



COMFORTABLE ADVENTURES & EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

Small group & custom journeys for discerning travellers



(really) small groups
private journeys
off-the-beaten track
expert guides
authentic
local connections
hassle-free
comfortable adventures
life-changing

Around The Sun designs and builds comfortable adventures and extraordinary holiday experiences for discerning travellers.

Rather than offering trips to every country, we only operate in regions where we have lived or travelled extensively - and where we like and trust outstanding local operators. We know a few parts of the world, and we know them well.

We organise a wide variety of trips to Mediterranean countries (with a focus on Italy, Spain, Portugal and Morocco), the Indian subcontinent (with a special focus on the Himalayas: India, Bhutan, Nepal), South-East Asia (with a focus on Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and the Philippines), Southern Africa (with a focus on South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia), and Australia (with a focus on Victoria).

We showcase a careful selection of small-group trips (with guides) on our website, but we also create customised, private journeys (both guided and self-guided).

Think of us as holiday architects. We not only design itineraries, but we select and supervise the world's best operators. Together we organise the logistics and build the ultimate combination of experiences.

Our goal is to make each Around The Sun journey the trip of a lifetime.

Some of our destinations are iconic favourites (often, but not always, they're iconic for a good reason!), but many of Around The Sun's favourite destinations are little known. Even when we visit an iconic sight we aim to do things differently - and to get off the beaten track. Our local guides make this possible because they know the local secrets.

When you're off the beaten track, luxury sometimes becomes a relative term, but our adventures are always comfortable.

We're not averse to staying in a five-star hotel if it is the best option, but whenever possible we seek out small, unique, family-owned, places. Some are in old farmhouses, some are in monasteries and castles. Sometimes the only option is a tent!

We don't chase Michelin stars, but we do think food and wine can provide windows into a culture. So we track down outstanding restaurants and bars - where the locals eat and drink.

One of our primary aims is to connect genuinely and authentically with local cultures and, especially, with local people. Our local guides are your first link, but the people who offer you hospitality are the next. Together they open the door to unforgettable experiences and friendships.

Some of our trips can be pretty full-on - but we understand the importance of free time, options and choice. Spending time just taking it easy in the sun, is fine by us!

We make it our mission to take the stress and hassle out of travel. All that our travellers are expected to do is relax, enjoy - and soak up extraordinary experiences.



EXPERIENCES!

Around The Sun trips are built around experiences - but one traveller's most treasured experience can be another's worst nightmare! Bearing this in mind, Around The Sun caters to an enormous range of interests and comfort levels. Our itineraries are as varied as our travellers.

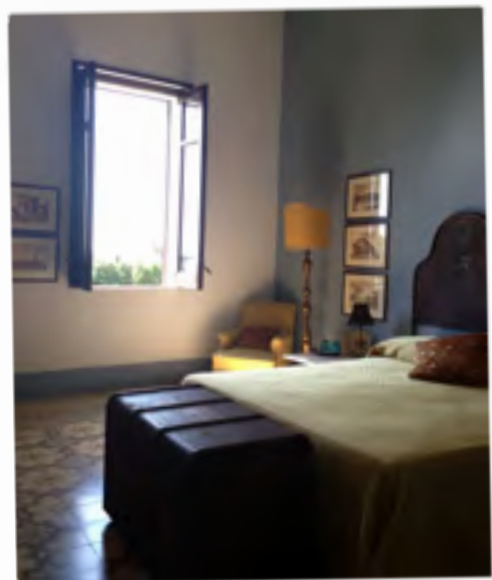
Around The Sun counts places to stay and places to eat as crucial travel experiences. They are carefully chosen. Whenever possible they will connect you with the local culture and people. Accommodation will be extremely comfortable, sometimes quirky. Places to eat and drink will be off the tourist trail - the local's favourites.

Around The Sun's published itineraries include old-style Himalayan treks; self-guided walks and bike trips in Italy; general tours with a focus on history, food and wine; pony treks; luxury car camping; kayaking; exploratory expeditions; and blissful holidays where you don't do much at all.

