

Sharing the Stories of Australia

Australian Journeys: explore, indulge, discover.

Australia is a large and diverse country with so much to explore. This edition of 'Sharing the Stories of Australia' shares some of the exciting, unique and essential journeys that will take your clients beyond the gateway cities and off the beaten track. Of Course, these are just a small sample of the unforgettable Australian journeys your clients can take by foot, by car, by boat or by air.

We also share a selection of exciting new products and unique holiday experiences from across the ditch that have captured our attention and an events line up for the upcoming months. Check out the first 29,000 [here](#). To book any of the suggested tours, products or events for your clients please contact your local wholesaler.

Unique Floating Cooking School in Melbourne

Melbourne is hailed as the food capital of Australia, so what better place to partake in a cooking school? There are a host of cooking schools in this epicurean city but this new 'Junk Food Cooking School' is sure to be unforgettable. The class takes place aboard a traditional Chinese Junk called the 'Oriental Queen' berthed at

Melbourne's docklands. Pupils of this unique cooking class can learn to whip up a Royal Thai banquet or fragrant Indian curry with ingredients sourced from the local markets. The meal is then enjoyed with a glass of wine in the main saloon with the fantastic sights and sounds of Victoria Harbour. junkfoodcookingschool.com.au

Futuristic New Attraction at Sydney Aquarium

Sydney Aquarium at Darling Harbour has an amazing new exhibition giving more reason to visit this popular attraction. The new 'Future is Wild' exhibition is a multimedia experience that takes visitors 5 million, 100 million and 200 million years into the future using the latest sound and visual technology.



The project was designed by award winning film makers and leading scientists that have combined the marine life of Sydney Aquarium with virtual animals that may one day fill our seas, streams, rivers or walk on land. thefutureiswild.com



Lonely Planet Selects South West Australia for Top Ten

Western Australia's spectacular South West was recently named as one of Lonely Planet's 'Top Ten Regions' in the 2010 Best in Travel Guide. The region was the only in Australia to make the exclusive travel book this year.

The South West was selected because of its remarkably diverse range of scenery and activities. Visitors to the area are spoiled for choice with world class surfing, fabulous food and wine experiences, whale watching and trails through awe-inspiring forests.

The region is three hours from Perth making it well worth the trip considering it is one of the top ten destinations in the world right now.

Passport to Shine

Tourism Queensland is giving a lucky holidaymaker the chance to win an amazing holiday in Queensland worth AUD \$100,000 for up to 10 people. The competition celebrates the launch of Tourism Queensland's landmark new global brand platform, Queensland, Where Australia Shines and is open to Facebook friends of the destination worldwide. Travel agents are welcome to enter. The competition highlights what makes Queensland a fantastic holiday destination –

the sunshine, the beaches and the unforgettable experiences. Tourism Queensland provides Facebook users with a virtual passport to which they add Queensland experiences, including the awe of snorkelling the Great Barrier Reef, the wonder of sailing among Queensland's subtropical islands, the exhilaration of gliding through the rainforest or the adrenalin-rush of mustering cattle in the outback among many others. Once you have collected three experiences you are eligible to enter the draw. To enter Passport to Shine, go to facebook.com/visitqueensland



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Pacific Coast Touring Route

The Pacific Coast Touring Route has more than 900 kilometres of roads to explore between Sydney and Brisbane taking visitors past gorgeous beaches, through historic villages and pristine forests. Adventure lovers can toboggan down sand dunes, surf along

the Coffs Coast, go on an aerial rainforest walk or kayak with dolphins. A little closer to earth, there is the opportunity to taste locally made cheese, admire Grafton's architecture, indulge in a day spa massage or find yourself in new age Byron Bay. Heading North from Sydney,

your clients could start their holiday with a whale watching cruise in Port Stephens, go quad biking on the sand dunes at Stockton beach or experience a "feed, walk and talk" tour at the Koala Hospital in Port Macquarie. Along the Coffs Coast there are 13 National

Parks to explore including; lush subtropical rainforests, wilderness areas and walking trails.

Northern New South Wales is one of Australia's best kept secrets and the perfect holiday destination - bursting with gorgeous beaches and a warm year-round climate. At the heart of Northern New South Wales is Byron Bay. Byron is a new age paradise, famous for glorious surfing beaches and a lifestyle that combines hippy chic with hedonistic fun. Traditionally home to people seeking alternative lifestyles, today it offers natural therapies, organic food, fabulous shopping, luxury hideaways and indulgent spa treatments.

