

DAVID SKILLAN'S WORLD OF TRAVEL . . .

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2011

Travelling the World Since 1951 → Leading Tours Since 1970 → Publishing Newsletters Since 1978

Dear Fellow Traveller:

The long-range weather forecast, which I wrote about some time ago, is for a longer, colder winter than normal. So if you haven't made plans to escape at least part of it, start thinking about it now!

I spend a fair amount of time in the tropics, and I like hot, sunny climates for short periods, but I prefer the changes of the seasons. Autumn, when the leaves change colour and fall to the ground and the nights draw in and there's a chill in the air, is probably my favourite time. I also love spring and summer, but I'm not so fond of winter—too cold for my liking. Alas, I've never been heavily into winter sports, although I enjoyed snowball fights and ice skating on the ponds of England as a kid, and sledging and cross-country skiing in the woods of Berlin's Grunewald as a teenager. I can understand why many people become sunbirds as they get older, and head south for the winter.

Speaking of migratory birds . . . when I lived in Tsawwassen, I was a frequent visitor to the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary on Westham Island, not far from the town of Ladner. It's a pretty spot, full of ponds and natural tidal marshes and surrounded by farmland. A two-hour stroll is usually long enough to see a fair amount of birdlife, including waterfowl. Last time I was there, along with dozens of quacking mallards vying to be fed by tiny tots, there were lots of herons, blackbirds, and chickadees. I also saw a large flock of snow geese from a distance, as well as five resident sandhill cranes at close range. As winter approaches, they'll be joined by hawks, eagles, owls, sparrows, woodpeckers, and swans. If you live in the Greater Vancouver area, or occasionally visit and have a few hours to spare, the Reifel Sanctuary is well worth a visit. You're guaranteed to see a lot of birdlife and enjoy some exercise and fresh air. Open year-round, it costs \$5 for adults and \$3 for children and seniors, or an annual pass is \$25 per person and \$50 for a family. Wear good walking shoes, and be sure to take your camera and binoculars.

MY NOT-SO-SECRET ADDICTION—This year marks sixty years I've been travelling the world, on and off. I'm still excited about seeing new places, as well as places I've visited before, including Namibia, pictured below.

Travel is wildly addictive, and I'm a classic example of how wanderlust can affect a person's life. I was twelve years old in 1951, when my family moved from our modest home in Essex to Berlin, then known as the divided city. The move from England to the Continent changed my life dramatically. At the time (unlike today, when kids are taken to Hawaii or Mexico every year), this was considered serious travelling. Every term for five years, I made the 300-mile journey by train from Berlin to boarding school in Wilhelmshaven (on Germany's North Sea coast) and back. In the school holidays, I explored almost every part of Berlin and its surroundings, with my parents by car and on foot, as well as alone on my bicycle. Turned out that I was turned on by new sights and sounds, and my appetite for different experiences became insatiable. The more unusual and exhilarating the experience—and later, the wilder and more remote the place—the more I enjoyed it.

When I set off on my world travels in 1962, a restless, skinny twenty-three-year-old, I was determined to see and do everything I could. I was bursting with enthusiasm and goodwill. Had I known some of what awaited me, I might never have left! But right from the start, I was more eager for experience than for money. And I've had extraordinary experiences in spades. Fortunately, I've been able to incorporate two of my main interests—writing and photography—into my career. You can read a little about my start as a tour leader (sometimes known as tour guide, tour manager, tour conductor, or tour director) and some of my amusing and not-so-amusing experiences in the "David's Diary" section of <http://www.skillansafaris.com/david-skillan-newsletter.html>.



If you've been paying attention to my newsletters, you'll know I'm working on a five-year travel plan that will come to an end in 2014. Until then, I'm organizing, promoting, and hosting as many tours as I can. Much as I love my work, I have to be realistic, and I realize long-haul journeys will become more challenging with time. Sooner or later, I'll have to do just one or two long-haul trips per year. You'll also have noticed that I follow my own advice to keep going while you can, because you never know what's in store next year, or even tomorrow. As long as I remain fit and healthy, it's full steam ahead for the next couple of years. I have no doubt that the time will fly by.