Custom itineraries can be built around trekking, cycling, motorbike tours, food, wine, cooking, agriculture, beaches, shopping, handcrafts, religion, wellness, art, architecture, snorkelling and diving.

And the list does not necessarily end there; if you have any interest that happens to flourish in the Mediterranean region, the Himalayas, India, South-East Asia, Southern Africa or Australia we and our local operators almost always (but not always!) have the resources to meet your needs.

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Accommodation

The accommodation used by Around The Sun varies widely. At one extreme people stay in castles, at the other they stay in tents. The choice is determined by a range of factors, starting with comfort and ending with location and availability.

Our bottom line is that accommodation **MUST** be clean and comfortable and must have modern, private bathrooms!

Ideally we want accommodation that is also old, interesting and charming. It should provide an immediate link to the history and culture of the country. We like locations that reduce the need for transport, locations from where people can make exploratory walks, or locations that are so beautiful nobody wants to leave! We prefer small hotels with friendly and hospitable hosts who are a genuine link to the local culture.

Some of these ideals are harder to achieve in developing countries and big cities. On trekking trips they can be impossible!

On trekking and camping trips, similar priorities for cleanliness and superb locations apply, but the end result is very different! Our sleeping, dining and toilet tents are all pitched by staff. The sleeping tents are set up with foam mattresses. The facilities on our Car (& Minibus) Camping treks border on the palatial.



Food & Wine

Food (and sometimes wine) plays a key part in all Around The Sun trips. We believe that a country's cuisine, restaurants and bars can provide one of the most interesting windows into its culture. So we track down outstanding restaurants and bars - where the locals eat and drink.

The food won't be haute cuisine, but it will feature high quality examples of local cuisine - what the locals love to eat. It will be delicious! The produce will usually come from nearby fields, bakeries and oceans via a local market. The markets themselves are often trip highlights.

Most Around The Sun trips also include opportunities to make a direct connection with iconic local products and producers - like visiting wineries - and some trips also include cooking classes for those who are interested.

Those travellers who have a really strong interest in food and wine in Italy and Spain, and food in Morocco, India, Thailand and Vietnam should speak to Around The Sun about developing a custom trip.





Himalayan Trekking

Around The Sun offers small group, guided treks in the Himalayas – but we also create private and fully customised treks. (A walking trip in the Himalayas is normally referred to as a trek, a walking trip in Europe is, well, a walking trip!)

There are increasing numbers of luxury lodges in Nepal, India and Bhutan, but Around The Sun believes the best trekking experiences still involve camping.

In Ladakh and Bhutan, where the road network is well developed, it is possible to use vehicles to cover big distances – but it is still very rewarding to do some walking too. See the Car (& Minibus) Trekking section following.

Trekking is a very different experience to camping as most westerners have experienced it. For a start, you don't have to carry your pack, pitch your tent, or cook your food! And the food is not a one-pot special, but can cover everything from roast chicken to cakes and cinnamon rolls.

Some westerners are uncomfortable with the notion of having a team of people dedicated to looking after them – but properly paid work on a trekking team is considered a high status job – and the wages are more than welcome in a region that has enormous unemployment issues. Travelling with a team of competent, interesting mountain people is a great experience in its own right. And that's before you start thinking about the amazing places they take you to.

Around The Sun steers clear of the iconic, but extremely crowded, Everest Base Camp and Annapurna Circuit walks in Nepal. Both these walks can now be undertaken as individual tea house treks, and although the views are great, the lack of cultural authenticity and the crowds are not.

Around The Sun's trips take you off the beaten track, have spectacular scenery and introduce you to authentic Himalayan and Tibetan cultures. The experienced staff make sure you are safe and comfortable.



General Culture

Most of Around The Sun's published, small group, guided tours are a 'General Culture' experience and most are car/minibus based.