An unmissable highlight in Byron Bay is watching the sunrise over Cape Byron followed by a hearty breakfast at one of the town's eclectic cafes. pacificcoast.com.au

Luxury Travel by Air

Many of Australia's most remarkable destinations are spread out, difficult to reach and therefore overlooked by many travellers. For those who are after an awe-inspiring holiday an air safari is the best way to explore Australia and see the best that this country has to offer. Air Adventure Australia offers a choice of eight tours, each conveniently departing from Melbourne. The most popular tour for the New Zealand market has been 'Flyaway Faraway Kimberley' which includes the Kimberley, Northern Territory and Coober Pedy. New for 2011 is 'Cape York and the Gulf' featuring Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Air Adventure Australia pioneered the concept of Australian air safaris to access Australia's hard-to-reach places. Guests travel in a private aeroplane with a commercially licensed pilot and guide. Each departure is restricted to 9 passengers and is ideal for discerning clients who appreciate the benefits of travelling in a small group.

All meals are included, featuring local cuisine and wine with dinners. There are even inclusions ranging from fishing to massages so guests have "peace of mind" in the knowledge that all arrangements are prepaid.

Copies of the new Air Adventures Australia brochure are available on request from Hogan and Associates, GSA's for Air Adventures Australia. airadventure.com.au



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Food & Wine Trails of the Gold Coast

Australia's Gold Coast has a range of exciting food and wine trails where you can meander either along the coastline or head up to the Hinterland. It's about taking the journey to discover another side of the famous Gold Coast.

Heading south, the new Seafood Discovery Trail features 35kms of coastline from Currumbin to Cabarita offering everything from fine dining restaurants and specialty cafes through to fantastic fish and chip takeaways and fresh seafood markets. You can even catch your own ocean harvest on a deep-sea fishing charter or haul in the crab-pots for a feast of local muddies.

The Pacific Food and Wine trail continues along the coast enabling visitors to discover gourmet delicacies



and boutique wines while experiencing the beautiful beaches and coastal towns that the region is famous for. Heading inland, the Hinterland Food and Wine trail sends visitors through the Gold Coast's Mount Tamborine hinterland region, where

they can sample wines at the cellar door, indulge in local cheeses, chocolates and local produce and even explore arts and crafts areas. Visit these websites for more information: [Seafood Discovery Trail](#), [Hinterland Food & Wine Trail](#), [Pacific Food & Wine Trail](#)



Stoked in the Bay of Fires

On the rim of Mt. William National Park in Tasmania sits the magnificent coastline known as the Bay of Fires. Combining a dramatic beachscape with indigenous ecology and wildlife, the Bay of Fires offers travellers a breathtaking experience. Bay Of Fires Walk offers four day walking tours of the coast and surrounding woodlands. The small groups are escorted by knowledgeable and passionate guides and meals and accommodation are included in the package price. The tour is suited to discerning yet adventurous travellers who can enjoy sumptuous meals made from fresh Tasmanian produce and stay in unique accommodation including the award-winning Bay of Fires lodge. There is even a portered option for those who don't want to carry their bag. This truly majestic spot was awarded Lonely Planet's hottest destination for 2009 and promises to astonish visitors with its beauty. bayoffires.com.au

Houseboating on the Murray River

For a truly unforgettable holiday, book your clients an Unforgettable Houseboat on South Australia's Murray River. Catering for 2 to 12 people, there's a houseboat to suit every taste and budget. Captaining one of these fabulous 'floating baches' is a great way to enjoy the panoramic views and abundant wildlife along the Murray River. Whether cooking a meal in the gourmet kitchen (complete with dishwasher and microwave), or a barbeque on the front deck, relaxing in the jacuzzi, or the king or queen size cabins with en-suite bathroom, your clients will enjoy all the comforts of home.

At least four nights is recommended for the houseboating journey. Houseboaters are free to explore the river at their own pace or can follow a recommended itinerary. Highlights include: exploring historic river townships, stretching your legs with an afternoon bushwalk or round of golf, taking a wine tasting tour to the Barossa or a nocturnal wildlife spotting tour, or enjoying a champagne bush tucker breakfast. For a real treat, book a private chef to come aboard and prepare a special meal for your clients as they watch the sunset.

houseboats.com.au





Calendar Down Under

Journey off the Beaten Track

Venture off the beaten track and discover some of the unique Australian events in communities and towns out of Australia's main centres.

