

DAVID SKILLAN'S WORLD OF TRAVEL . . .

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2011

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Dear Fellow Traveller:

I want to thank everyone who sent messages of concern for my wife Yuriko's family during the recent catastrophic events in Japan. Fortunately, three of her four sisters live in the Tokyo area. The one who lives in the nearby countryside went without electricity and running water for a week, and while it must have been unpleasant, it was nothing compared to what some people went through. Poor Japan! A triple whammy, and the danger is far from over, with radiation entering the ocean and the atmosphere. Almost every evening Yuriko and I are glued to the Japanese TV channel, watching the latest updates. Our hearts go out to the victims. It's just as well that I postponed my tour from this year to next, since nobody in their right mind is thinking of visiting Japan at the moment.

And speaking of postponing tours—something I seldom do—the continuing turmoil in North Africa and the Middle East has forced me to shelve my October 2011 tour to Morocco. As I've said a number of times in these newsletters, my travel partners and I place your safety and comfort ahead of all other considerations. We won't lead tours to any region where unrest is prevalent or even anticipated. I'm looking forward to visiting Morocco when things have settled down.

As a seasoned traveller and keen observer of the world for more than fifty years, I've seen governments fall and tyrants come and go. I wasn't in the least surprised when Egypt erupted. But I was surprised at how fast the demonstrations spread. During the ongoing turmoil, several people have enquired about my right-hand man in Cairo, tour guide Fouad Salah. Fortunately, he and his family have not been adversely affected. He tells me his first tour group after the uprising arrived just two weeks later. It remains to be seen what the eventual outcome will be in the Middle East, but already tourists are flocking back to Egypt, eager to take in the ancient sights. My last tour there was wonderful, but fond as I am of Egypt, I won't be going back again. I've made nine trips there over the last several years, and that's enough.

I've recently returned from another trip to Uganda, a land of infinite variety and beauty. It was my second tour in eighteen months, and I enjoyed it so much that I'm planning one last trip there, in March of 2013. Particularly exhilarating were the boat trips on Lake Victoria, the Kazinga Channel between Lake Edward and Lake George, and the Nile. We saw multitudes of birds, including Egyptian geese, cormorants, pelicans, yellow-billed storks, goliath herons, fish eagles, a variety of kingfishers—malachite, pygmy, giant, woodland, and pied—and heavens knows what else. We also saw monitor lizards, elephants, buffalo, waterbucks, hippos, and crocodiles, both in the water and on the ground. At a camp in Queen Elizabeth Park we got some good shots of Henry, the resident hippo. Later at that same camp, a leopard coughed and prowled right outside my tent in the middle of the night!

At Mweya Safari Lodge, a gorgeous place with a stunning view from the swimming pool over Kazinga Channel, there was a family of banded mongoose (two were mating), and two semi-tame warthogs strolling around the grounds as if they owned it. All part of the fun of an African safari. You never know what you're going to come across next.

On this adventure, it took only an hour of bushwhacking in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest to find the gorillas. When I was last there, in 2009, it took a challenging three-and-a-half hike to reach them, which left me knackered, for it wasn't long since I'd had hip surgery.





This time I stayed behind with two tour members. (Seeking the gorillas is an optional excursion, and the principal reason many travellers go to Uganda, but not everyone is up to what may be a strenuous hike, whose length depends on where the gorillas are.) I took a walk in the nearby hills, where I saw a banana gin distillery in action and visited a medical clinic, as well as a “faith healer” (not to be confused with a witch doctor) who used leaves and plants to make sick people better.

A few days later, in Kibale National Park, we came face to face with the chimps fairly quickly. After a while they clambered down from the tall trees where they nest, and walked and sat among us. Like the gorillas, they're still wild, but habituated to humans. They showed no fear of us. It's an awesome and humbling experience to see the shy, gentle gorillas and the cheeky chimps up close in their natural environments. It should be on everyone's bucket list. I'll be taking another tour to Uganda in March of 2013. You can see some of my photos at www.skillansafaris.com/david-skillan-slide-show.html and read “On Safari in East Africa” at <http://www.skillansafaris.com/newsletters/african-safari.pdf>.

