



Jill Worrall Tours May 2020 Newsletter

Hi Everyone

Well, the departure date for my Romania and Balkans tour came and went as I prepared this newsletter which was very sad BUT this tour is not cancelled, only postponed and this time next year I really do hope that we will be winging our way (masked or otherwise!) to Bucharest.

So, what's the current status of Jill Worrall Tours?

- 1) We have now had to postpone the Romania and Balkans tour until May 2021 and the Pamir Highway adventure until July 2021.
- 2) At present we are postponing our South India tour scheduled for early 2021 until 2022 based on current conditions in India.
- 3) I am now working on some NZ and Australia tours that will have all the hallmarks of my more regular tours in terms of very special itineraries that will be personally managed by me and will be lots of fun. I hope these will give us all something to look forward to while we wait to be able to start more long-haul adventures. More about those below.

The tentative 2021 Tour Schedule (first half of year)

Jan-Mar: NZ and Australia tours as below

April: Cherry Blossom Time in Japan

May: Romania and the Balkans (rescheduled from 2020)

July: Pamir Highway (rescheduled from 2020)

August: Wildlife of Uganda

The programme for the rest of 2021 will depend on what happens during the rest of 2020!

Tours originally scheduled for 2021 including South India, Pakistan and Poland the Baltic States and Finland will be rescheduled for 2022.

An important note on refunds

Travellers who had booked and paid deposits for Romania and the Balkans and the Pamir Highway tours have mostly opted to leave their deposits with us (in a totally secure Travel Trust Fund) ready for the resumption of the tours next year.

A few people have requested refunds and inquired as to why not all their deposit has been returned. This is NOT because we have retained any of their money ourselves but because, where it has been forwarded to another supplier (such as an insurance company) we simply do not have that money to refund as it has been paid to that supplier. It then becomes an issue to be dealt with the third party and although we are not required to do so we have offered to do all that we can to help clients try to get a refund of this money. We would never have done otherwise – Moray especially is spending



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many, many hours sorting out such issues as well as sorting out issues around any extra travel people had planned either before or after postponed tours.

Travellers who have kept their deposits with us then also ensure their places on next year's tours are held and also help to ensure that the tour remains a confirmed departure which is also extremely important if we are to get the tour running again.

You can rest assured that everything is being done with integrity, sound business practice and with your best interests at heart.

So, where are we going to go now?

I so want to be able to get my international tour schedule up and running again but we just don't know when that is going to be possible. I also know that like me, you are probably really keen to dust off the suitcase again and simply enjoy travel and time with others who feel the same – many of them people you will have probably enjoyed travel with before.

Hence, over the past few weeks I've been working hard at preparing two New Zealand tours and two Australian tours for you (the latter to run as soon as the proposed Trans-Tasman bubble becomes a reality) And the more time I spent on these the more enthused I have become about being able to offer you memorable, fascinating and great fun tours of our own backyard and just across The Ditch.

We already have more than enough interest to run a Chathams Island tour right now but of course have to wait to set dates until domestic travel regulations and flight information is available. There's also very good interest in the Deep South Tour.

These tours are scheduled to run at various dates between November this year through to about February 2021. As mentioned above we can't set the final dates until we know how domestic travel is going to work here and also what is happening to my international tours still scheduled for later this year.

So, if after reading the tour descriptions below, you are interested in joining me on any of these tours do let Moray know. Both tours are for a maximum of about 15 people and it is possible two departures may be available depending on demand. I will be on the tour as usual as tour manager and we will have local guides where appropriate.

Please note: All aspects of these itineraries are subject to change depending on what services and attractions are running at the time. Accommodation options will also depend on which establishments are open for business, but the aim is to use a mix of hotels, lodges and on occasions quality motels.

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The Chatham Islands

This is a seven-night tour based in Waitangi and will be a highly inclusive holiday (all meals are included on tour including all the best of the seasonally available Chathams fish and seafood; guidebook and map). There will be plenty of opportunities for some fantastic walks but equally if you're not a walker there are always options for you as well.

Tour highlights include:

- Waitangi West, including the Stone Cottage built by Moravian missionaries between 1866-1868; Port Hutt fishing harbour which has the most shipwrecks on the island; the famous Ohira Bay basalt columns.
- Owenga, where we will visit the fishing village; the Moriori Kopinga Marae, the only Moriori marae in NZ, to learn about the Moriori history and see Tommy Solomon's statue; lunch organised by the Owenga community; the wind farm; Rangaikei cliffs (from where there are great views out to surrounding islands); a walk to Te One township to see Moriori rock carving.
- Waitangi town tour, including the museum, old radio station and reforestation project; lunch at River Onion Gallery and visits to Henga Nursery and the island craft shop.



