

# Travel News

**Welcome to our first newsletter for 2026! We hope you find it both inspirational and entertaining.**

Gippsland Travel's final escorted tour for 2025 to New Zealand went off without a hitch. One of our lovely travellers even wrote a beautiful poem, which you can enjoy on page 3.

Our first escorted tour for 2026 is already underway in Antarctica. We know they're

having a fabulous time at this awe-inspiring destination, and we can't wait to hear their stories.

Later in this newsletter, you'll find details of all our upcoming tours. We also have some exciting new destinations planned for 2027 and 2028, including Cape York and the UK with a difference.

Be sure to check out our highlighted Travel Tips on page 2; we all love a handy tip that helps things run smoothly.

We also now have an app available to everyone with a booking. Having used it ourselves, we're excited to share it with you! We know apps aren't for everyone, so don't worry – you'll still be able to receive our trusty travel wallets.

Finally, thank you all for your support; we hope 2026 is as fabulous as ever!

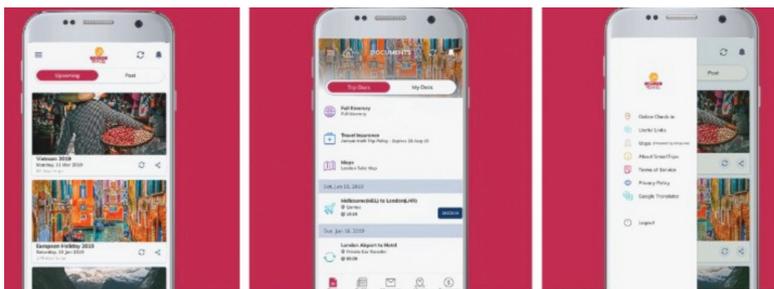
Until next time... *Jacquey & Linda*



Jacquey enjoying a thunder trike tour in the Bay of Islands, NZ



Linda and Clint finally made it to the tip!



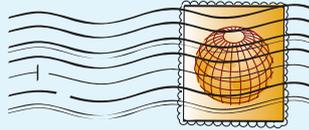
## TOUR LAUNCH EVENINGS FOR 2027 TOURS

- Egypt in Depth & Dubai** Wed 11 March 2026
- Spectacular Scandinavia & Iceland** Wed 13 May 2026
- Cape York Experience** Wed 1 July 2026
- UK with a Difference** Wed 26 August 2026
- Wonders of Eastern Canada including the Maritime Provinces** Wed 30 September 2026

Please call the office to register your attendance.



# Postcards



## Cape York Adventure – A Trip to the Tip!

By Linda Sharpe

Last year, my husband Clint, a group of friends, and I packed up our vans and hit the road for the ultimate outback adventure – Cape York!

After a few days of driving, our first stop on the Cape York Peninsula was Fairview Station in Laura. It was a quick visit – we were on a tight schedule and needed to get to Weipa the next day. We enjoyed a classic station dinner, camped out in the paddock under the stars, and hit the road again the next morning.

This was our first taste of the iconic Cape York dirt roads and corrugations. Thankfully, being early in the season and, with recent rain, the roads had been freshly graded and not as rough as we'd expected. Still, conditions change quickly up there. We were well prepared and, luckily, we didn't need a single repair or suffer any damage during our 6-week trip!

Rolling into Weipa five days and 3,600 km after leaving home, we were ready for a break from the car, staying three nights – the boys were keen to fish and try their luck catching mud crabs. We managed to catch one good crab on the first go, but most of the nets came up empty or damaged – likely thanks to the local crocodiles!

Next stop was Bramwell Station, the northernmost cattle station in Australia. We stayed for two nights, unhitched the vans, and spent a day exploring the southern section of the Old Telegraph Track.

With the boys experienced in 4WDing (and me with my eyes closed half the time!), we made it to the iconic Gunshot Creek crossing. We didn't attempt the famous drop – the top was too muddy after recent rain, and no one was game enough to try it.

After Bramwell, we found a hidden campsite by a river and stayed a few days while exploring the northern section of the track. Some standout stops were Fruit Bat, Eliot and Twin Falls and Nolan's Brook Crossing – perfect spots for a refreshing swim – and since



we arrived early, we had them almost to ourselves. I couldn't get over how crystal clear the water was everywhere. Great for swimming... and croc-spotting!

North to the Tip! We crossed the Jardine River a bit earlier than planned due to some mechanical issues with the ferry. After stocking up in Bamaga we camped for four nights each at Loyalty Beach and Punsand Bay.

We spent our time fishing, 4WDing, visiting aircraft crash sites, and even took a day trip to Thursday Island, but nothing compared to finally reaching The Tip, the northernmost point of mainland Australia. After all the rough roads, river crossings, and endless red dust, standing at that small sign at the top of the country was an unforgettable moment. We'd made it!

After reaching the top, it was time to return south taking our time coming down the coast, stopping to explore some beautiful places: Cooktown, Bloomfield Track, Cape Tribulation, Port Douglas, Airlie Beach, Mackay, 1770 and Sandstone Point.

