

Time Travel Australia

Our Business is in Ruins

Newsletter Autumn 2013

No a lot to report for this period. We haven't had any tours since the last newsletter although we have been planning several for 2014. Having to spend the winter in Canberra hasn't been a lot of fun!

What's new for 2014? In association with Travelmakers, we will be taking a tour to Japan in May to coincide with the cherry blossom - although with the changing weather patterns who knows what we will find.

I have had several requests to lead a few more tours within Australia. We are scheduling a trip to SW NSW in April. I will try and run a tour to South Australia before too much longer.

In late August we will be heading off to Morocco and southern Spain. We did this trip a few years ago and it worked very well, pairing these two countries through their shared history, art and architecture. I am looking forward to getting back as we haven't been to Spain since 2010. We have scheduled an overnight trip to the edge of the Sahara as well as a Moroccan cooking class (optional) which should be fun.

We are always open to ideas so please feel free to send in any suggestions.

Happy travelling.

Hasta la vista!

Chris Carter

L'ile des Pins (Isle of Pines) Convict History

We don't often think of New Caledonia having a convict past. In 1774, on his second voyage of exploration, Captain James Cook named the island because its NE coast reminded him of his native Scotland. It wasn't until 1853 in the reign of Napoleon III that Admiral Febvrier Despointes (1796-1855) took formal possession of the country for France. The French authorities had viewed with

interest the 'experiment' in Australia and convict settlements began on New Caledonia in 1860 with transportation ceasing in 1897. Over this period there were some 22,000 arrivals including 5,000 communist political prisoners. Some convicts were repatriated to France but 60% remained on the island. When freed they received no land or support and were not accepted by the free settlers. There was no equivalent to Governor Lachlan Macquarie and many died in marginalised poverty.

The Isle of Pines is 80 km off the southern tip of Grande Terre (the main island) and can be reached by a short flight or a ferry ride of 3 hours from Noumea. You will feel at home for we know these Araucaria pines that tower above the palms as Norfolk Island pines. From the ferry wharf at the village of Kuto take a 2km walk north leaving the beautiful beach of Kuto Bay on the left. Just before arriving at the small hamlet of Wero is a sign on the right indicating the presence of a convict site reached by a 200m track into the bush.

The photographs give some idea of what awaits. A reconstructed building, possibly the administration office, sits in a cleared area. There is a notable lack of information about the site although a modern sign





(1874-1875) indicates the age of the building. One is not encouraged to view the rest of the buildings that are scattered in dense bush, vines and undergrowth. The convict cells are built of stone (? limestone) with brick surrounds to windows and doors. Bars are still present in many of the windows and iron shackle retainers can be seen low down on the walls. In the short stay we were unable to understand the layout of the sight.

I found this unexpected gem the most interesting attraction on the island. Construction seems to have started during the middle period of transportation and to have been of modest size. Enough of the site remains to develop an overview of the convict history on the Isle of Pines that could support tourism. I can think of worse places to carry out an appropriate survey and excavations!

Harry Wooller

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Scheduled Tours – 2014

A Little TLC: Thailand, Laos & Cambodia

18 days, February, 2014

Led by Penelope Heath

From Bangkok, this small group tour will take you through three exciting South-East Asian countries - Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Although these countries have similar histories and adjoining borders, they are all quite different and by visiting them we can explore their similarities and differences and get to know our near neighbours. This will be done by enjoying the cuisine of these countries and regions, meeting the people including some from the hill tribes, visiting temples and cultural centres as well as a focus on NGOs who help the local people in so many ways.

The Magic of Mexico

18 days, March, 2014

Led by Christopher Carter

A vibrant palette of ancient cultures and modern art, heritage cities and glorious beaches, colourful music, dance and traditions, Mexico offers a feast for all the senses.

Begin with a thorough exploration of the wonderful museums, pre-historic sites, colonial heritage and thriving cultural scene in and around Mexico City. Then travel into the jungle to visit the ancient Mayan sites of Palenque and Yaxchilan, before concluding in the Yucatan Peninsula famous for its archaeological sites, enchanting colonial cities, beautiful beaches and distinct cuisine. Whilst the itinerary will be comprehensive, there will be time to relax and immerse yourself in the local culture.

