



THE
Travel Journal



Introducing

The Oasis Travel Journal...

For almost four decades, the Oasis Travel family have wandered the globe extensively, exploring the far-flung corners, iconic landmarks, and hidden gems, which transform holidays into everlasting memories.

Here, we've asked a selection of our experts to share little snippets of their top travel moments as well as insights and recommendations to inspire your next adventure. This is highly personal, almost as if they were documenting their journeys in their own private journal, from exotic island escapades and legendary destinations to dazzling cities and spectacular moments. In our quest to create the perfect travel experience, we thought we'd begin by inviting you to take a look inside the journal and venture beyond any traditional brochure. After all, your journey is our journey.

www.oasis-travel.co.uk



GILLIAN COOMBES

South India

Kerala

Spice Boat Cruise overnight, sailing from the Coconut Lagoon eco-friendly hotel. This was part of a fabulous “Palaces and Temples” trip with Azure, who are a personal favourite trade partner.

Mustique

Having a tour around Princess Margaret’s former villa, then having my own villa within the Cotton House Hotel.

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GILLIAN COOMBES

Antigua

Shirley Heights

BBQ and cycling around Jumby Bay Hotel. Live reggae and soca music, smokin' barbecue, potent rum punch and dancing under the stars. The Shirley Heights Party is the best bash in the Caribbean.

Monte Carlo

A helicopter on arrival in Nice to Cannes and a 4-night stay in Monte Carlo.

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Peru

Travelling by train from Cusco to Machu Picchu was one of the most awe-inspiring journeys of my life. When we arrived – right there was one of my lifetime dreams, visiting and exploring, the Lost city of the Incas.

South Africa

A 10-day whistle stop tour of South Africa, arriving in Capetown and visiting the beautiful V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain, The Winelands of Stellenbosch & Franschhoek. For me the highlight was the Southern Right Antarctic whale watching at Hermanus – before we finished the journey by travelling on the most luxurious train in the world along the Kimberley Diamond Route.

Kenyan Safari

An action packed 10-day Safari without walls where the animals are free to wander. Visiting Northern Kenya then crossing the Equator into the south and seeing the Big Five. The sundowners over the African Savannah were breath-taking as well as the 4x4 jeep game drives.



SIMON THOMAS O'NEILL

Orient Express

London to Venice

From the moment I stepped on board this iconic train – I was whisked away to a bygone era. It was like being transported back in time and that is exactly what happened. The food, the wine and the service were exquisite. A decadent journey back to the 1920's, the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express offers elegant cabins complete with rich details including fine fabrics and glossy wood panelling that take you back in time. During the day, twin cabins let you admire the scenery as you are whisked across Europe, then as night falls, they are transformed into inviting bedrooms that allow you to sink into sumptuous comfort, all the while as the world goes by.

Simply put, there is nothing else quite like it. The Venice Simplon-Orient-Express is the epitome of luxury on rails and offers an exquisite experience on every journey, whether between London and Venice or Paris and Istanbul. Dedicated to offering opulence at the highest quality, a journey on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express is one to treasure forever and the ideal escape to an adventure only heard of in story books.