Finally, we turned inland to Dubbo, where we wrapped up the trip with a drive-through zoo safari – then headed home, full of red dirt and even more memories.

Six weeks, thousands of kilometres, endless laughs, and one unforgettable adventure. Cape York – ticked off the bucket list!

## Travel Smart with Gippsland Travel's Tech & Digital Tips

- Download the **Gippsland Traveller App**, your go-to for documents, weather, currency, and uploading your own important travel details.
- Store digital copies of passports, IDs, insurance, and tickets in secure cloud storage or an encrypted app.
- Download apps like WhatsApp. They are a great way to stay connected with family and friends while traveling. These apps are also often used by tour companies to get in touch with you whilst travelling.
- Use translation apps and download offline maps for ease while travelling.
- Many destinations now require electronic visas or digital arrival cards – ensure you are using the official website.
- Download your airline's app to receive real-time updates on gates, delays, and schedule changes.
- Always carry a portable charger, travel adapter, and compact first-aid kit.
- Power banks are not to be used on board an aircraft & must be carried in cabin luggage – always check airline-specific rules before flying.
- Share your adventure! Gippsland Travel always welcomes reviews, feedback, and your travel stories – we love sharing knowledge to inspire and support all our adventurers.



From 25 February, travellers who hold British or Irish citizenship as well as another nationality (e.g., Australian) will no longer be permitted to enter the UK using a non-British/Irish passport, such as an Australian passport.

For more information, please refer to the Official UK Government website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or call on: (02) 6270 6666



## Fiji Adventure

By Shae Diston

After attending the 2025 Helloworld Frontliners Conference in Fiji I decided to extend my stay there at the Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa to get to know the country a little better.

This was a great way to wind down and enjoy the tropical paradise Fiji has to offer! The people are super friendly and, as a solo traveler, I felt very safe and well looked after.

To broaden my knowledge of the country and its people I took a private tour of Nadi and visited Viseisei village, where the first settlers on Fiji landed around 3000 years ago.

I also thoroughly enjoyed venturing out in Fiji, immersing myself in their history and exploring the beautiful lush Garden Of The Sleeping Giant, a 20-hectare botanical paradise showcasing orchids and other native flora, lush jungle walkways, lily ponds and immersive feature gardens.

Seeing the vibrancy of the Sri Siva Subramaniya Swami Temple was another highlight of the day! This brightly coloured Hindu temple is covered in elaborate carvings of warriors, kings and gods. The detailing was incredible.

A full day spent at Castaway Island was really worth it. After my trip on a catamaran to get there I enjoyed a very relaxing day on the beach and exploring the facilities of Castaway Island Resort!

My favourite restaurant was Koko at the Sofitel. It was the most culturally rich culinary experience I had in Fiji. I went there on my last night and it certainly ended the trip on a very high note!

If you like the idea of convenience, a half or full board package in Fiji can be a great choice. I personally decided to use this option and it felt like a little luxury without worrying about extra expenses. That said, nothing beats the authentic local cuisine, and there are plenty of delicious spots to eat in and around the port – or at other hotels if you'd like to keep your options open and not eat at the same place every day.



## Our New Zealand Tour

by Wendy A.

This has been a great holiday I'm sure you'll agree  
Without Jacquey our leader where would we all be  
And Dave our brave driver who's driven us from A to B  
Telling us stories all along about his favourite country

In Auckland we started with a tour up the tower  
And a cruise on the harbour in the afternoon hour  
The Kauri museum was a favourite for all  
Where the lifelike figures all kept us enthralled

Waitangi was next with a wonderful guide  
And to Russell on the ferry we all did ride  
The hole in the rock we couldn't go through  
But we did see some dolphins that put on a show

Then came a train ride with scones and coffee  
And an exciting visit to a Kiwi hatchery  
Then up in a gondola for a yummy breakfast  
Some rode on the luge, they came down so fast

Rotorua our next stop had mud pools galore  
Saw a Māori performance we all did adore  
In Wellington a highlight we all went to see  
The Te PaPa Museum where we saw Gallipoli

In not the best weather the Cook Strait we crossed  
Then caught a comfy train down the east coast  
Christchurch our next stop is a beautiful town  
The Antarctic Centre, such surprises where we all had such fun

The scenery over the alps was a sight to behold  
To Fox Glacier a small hotel with many a friendly soul  
A Haast River Jet Boat ride had us spinning around  
Before a visit to Arrowtown, a trendy small town

Queenstown was next, on the side of a hill  
Where we drove into Skippers Canyon, which gave us a thrill  
And a cruise across the lake for a scrumptious bbq  
And a lovely old sheep dog performing on cue

Now a highlight I think everyone would agree  
A night on Doubtful Sound we were so lucky to see  
We had rain, we had waterfalls, we had sunshine galore  
We had interesting wildlife, who could ask for more

Larnach Castle in Dunedin just blew us away  
Even though the city didn't put on its best day  
But it does boast the very steepest street of them all  
Some walked all the way up it with never a fall

I think you'll agree we've had a wonderful time  
The scenery and adventures have all been sublime  
But tonight marks the end of a really great trip  
Some are going home with an ice cream on each hip  
So a huge thank you to Jacquey and give a big cheer  
Till we all meet again in Warragul next year.