UPCOMING TOURS—My September tour to **central and eastern Europe** is filling up, with only a few places left. Visiting some of the most fascinating places in Europe, this tour goes toward the end of summer, when most of the crowds have disappeared. It includes the great cities of Warsaw, Vienna, and Berlin, where I spent several of my teenage years. I've been back twice in recent years to see Checkpoint Charlie and our old house in Miquel Strasse. If you like the history, culture, and music of Europe, you'll enjoy this trip. Call **Samantha** of **Collette Vacations**.

This thirteen-day safari in Kenya should be of particular interest to someone with a limited budget.

I'm replacing my Morocco tour with a safari in **Kenya** this October. This thirteen-day tour is a really good deal, and should be of particular interest to someone who's always wanted to do an African safari but has a limited budget. (This tour is shorter and therefore less expensive than my usual Kenya and Tanzania tour, which will next run in 2012.) We'll see some of Kenya's most amazing destinations, such as the rugged terrain of the wildly beautiful Shaba National Reserve, where Joy Adamson raised Elsa the lioness, Lake Nakuru, famous for its flamingos, and the rolling hills of the fabled Maasai Mara, where we'll almost certainly see all Big Five (elephant, lion, rhino, leopard, and buffalo) and the great migration of wildebeest and zebra. However, there's a small catch: to qualify for the low price on the group air tickets, we can't make any diversions or extensions. We all have to go and come back together. We expect this tour to sell out early, so call **Felicity** at **Safari Studio** now for a brochure. And to get an idea of what to expect, look at my Kenya photos at www.skillansafaris.com/david-skillan-slide-show.html.



My November tour of **Cambodia and Vietnam**, which includes a couple of days in Bangkok, **Thailand**, is another that offers great value and should have people licking their lips in anticipation. As an old Asia hand, I'm very fond of the Far East. Back in the early 1970s, I was the company's man in Bangkok for five winter seasons. I travelled all over India, Sri Lanka, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Cambodia. In fact, for my first few years in Canada, I was known for my tours to Asia. I've lived in Thailand and Singapore, and led at least forty tours to this exotic region. If you like Oriental food, as I do, you'll have plenty of opportunities to sample an array of mouthwatering local dishes on this tour.

My January safari to **Botswana** has become a favourite tour of mine. I'm completely enamoured of this magnificent wilderness. Its higher price (compared to my other safaris) is because we fly from camp to camp in light aircraft, instead of driving, shortening travel time and seeing much of the country

from a bird's-eye perspective. Over the last several years I've led eight tours there, and I never grow tired of it. It's Africa at its best—superb, intimate camps with delicious food, and extraordinary bird and wildlife. There are few nicer things in life than an exciting day on safari or sightseeing, knowing you'll sit down to a fine dinner at the end of the day, followed by a comfortable bed in spectacular surroundings. That's always the way it is on our Botswana safaris. We already have lots of interest in this tour, which has room for just twelve participants, so you must book soon. Check out my Botswana photos at www.skillansafaris.com/david-skillan-slide-show.html and read "Botswana—The 'In' Place for Safaris" at www.skillansafaris.com/newsletters/botswana-safari.pdf.

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After our freezing February, I'm considering a tour next February to **Costa Rica**, another land of great contrasts. It will be a twelve-day tour at a reasonable price. If you'd like to escape one of our coldest months and see some extraordinary bird and wildlife (from toucans, hummingbirds, frigate birds, and parrots to anteaters, howler monkeys, and three-toed sloths), let me know soon, so I can set this rewarding tour in motion. It will be my seventh and final trip to this exotic destination. Watch for details in my summer newsletter.