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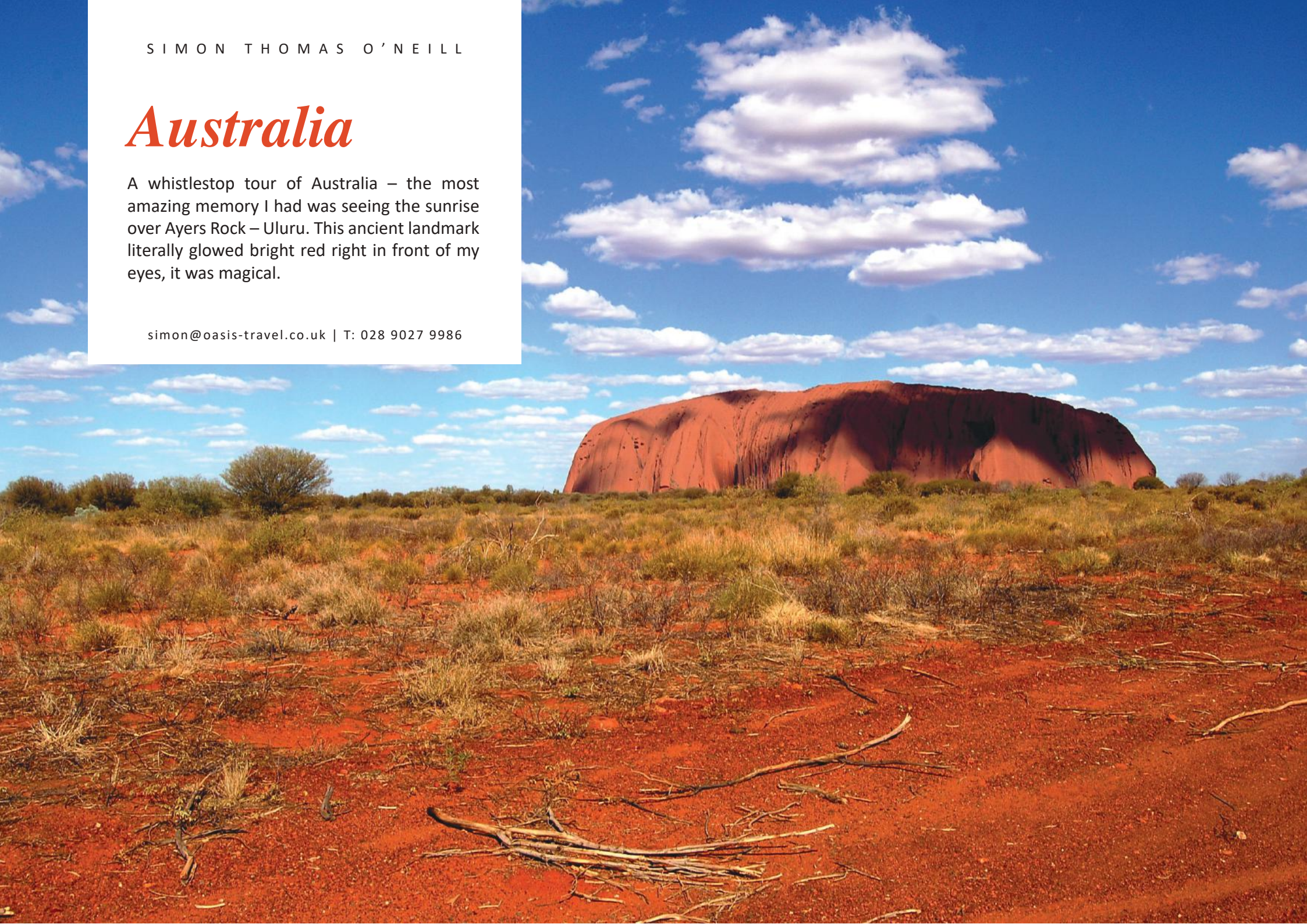


SIMON THOMAS O'NEILL

Australia

A whistlestop tour of Australia – the most amazing memory I had was seeing the sunrise over Ayers Rock – Uluru. This ancient landmark literally glowed bright red right in front of my eyes, it was magical.

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Venice

James Bond Transfer

Probably one of the least celebrated items in a holiday itinerary is the transfer. The island of Venice refutes this in a grand style.

A private speedboat transfer from the airport to the island is a special way to begin a visit to this unique and beautiful place. You enter the city through a labyrinth of minor canals and waterways before disembarkation at your chosen hotel. From there, a walk will take you to St Marks Square and the Riva degli Schiavoni, where the adventure begins.

New York City

Manhattan Skyline

The first view of the New York City skyline is truly a jaw-dropping experience. The wonder of this city is that it is larger than you can possibly anticipate. Despite the many views offered over the years in hundreds of TV and Films, the drive from Queens to Manhattan from JFK airport exceeds expectation. The ultimate city experience.