My recent tour of eastern and central Europe was a great success. Lovely hotels and amazing destinations. I enjoyed it so much that I'm planning another trip there in May of 2013. Watch for photos to be posted on my website.

*You can walk close to
the thundering Victoria Falls,
and take a helicopter or
ultralight flight over them.*

THE QUEST FOR HAPPINESS—I was reading the November issue of *Condé Nast Traveler* recently, and there was an article about Bhutan, the tiny Himalayan kingdom tucked between China and India, where gross national happiness (GNH) is infinitely more important than gross national product (GNP). Author Adam Platt, a self-described “neurotic lowlander” from America, describes his brief escape from global turmoil into this small, remote land. For “anxious, debt-ridden, information-addled westerners” (as he describes his fellow North Americans), there's much to admire in Bhutan, where the people are maddeningly happy, like many of those from so-called Third World countries. He says we in the First World have it all wrong, and I'm in complete agreement. The lust for material possessions and the constant greed for more that westerners so highly prize is ridiculous, even obscene. No wonder the planet faces such dire circumstances! Nobody can live beyond their means.

This issue also has *Condé Nast's* annual list of the world's best airlines, hotels, safari lodges and camps, et cetera. Several of the properties we visit on my African safaris are on this year's list—Little Vumbura Camp in Botswana, where we often stay, Gibb's Farm in Tanzania, where we sometimes stay or stop for lunch, and the Serengeti Serena Safari Lodge in Tanzania, where we usually spend a couple of days and nights.

UPCOMING TOURS—I'm delighted to report that both my January Botswana safari and my February Costa Rica tour sold out early. Luckily for you, though, there's still space in my March tour to **South Africa and Zambia**. This is one of my favourite African tours. I love its diversity. Unlike most of my other Africa destinations, which are primarily about wildlife, South Africa offers a wonderful mixture of everything—cities, beaches, game reserves, superlative accommodations and services, scrumptious food. It's a tantalizing combination. And at the end of the trip we spend a couple of days in Zambia, staying a stone's throw from Victoria Falls, at the Zambezi Sun hotel, where giraffe and zebra wander the grounds. In addition to getting close to the thundering falls on foot (yes, ponchos are supplied, to protect you from the spray), you can take a helicopter or ultralight flight over them, or take an elephant ride, or visit an African village. Many optional excursions are available. We'll also take a leisurely sundowner cruise, complete with drinks and snacks, on the mighty Zambezi River.

South Africa is equally interesting to travellers, fun-seekers, and nature lovers. If you're longing to go to Africa and love variety, this is the tour for you. To learn more, look at the overview on page 6 of this newsletter and read “A Visit to Cape Town” at <http://www.skillansafaris.com/newsletters/cape-town.pdf>. Regrettably, I don't have many good photographs, as I was still shooting videos and not yet into digital the last time I was there. To request a brochure or to book your seat, please call Felicity of Safari Studio at 604-990-1511 or 800-565-6670.



As you may know, I have a personal interest in **Japan**—my wife's family lives there—and I've been carefully monitoring the clean-up operation. Things are proceeding quicker than many people anticipated, thanks to the Japanese can-do spirit. What they've accomplished since March is little short of miraculous. It's the Japanese custom to make visitors feel welcome, and after all the mayhem they've been through this year, you can bet they'll overwhelm visitors with appreciation and kindness. Why not see the Land of the Rising Sun in the time of cherry blossoms, next April, with me and my wife, Yuriko? No, you don't have to eat Japanese food every day—only when you want to! Check out the tour overview on page 6 of this newsletter, and see my slide show and articles about Japan at www.skillansafaris.com. For a brochure, please call Samantha at Collette Vacations at 866-358-0333.

