

# DAVID SKILLAN'S WORLD OF TRAVEL . . .

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2008

*Travelling the World Since 1951 → Leading Tours Since 1970*

## Dear Fellow Traveller:

Once again it's that time of the year when I must prepare for another busy travel season. Believe it or not, I still get a tingling sensation up and down my spine before setting off on a big trip. It's a feeling of excitement. Interestingly, when I first started out as a tour leader in 1970, most of my clients were considerably older than me. Now I'm the same age as many of them. It's an advantage. Like all mature people, I have much more experience than when I was young. Fortunately, too, I still have a lot of stamina, which throughout my life has stood me in good stead.

Just a while ago, I spent two enjoyable weeks in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and PEI with a good friend. (Next summer, I hope to go to Greece and the Yukon.) We rented a car and covered 3,200 kilometres, which often included straying off the beaten track, staying in small hotels, inns, and motels. Prior to this trip I had only been to Halifax for three days, thirty years ago, so it was all new to me—and I loved it. Antigonish, Lunenburg, Moncton, Charlottetown, Sydney, Cheticamp, Baddeck, Louisburg, and of course Peggy's Cove and the Cabot Trail are no longer just names to me, but real and interesting places. My favourite areas were Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton Island. Highlights included fresh Atlantic seafood at one of the many world-class restaurants in the historic city of Charlottetown, a visit to Bird Island (where we spotted bald eagle, puffin, kittiwake, herring gull, great cormorant, double-crested cormorant, gannet, great blue heron, and various species of duck), and whale watching by launch, getting unbelievably close to two separate pods of about 20 pilot whales. And a moose and calf so close to the road I could have touched them. Other warm memories include friendly people who take great pride in their neat homes and gardens, lakes and mountains that remind me so much of the Scottish Highlands and the scenic rugged coastline full of picturesque coves, bays, estuaries, and deserted sandy beaches. Not as spectacular as the west coast, but still very majestic and beautiful in its own way.

We visited the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site in Baddeck, where the famous inventor, scientist, and innovator lived for many years and later died. His yearning to communicate led to the invention of the telephone, but he preferred to be known as a champion of the deaf. We also visited the original old house in Clifton, PEI, where Lucy Maud Montgomery, author of *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea*, and 40 other books, was born in November, 1874. A gifted writer who, like the great man Bell (if only he could now see what he began—the millions of cellular phones—he would be both pleased and mortified), found well-deserved fame and fortune during her lifetime, she wrote many quotable comments, including a reference to other writers and romantics like herself: "Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many in the world." I can relate to that.

**WEBSITE**—I've recently had my website redesigned and updated, and I'm delighted to share it with you. Check it out at [www.skillansafaris.com](http://www.skillansafaris.com). By all means, tell your friends about it! I recently read on the Internet that a "true travel junkie wants to share their travel experiences with the world." You can bet on that! Once I get around to sorting through my huge collection of colour slides, some never before seen, I'll add many more to my website. (Oh, and I've revamped my newsletter, too. Hope you like it!)

**UPCOMING TOURS**—Early next month, I leave on my annual **Kenya and Tanzania Tour**. My new titanium right hip, fitted 18 months ago, is working perfectly, and as usual I'm raring to go. Can't wait to get back to the fabled Serengeti Plains and the fabulous Masai Mara Game Reserve. Incidentally, you may have noticed that we quoted a price for next year's tour in my previous newsletter, but my apologies, that was an error. We do not yet have prices for 2009. After the political problems in Kenya early this year, tourism—not surprisingly—went into the doldrums, and tour



*With love from Zambia . . .  
DS on the mighty Zambezi River.*

operators and game lodge owners were forced to drop their prices. Ironically, those in nearby Tanzania benefited from Kenya's misfortune, and upped theirs! So stay tuned. Next year's tour price could be higher—or lower.

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, my November tour to **Egypt and Jordan** has been sold out for some months. I was intending this November to be my last to Egypt and Jordan, but so many people have asked me to do another next year that I've decided to do one in November of 2009. And I'm very happy about it. The Middle East is a fascinating part of the world that I haven't yet seen enough of.

