



Summer 2017 Newsletter



Happy New Year from the Deacocks!



Wagha (Indo/Pak) border guard

Our Spring 2016 Newsletter generated strong interest in Mississippi Horizons departing 8th May 2017 - with seven participants so far. Cabin vacancies on Queen of the Mississippi are limited, and we urge anyone interested in joining this tour to book now to avoid disappointment. Caucasus Horizons and Indonesia Horizons also have a number of passengers booked.

Now read on for advance information on our 2018 *Shangrila to Tibet* and *Central America* tours.

America's three great music meccas

New Orleans is generally credited as the birthplace of jazz music, but is also a major center of the blues. The 12 bar blues were well known in the city before most of the rest of the country. Buddy Bolden's band was remembered at excelling on playing blues before 1906. Anthony Maggio's "I Got the Blues" was an early example of published blues sheet music from 1908. The Original Dixieland Jass Band's "Livery Stable Blues", generally considered the first jazz record, is in a fast blues form.

Memphis calls itself the birthplace of rock 'n' roll. In 1951 the Memphis Recording Service, forerunner of Sun Studio, recorded "Rocket 88" by Jackie Brenston & His Delta Cats, which some say was the first rock 'n' roll record. Memphis is where some of the earliest practitioners of the blues and rock 'n' roll got their start - at Sun Studio, Stax Records or Hi Records: Johnny Cash, B.B. King, Carl Perkins, Booker T. and the MGs, Jerry Lee Lewis, Rufus & Carla Thomas and of course the king himself, Elvis Presley.

Nashville is popularly known as Music City following the birth of the Grand Ole Opry in the 1920s and Music Row in the 1950s, but the truth is that Nashville's affinity for music shaped the city from the 19th century. Hymnal publishing started in the 1820s, and the years after the Civil War saw the formation of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, who achieved worldwide fame and performed for Queen Victoria. Then in 1892, work was completed on the Union Gospel Tabernacle, soon to be renamed The Ryman Auditorium.

There are currently 7 people traveling on **Mississippi Horizons** departing 8th May 2017. We visit all three of these iconic music 'meccas', with a walking tour and buggy ride through New Orleans's French Quarter and Bourbon Street; a visit to Sun Studio and Gracelands in Memphis; and in Nashville we visit Ryman Auditorium, Music Row and there is an opportunity to attend a show at the Grand Ole Opry. Vacancies are limited (in particular, cabins on the Queen of the Mississippi for our 7 day Mississippi river cruise) so if you're interested in joining this tour request our descriptive brochure and book now to avoid disappointment.



Clockwise from top left:

- French Quarter, New Orleans
- Sun Studio, Memphis
- Graceland, Memphis
- Ryman Auditorium, Nashville
- Country Music Hall of Fame, Nashville



We are happy to announce the launch of our new website featuring news and reviews, Newsletters and brochures, future tours and other information.

Over time we will be adding destination and tour ideas and information for those looking for a privately organised holiday, extended tour or private group arrangements.

See <https://farhorizons.com.au/>

Mississippi Horizons

30 days departing 8 May 2017



A thousand years ago the Anasazi (a Navajo word meaning "ancient ones") built dramatic adobe dwellings, or pueblos. Chaco Canyon was the center of Anasazi civilization, its many large pueblos probably serving as administrative and ceremonial centers for a widespread population.

Pueblo Bonito (pictured), one of the largest of the Chaco Canyon pueblos, is a good example of how the Anasazi lived. The original pueblo rose four to five stories high — an astounding achievement for the time.

Rooms surrounded a central plaza, and throughout the settlement were a number of *kivas*, meeting places that served a ceremonial purpose. The total population of Pueblo Bonito was probably around 1,200 people at its height. Surrounding the pueblo

were a number of smaller dwellings and structures. Numerous communities looked to Chaco Canyon for political and religious guidance.

Why did the Anasazi leave pueblos it had taken them decades to construct? Indications are that a series of extended droughts occurred from 1125 AD until a 14 year long 'super' drought in 1275 AD which led to the abandonment of the region.

The Anasazi departed en mass, burning the kivas and abandoning tools and personal effects. Today the ruins and remnants of this unique culture draw visitors from around the world.

Chaco Canyon is one of several American Indian sites visited on Mississippi Horizons.

Visiting

San Francisco	3 nights
Napa & Sonoma Valleys	
Albuquerque	1 night
Sandia Peak tramway ride	
Acoma	
Gallup	1 night
Chaco Canyon	
Durango	2 nights
Silverton Railway	
Pagosa Springs, Taos	
Santa Fe	2 nights
Santa Clara Indian Reservation	
New Orleans	3 nights
Bayou Swamplands	
Oak Alley plantations	
Mississippi River cruise	7 nights
Memphis	1 night
Nashville	3 nights
Jackson	2 nights
Yellowstone National Park	1 night
Grand Tetons National Park	

From \$42,990 per person [share twin] ex Sydney. For further details request our descriptive brochure.