I've added another trip to the mysterious **Peru** to my tour list. Ever since my trip there a year ago (see some of my photos at <http://www.skillansafaris.com/david-skillan-slide-show.html>), people have been asking when I'm going again, so I'm planning another tour for May of 2012. This time I'm including an optional excursion to the extraordinary **Easter Island**, which I've always wanted to see. If you've always wanted to visit Peru, this tour is a bargain at just \$5,299 per person (sharing), and the four-day extension to Easter Island—the most remote inhabited island in the world—is just \$1,020 more. To sweeten the pot further, Collette Vacations is offering an early-bird discount of \$150 per person if you book before mid-December. Call Samantha at 866-358-0333 for a colour brochure and to reserve your seat. Space is limited, so the sooner you book, the better.

My September tour of **Turkey** already has a lot of early interest, despite the recent earthquakes in the eastern part of the country, which we avoid. This tour incorporates the most interesting places. This will be my third and final tour to this exotic country, which straddles Europe and Asia, and I can't wait. I expect this tour to sell out, so book early. Ask Collette Vacations about the early-bird discount.

My annual safari in **Kenya** and **Tanzania** has been finalized, and the brochure is ready. October is arguably the best time to visit East Africa. It coincides with the world-famous Great Migration of wildebeest and zebra, between the long and the short rains. Plains game are interspersed with the occasional hyena, jackal, and lion, as far as the eye can see. If it's long been your ambition to see Africa's wildlife, from ferocious predators to small, dainty animals and exotic birds, this is your opportunity. It's worth every penny!

My November 2012 tour to **Namibia** will be my third trip there. It's an incredible place in so many ways. Among the many weird and wonderful things found in the Namib Desert is the welwitschia (*Welwitschia mirabilis*), a peculiar plant that lives for up to 2,000 years and can survive for years without rain. And yes, I've seen many. Namibia is also home to the handsome Herero and Himba people, as well as the Bushmen. Like neighbouring South Africa, Namibia is a land of contrasts. One of my friends, a tour guide who has travelled over much of the African continent, raves about Namibia, and goes there regularly for his "Namibia fix." Why not join me next November, and find out for yourself why everyone enjoys it so much?



A few people have expressed interest in extending their visit to Namibia with an optional excursion to the exotic **Madagascar**. It's famous for its flora and fauna, especially its 100 species of lemur. It's another place I've always wanted to see. Expect to pay roughly \$2,000 for a six-day extension, including flights, hotels, and most meals. Please ask for details when you book the Namibia tour.

FUTURE TOURS—So you can plan your holidays well in advance, here are the tours I'm planning for 2013: **Botswana** (January), **India** (February), **Uganda** (March), **New Zealand** (April), **eastern and central Europe** (May), **China** and **Tibet** (September), **Ethiopia** (October), and **Morocco** (November). For 2014, I'm planning trips to **Ireland**, **Croatia**, and one or two **African** destinations.

The dates are tentative and subject to confirmation. Your input helps me and my travel partners plan the best itineraries at the optimum times of the year. If you'd prefer that we do Australia and New Zealand together, for example, rather than New Zealand on its own, we'll arrange it. Tell me your thoughts!

*If you take too long in making up your mind,
you can sometimes miss out.
You have to book early.*

YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE—If you take too long in making up your mind, you can sometimes miss out. We've recently—reluctantly—cancelled a tour due to lack of bookings. Even though we had a number of inquiries, nobody booked. Then, as soon as we'd cancelled the tour, several people called to sign up. Sorry, folks, you can't have it both ways. If you want to be reasonably certain that a tour goes, you have to book early.

I've spent a lifetime travelling, so dropping a tour or two isn't a big deal to me. But it's very disappointing to someone who badly wants to go. It's also a fair amount of work to set up a tour, and it can't be done overnight. So please be decisive. Ignore all the doom and gloom that surrounds us, and book right now. Don't procrastinate! Experience has taught me that when you do something rather than nothing, 99 times out of 100 you'll be glad you did. Booking late may be a sign of the times, but it doesn't help anyone. To avoid disappointment for yourself and other would-be participants, please book as early as you can.

