



## Jill Worrall Tours December 2020 Newsletter

Hi Everyone

The other day I took down my 2020 wall planner, unceremoniously stomped up and down on it a few times and then dumped it in our wheelie bin. I considered the method of its dispatch more than justified.

But as we are now well into the season of goodwill, I will admit that there were some positive aspects of an otherwise awful year for those of us who organise and run tours, and those of us who hoped to actually be on one!

\* The country-wide lockdown meant a three-generation household for us and I enjoyed every minute of it. The subsequent seven months at home has also allowed me to indulge in a great deal of gardening and handcrafts – something I usually have little spare time to do.

- \* The phone calls, emails, letters and parcels and many other genuine gestures of support from so many tour members. I was so touched that, despite all of your own many stresses and strains this year, people had gone to the trouble to check up on me. It was deeply appreciated and much needed. Losing all my tours, the joy of travelling with you all and the longest period in my life since I was 16 not earning any income was extremely difficult. Your care and support helped me get through it.
- \* I'm also hugely thankful to be in partnership with James Greer at House of Travel Riccarton. Like me, he was determined that we were going to stay in business and tough out this incredibly difficult year. His support, along with Moray Johnson's unflinching backing and cheerfulness, have been key in making sure that Jill Worrall Tours is ready for 2021 and beyond.

### Stop Press!!!

The NZ Government has just announced that, all going well, we will have a quarantine-free travel bubble with Australia within the first three months of 2021. This means we are now full steam ahead with bookings for my five Australia tours for 2021, beginning with Tasmania in April.

Please remember, **at present we do NOT need any deposits** as we do understand that the start date for the bubble is still to be announced and both countries do need to have Covid 19 under control. But this really is exciting news, so if you are looking forward to some overseas travel as much as I am do get in touch soon. It will be really helpful for us to get firm expressions of interest in this tour so we can truly get the Jill Worrall Tours show roaring and back on the road as soon as we can.

And yes, I'm already working on a fabulous 2022 programme, including tours we've had to cancel and some great new destinations. More about those as the new year progresses.

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### The Deep South Tour



I've recently returned home from my Deep South Tour on which I was joined by 13 Kiwi travellers from all over New Zealand. Although we spent rather a lot of time in puffer jackets, we had an amazing time.

Two tour members, talking to Derek my husband put it this way: "Braemar Station was an absolute highlight," said one person. "But every day and everywhere we went was a new highlight" added their fellow traveller.



Dinner in the music room at Larnach Castle; one of the best days of the season to see the Northern Royal Albatross flying; an almost cloudless day on Stewart Island; dolphins in Doubtful Sound; waterfalls thundering down the cliffs at Milford and a star-strewn sky and cloudless dawn over Aoraki Mt Cook. We truly had it all.

The feedback: "Wonderful as always...fab trip...loved it...you dream up great journeys and make them real for us...a memorable trip...ever thankful...great time as always...I've loved this wonderful journey with you...superb as ever"

If you read those comments and wish you'd come along, I do have one more NZ trip available - my Central Otago and West Coast tour from March 5 to March 18. It's also packed with highlights and will take us from the wide skies and tussock-clad hills of Central Otago to the lush sub-tropical forest of Karamea with a lot of fun in between! Do contact me if you'd like more details.

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### Finding us over Christmas-New Year

House of Travel's office will be closed from Dec 23 until Jan 11, so during that time Moray will not be contactable. BUT, I am working from home throughout the holiday period so if you have any queries about future tours (including the full itineraries we have available) don't hesitate to contact me at [jill.worrall@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jill.worrall@xtra.co.nz) or on 0275 38 99 55.

### From my place to your place



We're gearing up for a big family Christmas Day at my daughter Rachel and son-in-law Atkins' new house. They shifted from their much-loved small cottage to a bigger, restored villa a few weeks ago. Rachel, with some assistance from me, is now creating a new garden there. Natey is truly the son and grandson of hardcore gardeners – he's a dedicated waterer of pots (and sometimes of his grandmother) and refuses to use his child-sized trowels in favour of a spade, still slightly bigger than he is. Jono and Em's new house at Rolleston is all but complete, but frustratingly the final parts of the interior fit-out now have to wait until after the great Christmas shutdown! But they're excited nevertheless to be moving soon, although I have to admit I'll be sad to see them move out!

Derek is just fine (and thank you to all those men who have been inquiring about his well-being with me home all the time....) and is hoping to get to the UK in 2021 to see his youngest daughter, Rachael, who was due to come home for a holiday in March but was stopped literally at the Heathrow check-in as world-wide lockdowns began.

So, no turkey to stuff for me this year; instead I'm going to experiment with a pavlova Christmas tree instead, seeing I have the time.

So, whether you too are battling potential meringue disasters, wrestling with turkeys, or wielding the BBQ tongs, I do wish you all a very, very Happy Christmas. All the very best from James and Moray too.

Your support and interest in my tours has been amazing and I'm going to be working very hard and with undimmed enthusiasm to make sure that I can offer you some fantastic tours in 2021 and beyond. So, here's to a travel-filled and healthy 2021 as well!

With all the very best for Christmas and New Year

Jill x