A great way to arrive prepared is by pre-booking a restaurant or city attraction. We chose the former, reserving a table at Tribeca Grill. This is a super way to explore a neighbourhood as well as enjoying a meal in exciting, authentic surroundings.



South Africa

Humbled By Nature

To experience wildlife roaming freely in a natural habitat is a humbling feeling. Phinda Game Reserve in KwaZulu Natal is a notch above some of the others as it is coastal, having the Indian Ocean as its eastern border. This provides a flight in a light aircraft with literally a huge added attraction, as whale watching is possible. We flew low over a lake, passed a sandbar, and unexpectedly found ourselves skimming the ocean where whales could be seen surfacing. The might and beauty of nature comes home very forcibly.

Peru

Religious Experience

When man-made and nature come together in a breath-taking location, you have the opportunity of a once in a lifetime experience.

Visiting the citadel of Machu Picchu in the Peruvian Andes is particularly exciting as the entire experience is hidden, until viewed from the Sun Gate (if doing the trek) or the viewing platform (if taking the train/bus). The scale and altitude cannot be conveyed on film. Best to put the camera away and just marvel at the ingenuity of this estate, founded for the Inca emperor Pachacuti, circa 1450.



MARK DAVIDSON

Lebanon

Misplaced Land

I visited Beirut in Lebanon a year before the explosion at the port, which resulted in many lives lost. Then, my impression of the country was of incredible people doing their very best to promote a tourist industry with a lack of government assistance. The standard of restaurants and hospitality were superb.

When there, we visited the Roman ruins of Baalbek City, some 40 miles north-east of Beirut. This monument surpasses many of the ruins found in the Roman Forum, and is an essential visit.

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G A R Y B O Y D

Luxor, Egypt

Watch the sunrise from a Hot Air Balloon over the Valley of the Kings in Luxor in Egypt.

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G A R Y B O Y D

Ink 48 Hotel

New York City

Have a cocktail at sunset in “The Press Lounge” in the Ink 48 hotel In New York. Rooftop bar with magnificent views of the NYC skyline and the Hudson River.

Hiram Bingham

Belmond Orient Express

Travelling from Cusco to Machu Picchu in Peru, via the Sacred Valley and enjoying the Inca Citadel in all its glory. Pisco Sour in hand!

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GARY BOYD

Le Maire Channel

Antarctica

Cruising the LeMaire channel, I was privileged enough to see some of the world's most spectacular scenery, including the midnight sun.

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G A R Y B O Y D

Queenstown

New Zealand

Skydiving in Queenstown New Zealand, over the “Remarkables Mountain Range” not for the faint hearted but 100% worth it if your nerves can handle it.