SELLING MY SOUVENIRS—Because space has become an issue, I'm reluctantly selling a lot of my artwork. I have art pieces and artifacts from around the world, most in mint condition. You may find the perfect piece to sit on your mantelshelf or adorn your living room wall. My treasures from Africa, Asia, Latin America, India, Egypt, Peru, and many other places include hand-carved people and animals (elephants, lions, hippos) in ebony, mahogany, rosewood, teak, soapstone, Kisii stone, and Verdite, as well as exquisitely made bags, stools, candlestick holders, walking sticks, salad spoons, dolls, wall hangings, masks, and hand-woven baskets—a couple of hundred items in all.

Items range from \$10 to \$500. I'll donate fifty percent to various charities, including African famine relief agencies, the Arthritis Society, the Canadian Cancer Society, and the Marmot Recovery Foundation. I can accept cash and cheques. I'll hold the sale by appointment at my Vancouver home on December 13, 14, and 15, 9 am to 6 pm; please contact me at 604-261-4656 or davidskillan@skillansafaris.com for an appointment and directions.



KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE—If you're a news junkie or a keen observer of the world scene, like me, you'll have noticed that this year we've been inundated with news stories about both natural and man-made disasters. From the bloody riots in Tunisia and the ongoing political unrest and bloodshed in Egypt, Yemen, Libya, and Syria to the horror of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami, the New Zealand and Turkey earthquakes, killer tornadoes in the US, flooding in Canada, Australia, Thailand, Spain, and Italy, the terrible Somali famine, Vancouver riots, UK riots, and the ongoing global financial crisis, people are jittery. The bad news just keeps coming, and it might seem like nowhere is safe.

It would be easy to throw up your hands in despair, and not go anywhere. That's why I feel the need, every so often, to reassure you that neither I nor my travel partners would knowingly take you into a hazardous situation in any part of the world. Ever. Fortunately, I'm old enough and experienced enough to know that when bad things happen, sooner or later they pass. And there are still many wonderful places to see and things to experience out there!

Of course, you can never guarantee everything. I know of several tour leaders who lost their lives in spectacular ways. Like the tour-leader-turned-biologist who dropped off his tour members at their lodge in a national park in India, then went off chasing butterflies, only to be devoured by a tiger. And the one who was killed in a road accident. And the one who drowned when his ferry overturned in a stormy Baltic Sea. Such is the risk of the job—and of living. I'm glad to report however, that most tour leaders, like pilots, live to a decent old age—and keep all of their tour members safe, besides.

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until I learned to adopt a fatalistic attitude.
Then it became sheer joy
to fly in light aircraft
over Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.*

TOUGHENING UP—Though I now consider myself a hardy, seasoned globetrotter, I've had to overcome some substantial obstacles, both in my personal life and in my chosen profession. I was a very shy kid who suffered from acute homesickness when I was packed off to boarding school in Germany. It was the first time I'd ever left home, and I hated it. I also had a sensitive stomach that was easily upset. Later, when I became a soldier, I learned to eat everything, no matter how it tasted. With so much vigorous exercise—sweating over ten-mile route marches, struggling over obstacle courses and through energetic gym classes—my appetite was voracious. Still later, during my world travels, I was often sick from what I'd eaten at roadside stalls and greasy-spoon cafés, but I eventually learned to enjoy every kind of exotic food.

For years I was afraid of flying, too, until I learned to adopt a fatalistic attitude and come to terms with my fear. Then it became sheer joy for me to fly in light aircraft over Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

And whenever I went to sea, which happened with some frequency during my early world travels (it was cheaper, but took much longer to sail than to fly), I was subject to the worst seasickness. I would be desperately ill for days, despite trying many different remedies, including anti-nausea pills, fasting, walking around the deck, and alcohol. None of these remedies worked, and some made my situation worse. As anyone who's been extremely seasick knows, all you want to do is curl up and die. It was a miserable affliction—and I shared it with the likes of Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson and Charles Darwin. It was on my sixth or seventh voyage around the Galápagos Islands—where, ironically, Darwin spent months sailing—that I eventually conquered this nasty affliction. I've had no trouble with it since.