Another favourite tour of mine takes off next March, when we head to **South Africa**, with a side trip to Victoria Falls in **Zambia**. Parts of South Africa are lovely beyond description. For sheer variety, sumptuous accommodations, good food, and an excellent price, this twenty-day tour is unbeatable. We'll visit the beautiful city of Cape Town, the scenic Garden Route, Port Elizabeth, Durban, and Pretoria, with all the must-see sights along the route, including the well-known game parks and reserves of Addo (famous for its elephants), Hluhluwe (known for its abundance of white rhinos and other big game), and Kruger (one of the world's largest national parks, where we usually come across packs of the relatively rare, lithe wild dogs). If I'm not mistaken, this will be my twenty-first trip to South Africa, an achingly beautiful land, and another place I never tire of. I once spent a year working in the Cape, and it's among my favourite memories. If you want to see what may be the most diverse country in Africa, enjoying a varied itinerary of cities, beaches, game parks, and scenery, this is the tour for you.

You may have noticed that I've rescheduled my 2012 **Japan** trip from May to April. It's a slightly nicer time to go. It's widely expected that tourism will quickly bounce back, and the Japanese people will be anxiously waiting for the tourists to return, though it will be years before the area most devastated will be as it was before. Our itinerary doesn't include any of the places affected by the recent earthquake and tsunami. If Japan is still in the doldrums six months from now, I may replace this tour with a twenty-one-day tour of New Zealand, my favourite country, for approximately \$5,000 per person. Please let me know as soon as possible if you may be interested.

I was hoping to do a tour of **Newfoundland and Labrador** this summer, but there were few inquiries, so I'm not proceeding. I'm going with friends, instead.

FUTURE TOURS—All good things come to an end sooner or later, and nobody knows that better than me. From next year on, these will become my farewell tours. Here's a reminder: from 2012 to the end of 2014, as well as the trips already listed, I intend to host tours to **Ireland, Ethiopia, Ecuador** and the **Galápagos, Uganda, Zambia, Australia** and **New Zealand, Greece, and China**. And maybe, if I can squeeze it in, a tour to Timbuktu in **Mali**, a place I've always wanted to see that has so far eluded me.

A SAFARI BY ANY OTHER NAME—Wild Africa Safaris, the company that has sold my African tours for many years, has joined forces with another well-established African tour operator, **Travel Studio**. The new company is called **Safari Studio**. The North Vancouver address and telephone numbers remain the same, though the website and email addresses have changed. Yes, **Chris, Felicity, Melissa, and Michelle** are still there, joined by **Clive and Helen**, ready to serve you.



NO WAITING—A year ago I signed up for Nexus, and a good deal it is—\$50 for five years. Now I don't have to wait in line at Canadian airports and highway border crossings. I flash my Nexus card and pass quickly through. Express booths have been installed in the arrivals area of YVR, which means I no longer have to join the queue to see a border agency officer, making life so much easier, especially when I'm tired. As both these new services are designed to facilitate customs and immigration formalities and reduce long lineups, we're all encouraged to use them. It does take a few weeks after applying online or by mail to get a Nexus card, and you do have to go for what I'd call a casual interview, but if you do a fair amount of travelling, it's worth it.

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in most travel documentation
that says anyone who impedes
the smooth running of the tour
may be removed from the tour.*

SILENCE IS GOLDEN—I'm writing this on behalf of tour managers and tour guides around the world. We all have our idiosyncrasies and hang-ups. One thing I can't stand when travelling are yackers. You know, people who talk incessantly, going on and on no matter where they are or what they're doing. They think everyone wants to listen to them, when nothing could be further from the truth. It's one thing to be excited about something, but quite another to yack all the time.

When I give my initial briefing at the beginning of each tour, to ensure that everything goes smoothly, I always make a point of reminding my tour members to try not to get on one another's nerves. We're travelling in close quarters. But the yackers never seem to get it. They're so full of their own importance that they assume what I say doesn't apply to them. I think I'm a tolerant person—in my job, I have to be—but even I can't put up with that nonsense for long. I love good conversation and light banter as much as anyone, but not when it's one-sided.