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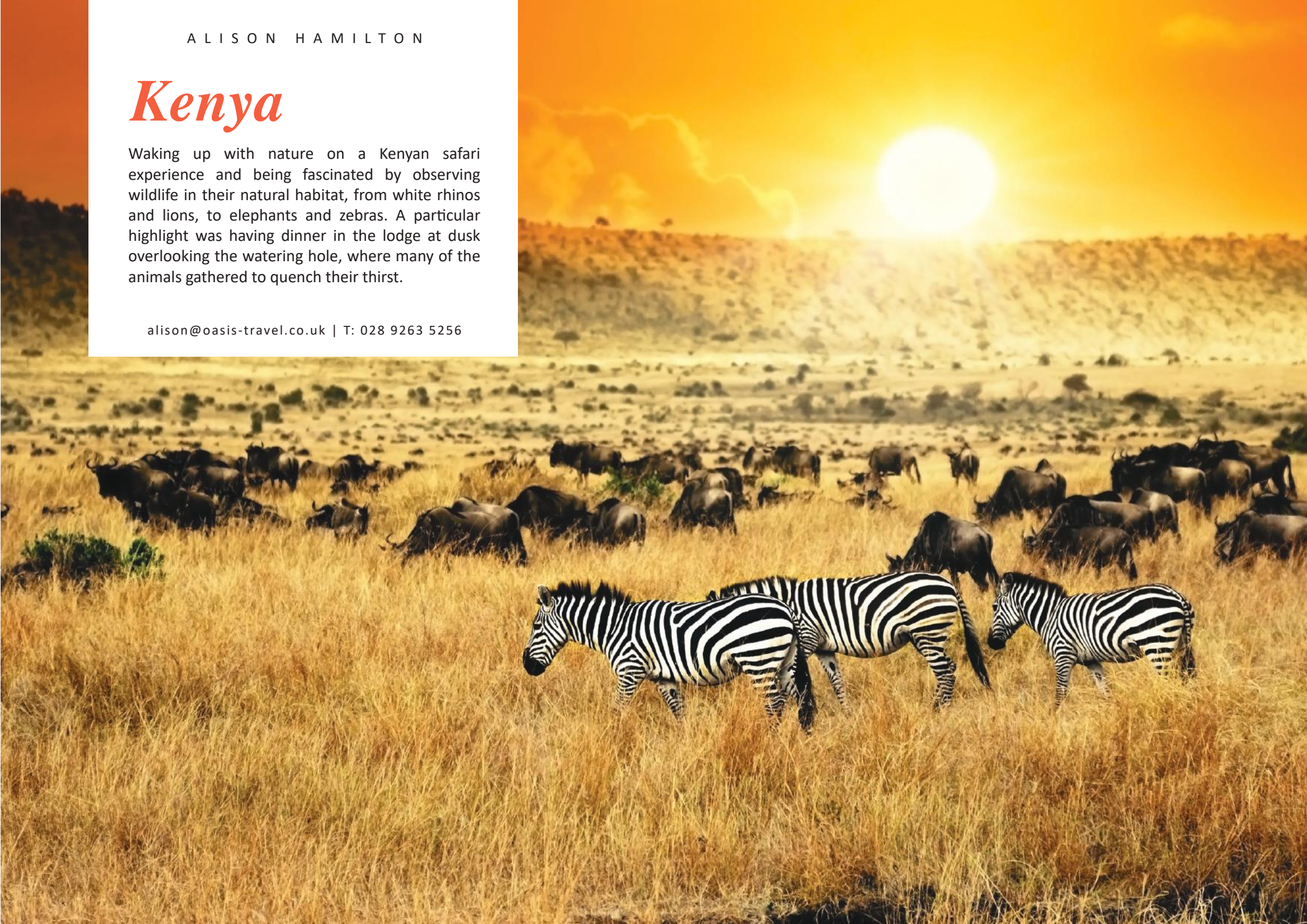


ALISON HAMILTON

Kenya

Waking up with nature on a Kenyan safari experience and being fascinated by observing wildlife in their natural habitat, from white rhinos and lions, to elephants and zebras. A particular highlight was having dinner in the lodge at dusk overlooking the watering hole, where many of the animals gathered to quench their thirst.

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ALISON HAMILTON

Seychelles

Driving around the island in a mini moke, and taking in the ultimate chilled island life, before enjoying the energy of the plethora of beaches and bars scattered around this picturesque paradise.

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ALISON HAMILTON

Perfect Day Cococay

This private island located in the Bahamas is owned by Royal Caribbean and is the ideal place to design your perfect day. It could be grabbing a drink at the swim-up bar, getting a taste of the Maldives with your own private overwater cabana, or testing your limits at the thrill waterpark. I loved how the energy and excitement of the brand was translated onto the island and without a doubt I can say that this place is perfect for everybody.

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ALISON HAMILTON

Las Vegas

There really is no place like Vegas. The energy and vibe is unmatched – I remember attending a live show performance in which they had little Tiger cubs parading around the entrance. I just loved the lights, hotels, casinos, pool clubs and the fact that you feel this surge of energy that just seems to last for your entire visit – it's a special way of being and would say that everyone has to experience it at least once.

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ALISON HAMILTON

San Francisco

No visit to San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf is complete without a trip to Alcatraz Island. The ferry views were stunning, the prison grounds were striking and the audio tour was absolutely fascinating, giving you a transportive and immersive look at this famed attraction.