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in no uncertain terms,
"You must not minimize yourself."
Many of us
should take those words to heart.*

RECENT READS—There's nothing like a good book to take you out of yourself in an airport or a bus or train station. Thank you to those who write for a living! Here are some of my most recent reads.

Boom! Talking About the Sixties: What Happened, How it Shaped Today, Lessons for Tomorrow is a somewhat peculiar title by NBC anchor Tom Brokaw, who describes his life as a journalist, as well as the many personalities—politicians, writers, actors, musicians—who made a difference in the 1960s, for better or for worse.

Starting Out is Pierre Burton's vivid account of growing up in the Yukon, followed by interesting times in the Canadian army and then life in Vancouver as an up-and-coming young reporter.

My Several Worlds: A Personal Record is about Pearl S. Buck's early life as a wife, mother, and missionary in China. If you're a Pearl Buck fan, you must read *The Good Earth*, which was made into a Chinese movie many years ago. When collecting her Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm in 1938, she met Sinclair Lewis, a fellow American and Nobel Prize winner, who told her, in no uncertain terms, "You must not minimize yourself." Many of us should take those words to heart. It was the same Sinclair Lewis who wrote in his journal, "America is the most contradictory, the most depressing, the most stirring, of any land in the world today." That was way back in the 1940s.

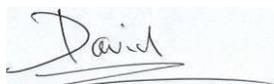
STAYING IN TOUCH—As I've mentioned before, I'm reducing my newsletters to two or three per year. Don't worry, though—if you're on my email list, you'll get most of my travel news earlier than those who get only hard copies. If you haven't already given me your email address, please send it right now. Rest assured that you won't be hassled—that's not my style—but you will receive periodic updates. Of course, you can always go to my website (www.skillansafaris.com) at any time to view my slide shows, read my articles, and find out the details of my upcoming tours. As long as I can stay in touch with people via phone, email, my website, and now Twitter every so often (please follow @david_skillan), that's good enough for me.

TREAT YOURSELF—As many satisfied travellers know, you can't go wrong on a David Skillan tour. For more than 40 years, I've been advising people where to go, and taking them to the far corners of the Earth. I'll never let you down or leave you stranded. I don't profess to know all the answers, but I do know my job, and I guarantee that you'll have the time of your life. All you need is a sense of humour and a spirit of adventure, and you're good to go!

Please take your time in reading this newsletter, and consider the many opportunities to enrich your life. See more of our amazing planet—make a date to put on the mantle of an explorer and join me on the trip of a lifetime to Africa, Asia, or South America sometime soon. You'll be so glad you did!

Wishing you and your loved ones much joy and laughter over the coming festive season, and good luck, happiness, and prosperity in the New Year.

Happy travels!



David (Around the World in Eighty Months) Skillan

Incurable romantic, free spirit, and ambassador at large . . . ↗

DAVID SKILLAN'S WORLD

An Overview of Upcoming Tours and Safaris Presented in Cooperation with Safari Studio and Collette Vacations

BOTSWANA & ZAMBIA SAFARI

Departs January 8, 2012 → 14 days → \$9,675 per person (sharing)

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. Visit the Moremi Game Reserve, Vumbura Plains, Linyanti, world-famous Okavango Delta, and breathtaking Victoria Falls. ***Sorry, this tour is sold out. The next one is scheduled for January 2013.***

ESCAPE TO COSTA RICA

Departs February 19, 2012 → 12 days → \$3,699 per person (sharing)

