

Newsletter

January, 2010



What a year it has been for the travel industry culminating in the threat of a British Airways strike at the peak Christmas holiday time and the sad collapse of Globespan which had done so much for reducing the cost of travel from regional airports in Scotland. Our team have worked flat out to re-arrange travel plans for all our customers who were affected as well as helping many who have lost their money having not booked through a Travel Agent. At last even many parts of the press are realising that there are so many advantages of booking with an independent travel agent for financial security as well as the experience and excellent customer service that our team provide!



The Twelve Apostles, Australia

Aimee was lucky enough to go to Australia. She did a whistle stop tour of Victoria and South Australia starting in Melbourne and then going along the Great Ocean Road towards Adelaide. On their first day they saw kangaroos, emus and koalas in the wild. She saw the Twelve Apostles and took a helicopter trip over the ocean to get the best views. She enjoyed seeing a little of Adelaide and exploring and sampling the Barossa wine valley. Aimee also flew over to Kangaroo Island for a night where she enjoyed the wildlife and geographical wonders including Seal Bay, Remarkable Rocks and Little Sahara. She enjoyed every minute of her trip and can't wait to go back but is now *looking forward to 19th January at 6.30pm in our Travel Cafe in Elgin* where we are hosting an Australian Evening. Tour Operators will give a presentation and slide show on what Australia and New Zealand have to offer and afterwards they and our own

team of Aussie Specialists look forward to answering questions and helping you to plan your trip to Australia and New Zealand. Drinks and 'nibbles' will be provided - everyone is welcome - please contact our Elgin or Forres shops for free tickets so that we know how many to cater for.

Lynette has been lucky enough to win two holidays this year. The first was to Anguilla and she has just returned from Mauritius. Anguilla is the perfect place for relaxation and indulgence - a quiet and still unspoilt coral island. There are endless glorious white sandy beaches combined with luxury hotels and outstanding restaurants, many of which Lynette has now stayed in or visited and would be happy to tell anyone who is interested more about them. Between May and November you can watch the turtle hatchlings and there is excellent swimming, snorkelling, cycling and horse riding.

Lynette was even more enthusiastic about Mauritius where she stayed in four different hotels and visited 13 others. She experienced exceptional levels of service and accommodation wherever she went. After each hotel she thought the next one can't be as fantastic as the last and each time it was - all very varied and special in different ways, and suitable for different people. As well as the white sandy beaches and crystal clear sea the island is very green. Mauritius is an exotic mix of languages, customs, cultures and cuisine. It is warm all the year round - from December to April are hot summer temperatures followed by a cooler drier period from May to November. The winds are at their strongest in July and August and the east coast can be a bit cooler, which can be very pleasant for us.



A beach in Mauritius

We have recently returned from an interesting holiday in Morocco. We spent three nights in Marrakech where we walked for miles taking in all the sights, sounds and smells which make it such an extraordinary and vibrant city. We enjoyed the Djemaa El Fna Square with its music, snake charmers, street entertainers and stalls selling delicious freshly squeezed orange juice and in the evening hundreds of barbeques seem to appear from nowhere all fighting for your custom claiming that Nigella or Jamie had eaten at their particular stall!! The rabbit warren

of the Souks are unlike anything we had seen before. We stayed in a wonderful Riad within the Medina. The staff were incredibly welcoming and friendly and our room combined Moroccan style with a contemporary twist and we enjoyed being able to lie back and rest on our own roof terrace. It was one of the best places we have ever stayed in but was a world away from what we found outside the Riad and by the time we moved on we had really had enough of being hassled endlessly to buy things.



Ian and Fiona on camels in Morocco

From Marrakech we went into the Atlas Mountains for three nights of peace and tranquility. The weather was lovely and we enjoyed a few walks through the hills passing small hamlets where children who appeared from nowhere were not sure whether to hide or ask for 'bonbons'. We were then driven west

across the country to Essaouria, a charming fortified emplacement created by the Portuguese in the 15th Century, which is now an unspoilt fishing port - not a bar or club to be seen! We found excellent fish restaurants and stayed in another excellent Riad with a roof top pool. There are miles of lovely beaches and at other times of the year the Atlantic breezes attracts windsurfers. The early morning drive back to Marrakech was fantastic - it was market day in one of the towns and we watched hundreds of men riding across fields on donkeys draped with panniers bringing their wares to market - it was an unforgettable and almost biblical sight.

This year we have seen a noticeable increase in bookings to the Far East, Egypt, Turkey and the Balkans. Many people feel they are getting better value for money in non-Eurozone countries. Many skiers who visited the big name ski resorts last season left with uncomfortably large holes in their wallet and so as well as France reducing the VAT charged on food many resorts have had to cut their prices to attract skiers for the coming season.

We were lucky enough to win the 2009 TIPTO Proprietor of the Year Award at the Agent Achievement Awards in London. The award which was recognition for the expertise, experience and customer service that all our friendly staff provide. Thank you for your support in the past and we look forward to helping you plan your travel arrangements for 2010. Use us or lose us!

Happy travelling and best wishes for 2010 from all at Beaver Travel.

Ian and Fiona

Ian and Fiona Widdowson

PS: Travel with a difference - while you are dreaming of your next holiday you might like to spare a thought for our friend Ed Stafford who is attempting to become the first person to walk from the source to the mouth of the Amazon - a very inspiring story which can be followed on www.walkingtheamazon.com. If the challenges of the jungle weren't enough he is struggling financially and so if you happen to know of anyone who would be interested in helping with sponsoring this amazing project please get in touch.....

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