The weird thing is how offended some of these people get when I eventually take them aside and diplomatically ask them to think of others. It doesn't seem to occur to them how offensive their constant nattering is, or how unpopular they're making themselves.

One of the worst was a woman from Vancouver on a recent tour who talked all the time, and loudly. Everything was about her. She never let up, no matter where we were. It was extremely wearing for the other tour participants. Needless to say, I've since dropped her (and a few others) from my mailing list. She'll never be welcome on another David Skillan tour. I don't need her on another trip, and neither do my other clients. She can keep her business, thank you very much. As a tour leader, I can't change someone in two or three weeks—nor should I be expected to—but I can make it clear that such unnecessary, boorish behavior will not be tolerated.

Fortunately, there's a responsibility clause in most travel documentation that says anyone who impedes the smooth running of the tour—in other words, spoils it for others—may be removed from the tour. And most people who sign up for my tours are considerate, understanding, and appreciative, thank god. Enough said.

EXPLORING WASHINGTON—Recently I had an opportunity to spend a day in Washington, DC. It was my first time in the American capital, and I wish it had been longer. It's a beautiful city with so much to see. It would be easy to spend five to seven days visiting the most interesting places. There are many reasonably priced hotels, including some downtown for about \$75 a night. Most places of interest are within walking distance, or you can do as I did, and hop on an open-top double-decker bus, getting on and off wherever you like. I saw Capitol Hill, the Treasury, the White House, Ford Theatre (where Lincoln was shot), and some of the many museums in the renowned Smithsonian group. The museums are all free of charge. Think about the best time to go. Winter can be harsh, with lots of snow, and summer is hot, humid, and crowded with tourists. The best times to go are spring and fall.



CALIFORNIA-BOUND—A couple of months ago I made my first trip to visit my daughter Julie, son-in-law George, and granddaughter Natalie, and of course their dog Joffre. They're now nicely settled into their new routine, in a cozy cottage in Laguna Beach, California. They have banana trees and birdsong in their garden, and the beach is four blocks away. The town is very pleasant, full of boutiques and galleries.

ANOTHER MILESTONE—Last month I celebrated forty-one years in the travel industry. In March 1970 I escorted my very first tour, a group of sixteen Brits from London to Japan's world fair via India and the Far East. I've been employed in the travel industry in one capacity or another ever since. Few people make much money in the travel business, but you can't beat some of the extraordinary experiences I've had! Money ain't everything!

PACKING HINTS—We all know it's wiser (and easier) to travel light, but nearly everyone over-packs. These days, though, when you have to pay for extra pieces of luggage, it's time to rethink the exercise. First, place everything you intend to take on your bed, then ask yourself whether you really need it all. Is it necessary? Remember, if it should happen to get lost or stolen, most of what you take can be replaced at your destination.

FOR SALE—Over the years, I've accumulated quite a collection of souvenirs, such as wooden and soapstone artifacts and carvings, exotic masks and wall hangings, and framed pictures and maps. Most have been in storage since we moved from our Tsawwassen house to a Vancouver condo several years ago. We just don't have space to display them. Now I've realized it's time to get rid of them. As a number of people have expressed interest in buying some, I hope to have a sale this summer. None of my pieces are particularly valuable, but they're too nice to just give away. I'd like them to find good homes where they'll be treasured. I'll let you know where and when the sale will be, and will include photos of some of the items I'm selling in my next newsletter.

*If you've been dreaming about a big trip,
why not just go?
It's not what we do in life that we regret,
it's what we don't do.*

STAYING IN TOUCH—As most of my clients and readers are aware, I've been putting out newsletters for many years as a way of staying in touch with my clients. I enjoy writing them, keeping you in the loop about what I'm doing. Your feedback and comments mean a great deal to me, even though I don't always include them, due to space restrictions. Some I save for future newsletters. So please keep them coming. To be sure you don't miss my occasional tour updates and special deals, such as my upcoming Kenya safari, and to view my newsletters in colour, please be sure I have your current email address. Don't worry, I won't hassle you. It's not my style to do business that way.