The aim of these trips is to give people a broad taste of a region and culture. They encompass iconic sights, history, food, wine, walking (though in modest daily doses), art, architecture, shopping, handicrafts and, almost always, a good dose of beach.

As with all Around The Sun trips, a key aim is to go one step beyond the beaten track (even when visiting the most touristy sights) to make it possible to connect genuinely and authentically with local cultures and, especially, with local people.



Walking & Cycling

All Around The Sun trips include healthy doses of walking - but the amount can vary between modest doses up to five, even six, hours per day.

Obviously the big hours only relate to specialist trekking and walking trips. (A walking trip in the Himalayas is normally referred to as a trek - see the Trekking section - and a walking trip in Europe is, well, a walking trip!)

Around The Sun offers a number of self-guided walking and cycling trips off the beaten track in Italy. Travellers are provided with extremely detailed walking and cycling notes that take them to pre-booked accommodation in charming villages, as well as to recommended eating places. In some cases transport is provided to/from the starting and finishing points.



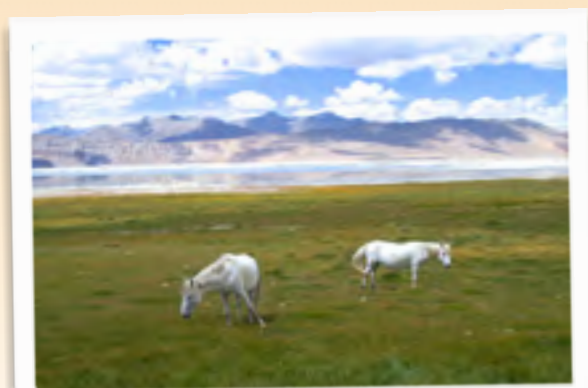
Beaching

For many travellers a holiday is not a holiday unless there is time spent at the beach - and not just any beach. The water must be warm and crystal clear. Waves are highly desirable, but their absence is tolerable if there are alternative activities to surfing: snorkelling, diving, windsurfing, fishing, boating and paragliding are all acceptable.

Virtually all Around The Sun trips feature a healthy dose of beach - but for some a healthy dose will be nowhere near enough. Around The Sun knows the beaches of the Mediterranean, South Africa and Asia well - well enough to get you off the beaten track to uncrowded gems. Or we can send you to a relatively crowded gem where you can mix with Europe's beautiful people and enjoy the funkier restaurants and bars on the planet. We can find you hotels, guesthouses, and villas (with and without hot and cold running servants).

If a beach holiday is what you want, whether it involves one beach or multiple beaches, Around The Sun can make your dream a reality.





Car (& Minibus) Trekking

Trekking is no longer just the province of the young, fit and hardy. In Ladakh and Bhutan, where the road network is well developed, it is possible to use vehicles to cover big distances - and to get well off the beaten track.

Around The Sun has developed some stunning itineraries that enable you to see some of the Himalaya's most spectacular sights, en route to amazing fully-serviced campsites where comfortable sleeping and dining tents have already been pitched. High quality meals are provided and, where appropriate, the campsite can be used as a base for day walks that are as ambitious or gentle as you want to make them.

It is possible to put together itineraries that combine car touring, lodges, luxury car-based-camping, walking/trekking in the most spectacular and remote areas, and fully-serviced-camping! Particularly in Bhutan, there are some outstanding, luxurious lodges and hotels that will tempt many people.

Car trekking is a very different experience For a start, you don't have to walk if you don't want to. And you don't have to pitch your tent, or cook your food!

Limited Only By Your Imagination...

Around The Sun journeys are limited only by your imagination. The partnership between Around The Sun and our outstanding local tour operators means that it is possible to create private, custom trips to meet virtually any wish list.

Our operators' highly-experienced staff crews make sure everyone is as safe, comfortable and well fed as is humanly possible.