Indonesia Horizons

34 days departing 18 July 2017

At the south western tip of the island of Java lies Ujung Kulon National Park, one of the world's most pristine natural ecosystems. Covering a total area of 122,955 hectares (one third of which is a marine sanctuary) Ujung Kulon is the last sanctuary of the critically endangered Javan or Sunda Rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*). The latest research, conducted in 2013, indicated there were only 58 Javan Rhinos in existence at that time.

Sightings of this extraordinary creature are extremely rare - so much so that some locals regard the rhino as a sacred ancient creature.

The region is home to many other wildlife such as Owa Jawa monkey, Surili (Presbytis aigula), wild dog, Banteng Bull, Silvery gibbon, Javan lutung (*Trachypithecus auratus*), Javan leopard, Rusa deer and Java mouse-deer. There are over 72 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 240 bird species found in the National Park.

Ujung Kulon was first declared a reserved area in 1980 and in 1992 was established as a National park and designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Our 34-day Indonesia Horizons travels overland from the western tip of Java through the central highlands to the sulphurous Ijen Crater on the eastern tip of the island, across Bali then cruises through the fabled 'Spice Islands' to see the mighty Komodo Dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*).

Cabins on *Ombak Putih* - the traditional wooden Buginese sailing schooner cruising from Bali to Flores - are strictly limited. Book now to avoid disappointment!

From \$29,870 per person [share twin] ex Sydney or Melbourne. For further details request our descriptive brochure.



Our Spring 2016 Newsletter announced plans for 28-day **Myanmar Horizons**, which generated substantial interest. For operational reasons the tour has been pushed back a few days and will now depart 18th January 2018. The tour is built around a 7-day cruise on the Irawaddy River with extensive sightseeing in Mandalay, Pagan, Lake Inle and Yangon. Unfortunately 2018 schedules for the 10-day Myanmar coastal cruise have not been released and the cruise operator are unable to confirm it will operate, so in its place we will spend 7 days cruising through the Mergui Archipelago off the southern Myanmar coast, starting and finishing in Kawthaung adjacent to the Thai border. Our descriptive brochure will be released shortly and we welcome expressions of interest from others.

Caucasus Horizons

22 days departing 14 October 2017



Zvartnots (meaning "celestial angels") cathedral, dedicated to St Gregory, was built by the order of Catholicos Nerses III (Nerses the Builder) from 643-652. Now in ruins, it is located at the edge of the city of Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin) in Armavir Province of Armenia.

The cathedral was built at a time when much of Armenia was under Byzantine control or influence and during the early invasions by Muslim Arabs.

According to the medieval Armenian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the cathedral was consecrated in 652. Following the Arab occupation of Dvin and the intensifying wars between the Byzantine and Arab armies on the former's eastern borders, Nerses transferred the patriarchal palace of the Catholicos from Dvin to Zvartnots.

Zvartnots remained standing until the end of the 10th century, but historical sources are silent as to the cause of its collapse.

The ruins remained buried until they were uncovered at the start of the 20th century.

The site was excavated between 1901 and 1907 under the direction of Vardapet Khachik Dadyan, who uncovered the foundations of the cathedral as well as the remains of the Catholicos palace and a winery. The excavations revealed that Zvartnots had been constructed on the remnants of structures that dated back to the reign of the Urartian King Rusa II.

Caucasus Horizons visits Zvartnots during a full day excursion to Echmiadzin, Hripsime and Sardarapat.



Visiting

Azerbaijan

Baku	3 nights
Surakhani, Qobustan	
Shemakha	
Sheki	1 night

Georgia

Lagodekhi, Gremi	
Telavi	1 night
Tsinandali	
Tbilisi	3 nights
Mtskheta	
Bakuriani	2 nights
Vardzia	

Train to Borjomi	
Kutaisi	1 night
Gori, Uplistsikhe	
Gudauri	1 night
Kazbegi	
Tbilisi	1 night

Sadakhlo	
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Armenia

Lake Sevan	1 night
Haghartsin	
Yerevan	4 nights
Garni, Geghard	
Echmiadzin, Zvartnots	
Sardarapat	
Gyumri	

Dubai	1 night
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From \$18,585 per person [share twin] ex Sydney or Melbourne. For further details request our descriptive brochure.