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PETER MCCABE

St. Barthelemy

French West Indies

Staying in the luxurious Cheval Blanc St. Barth Isle de France hotel, indulging in an exceptional lifestyle experience. Fond memories of exploring the capital Gustavia with its pastel coloured buildings and fabulous restaurants.

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PETER MCCABE

Carmel Valley

California

Taking a two-night break from a road trip down the west coast of America at the wonderful Carmel Valley Ranch. Chilling in the beautiful countryside during the day and toasting marshmallows around the firepit after an excellent evening meal in a stunning rural setting.

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PETER MCCABE

Phinda Game Reserve

**In the heart of Zululand on
South Africa's east coast**

After a 05:30 start (supplied with hot water bottles and rugs) to catch the early morning wildlife action at the watering holes, the land-rovers pulling into a clearing which had been set up to provide a sumptuous breakfast banquet. The food was hot, the setting spectacular – a truly memorable way to start the day!

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P E T E R M C C A B E

Bermuda

Southampton Princess Hotel

Enjoying a beautiful private beach with sand that almost seemed pink. My son was studying for his AQE at the time and remember us flitting between practice papers in the shade and throwing an American football on the beach. I remember wonderful Mahi-Mahi in the fish restaurant and private boat taxis to Hamilton to explore there.

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PETER MCCABE

Mykonos, Greece

Kastro Bar

Tried this iconic bar around lunchtime while stopping off at Mykonos while on a Celebrity Cruise. The venue is small but has amazing views over Little Venice and the Windmills. The blue water lapping up to the edge of the terrace while sipping my cocktail of choice is another relaxing memory. It was a great place for a quick stop during the day and I am sure becomes even more spectacular in the evening.

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W E N D Y C O R K I N

Rosewood Mayakoba

Playa del Carmen Mexico

We arrived in this luxurious haven to an amazing reception. Taken to our beautiful rooms by boat was an unreal way to arrive. Mayakoba is built on a lagoon which is home to three 5 star resorts – Rosewood, The Fairmont and The Banyan Tree. We were able to book reservations in the restaurants in any of the hotels and could be transferred there by golf buggy or boat. It was truly magical. Treats on the beach included champagne o'clock and canopies. Our butler, Janet, looked after our every need and we could reach her day or night by our App.

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Malaga, Spain

One of my favourite cities in Europe is Malaga. A short flight takes you to this bustling city, great for a long weekend with the girls. The old town is beautiful and it is full of great Tapas bars, cocktails bars and great shopping! The port is full of restaurants and with it fast becoming a favourite cruise destination it is also good to spend a few days pre or post cruise! Malaga also has the added advance of a beach which has good beach bars serving freshly grilled sardines – a lovely place to spend an afternoon. It is over the Christmas period that this city truly comes to life. The lights are spectacular and the atmosphere is second to none. With light shows held every night in the season the streets are full of music, dancing, singing and families enjoying this magical festive season!

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W E N D Y C O R K I N

The Margi

Vouliagmeni, Greece

This gem of a boutique hotel is nestled in an area outside of Athens known as the Athenian Riviera. Fabulous outdoor space which is lit up in the evenings by lights on the trees creating a magical atmosphere. Great beach restaurants are plentiful in the area but the most amazing restaurant which is a must to visit is Ithaki. It sits on the edge of the water in the most perfect setting and serves world class food and drink. Close by is the town of Glyfada for those who enjoy a bit of retail therapy.

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BodyHoliday

St. Lucia

The ethos of this amazing resort is “Give us your body for a week and we’ll give you back your mind” Nothing could be more true. Set in beautiful bay this holiday offers for you to do as much as you want or as little. Classes of all types run from early morning to sunset. The choice ranges from beach fit, sunrise and sunset yoga, relaxation classes, spin, water aerobics (the best fun of the day!). You can learn how to water ski, snorkel and even diving. Equally you can just lie on a sun lounger with your cocktail nobody judges it’s up to you! Every day you have a spa treatment included in your package and it’s always amazing! As the sun sets you can enjoy a cocktail at the side of the beach while listening to the resident saxophone player. Then in the evening it’s lovely food and then music in the main bar or a perhaps a sing song in the beautiful piano bar. By the time you finish your holiday you really feel as if your mind is completely rested. Probably one of my favourite places in the world.