My January **Botswana Wildlife Safari** still has a few places left. As you will gather from the tour overview, this is one of our very finest trips, and because we are using the very best accommodations, priced higher than usual. A connoisseur's safari in every sense of the word, on this tour we fly from camp to camp in small private aircraft. As well as a paradise for wildlife, Botswana is becoming well known for its sustainable tourism. It also boasts superb tented accommodations, some of which you can see on my new website, and well worth a look. In Botswana we usually get very close to many of the species, including elephant, lion, and leopard—and wild dog often surround our vehicles, then sit or lie down watching *us!*

My annual February/March **South Africa and Zambia** tour is gradually filling up. While I greatly enjoy everywhere I go, this is my favourite tour (not to be confused with my favourite country, New Zealand), because of its great diversity and wonderful combination of city, scenery, and safari. Like the Botswana tour, it includes a couple of days at the end in Zambia, where we visit the world-famous Victoria Falls. During our two days in Livingstone, in addition to visiting the breathtaking falls—a sight to behold, and even more impressive than Niagara and Iguacu (on the border of Argentina and Brazil)—there is much else to do. As you'll see in this newsletter, you can take an optional helicopter or (if you're more daring) ultralight flight or elephant ride.

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*The Zambezi River's breathtaking Victoria Falls  
are even more impressive than Niagara and Iguacu.*

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On my last trip there, six months ago, I got to ride an African elephant for the first time. I'd ridden Asian elephants in Sri Lanka and Thailand, and on tiger and rhino safaris in India and Nepal, but this was my first time on an African elephant. It was a thrilling experience. For years, many people thought African elephants couldn't be trained, so few bothered to try. Now camps in several African countries offer rides on African elephants. During this not-to-be-missed two-hour trip, we got very "up close and personal" with giraffe, impala, water buck, and a sizable herd of Cape buffalo. A great new perspective and method of observing wildlife! As these excursions are becoming increasingly popular, I recommend making reservations with Wild Africa Safaris as soon as possible.

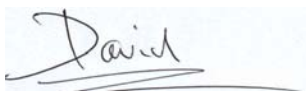
If you haven't yet visited Down Under, check out my exciting 21-day March/April **Australia and New Zealand** tour (from the Outback to the glaciers), with an optional two-day extension in Fiji. We visit Sydney, Melbourne, Alice Springs (where we get to ride a camel), Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, Christchurch, Queenstown, Milford Sound, and more. For details and a colour brochure, call Marcie Hepburn at 866-358-0333 or e-mail [mhepburn@collettevacations.ca](mailto:mhepburn@collettevacations.ca), or e-mail Tom Maclean at [tmaclean@collettevacations.ca](mailto:tmaclean@collettevacations.ca). Tom will reply with a phone call, if you give your number. Like the staff at Wild Africa Safaris, you'll find Marcie and Tom very helpful. By the way, Collette Vacations still has an office in Langley, BC, but recently centralized its business and transferred its group sales office to Mississauga. Don't worry, though, my tour still departs from and returns to Vancouver.

**DAVID'S DIARY**—Once again, I offer a few tidbits from the DS travel files . . . a personal glimpse into the life and times of a contemporary world traveler and tour leader. (Confessions!) This time you'll read about my recent trip to Japan. I'm planning a tour there, probably in the spring of 2010, so please let me know if you're interested.

**E-MAIL ADDRESS**—Kindly note that I have a new e-mail address: [davidskillan@skillansafaris.com](mailto:davidskillan@skillansafaris.com). I've had access to (and been paying for) this address for some time, but till now it's been easier to use Hotmail from abroad.

Please join me on a tour or safari sometime soon. As many people know, I always walk the talk. Remember, nobody has more fun on tour than we do. Nobody! *Safari njema* (travel safely, as they say in Swahili) or, as my mother used to say, mind how you go. And please be so kind as to tell your friends and relatives about my thrilling tours.