This tour is being organised for the Art Galley of NSW and bookings are handled by Renaissance Tours, Sydney.

Call Lissa on 1300 727 095 for further information.

To the Edge of the Outback: Mungo, Broken Hill & Beyond.

13 days, April 2014

Led by Christopher Carter

This tour aims to introduce the depth and breadth of prehistory and history of South-West NSW. Departing from Canberra, we will follow the expansion of settlement along the Murrumbidgee River stopping off at Gundagai and Balranald on the way. We will then detour inland to see Lake Mungo and discuss its 50,000 years of prehistory.

After couple of nights in Mildura (including a dinner at Stefano's) we will head north along the Darling and on to Broken Hill where we will visit some of the historic sites of this famous area. We will also visit Mutawintji National Park to experience some of its Aboriginal prehistory.

Accommodation varies between hotel, motels and shearers' quarters where sleeping bags will be required.

Call or email us directly for further information.

Shinto Spring: Japan

15 days , departing 5 May 2014

Led by Christopher Carter

Japan is a country of contrast – a blend of modern cities, ancient culture and diverse scenery. It is the beauty of the season that draws us there in May - cherry blossom and the lush, green countryside dotted with ancient villages, temples and castles.

We will visit a number of the better known sites but our local guides will take us off the tourist trail and show us the real Japan where we can dine in local restaurants, stay in a traditional inn and ‘meet the locals’.

This tour will provide an introduction to this beautiful country and its people. We will experience Japan’s cuisine by eating in smaller restaurants as well as an opportunity to pick up some culinary tips with a sushi class or two.

Contact Travelmakers on 02 62474444 for further information.

Al Andalus: Morocco & Spain

18 days, August/September 2014

Led by Christopher Carter

The theme of the tour will follow the Islamic expansion from north Africa late in the 7th century where they decided to cross the Straits onto the Iberian Peninsula. The Moorish invasion of Spain was swift, expansive and left a telling mark on modern Spanish culture. This tour will commence in central Morocco, move inland to visit several of the classic cities before passing through the Rif mountains to Tangier where we cross the Straits of Gibraltar into Southern Spain – ‘al Andalus’ to the Moors.

Moving through the mountains we will visit Ronda before driving on to Sevilla and the original Muslim capital of Cordoba. We will then follow the fall of Islam in southern Spain and follow the frontier as it collapsed toward Granada.

Contact Travelmakers on 02 62474444 for further information.

An Andean Adventure:

Chile & Peru

21 days, from 20 September, 2014

Led by Christopher Carter

Travelling through Chile and Peru this tour will provide a basic understanding of the cultures of the Central Andean Region of South America. While it would not be possible to follow a distinct chronological route, the theme of the tour will basically follow the Inka Empire from its southern

periphery in Chile and the Atacama Desert to its inner sanctum in Cusco. *En route* we will also visit a range of sites that present evidence of many of the cultures that either pre-date or were contemporaneous with the Inka.

This tour is being organised for the Art Galley of NSW and bookings are handled by Renaissance Tours, Sydney.

Call Lissa on 1300 727 095 for further information.

The Archaeology of South-West USA

21 days, August 2014

Led by Doug Williams

This tour will consist of two components – two weeks archaeological field work at the Crow Canyon Archaeological Centre (Colorado) and a week visiting some of the better known sites of the Four Corners region of the USA including Mesa Verde and Monument Valley.

The Crow Canyon Archaeological Centre is dedicated to understanding, teaching, and helping to preserve the rich history of the ancestral Pueblo people of the American Southwest. Time spent at the Centre will include archaeological excavation as well as laboratory work.

This tour is still in the developmental stage and we do not have more details available at present. Please let us know if you are interested at all.

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Please contact us directly if you have any questions or require further information for any of the tours.

If you have any news that would be of interest to our readership, feel free to forward items, snippets of news or photographs to the address below for inclusion in our next newsletter.

Chris Carter

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