Leave the Canadian winter behind for a tropical escape! Experience the warm beaches of the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, and explore the dense rainforests that lie in between, with their myriad bird and animal species and traces of pre-Columbian cultures. You'll see toucans, blue-footed boobies, scarlet macaws, howler monkeys, anteaters, sea turtles, three-toed sloths, jaguars, and extraordinary plant and insect life. More butterflies than anywhere else on Earth! Costa Rica occupies just 0.25 percent of the planet's landmass, yet contains five percent of the world's biodiversity. With twenty-five percent of its area protected as parkland, it's one of the greenest countries on Earth. ***Sorry, this tour is sold out.***



SOUTH AFRICA & ZAMBIA

Departs March 11, 2012 → 21 days → \$8,455 per person (sharing)

Described as "a world in one country," the breathtakingly beautiful South Africa is one of the most diverse countries on earth. South Africa has everything! Our tour includes both city and safari—Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, world-renowned wineries, the Cape of Good Hope, Blyde River Canyon, Zululand, Swaziland, Mpumalanga, Kruger National Park, and Bluehluwe Game Reserve. Enjoy day and night game drives in open safari vehicles. Take in the scenic Panorama route. Visit a penguin colony, rhino sanctuary, and the magnificent Drakensburg Mountains. Sip fine wines, enjoy gourmet meals, and experience close encounters with extraordinary bird and wildlife.

In Zambia, visit Livingstone, the adventure capital, during a two-day excursion to Victoria Falls. Enjoy a sunset cruise on the mighty Zambezi River and an optional helicopter, ultralight, or elephant-back ride. ***Join us in March for the best of both city and safari!***

HIDDEN TREASURES OF JAPAN

Departs April 18, 2012 → 14 days → \$6,199 per person (sharing)

This journey through rich history and traditional culture is like no other tour you've ever taken! Visit Japan's ancient first capital at Nara and the vibrant metropolis of Tokyo, as well as Hakone, Nagano, Takayama, Kanazawa, Otsu, and Kyoto. Stroll along the Ginza, wander through stunning Japanese gardens, explore Meiji Shrine and Matsumoto Castle, and enjoy cable car and boat rides that provide spectacular views of Mount Fuji. Travel on the bullet train, relax in hot-spring baths, see traditional farmhouses with thatched roofs, learn the art of origami, and participate in both traditional and modern Japanese entertainment. This one-of-a-kind tour of the legendary Land of the Rising Sun takes place during the season of spring blossoms. ***Plan to join us in April!***

MYSTERIES OF PERU

Departs May 13, 2012 → 14 days →
\$5,299 per person (sharing)

Explore the mysteries of the Andes Mountains, the timeless cultures of ancient Peru, and the bird and marine life of the Ballestos Islands! Take a breathtaking journey through the Andes aboard the Vistadome train to Machu Picchu, Lost City of the Incas. Paddle out to meet the Uros people, who live on the floating islands of Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable lake. Visit a living museum to learn centuries-old Andean methods of spinning, dyeing, and weaving traditional textiles. And get a bird's-eye view of the remarkable Nazca lines (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Highlights include the Museum of Gold in Lima (the City of Kings, another UNESCO World Heritage Site), Cuzco (heart of the Inca civilization), Ollantaytambo (an architectural treasure), Puno (birthplace of the Inca empire), Tambopata National Reserve, the Paracas National Reserve, and the remarkable Ballestas Islands (Peru's version of the Galápagos, home to sea lions, penguins, boobies, pelicans, and cormorants). You can even add an optional four-day excursion to discover the secrets of Easter Island. ***If you've dreamed of visiting one of the most mysterious places on Earth and walking in the footsteps of the Incas, sign up soon! Book before mid-December, and receive a \$150 discount!***



CLASSICAL TURKEY

Departs September 13, 2012 → 15 days → \$3,995 per person (sharing)