Yours in everlasting travel,



**David (Around the World in Eighty Months) Skillan**

*Incurable romantic, free spirit, and your man in Africa, Australasia, and elsewhere . . .*



## Excerpts from Recent E-Mails, Cards, and Letters

"We understand that you are considering a fall 2009 trip to Egypt, and would like to submit our names. We have heard great comments about your tours, and look forward to travelling with you."

~Brian and Jane C. (Coldstream, BC)

"Les and I are really excited about going to Egypt with you in November. Gotta get that trip in while you're leading it!"

~Maureen O. (Ottawa, ON)

"Love to get your newsletters, as they remind me of the fabulous tours we did with you. I promote your tours whenever I can, and when I find a rich and handsome fellow needing a companion, I'll make sure travelling with you is part of the deal. Thanks for the memories."

~Margret P. (Richmond, BC)

*(Margret was the partner of the late Geoff Dean, a real go-getter who, sadly, died from an illness while in the prime of his life. Together they travelled to Kenya and the Galapagos Islands with me. Geoff kept all my newsletters neatly filed so as to refer to them from time to time. ~DS)*

"Thank you so much for keeping me up to date with your newsletters. I really enjoy reading about your adventures and early life. Do keep your newsletters coming, and I will pass them on. I will surprise you one day and book a trip. Thanks so much for keeping in touch."

~Pat Robertson (Toronto, ON)

"I am very excited, as I have wanted to go to South Africa since I was a little girl! This trip will be a birthday treat for myself. Can't wait for February!"

~Dena V. (Chemainus, BC)

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*"Love to get your newsletters, as they remind me  
of the fabulous tours we did with you."*

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"Very pleased to get your newsletters electronically. I like the e-mail format. It's a great way to pass them on to friends and others who may be interested. Keep them coming!"

~Errol F. (Mayne Island, BC)

"Perhaps, as you have sampled many different cuisines around the world, you could do a piece on authentic or favourite Vancouver restaurants that offer similar food to what you have sampled, and how they rate by comparison. I am very interested in seeing the Land of the Rising Sun, and may join you on your proposed 2010 tour."

~Bill K. (Surrey, BC)

*(I love every type of food, and sampling different dishes is one of the great joys of travelling. I've mentioned two or three of Vancouver's Japanese restaurants in this issue, and may well write about other Vancouver eateries sooner or later. ~DS)*

"Larry and I are very interested in your proposed tour of Japan. Please let us know details ASAP, including exactly when it will be."

~Julie W. (Fort Langley BC)

"Your recent trip to Japan as described in the attachment to your last e-mail sounded awesome. Loved how you were able to reach into the depths of your mind, upon seeing certain things this time around that brought back a flood of memories from times past. Good writing, as always! I do hope you continue to promote Namibia. As you know, I loved it, and was amazed at how spectacular it all was, especially after the rains, when it was startlingly green."

~Sally S. (Edmonton AB)

*(Sally has taken four of my tours—Botswana and Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania, Egypt and Jordan, and Namibia—and still can't decide which one she enjoyed the most. One thing is for sure, like many people, she loves the African continent! ~DS)*

**Your comments are always appreciated, so please keep sending them!**

~DS

## David's Diary

### *More Tidbits from the DS Travel Files*

Had an interesting week in Japan early this summer, just as the G8 summit was starting. We made a brief visit to see my mother-in-law, who is 93 and in poor health. (My father-in-law, a wonderful man who, unusually for a Japanese person, danced the quickstep, foxtrot, and tango 50 years ago, died at 66.) My wife Yuriko goes back at least once a year, but I go only occasionally.

Yuriko is one of five sisters. The youngest works as senior secretary to the Assistant Minister of Finance, so we got a personal tour of Japan's Diet (parliament) building. Because Japan remains a formal society, I had to wear a jacket and tie, despite the very hot weather.

