



Jill Worrall Tours June 2020 Newsletter

Hi Everyone

Yes, I'm still here! Not a weed in the garden, another mosaic project under way, along with an applied Advent calendar – I'm expecting a Domestic Goddess award anytime soon.

BUT, most importantly, I'm also working hard at plans for some exciting New Zealand and Australia tours while we all wait for the rest of the world to safely open up to us for adventures further afield. Moray is still hard at work, too, sorting out the final details of these tours and answering queries from people on the tours we've had to postpone until next year.

Because of continued uncertainty over the Trans-Tasman "bubble" we have made the decision to run both my two Australia tours in January/February next year – see below for more details.

Postponed Tours

I've been so heartened, and I know Moray has been too, that so many of you are keen to stay booked on tours that we've had no option but to postpone this year. **The Romania and the Balkans, Pamir Highway, Greek Islands and the two departures for Ethiopia are NOT cancelled – they are postponed until 2021.** We intend for the tour dates to be very similar (we hope within a few days of this year's dates) but we will update you all on these as soon as we have more details.

So disappointing and upsetting though it has been to have to do this I have every intention of keeping the show on road with the invaluable support of Moray and back-up from business partner James. As this year progresses and the situation overseas becomes clearer, we will let you all know the new tour dates.

Your ongoing support and enthusiasm for my tours is greatly appreciated. I know many, many people have far more stressful situations to deal with than me as a result of Covid19 but it has been really hard and the fact that so many of you have called or emailed me just to see how I'm doing means such a lot to me. Thank you very, very much.

Plans for 2020

The Far North with Jill – mid Oct 2020



A treat for South Islanders in particular but of course everyone is welcome to join me on a small group, bespoke tour of the Far North of New Zealand. Springs comes much earlier to the north so

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get a head start on some warmer weather as we spend about 10 days exploring Northland. Highlights will include the Matakohē Kauri Museum, Waipoua Forest (Tane Mahuta) and Hokianga Harbour; Ninety Mile Beach, Cape Reinga, Russell and the Waitangi Treaty Grounds with cultural performance and hāngī, the famous Cream Trip cruise through the Bay of Islands, Kerikeri (with New Zealand's oldest European buildings), Kawakawa's famous Hundertwasser toilets and historic steam train, a winery and food day tour in Whangarei and a day trip to Kawau Island. We plan to have the full itinerary, tour price and other details ready to send to you in July.

The Chatham Islands with Jill Nov 3 – Nov 10, Nov 12 – 19, 2020

We've had fantastic interest in my proposed tour to the Chathams in November this year. So much so, we now have two departures – Nov 3 – Nov 10 ex Christchurch and Nov 12 – 19 ex Auckland. The full itinerary, prices and booking information are now available – if you haven't asked Moray for this information do get in touch and she will email it to you ASAP. The tour price includes flights to and from the Chathams (from either Christchurch or Auckland), return flights for the day trip to Pitt, all meals on the Chathams and the best quality accommodation available on the island as well as a full seven days of activities and sightseeing. I will be travelling to the Chathams with the Christchurch departure and returning to Auckland with that group so I will be with you the whole time. I really can't wait to see you all again. It's going to be lots of fun and as always, I will be on hand 24/7 to make sure all you need to do is have a great time. We will have local guides with us as well throughout our seven-night stay on the island

Limited places are available on both departures so if you haven't booked already please get in touch with Moray soon.



New Zealand's Deep South – 26Nov/08 Dec 2020

This tour features the jewels in the crown of New Zealand's Deep South. Beginning in Dunedin we will travel south through the Catlins (an area I know well having lived in Balclutha for many years) then cross Foveaux Strait for three nights on Stewart Island where we'll go in search of kiwi and other rare birds and simply enjoy the unique island atmosphere; then make a road trip through Invercargill and Riverton (with a short side trip

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to Cosy Nook!) and up to Lake Manapouri. From here we'll set off on an overnight cruise of Doubtful Sound – something very few New Zealanders have had the chance to do; we will also cruise on Milford Sound and visit Te Anau's glow worm caves before heading north into the Mackenzie Country and a two-night stay on a high country sheep station (my family have been coming here for short holidays for more than 20 years!) Here you will have the chance to visit Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park or spend the day on a 4WD expedition in the remote high country. The tour will finish in Christchurch.

This is a small group tour as in some places, accommodation options are limited, so if you are interested in joining me, do let Moray know. She will also send you the full itinerary and price and booking information that will be ready very soon.



Plans for 2021

Tasmania – the Grand Circuit 24 Jan/ 07 Feb 2021

I've travelled extensively around Australia (many times as a guest travel writer for various state tourism organisations, as well as to Darwin with the New Zealand Defence Force en route for East Timor to write about the NZ peacekeepers stationed there) but I've never managed to get to Tasmania!