While I hate to be left behind in the frantic race for the latest technology, I also refuse to become a slave to it. I don't have an iPad, don't blog, and don't do Facebook. Apparently I'm not alone! As actor George Clooney is reported to have said in 2009, "I'd rather have a rectal examination on live TV by a fellow with cold hands than have a Facebook page." At my age, I don't have a need to know or tell others what I had for breakfast this morning or for dinner last night. But who knows? Things might change, and I may just break down and treat myself to a Canadian-made Blackberry. Meanwhile, I happily stay in touch with clients and friends through newsletters and emails, and I'm starting to use Twitter in a small way to send out timely updates. Please follow me there: @David_Skillan.

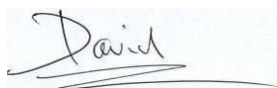
GET MOVING!—If you've been dreaming about a big trip, why not just go? You won't regret it. As the saying goes, it's not what we do in life that we regret, it's what we don't do. And remember that other old quote: procrastination is the thief of time. Never one to let grass grow under my feet, I'm doing everything while I can. Shouldn't you be doing the same?

Maybe you're contemplating a big trip, but don't know where to start. We make it simple by offering the finest tours at fair prices. As well as seeing some of the world's greatest sights, we stay in some wonderful places, from delightful to deluxe. Few other tour managers can match my experience. And unlike many in the travel industry, who merely wave you goodbye, I go with you every step of the way, making sure your trip of a lifetime unfolds the way it should.

I invite you to plan your great escape now. Come with me somewhere in this exciting world soon! I guarantee you'll have the time of your life, and return home with unforgettable memories.

If you have any friends or family who'd like to receive my newsletters and periodic tour updates, please send me their email (or postal) addresses. And please pass this newsletter to anyone you think may be interested.

Kwaheri (goodbye for now in Swahili), and mind how you go!



David (Around the World in Eighty Months) Skillan

Incurable romantic, global citizen, and roving reporter . . . ➔

DAVID SKILLAN'S WORLD

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

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Departs September 3, 2011 → 15 days → \$4,595 per person (sharing)

Join us on a leisurely tour through many of the European spots you've always wanted to see! This must-do tour includes all the major sights in the fascinating cities of Berlin, Potsdam, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Kraków, and Warsaw. Visit Berlin's Charlottenburg Palace, Brandenburg Gate, and Checkpoint Charlie, Prague's old Jewish Quarter and Hradčany Castle, Vienna's Schönbrunn Palace, Budapest's Heroes' Square, Częstochowa's medieval Jasna Góra Monastery (home of the revered Black Madonna painting), Kraków's Wieliczka Salt Mine (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), and the notorious concentration camp at Auschwitz . . . plus much more! **Plan now to join us next September, when the summer crowds have gone. Only a few places are left!**

KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI

Departs October 11, 2011 → 13 days → \$5,410 per person (sharing)

Explore one of the most beautiful parts of Africa—the original safari country! Its near-perfect climate, magnificent scenery, and unequalled abundance of wildlife have long made Kenya a favourite. See Africa's Big Five (elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, and rhino), as well as countless other animals and a huge variety of birdlife. Visit Shaba National Reserve, where George Adamson did his lion research. Stay at the famous Treetops Lodge, and watch a variety of animals come to the waterhole. See Lake Nakuru in the Great Rift Valley, renowned for its flamingos, and explore the incomparable Maasai Mara National Reserve in time to see the great migration of wildebeest and zebra. If you've always wanted to go on safari in Africa, this is the tour for you! **At this low price, it will sell out quickly, so don't hesitate—get your name on the list now!**

CAMBODIA & VIETNAM TOUR

Departs November 2, 2011 → 15 days → \$5,949 per person (sharing)