For some reason, all of my wife's sisters think I am the cat's whiskers and make a fuss of me. Don't know why. Not that I have done anything special, except marry the prettiest of the Tsunashima girls. It's probably because I'm the only *gaijin* (foreigner) in the family. The Japanese like much about the West, including friendly people from faraway places. That said, it was interesting, on arrival at Narita Airport, to be fingerprinted and photographed under a new system that's designed to help prevent terrorism.

This was a nostalgic trip for me. Sadly, the old family home in Kamata, Tokyo, a typical traditional Japanese all-wood house with a blue-tiled roof, sliding windows and doors, and tatami matting, now sits rundown and empty, awaiting demolition. The goldfish pond I so enjoyed has been filled in. It was in that tiny oasis of tranquility, in the heart of Japan's capital, that our daughter Julie was born in the summer of 1974 and spent the first six months of her life, while I pondered my future and got to know the extended family. Later, I took tour groups there to sip green tea and eat cake and rice crackers. Everyone loved it. Next door, my wife's family has now built a modern, two-storey concrete house with all the latest conveniences. It doesn't have as much charm as the old place, but times and circumstances change.

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*It was nice to discover that the use of cell phones is prohibited  
in public places and when driving—I wish that were so at home—  
and amusing to see just about everyone on the crowded trains and buses  
staring down at their phones, text messaging.*

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There are few Internet cafés, but I came across the Yahoo Cafe on the seventh floor of the five-star Asukusa Prince Hotel, where for ¥500 (about \$5) you get a cool drink, tea, or coffee plus two hours of Internet use—a good deal.

I enjoyed lots of delicious homemade meals and a few Kirin and Asahi beers. Oh, and a superb tempura lunch in a famous restaurant, courtesy of sister-in-law Nanako's Member of Parliament boss, Mr. Otohiko Endo, whom I had the pleasure of first meeting when showing him around Vancouver back in 1993. Despite his prestigious and well-paid position, he twice told me how much he envied me! I also learned that, according to the "new" Japanese way of thinking, if I were to follow a strict diet, lifestyle, etc., my age would be a mere 46. And I thought I was 45!

I first went to Japan in 1966, when I was 27. As usual I was broke, so I found a job teaching English at the English Language Centre in the lively area of Iidabashi. I also found a tiny, six-tatami "aparto," where for six months I slept on a futon on the floor and commuted the short distance by train. Conversation schools were then becoming popular, as more Japanese wanted to learn English for both social reasons and business purposes. I also worked as a movie extra, but found it terribly boring to hang around waiting for hours on end between takes.

I liked much about Japan and its people, including the fancy coffee shops where one could spend hours over a single cup of coffee or tea, listening to classical music or jazz, catching up with friends, and chatting up pretty girls. I also used to (and still do) enjoy strolling the streets of Tokyo—the safest big city in the world—especially the entertainment districts of Roppongi, Shinjuku, Ginza, and Shibuya, with their bars, restaurants, nightclubs, and *pachinko* parlors. I loved seeing the latest fashions and trends in the supermarkets and gadget shops, too. Japan is not nearly as expensive as one is led to believe, as long as—like anywhere—you familiarize yourself with the local environment and know where you're going.

Soon after entering the travel industry in 1970, I went back to Japan several times, taking British groups to Osaka's Expo '70. I continued to lead British groups to Japan throughout the early 1970s, and escorted several Canadian tours after I moved to Canada in the mid-1970s.

It was in the spring of 1971 that I met Yuriko on a flight from Hong Kong to Bangkok. She was a flight attendant for Cathay Pacific out of Hong Kong, and I was based in Thailand as the Far East area manager for an international travel company. Our courting was romantic, but all too brief and intermittent. When time permitted, we explored the back alleys of the then British Crown Colony, taking ferry and junk rides to surrounding islands. After two years of seeing each other only occasionally, due to frequent travel for both of us, and after numerous love letters and expensive long-distance phone calls, Yuriko gave up flying and we were married in Bangkok. Sixteen months later, Julie was born in Tokyo, and two years after that, Jane was born in Vancouver.