# GIPPSLAND TRAVEL PERSONALLY ESCORTED TOURS



We recommend registering your interest in any of our escorted tours with a \$250 holding deposit, which is fully refundable if you change your mind. For some tours you may be placed on a waitlist until availability is secured or the final itinerary is released. Please call or email the office for more information or to register your interest in any of our tours.

## 2026 Escorted Tours



### THE BEST OF BEAUTIFUL JAPAN

April

Japan is known for its beautiful landscapes, its ancient temples and shrines, its vibrant cities, its delicious cuisine, its culture of politeness, and its unique fashion and art. Japan is famous for its rich cultural history and its unique blend of traditional and modern culture.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner  
Fully booked



### CANADA & ALASKA

July

This spectacular journey includes travelling through the fabulous Rockies on the Rocky Mountaineer Railway as well as coach, plus a couple of days in Vancouver. We then have a relaxing 7-night cruise through the Inside Passage to Alaska visiting quaint towns and enjoying magnificent views of breath-taking glaciers.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner  
Fully booked – Waitlist open



### STUNNING STANS

August/September

Journey through the captivating 'Five Stans', a mosaic of countries intricately linked by a common history of Soviet influence, yet distinctly independent in character. Explore the serene landscapes of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, where lush expanses and tranquil beauty await. Then, venture into the grand mosques and vibrant bazaars of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, rich with history and cultural splendour.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner  
Limited availability



### NORTHERN LIGHTS & EUROPEAN CHRISTMAS CRUISE

December

This is a chance to experience the amazing Northern Lights and wonderful traditions and celebrations of a European Christmas, all in one tour. We will start by chasing the Northern Lights before visiting the historic Christmas markets where we can buy all kinds of traditional gifts and sample the local fare while enjoying a delicious mulled wine with gingerbread. This tour includes a river cruise on which we will celebrate Christmas Day.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner  
Fully booked – Waitlist open

## 2027 Escorted Tours



### EGYPT IN DEPTH & DUBAI

March

One of our all-time favourites, our itinerary incorporates an extensive tour of Egypt, including a first-class Nile Cruise, before continuing to Dubai to experience the luxury, culture, and iconic attractions of this extraordinary city.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner & Krystal McCullum  
Tour Launch – Wednesday 11 March 2026



### SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ICELAND

May

With its spectacular scenery and historic traditions, Scandinavia is also known for the friendliness of its people. As well as visiting enchanting Scandinavian cities, we will include a cruise through the majestic fjords. While we are in Iceland we will discover dramatic volcanic landscapes, thundering waterfalls, and otherworldly natural wonders.

Escorted by Jacquey Turner

Tour Launch – Wednesday 13 May 2026



### CAPE YORK EXPERIENCE

June

Cape York, the northernmost point of the Australian mainland, offers pristine beaches, lush rainforests, rugged mountains, and vast wetlands creating a unique blend of natural beauty, rich Aboriginal culture, and rugged adventure.

Escorted by Linda Sharpe

Tour Launch – Wednesday 1 July 2026



### UK WITH A DIFFERENCE

July/August

A 3-week tour of England and Wales, offering an unusual tour visiting some of the lesser-known and out-of-the-way places in these countries, but also including such famous cities as York, Lincoln, and Cambridge.

Escorted by Linda Sharpe, accompanied by Jacquey Turner

Tour Launch – Wednesday 26 August 2026



### WONDERS OF EASTERN CANADA INCLUDING THE MARITIME PROVINCES

September

This 4-week tour featuring the wonder of Niagara Falls and the sprawling natural beauty of Newfoundland will visit Toronto, Montreal and Quebec along with the maritime landscapes of Nova Scotia. There will also be the option to visit Churchill, the polar bear capital of the world!

Escorted by Jacquey Turner

Tour Launch – Wednesday 30 September 2026

## Proposed 2028 Escorted Tours

March

**JORDAN & SAUDI ARABIA**

June

**CANADA & ALASKA**

October

**EAST AFRICA & MADAGASCAR**

November

**NEW ZEALAND**



**GIPPSLAND  
TRAVEL**

Gippsland Travel Centre Pty. Ltd. ABN 70 065 385 337  
Shop 3, 126 Albert Road, Warragul, Victoria 3820  
Telephone (03) 5623 5151 Emergency No. 0419 213 274  
Email [info@gippslandtravel.com.au](mailto:info@gippslandtravel.com.au)  
[www.gippslandtravel.com.au](http://www.gippslandtravel.com.au)



We hope you enjoy receiving our newsletter, however, should you wish to be taken off our mailing list please don't hesitate to contact us.