See the intriguing land that straddles two continents! Visit Istanbul, Ankara, Çanakkale, Selçuk, Bergama, Pamukkale, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Troy, Hierapolis, Egirdir, Konya, Bolu, Perge, Gallipoli, and the Dardanelles. Stroll through the ancient ruins of Ephesus, once one of the grandest cities in the Roman Empire, and explore the strange underground homes of Cappadocia. Take a ferry across the Bosphorus. Gaze at the treasures of Topkapi Palace, visit the Blue Mosque, enjoy a performance by whirling dervishes and belly dancers, shop in the Grand Bazaar, spend two relaxing days in Antalya, on the Turkish Riviera (or Turquoise Coast), and much more. September is the ideal time to go, when the crowds have gone and the weather is fine and settled. ***Mark this on your calendar, and call now to reserve your space! Ask about our early-bird discount!***

KENYA & TANZANIA SAFARI

Departs October 3, 2012 → 16 days → \$8,855 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 tour includes the finest game lodges and tented camps, splendid game-rich wilderness, and the magical Serengeti Plains, Ngorongoro Crater, Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro, Maasai Mara, Aberdares, Lakes Nakuru, Naivasha, and Manyara, and the Olduvai Gorge (the Cradle of Mankind). Take a balloon ride over the East African plains and visit a Maasai village, the Karen Blixen Museum, and more. This is the perfect tour for those who yearn to see a wildlife spectacle unrivaled anywhere. 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 include the island of Zanzibar or Kenya's Coral Coast. ***Don't miss this fabulous trip!***

NAMIBIA JOURNEY

Departs November 4, 2012 → 18 days → \$7,730 per person (sharing)

Known for its haunting, pristine landscapes, Namibia—formerly South West Africa—is worth discovering. Explore Windhoëk, the old diamond city of Lüderitz (now covered in sand), the seaside town of Swakopmund, the legendary Namib and Kalahari Deserts, Fish River Canyon, Etosha National Park, the Skeleton Coast, and the world's highest sand dunes at Sossusvlei. See rock paintings, a cheetah research farm, and a Bushmen village. Boat out to a seal colony, stay in gorgeous lodges, and enjoy game drives that feature animals unique to this region, including the wild horse, meerkat, gemsbok, oryx, springbok, black-faced impala, and damara dik-dik. You'll also see the Big Five, including the desert elephant, and hundreds of bird species. ***If you've been to East and South Africa and yearn to see more of this extraordinary continent, don't miss this tour!***

David Skillan is a writer, photographer, and tour leader who has travelled, lived, and worked all over the world. He has hosted more than 230 tours abroad, including more than 110 to Africa. Having seen the world both the hard way and the easy way, he loves sharing his vast international experience. →

EXCLUSIVE

The David Skillan Travel Collection

A Special Series of the Finest Personally Escorted Tours and Safaris

| 2012 | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------------|--------------------|
| January 8 | BOTSWANA & ZAMBIA SAFARI | 14 days | Sold Out | Safari Studio |
| February 19 | ESCAPE TO COSTA RICA | 12 days | Sold Out | Collette Vacations |
| March 11 | SOUTH AFRICA & ZAMBIA | 21 days | \$8,455 | Safari Studio |
| April 18 | HIDDEN TREASURES OF JAPAN | 14 days | \$6,199 | Collette Vacations |
| May 13 | MYSTERIES OF PERU | 14 days | \$5,299 | Collette Vacations |
| September 13 | CLASSICAL TURKEY | 15 days | \$3,995 | Collette Vacations |
| October 3 | KENYA & TANZANIA SAFARI | 16 days | \$8,855 | Safari Studio |
| November 4 | NAMIBIA JOURNEY | 18 days | \$7,730 | Safari Studio |
| <p><i>Tour prices are per person, in Canadian dollars. 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. Taxes are extra. All dates, itineraries, and prices are subject to change. Most tours can be extended at the ends.</i></p> | | | | |

David Skillan's tours are marketed exclusively by Safari Studio and Collette Vacations. For full details, including the itinerary and booking information, please contact the tour operator indicated in the schedule above.