I enjoyed living in Japan and my frequent visits back. I can clearly remember some of the hotels I've stayed in—the New Otani, Asakusa Tokyu, Keio Plaza, Tokyo Prince, Ginza Tokyu, and Dai-ichi—and some of the tour companies I've worked with, including Nippon Express and Fujita Travel. I still can't believe that 40 years ago I mastered the complicated railway system and maze of tunnels that still intimidate experienced travellers. But I never learned much of the language, except for *ku-da-sai* ("please"), *arigato* ("thank you"), *sayonara* ("goodbye"), and such questions as "Where is the nearest loo?" There was no real need. Almost everyone I met wanted to practise their English on me! But my daughters, who both have English and Japanese first names (Julie Taeko and Jane Mieko), speak it pretty well.

It was some time after living in Japan that I developed a taste for sushi and sashimi. I didn't like it at first. But taste buds change, and for years I have enjoyed it, and most Japanese food, for that matter, plus all the trappings and side dishes that come with it—not to mention every other kind of exotic food. When I first arrived in Vancouver, in 1975, there were only about three Japanese restaurants here; now there must be at least a couple of hundred. I've noticed that children and young people take to sushi like ducks to water, whereas older people need time to acquire the taste. Many of the Japanese restaurants in Vancouver are run by Chinese and Korean people, but in my opinion the best and most authentic are Japanese owned and operated.

I'm often asked whether I know of good Japanese restaurants, and there are many. One I sometimes drop into is called Sushi Hachi. Located on the north side of West 41st Avenue, a block west of Arbutus, it's small and basic, with pictures of Japanese dishes and a huge red octopus on the walls. The daily two-course lunch special comes with miso soup. Last time I was there, I had tempura and chicken curry and rice for just \$6.95. What it lacks in atmosphere, it makes up for in the food, which is always fresh and tasty. Another good one for dinner, also small and simple, is Shiro's on Cambie at West 15th. Then there's the larger, grander Shabusen, located both on Granville at West 14th and on Burrard near Georgia. All are reasonably priced. Then, of course, there's Tojo's, one of the most expensive Japanese restaurants in town, which attracts movie stars and the well-heeled.

I hope to lead a tour to Japan with my wife in the next year or two, covering Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto, Hiroshima, and the Inland Sea. It will probably be in April or May of 2010, in time for the cherry blossoms. Let me know if you're interested in joining us.

Incidentally, the reason you don't hear much about Yuriko is that she has her own airline career (she works at YVR) and many interests, and prefers to stay in one place rather than gallivant around the globe like her husband! And that's the way it is . . . .



DS with his sister-in-law in Tokyo this summer.

**WILD AFRICA SAFARIS**  
*Proudly Presents*  
**DAVID SKILLAN'S AFRICA**  
*An Overview of Upcoming African Tours and Safaris*

*"I speak of Africa and golden joys . . . ."*

~William Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Act 5, Scene 3

*"Africa grabs a piece of your heart and never quite lets go . . . ."*

~Robert Ruark, author of *Uhuru*, *The Honey Badger*, and *Poor No More*

*"On safari . . . each breath you draw gives pleasure. You wake each day with a new sense of wonder . . . ."*

~Elspeth Huxley, author of *The Mottled Lizard* and *The Flame Trees of Thika*

*"My beloved Africa . . . ."*

~DS

### KENYA & TANZANIA SAFARI

Departs October 3, 2008 → 18 thrilling days → \$8,530 per person (sharing)

***The ultimate adventure . . . the two most famous safari destinations in Africa . . . a romantic journey that many dream about, but few experience.*** This thrilling tour of East Africa includes the finest game lodges and tented camps, splendid game-rich wilderness, and the magical Serengeti Plains, Ngorongoro Crater, Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro, Masai Mara, Aberdares, Samburu, Lakes Nakuru, Naivasha, and Manyara, Olduvai Gorge (the Cradle of Mankind), and more. The perfect tour for those who have long yearned to see a wildlife spectacle unrivalled anywhere in the world. October coincides with the great migration of wildebeest and zebra—often called the greatest show on earth. Imagine warm, sunny days, spectacular scenery, and amazing experiences: they're all yours on this incomparable trip! This tour can be extended to conclude with the island of Zanzibar or Kenya's Coral Coast. ***Don't miss out on this, our most popular tour!*** The next departure will be in October of 2009.