- We will spend time at Te Whanga lagoon and for fossilised sharks' teeth and walk through the Tuku reserve, which is home to the Chatham Islands pigeon, and have a BBQ dinner at the Croon family's property, Admiral Farm, with its magnificent garden. We will also visit Taiko Camp to learn about albatross relocation and other endangered bird projects.
- Kaingaroa: Nikau palm reserve; Cape Young and Splatter Rock, walk across Wharekauri Farm Station to the Clay Cliffs; board walk through the Ocean Mail wetland reserve; Hapupu tee carvings – the unique Moriori tree carvings (dendroglyphs); Broughton Landing (an old mission

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and whaling station and site of the remains of wrecked RNZAF Short Sunderland; Point Manning fur seal colony.

- Pitt Island: Day trip by Cessna to Pitt Island, including lunch at Flowerpot Bay Lodge; Glory Bay, bird watching (the island has 21 endemic bird species), flora (there are 52 endemic plant species on Pitt); spectacular scenery and geology.

There will also be time for an optional (at own expense) fishing trip – any fish or paua caught will be filleted, bagged, frozen and then be able to be brought home.



The Deep South

I am sure this tour will appeal to anyone who may not have had the chance to spend time in the splendiferous deep south of New Zealand. This tour will take in many of the region's highlights but also some back roads and little-known attractions that dyed-in-the-wool South Islanders like me know about!

The tour begins and ends in Christchurch and will include all breakfasts, a number of dinners or lunches and a well-balanced mix of organised sightseeing and free time where appropriate.

The tour includes:

- A walking tour of the Christchurch CBD and the earthquake rebuild; punting on the Avon; traditional English-style high tea and welcome dinner.
- Oamaru's historic Victorian Quarter and off-the beaten track coastal roads en route to Dunedin.
- Otago Peninsula: Royal Albatross Colony, Larnach Castle and free time in Dunedin city.

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- The Catlins: Nugget Point lighthouse; Owaka; Purakaunui Falls; Papatowai beach; Tautuku Beach, Curio Bay and Waikawa Bay (home to the surfing dolphins and a petrified forest).
- Stewart Island: Ulva Island birding tour; kiwi expedition; optional boat ride, walk and flight to Mason Bay; pelagic bird and fishing cruise.
- Invercargill: Burt Munro memorabilia; Bill Richardson Transport World
- Manapouri via Riverton and Tuatapere
- Doubtful Sound: Overnight cruise via Lake Manapouri and West Arm
- Milford Sound: Overnight stay in Milford and lunch cruise of Milford Sound.



- Te Anau – Te Ana-au glow-worm caves
- Exclusive two-night stay on remote High-Country station (Lake Pukaki area) with options of either full day in Aoraki/ Mt Cook National Park or 4wD high country station tour.

Central Otago and West Coast anyone?

Depending on expressions of interest I also have plans for a Central Otago-West Coast tour that will include the Central goldfields area; a 4WD expedition on the Old Man Range; producers of local specialities including fruit and wines; Paradise, Glenorchy and Dart River jetboat; Crown Range; Wanaka; Haast, Jackson Bay and jetboat journey into remote South Westland backcountry; Fox and Franz Josef glaciers and Lake Mathieson; Punakaiki; Charleston, Westport and Denniston Plateau; Oparara Arches and Heaphy region of Karamea; Reefton (including The Bearded Miners and the Reefton Gin Distillery)

If you would be interested in this tour do let Moray know. I am descended from several generations of West Coasters, so this is a region I absolutely love and know extremely well.

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Australia

Further details of these tours will be available over coming weeks but if you would like to register your interest in either or both of these tours do let Moray know.

Tasmania in depth

I am planning a two-week (approx.) tour to Tasmania that will feature Hobart, Launceston, Ross, Port Arthur, Cradle Mountain and much more. Tasmania is Australia's smallest state and one that sometimes Kiwis overlook! With 40 per cent of its landmass declared as national park or World Heritage regions it's an island of stunning natural beauty and a fascinating, albeit at times tragic history; the island was once known as Van Diemen's land and was an infamous penal colony. Today historical sites combine with scenic wonders, vibrant towns and cities. It's also world famous for its specialty foods and wines.

It's even possible we might be able to fly direct to Tasmania from New Zealand, but if not, there'll be the added bonus of a few days in Melbourne and environs.



Western Australia and the Indian Pacific Railway

On this tour we'll take the Indian Pacific Railway either to or from Perth from Sydney and the make a road trip encompassing Perth, Fremantle, Margaret River and the Coral Coast. I took this epic train journey a few years ago and despite being told it might be monotonous, I was far from bored! The scenery was everchanging, the scheduled stops along the way were fascinating and the meals were superb!

If Western Australia was a nation and not a state, it would be the 10th largest country in the world so there's a lot to see - from historical and cultural sites to vineyards to a coastline teeming with wildlife. And, of course, it's wonderfully sunny and warm!

Full itineraries for these tours will be available soon as will dates, so if you're interested in coming to Australia with me in our ANZAC bubble do get in touch!

Best Wishes, Jill