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W E N D Y C O R K I N

Santa Monica

California

After a road trip driving along the Big Sur from San Francisco we arrived in the iconic Santa Monica. We stayed in Lowes Santa Monica Beach which overlooked the pier with the famous big wheel. You could watch people roller skating, playing sports and running along the beach. Fabulous fish restaurants were everywhere and it was amazing to go along The Santa Monica Boulevard. We spent a fabulous afternoon in Beverly Hills taking in the famous sights and finishing up with cocktails in the Beverly Wilshire.

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JULIE-ANNE VAUGHAN

Seadream Cruise

Amazing yachting experience, sleeping under the stars, jet skiing at the back of the yacht across the bay and enjoying delectable food on the ultimate yachting experience.

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JULIE-ANNE VAUGHAN

Eagle Island Lodge

A Belmond Safari, Botswana

Travelling on Safari on the Okavango Delta waterways by a Mokoro canoe with the Hippo's just below and then continuing our Safari by foot and seeing the most amazing animals close up, before stopping in the evening for a sundowner in the middle of nowhere as the sun set on Botswana.

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JULIE-ANNE VAUGHAN

Monaco

Grand Prix

Sailing on Silversea we tendered in Monaco Bay, beside all the amazing yachts, the sound and the thrill of the Monaco Grand Prix from our viewpoint at the Palace.

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JULIE - ANNE VAUGHAN

Maldives

Arriving for the first time in the Maldives and then onwards to our island, One & Only Reethi Rah by seaplane, you can't imagine how turquoise blue the sea is and how soft the sand is, snorkelling on the House Reef with the reef sharks swimming beside you (they are vegetarian). Paradise!

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JULIE-ANNE VAUGHAN

Marrakesh

Staying in a stunning Riad at the Royal Mansour, travelling into the Atlas mountains and having a traditional meal with a local family but the highlight was zooming around the souk on a motorbike and sidecar, it was like something out of a James Bond movie.