Two spectacular Asian countries, rich in diversity . . . a world of ancient traditions and remarkable cultures. This memorable tour of the Orient showcases the history and artistic treasures of two extraordinary Far East destinations. Visit the great temple complex of Angkor Wat, the culturally rich Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City (formerly known as Saigon), the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ha Long Bay, the traditional Asian trading port of Hoi An (which flourished from the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries), and My Tho in the Mekong Delta. Spend three days in exotic Bangkok and enjoy an optional two-day excursion to Hong Kong at the end of the tour. Plus much more! **Plan to be in the exotic Far East later this year!**

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. **Reserve now!**

COSTA RICA ADVENTURE

Departs February 18, 2012 → 12 days → \$3,175 per person (sharing)

Leave the Canadian winter behind for a tropical escape! Enjoy the warm beaches of the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, and explore the dense jungles that lie in between, with their myriad bird and animal species and traces of pre-Columbian cultures. 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. **Treat yourself to a clean getaway with us next February!**

SOUTH AFRICA & VICTORIA FALLS

Departs March 11, 2012 → 20 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. Our tour includes both city and safari—Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, world-renowned wineries, the Cape of Good Hope, Blyde River Canyon, Zululand, Swaziland, Sun City, Mpumalanga, Kruger National Park, and Hluhluwe 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. 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. Sip fine wines, enjoy gourmet meals, and experience close encounters with extraordinary bird and wildlife. **Plan now to join us next March!**

HIDDEN TREASURES OF JAPAN

Departs April 11, 2012 → 14 days → \$6,399 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!**

CLASSICAL TURKEY

Departs September 4, 2012 → 15 days → Price TBA

See the intriguing land that straddles two continents! Visit Istanbul, Ankara, Selçuk, Bergama, Pamukkale, Hierapolis, Egirdir, Konya, Bolu, Gallipoli, and the Dardanelles. Stroll through the ancient ruins of Ephesus, explore the strange underground homes of Cappadocia, and take a ferry across the Bosphorus. Gaze at the treasures of Topkapi Palace, enjoy a show of folk and belly dancing, shop in the Grand Bazaar, and much more. September is the ideal time to go, when the weather is fine and settled. **Put this on your calendar!**

KENYA & TANZANIA SAFARI

Departs October 3, 2012 → 16 days → Price TBA

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 unrivalled 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 6, 2012 → 15 days → Price TBA

Known for its haunting, pristine landscapes, Namibia—formerly South West Africa—is worth discovering. Explore Windhoëk, the capital at Lüderitz, the seaside resort town of Swakopmund, the legendary Kalahari Desert, Fish River Canyon, Etosha National Park, and the world’s highest sand dunes at Sossusvlei. Take in rock paintings, a cheetah research farm, and a Bushmen village. Boat out to a seal colony, and enjoy game drives that feature animals unique to this region, including the gemsbok, oryx, springbok, black-faced impala, and damara dik-dik. You’ll also see the Big Five, including desert elephants, and hundreds of bird species. **If you’ve been to East and South Africa and yearn to see more of this extraordinary continent, plan to join us!**

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 hard-earned international experience. →

EXCLUSIVE

The David Skillan Travel Collection

A Special Series of the Finest Personally Escorted Tours and Safaris

2011				
September 3	CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE	15 days	\$4,595	Collette Vacations
October 11	KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI	13 days	\$5,410	Safari Studio
November 2	CAMBODIA & VIETNAM TOUR	15 days	\$5,949	Collette Vacations
2012				
January 8	BOTSWANA & ZAMBIA SAFARI	14 days	\$9,675	Safari Studio
February 18	COSTA RICA ADVENTURE	12 days	\$3,175	Collette Vacations
March 11	SOUTH AFRICA & VICTORIA FALLS	20 days	\$8,455	Safari Studio
April 11	HIDDEN TREASURES OF JAPAN	14 days	\$6,399	Collette Vacations
September 4	CLASSICAL TURKEY	15 days	TBA	Collette Vacations
October 3	KENYA & TANZANIA SAFARI	16 days	TBA	Safari Studio
November 6	NAMIBIA JOURNEY	15 days	TBA	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.