### EGYPT & JORDAN TOUR

Departs November 2, 2008 → 16 unforgettable days → \$6,670 per person (sharing)

***Join us in the land of pharaohs, mystery, and enchantment!*** This exciting tour includes Cairo, Memphis, Aswan, Luxor, the Pyramids of Giza, the Valley of the Kings, a four-night Nile cruise, and the famous temples of Abu Simbel, Philae, Edfu, Kom-Ombo, and Karnak. Visit the renowned Egyptian Museum, ride a camel, watch a belly-dance display, haggle for souvenirs, take a horse and buggy ride, sail in a felucca, and peer into King Tut's Tomb. You'll also be transfixed by the wildly beautiful country of Jordan, as we follow in the footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia, explore the World Heritage Site of Wadi Rum, and visit the extraordinary forgotten Rose City of Petra, one of the newly named Seven Wonders of the World. If you've always wanted to see one of the world's greatest ancient civilizations, this is the trip for you! ***This tour is now sold out. The next departure will be in November of 2009.***

*Writer, photographer, and adventurer David Skillan has travelled, lived, and worked all over the world, including Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa. He's had a love affair with Africa since 1962, when he first set foot there.*

*Since 1970, David has hosted more than 200 foreign tours, including more than 100 to Africa—Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Zaire, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. He spends four to five months of each year travelling the world, mostly to African destinations.*

*He has been publishing newsletters about his life, travels, and tours since 1978.*

## BOTSWANA & ZAMBIA SAFARI

Departs January 3, 2009 → 16 magnificent days → \$12,105 per person (sharing)

***You'll adventure in style and comfort on this exclusive connoisseur's tour, which is limited to just 12 participants.*** Described by aficionados as Africa's gem, Botswana has become a favoured destination among seasoned travellers. Masses of wildlife roam the woodlands, savannahs, plains, and wetlands of this sparsely populated country, including many species of antelope (nyala, waterbuck, kudu, sable, eland, tsessebe, lechwe, impala, and sitatunga), hyena, jackal, bat-eared fox, wild dog, wild cat, giraffe, zebra, hippo, and of course all of Africa's Big Five (lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and buffalo). In this remote, peaceful region of Africa, we stay at the finest places, where food and service are second to none. Accommodations are in luxurious tented camps . . . travel is by specially chartered light aircraft . . . game viewing is by boat and open safari vehicles. We'll visit the Moremi Game Reserve, Vumbura Plains, Linyanti, world-famous Okavango Delta, and breathtaking Victoria Falls. ***If you've always dreamed of the finest of African safaris, this is it! Book now!***

## SOUTH AFRICA & ZAMBIA TOUR

Departs February 18, 2009 → 18 wonderful days → \$7,995 per person (sharing)

***Described as "a world in one country," the breathtakingly beautiful South Africa is one of the most diverse countries on earth.*** Our incomparable tour, which includes both city and safari, goes to Capetown (one of the world's loveliest cities), Durban, and Pretoria, as well as the world-renowned wineries, Cape of Good Hope, Blyde River Canyon, Zululand, Swaziland, sensational Sun City, Mpumalanga, Kruger National Park, Hluhluwe Game Reserve, and day and night game drives in open safari vehicles. Take in the scenic Panorama route, and visit a penguin colony and rhino sanctuary, as well as the magnificent Drakensburg Mountains. In Zambia, we visit Livingstone, the adventure capital, during a two-day excursion to the awe-inspiring Victoria Falls, a sunset cruise on the mighty Zambezi River, and a thrilling optional helicopter, ultralight, or elephant-back ride. We'll sip fine wines, enjoy gourmet meals, and experience close encounters with extraordinary bird and other wildlife. You can extend the tour with an extra three days at an exotic beach resort in Mozambique's famed Bazaruto Archipelago. ***Seize the moment—book now!***