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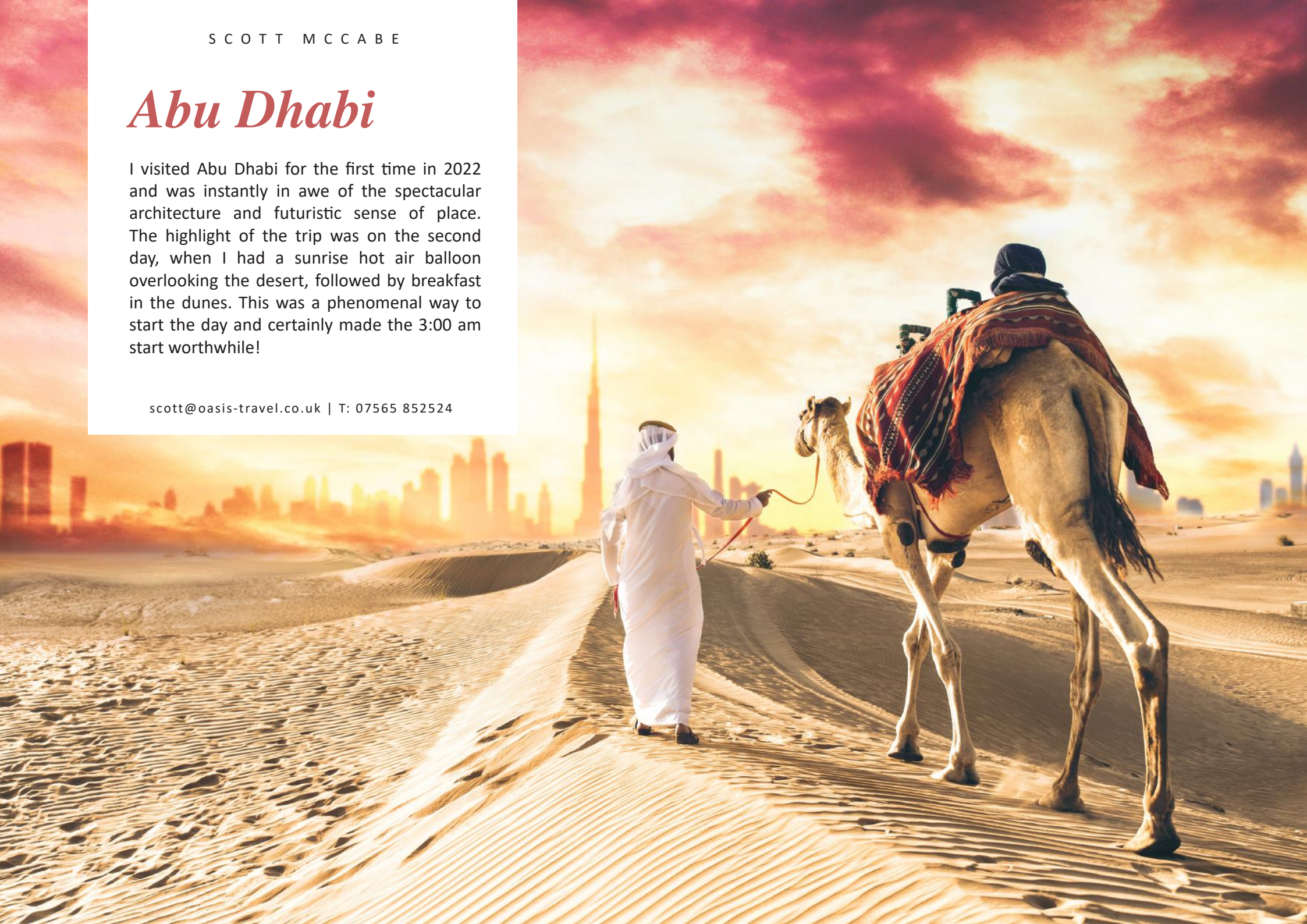


SCOTT MCCABE

Abu Dhabi

I visited Abu Dhabi for the first time in 2022 and was instantly in awe of the spectacular architecture and futuristic sense of place. The highlight of the trip was on the second day, when I had a sunrise hot air balloon overlooking the desert, followed by breakfast in the dunes. This was a phenomenal way to start the day and certainly made the 3:00 am start worthwhile!