<p>Safari Studio #301 - 123 East 15th Street North Vancouver, BC V7L 2P7 Canada 800-991-6111 or 604-519-1610 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



“Thought you’d like to see the video of drunken elephants and monkeys high on marula fruit, which brought back so many great memories of our time in South Africa. Still dreaming of another trip with you, but only time will tell—and, of course, finances! South Africa and Victoria Falls still top the list of all our travel experiences. Those going with you are in for a treat.”

~Don and Dolores S. (Victoria, BC)

“Thank you so much for the emails and pictures. The trip to Kenya and Tanzania was amazing, and I will remember it forever. I look forward to your letters regarding future travels, and will pass them on to others.”

~Trish D. (Vancouver, BC)

“Our recent trip to Uganda was more spectacular than I’d hoped. It was so nice to reconnect with you. Many thanks for all your efforts for a wonderful safari. I’m now considering my next David Skillan adventure!”

~Susan M. (North Vancouver, BC)

*You were such a gracious host,
and expert in putting together
a tremendous itinerary.
You certainly draw a fun following!*

“You were such a gracious host, and expert in putting together a tremendous itinerary with a flawless delivery. You certainly draw a fun following! Please add Larry’s and my names to your fan club. We are now dedicated promoters—though we don’t want you to be so popular that there will be no space for us in the future!”

~Sharon M. (Fort Langley, BC)

“Thanks so much for the photos. Botswana was marvelous. I’m pretty sure we all agree on that. Loved everything about the camps, not to mention the wildlife and birds. And it’s pretty hard to go wrong spending time in the Cape.”

~Pam D. (Victoria, BC)

“We have spent many hours over the last couple of months downloading, editing, and enjoying our pictures taken on the Kenya and Tanzania safari. What a fantastic trip!

~Mel and Audrey B. (New Westminster, BC)

“We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves on the Botswana trip, and both of us fell in love with Africa. We wonder why it’s taken us so long to get there. We’re both back to work, slightly jet-lagged, but very happy for our wonderful African experience. We look forward to catching up with you and the other tour members at the summer reunion.”

~Marg and Nick W. (Calgary, AB)

“Thanks for the always interesting newsletters. You definitely have itchy feet and an insatiable curiosity. I shall never forget my two trips to Africa. Who knows where and when we shall meet again? Mom is interested in your Namibia trip, which sounds enticing.”

~Vicki S. (Prince George, BC)

“Thanks for your latest newsletter and tour update. We are interested in two or three of them—Cambodia/Vietnam and Turkey—but want to do another safari most of all.”

~Lois and Norm B. (New Westminster, BC)

“Uganda was a marvelous trip, often a little hectic, but most interesting and exciting. It will be nice to spend quiet time sorting my photos and refreshing the memories. You have a delicate job, which you handle with skill and tact.”

~Alan P. (Richmond, BC)

“Am interested in your Vietnam and Cambodia tour, and also your trip to Namibia. One place I haven’t seen but am especially keen to visit is Madagascar. I’d rather go there with you than some tour organizer I’ve never heard of!”

~Marlene W. (Osoyoos, BC)

(Marlene has been on eight of my tours, and has every intention of making it ten! As she wants to go to Madagascar, we might add that as an optional extension at the end of our Namibia Journey next year. Anyone else interested? ~DS) →

This newsletter comes to you with our compliments.

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

Enjoy your life. It's the only one you have! ➔



From Africa with love . . .

Food for Thought . . .

“A good goal is like strenuous exercise—it makes you stretch.”

~Mary Kay Ash

“Worry not that no one knows of you; seek to be worth knowing.”

~Confucius

“Life is like a mirror. Smile at it, and it smiles back at you.”

~Peace Pilgrim

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.”

~Albert Einstein

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“Adventure is the champagne of life!”

~G. K. Chesterton