## UGANDA WILDLIFE SAFARI

Departs September 6, 2009 → 17 memorable days → \$7,975 per person (sharing)

***Often referred to as "the Pearl of Africa," Uganda is a lush, green, tropical land with some of Africa's friendliest people and a safari circuit that encompasses breathtaking landscapes.*** You'll see Africa's Big Five (lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and buffalo) and hundreds of other animals, including four different species of jackal, pygmy antelope, Nile crocodile, bush pig, giant forest hog, and the Uganda cob, Uganda's national antelope. Uganda is a birdwatchers' paradise, boasting the largest concentration of birds in all of Africa—more than 1,000 species. Our tour includes Lake Victoria (the largest lake in Africa), the Ruwenzoris (the Mountains of the Moon) and the acclaimed national parks of Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth, Kibale and Bwindi (the rainforests that are home to the mountain gorillas), and Ngamba Island (a sanctuary for chimpanzees). All this and much more, including the finest accommodations. ***September is one of the loveliest times to visit Uganda, and we expect interest to be substantial, so please get your name on the list soon.***

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***. . . And Collette Vacations Proudly Presents  
DAVID SKILLAN'S DOWN UNDER***

## AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND TOUR

Departs March 27, 2009 → 21 memorable days → \$7,445 per person (sharing)

***Join us on a great adventure Down Under, to two of the most extraordinary countries in the world.*** This exciting tour in the romantic South Pacific includes Melbourne, Sydney with its famous harbour and opera house, Alice Springs and Ayers Rock, the picturesque town of Cairns, and the Great Barrier Reef. In New Zealand we explore the garden city of Christchurch, the adventure capital of Queenstown, the Southern Alps, Mt Cook National Park, and Milford Sound, walk on Franz Josef Glacier, and visit a sheep farm. Highlights include fairy penguin, koala, kangaroo, a camel ride, scenic boat rides, a sheep farm, bush dinner in the Outback, dinner with a New Zealand family, and an optional two-day extension to exotic Fiji. Gorgeous hotels throughout. If you've often considered visiting this beautiful part of the world, don't hesitate! ***Call now for a brochure and further details.***

**EXCLUSIVE**

# The David Skillan Travel Collection

*A Special Series of the Finest Personally Escorted Tours and Safaris*

<b>2008</b>				
October 3	<b>KENYA &amp; TANZANIA SAFARI</b>	18 days	\$8,530	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
November 2	<b>EGYPT &amp; JORDAN TOUR</b>	16 days	\$6,670	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
<b>2009</b>				
January 3	<b>BOTSWANA &amp; ZAMBIA SAFARI</b>	16 days	\$12,105	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
February 18	<b>SOUTH AFRICA &amp; ZAMBIA TOUR</b>	18 days	\$7,995	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
March 27	<b>AUSTRALIA &amp; NEW ZEALAND TOUR</b>	21 days	\$7,445	<a href="#">Collette Vacations</a>
September 2	<b>UGANDA WILDLIFE SAFARI</b>	17 days	\$7,975	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
October 3	<b>KENYA &amp; TANZANI SAFARI</b>	18 days	TBA	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
November 4	<b>EGYPT &amp; JORDAN TOUR</b>	16 days	TBA	<a href="#">Wild Africa Safaris</a>
<p><i>Tour prices are per person, in Canadian dollars.</i></p> <p><i>Prices include all international and domestic flights (round-trip from Vancouver, Canada, though you can make your own flight arrangements and meet your tour), fine accommodations, most meals, and all sightseeing, as outlined in the respective itineraries.</i></p> <p><i>Taxes are extra.</i></p> <p><i>All dates, itineraries, and prices are subject to change.</i></p> <p><i>Most tours can be extended at the ends.</i></p>				

David Skillan's tours are promoted and marketed exclusively by Wild Africa Safaris of New Westminister, BC, and Collette Vacations of Mississauga, ON. For full details about a tour or safari, including the itinerary and booking information, please contact the tour operator indicated in the schedule above.