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| <p>Safari Studio #301 - 123 East 15th Street North Vancouver, BC V7L 2P7 Canada 800-565-6670 or 604-990-1511 africa@safaristudio.ca www.safaristudio.ca</p> | <p>Collette Vacations 34 Pearl Street Mississauga, ON L5M 1X2 Canada 866-358-0333 slutchman@collettevacations.ca www.collettevacations.ca</p> |
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Call now for colour brochures and detailed itineraries! →

Excerpts from Recent Emails, Cards, and Letters



“Glad to hear you are going to be sending out details of future tours, travel news, and photos via email. We are definitely in favour of saving trees, not to mention postage costs. We have very fond memories of our Botswana trip with you.”

~Dick and Adina M. (Victoria, BC)

“Remember me? Your 1987 trip to Kenya with Maureen and Lloyd? Just watched a BBC documentary with Jonathan Dimpleby on Tanzania, and thought of you. I’ve been happily married for 20 years, and have three sons. I have to take them to Africa at some point in time, as Africa stole my heart, and I must share the experience with those I love!”

~Ric W. (North Vancouver, BC)

“Loved the picture of the Maasai woman in one of your email updates. If you ever make prints of it, please bear me in mind! I remember so well my balloon ride over the Serengeti. We went right over a Maasai village, encircled by thorn bushes to keep the lions out, and they waved at us as we went over. Such precious memories! Thanks for keeping in touch. Hope to do another trip with you before you finally give it all up!”

~Carolyn K. (Victoria, BC)

*I remember so well
my balloon ride over the Serengeti.
We went right over a Maasai village,
encircled by thorn bushes to keep the lions out,
and they waved at us as we went over.*

“I very much enjoyed the trip to eastern and central Europe. It was like stepping into a history book and actually being part of it! Looking forward to the next adventure—Turkey next September, and then, funds permitting, Botswana.”

~Sue W. (Langley, BC)

“I recently met two of your clients, and when the topic turned to international travel, they unreservedly recommended you. You have a great website, so I was able to garner lots of info about the kind of tours you lead. I am particularly interested in your October 2012 trip to Kenya and Tanzania. Count me in, unless it costs a million dollars or I fall off the face of the Earth!”

~Dawne T. (Kamloops, BC)

“Much as I’d like to go travelling with you again, my legs won’t let me. But I’m always with you in spirit, and often remember the five trips I took with you to Africa, and wish it had been more.”

~Hans J. (Vancouver, BC)

“I was getting your newsletters from my mother, but she died recently, so please take her off your mailing list. In her place, I would like to start receiving your newsletters via email. I hope to join one of your trips sooner or later.”

~Sandy W. (Maple Ridge, BC)

“Enjoying the newsletters and updates very much. Helps keep us connected to Africa. We often reminisce about our amazing trip to East Africa. You can show and use any pictures of us you like.”

~Larry and Anita F. (Langley, BC)

“I always enjoy your letters and updates. I loved Uganda, and am greatly looking forward to Botswana. Please keep me informed about your tour of New Zealand, a country that has always been on my wish list.”

~Susan M. (North Vancouver, BC)

“Just a note to say thanks for keeping me in the loop. I would dearly love to experience another of your memorable tours. Please keep me posted about your treasures sale.”

~Barbara S. (Victoria, BC)

(Kindly see page 4 of this newsletter for details about my upcoming sale of artworks. ~DS) →

This newsletter comes to you with our compliments.

It's intended to create a greater awareness of the world we live in, promote worldwide travel and tourism, and inspire you to get up and go . . . hopefully, on one of my tours!

There's only one today. Make the most of it! →



With love from Gibb's Farm in Tanzania . . .

Words of Wisdom . . .

“Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life.”

~Steve Jobs

“I attribute my success to this—I never gave or took any excuse.”

~Florence Nightingale

“Discontent is the first step in the progress of a man or a nation.”

~Oscar Wilde

“The purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.”

~Eleanor Roosevelt

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“Adventure is the champagne of life!”

~G. K. Chesterton