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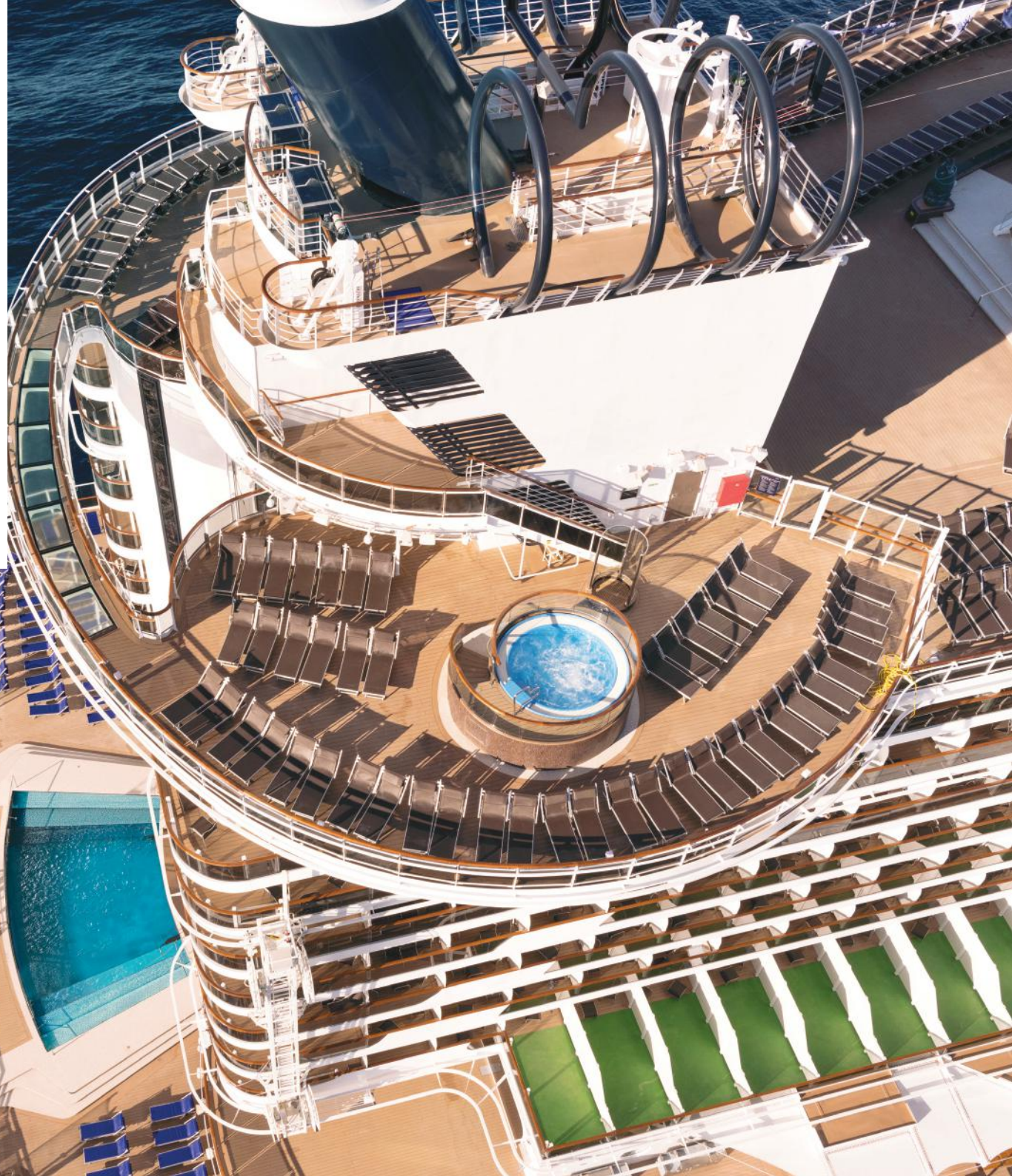


SCOTT MCCABE

MSC Yacht Club

Part of the joy of travel is creating lifelong memories with your loved ones. I was fortunate to be able to travel to the United States with my family and closest friends for a reunion trip, which featured a three-day Caribbean mini-cruise and day at Universal Studios in Orlando. We were treated to top quality service, amenities and activities onboard the MSC Seaside, all delivered through the Yacht Club which made the trip even more special.

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S C O T T M C C A B E

Miami, USA

Whilst a holiday is all about kicking back and indulging, another important aspect to me is enjoying the wellness activities at a particular location. The 1 Hotel, South Beach, offers the best of both worlds as you can start the day off with a workout at their state-of-the-art fitness facilities before heading out to enjoy the vibrant and energetic nightlife along the South Beach strip.

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SCOTT MCCABE

Rio de Janeiro

Brazil

The Belmond Copacabana Palace in Rio de Janeiro, is very much the heartbeat of the destination. Strolling along the beachfront eating Acai, enjoying a Poke Bowl poolside, and travelling to see Christ the Redeemer, the Copacabana Palace is the perfect place to base yourself for the duration of your visit to the capital.

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SCOTT MCCABE

Dubai, UAE

This summer I visited Atlantis The Royal in Dubai. Crafted by the world's leading designers, architects and artists, this hotel has set itself the challenge of being the most ultra-luxury experiential resort in the world. It's truly surreal, offering a plethora of activities featuring the world's most premium brands, such as Nobu by the beach. The highlight was chilling by the pool on Cloud 22, listening to one of many fine DJs, while overlooking the palm in all of it's glory.

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