Woodford Folk Festival **27 Dec - 01 Jan 2011**

One of Australia's largest and most colourful community cultural events and is one of the largest 'Folk' festivals in the world. The event is held annually on a 360-acre site near the small town of Woodford located one-hour from Brisbane. The festival presents more than 2000 performers and 400 hundred events with concerts, dances, workshops, forums, street theatre, writers' panels, a film festival, comedy sessions, acoustic jams, social dialogue and debate, an entire children's festival, art and craft workshops, late night cabarets and special events including a spectacular fire event. woodfordfolkfestival.com

Peats Ridge Sustainable Arts and Music Festival **29 Dec 2010 - 01 Jan 2011**

A three day music, arts and cultural festival in the wilderness of Glenworth Valley, an hour north of Sydney. Featuring two hundred artists performing across ten stages, an arts program filled with visual art, performance and installations, dozens of free workshops and a dedicated Indigenous program. peatsridgefestival.com.au

Tamworth Country Music Festival **14-23 Jan 2011**

An annual event celebrating Australian country music, culture and heritage. The festival is the second biggest country music festival in the world and the largest music festival in the Southern Hemisphere. With over 4,000 performances over 80 venues there is plenty of entertainment to discover and enjoy. tamworthcountrymusic.com.au

Countrylink Parkes Elvis Festival **5 Jan - 09 Jan 2011**

Record crowds are expected for the Countrylink Parkes Elvis Festival. A five day program of events will feature look-a-like and sound-a-like contests, the Elvis Street Parade, Elvis talent quests, displays of Elvis memorabilia, an Elvis Gospel Church Service and more than 120 individual events. parkeselvisfestival.com.au

Port Lincoln Tunarama Festival **21 - 26 Jan 2011**

A free, family-friendly festival held on the foreshore of Boston Bay over Australia Day weekend. The picturesque lawns of Port Lincoln, South Australia are transformed with stalls, sideshows and rides. The festival has a fun event line-up and showcases the region's best seafood, art, music, people and surroundings. The highlight of the festival is the World Championship Tuna Toss competition which sees competitors throw a fish (made of rubber these days) weighing between eight and ten kilos as far as they can. tunarama.net

Below is a sample of the diverse range of Australian events and festivals selected from the refreshed events section on Tourism Australia's website.

The events section is another great tool for travel agents, providing you with a comprehensive list of events to incorporate into client's holidays or even to give them another reason to return to Australia.

The events and festivals are categorised by ten groupings; International, Surfing and Lifesaving, Uniquely Australian and Aboriginal, Food and Wine, Cultural and Sporting as well as by each season. A handy search box also enables you to search for events by name, state, month or event type.

The Tourism Australia Events guide can be found at australia.com

Ironman Western Australia Triathlon **5 Dec 2010**

Ironman Western Australia Triathlon allows spectators to watch as elite Ironman competitors swim, bike and run a 226 kilometre course in an attempt to qualify for the world championships in Hawaii. Spectators will have the opportunity to view the excitement from a multitude of viewing stations, set up along the competitor's course. ironmanwesternaustralia.com

XXXX Gold Gove Game Classic **01-06 Dec 2010**

Anglers come from all over Australia and overseas to compete in this competition. There are outstanding prizes up for grabs in over 35 categories. A great opportunity for keen fisherman to match their strength with that of a barracuda, sailfish or marlin and enjoy the excitement of this four day tournament. govfishingclub.org.au

Sydney Telstra 500 V8 Supercars **3-5 Dec 2010**

Sydney Olympic Park will be pumping with action for the Sydney Telstra 500 V8 Supercar street race. As well as the V8 racing, the three day entertainment lineup includes Guns N Roses, displays by the world's best skateboarder Tony Hawk, carnival rides, an international food village and much more. v8supercars.com.au

Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival **25 Feb-14 Mar 2011**

The Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival offers a rich and vibrant three week program of visual and performing arts, workshops, theatre, outdoor cinema, music, exhibitions, parades and comedy – all in a diverse range of venues that showcase the unique landscapes, natural beauty and rich heritage of these districts. artsmildura.com.au

MONA FOMA 2011 **14-20 Jan 2011**

Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) and Festival of Music and Art (FOMA) come together in this spectacular annual festival held in Hobart, Tasmania. An eclectic fusion of the visual and performing arts, MONA FOMA presents noise, new media, theatre and classical art forms in one exciting festival. Renowned for its exemplary arts community, much of which is displayed on and around Hobart's historic waterfront, MONA FOMA presents another reason to visit this vibrant waterfront city. mofo.net.au