So now is the time to discover this island, which is about the same size as Ireland and Sri Lanka and is the 26th largest island in the world. With about half of the island being protected as World Heritage, National Park or reserve it's a place of outstanding natural beauty but also a land of history and superb natural produce.

My 15-day tour will include: Hobart (city tour, the famous MONA gallery that houses David Walsh's private collection of \$110m worth of art works); the Salamanca Markets; Bruny Island tasting tour; Peppermint Bay Cruise; The Wall in the Wilderness; King River Gorge steam railway journey; Gordon River Cruise and Sarah Island; historic mining towns of Zeehan and Roseberry; two nights in Cradle Mountain National Park and Tasmanian Devil Sanctuary; Brickendon Estate Village and Heritage Gardens; Launceston; Platypus House; Beaconsfield Mine and Heritage Centre; Tamar River winery;

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The Pub in the Paddock; two nights in Freycinet National Park and penguin tour; Port Arthur historic site.

As you know my tours offer great value with quality accommodation, lots of meals, local guides and I will be with you all the way as tour manager.

Note: This tour departure will depend on the establishment of the Trans-Tasman travel 'bubble'. We will be monitoring this situation very carefully but, in the meantime, if you'd like to go on this tour do please get in touch.



The Great South Western Edge – Western Australia 15 -28 Feb 2021

The south-western region of Australia, especially south of Margaret River, is one of the least visited yet still easily accessible and more populated regions of Australia, which is one reason I've chosen it for this tour! It covers a huge area of immensely diverse landscapes and attractions – amazing coastal scenery and abundant marine life, ancient towering forests, deserts and towns with intriguing histories.

My tour will include Perth (Kings Park and Botanical Garden and Swan River Cruise) ; Fremantle; Busselton's Underwater Observatory and Busselton jetty train; a Margaret River winery; Ngilgi Caves, Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park, Cape Leeuwin lighthouse; Pemberton Tram Journey, Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk, Torndirrup National Park; Albany Whaling Station; the National ANZAC Centre, Porongurup, Stirling Range and Fitzgerald River national parks; Esperance Bay of Isles cruise and Great Ocean Drive; Ravensthorpe Silo, Wave Rock; Tin Horse Highway; historic York.

The tour is timed to enable anyone who wishes to return to the East Coast (conditions permitting) via the Indian Pacific train journey as an optional extension. This is one of the longest and greatest of the world's rail journeys taking three days between Perth and Sydney (you can also stopover in Adelaide) and includes a stop at Kalgoorlie and crossing the Nullarbor and the Blue Mountains.

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Central Otago and the West Coast March 5 – March 18 (approx) 2021

Join me on a small group, bespoke tour through Central Otago and West Coast next March that will take in the Danseys Pass pub, curling in Naseby, Art Deco in Ranfurly, a 4WD adventure on the Old Man Range, the Dart River jet boat from Glenorchy, another jet boat adventure south of Haast into spectacular wilderness areas, the Hokitika Wild Food Festival; Punakaiki; Denniston; Karamea and the Oparara Arches; Reefton with its famed distillery and the Bearded Miners; the Tranz Alpine train from Greymouth to Christchurch.





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I have several generations of family history on the West Coast so know this region exceptionally well – it has a very special place in my heart, so I'd love to take you there to explore it in depth.

If this sounds like you, do please let Moray or me know and we will have a full itinerary and other details out to you later this year.

And for the rest of 2021?

Well, that's the 40-million-dollar question isn't it! Recently I described working in international travel as having just lovingly and skilfully made a chess set, then trying to play an important game while on a waterbed in a 7.0 Richter earthquake.

But what I HOPE is going to happen is that my Cherry Blossom Time in Japan tour will be heading to Japan in April 2021, followed by the rescheduled Romania and the Balkans tour in May.

Later this year we hope to be able to release more details on the revised 2021 tours.

Meanwhile, at home...

The home fire is literally burning at present, given the awful weather we've had in recent days! I've developed a bit more garden (convinced a slightly doubtful Derek that this will reduce the amount of lawn he has to mow rather than the fact I wanted more space for rhododendrons...). Natey stays with us two days a week – he loves trucks (I spend quite a lot of time with him near the main road truck-spotting) and our cat, who sadly doesn't not reciprocate Natey's feelings. Everyone else is hard at work – I'm so grateful they are all ok but I do find it difficult not being in the same boat at present.

I am hoping to launch some book readings on the Jill Worrall Tour Facebook page, starting with my first book *A Blonde in the Bazaar*. So, watch that space.

I'll be in touch again in July if not sooner. If you want more information about my NZ and Australia tours or generally want to have a chat about future travel, I love to hear from you.

I'm almost always here! This is, in fact, one of the first times I've been home all winter for many, many years – I've actually had to buy some more winter clothing!

Very best wishes and onwards, and hopefully upwards, via a flight, somewhere sometime soon!

Jill