Shangrila to Tibet

29 days departing 9 June 2018

Visiting

Kunming (Yunnan)	2 nights
Yuanthong	
Lufeng Dinosaur Museum	
Dali	2 nights
Weishan	
Xizhou	
Shaxi	2 nights
Lijiang	2 nights
Yuhu, Mt Wenbi	
Shegu	
Tacheng	2 nights
Golden Monkey Reserve	
Meili	2 nights
Dechen, Mt Kawakarpo	
Gyalthang (Shangrila)	3 nights
Ganden, Ringha Valley	
Zethang (Tibet)	1 night
Samye Monastery	
Lhasa	3 nights
Sera Monastery	
Lhasa/Xian train	1 night
Xian (Shaanxi)	3 nights
Terracotta Warriors	
Hui, Shaanxi Museum	
Chengdu (Sichuan)	3 nights
Panda Breeding Sanctuary	

As China continues its headlong race into the 21st century, more and more interesting and seldom seen regions become available.

Our Shangrila to Tibet tour begins in Kunming, the 'city of eternal spring', then journeys overland through Yunnan province along the ancient tea and horse trade route to the exquisitely scenic highlands of Shangrila (Gyalthang) where we see the vineyards and rose growing regions between the Yangtse and Mekong Rivers on our way to Mount Kawakarpo, the second most sacred mountain (after Mount Kailash).

From Shangrila we fly to Tibet and spend several days exploring the highlights of Lhasa and the Central Tibetan region including Potala, Jokhang, Drepung and other nearby monasteries.

In Lhasa we board soft class sleepers on the highest train in the world (pressurised) for the two day journey east to Xian to marvel at the Terracotta Warriors unearthed in the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor



of China. We then drive to Chengdu, the cuisine and Panda capital of China.

We travel during the best season for rhododendron and grassland flowers, at a relaxed pace to ensure sufficient acclimatisation, in readiness for our visit to the high Tibetan plateau.

From \$31,780 per person [share twin] ex Sydney. For further details request our descriptive brochure.



Central America Horizons

31 days departing 20 October 2018



Visiting

Panama City (Panama)	3 nights
Panama Canal	
Santiago David	1 night
San Isidro (Costa Rica)	
Cartago	3 nights
San Jose	
Orosi, Irazu Volcano	
Tortuguero National Park	2 nights
Sarchi	
Arenal Volcano	2 nights
Granada (Nicaragua)	2 nights
Lake Nicaragua	
Masaya Volcano	
Managua	2 nights
Antigua (Guatemala)	2 nights
Panajachel	1 night
Lake Atitlan	
Santiago	
Chichicastenango	1 night
Guatemala City	2 nights
Copan (Honduras)	1 night
Quirigua (Guatemala)	
Puerto Barrios	1 night
Rio Duce	
Lake Izabel	
Tikal	2 nights
Xunantunich (Belize)	
Belize City	2 nights
Altun Ha	
Mexico City (Mexico)	1 night

First operated by Far Horizons in 1991, this fascinating journey explores in depth the little known regions of Central America from Panama to Mexico, in part following the historic Mayan Route ("La Ruta Maya").

La Ruta Maya is the name given to the regions of Southern Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, which were populated by the ancient Mayans from 2000 BC to AD 900. These remarkable people built 21-storey stone palaces without tools or the benefit of the wheel, and developed a calendar which is more precise than the one we use today.

The first stage of our journey through Central America includes a visit to the Panama Canal and the 'Bridge of the Americas', then takes us along the Pan American Highway (which links southern Chile with Alaska) through Panama and Costa Rica into Nicaragua.

The second stage of our journey is through the highlands of Western Guatemala then neighbouring Honduras to the Mayan city of Copan.

From here we follow La Ruta Maya via Quirigua, Puerto Barrios and a cruise on the Rio Dulce to the impressive ruins at Tikal.

We cross the border into Belize (formerly British Honduras) to visit the Mayan sites of Xunantunich and Altun Ha, and tour Belize City then fly via Cancun to Mexico City for an overnight stop before returning to Australia.



Please call or write for a brochure or to register your interest in a future tour, a particular destination, or to organise a private group or individual travel program.

Mississippi Horizons



Mississippi Horizons

30 days departing 8 May 2017

Limited vacancies!

Caucasus Horizons



Caucasus Horizons

22 days departing 14 Oct 2017

Some vacancies

Indonesia Horizons

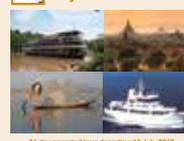


Indonesia Horizons

35 days departing 18 July 2017

Limited cabins available!

Myanmar Horizons



Myanmar Horizons

25 days departing 18 Jan 2018

Note: Mergui Archipelago cruise replaces Myanmar coastal cruise

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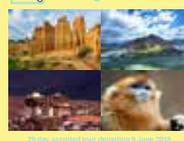
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Shangrila to Tibet



Shangrila to Tibet

29 days departing 9 June 2018

Brochure available soon

Central America Horizons



Central America Horizons

32 days departing 20 Oct 2018

Brochure available soon