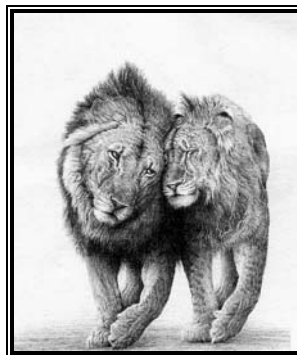
<p><b>Wild Africa Safaris</b></p> <p>Suite 104 713 Columbia Street New Westminister, BC V3M 1B2 Canada</p> <p>800-991-6111 or 604-519-1610</p> <p><a href="mailto:africa@wildafricasafari.com">africa@wildafricasafari.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.wildafricasafari.com">www.wildafricasafari.com</a></p>	<p><b>Collette Vacations</b></p> <p>Suite 400, Building 4 5025 Orbitor Drive Mississauga, ON L4W 4Y5 Canada</p> <p>866-358-0333</p> <p><a href="mailto:mhepburn@collettevacations.ca">mhepburn@collettevacations.ca</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.collettevacations.ca">www.collettevacations.ca</a></p>
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***Call now for colour brochures and detailed itineraries!***



## David Skillan's Travel Tips

- ✈ Before travelling, ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months, and that you have all necessary visas.
- ✈ Travel insurance provides peace of mind (and vital coverage), so be sure to buy it!
- ✈ Always carry a photocopy of your passport details in a separate place, in case your passport is mislaid or stolen and must be replaced.
- ✈ Have a dental check-up and get any necessary vaccinations well before departure.
- ✈ Never wear expensive or flashy jewellery. You could be robbed!
- ✈ Don't buy expensive luggage. All luggage takes a beating and gets thrown around a lot.
- ✈ Pack as lightly as possible. Never wear new or best clothing when travelling. Wear casual, loosely fitting garments. Dress for comfort, not to impress.
- ✈ Keep valuables such as your passport, tickets, medication, spectacles, etc., in your carry-on flight bag. Do not lock them in your suitcase.
- ✈ Remember to carry an extra battery and memory card for your camera.
- ✈ Wear a money belt, small backpack, or waist pouch in which to store such valuables as your passport, airline tickets, and travellers' cheques. This will leave your hands free.
- ✈ Always carry a good book, to pass time when flying and hanging around airports and to help you nod off at night.
- ✈ Wear a small Canadian flag pin. It makes for easy identification and is often a conversation opener.
- ✈ Always wear sunglasses and a hat in the tropical sun! This will reduce your risk of heatstroke by 75 percent. Sunscreen is also a must!
- ✈ Carry a fold-up weekend bag in your suitcase. It's useful for short excursions and/or shopping.
- ✈ Never leave valuables exposed in a hotel room. Lock them up!
- ✈ Make a point of learning how to say "please" and "thank you" wherever you go. The locals appreciate it.
- ✈ When filling out immigration forms, to the question "Purpose of visit?" answer "Tourism."
- ✈ On long flights, a mild sleeping pill helps you relax, cope with jet lag, and adjust your sleeping pattern. There's no need to tough it out!
- ✈ And remember, we're all ambassadors when we're abroad!



*"Travel is seductive and intoxicating.  
It should always be enormous fun . . . and a great adventure!"*

*~DS*

***This newsletter comes to you with our compliments.***

It is intended to create a greater awareness of the world we live in, to promote worldwide travel and tourism, and to motivate you to get up and go.

***The time to go is now!***



*DS with (left to right) Jane, Yuriko, and Julie in Vancouver, 2004.*

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with our exclusive, customized souvenir video!***

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**Words of Wisdom . . .**

"Age is not an excuse for giving up. There may be a retirement age at work, but there is no retirement age in life."  
~Daisaku Ikeda

"No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars or sailed to an uncharted land or opened a new heaven to the human spirit."  
~Helen Keller

"You are not here merely to make a living . . . You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish the world if you forget the errand."  
~Woodrow Wilson

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***"Adventure is the champagne of life!"***  
~G. K. Chesterton