If you have an interest, a hobby or a passion - and we judge it to be safe and ethically sound - we can make it happen. We can design itineraries for:

- motorbike touring in Europe, India and Bhutan
- white water rafting in Nepal, India and Bhutan
- religious and meditation retreats in Nepal, India and Thailand
- art and architecture in Europe and Asia
- snorkelling and diving in the Mediterranean and Thailand
- ocean kayaking in the Philippines and Thailand
- handicrafts in the Mediterranean region, India, Nepal and South-East Asia
- wellness (spas and retreats) in South-East Asia
- photography and painting trips
- exploratory expeditions
- blissful holidays



CHOICES!

Around The Sun trips include almost every possible style and mode of travel. Our itineraries are as varied as our travellers' interests.

The common denominator is that all our itineraries explore behind the tourist facade; every trip takes you off-the-beaten track; every journey creates opportunities to connect with local cultures and people; and every schedule is designed to be flexible and include plenty of free time.

Trips can be guided or self guided - small group or private - and fixed (published) or custom itineraries.

All Around The Sun trips are designed to create comfortable, hassle-free holidays. Ideally, all you have to do is enjoy yourself!

Our job is to organise the most appropriate logistics and to create the ultimate combination of experiences. The goal is to make each Around The Sun journey the trip of a lifetime.



Guided or Self-guided?

We think travelling with a guide is one of the greatest luxuries a traveller can enjoy, but we also know that travelling independently - along with all its challenges - can be great fun.

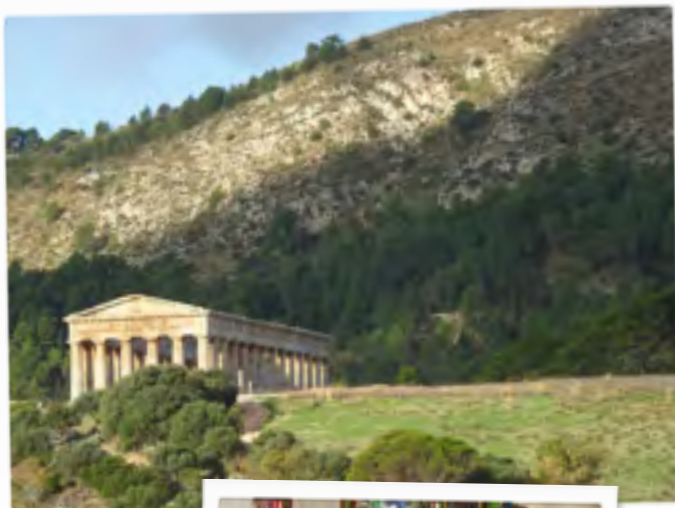
A self-guided tour, where Around The Sun develops an itinerary, manages the bookings and provides you with background information and introductions, is sometimes an ideal compromise. As a bonus, our outstanding operators are still on-hand if you need them in an emergency.

A small number of Around The Sun's guided tours are led by Richard Everist and Lucrezia Migliore. This provides travellers with a special opportunity to enjoy their extraordinary expertise and in the case of Lucrezia and her trips to Spain and Italy a chance to have some free language tuition.

One of the main reasons the tour companies chosen by Around The Sun are considered the best in the world, however, is because of the quality of their local guides.

Great guides are interesting, knowledgeable, energetic locals - and perfect travel companions. Great guides not only make travel as smooth and relaxing as possible, but they interpret and explain the culture you are visiting, and introduce you to local people.

In some of the most spectacular parts of Italy we also offer self-guided walking and cycling trips where we provide detailed walking notes and arrange comfortable accommodation in the villages along the route.



Small Group or Private?

The advantage of a small group tour is that you travel with a small group of people (12 or less) who, by dint of choosing the same tour, naturally have common interests. It's a great way to meet people, and sharing experiences with new friends adds an extra dimension to the journey.

On the other hand, few things can compare with the joy of sharing travel experiences with old friends and family. Every Around The Sun' itinerary can be run privately. The larger the number of participants, the more cost effective a private trip can be.

Published or Custom Itinerary?

If our published (fixed) itineraries don't completely meet your interests or your timing, Around The Sun, and our local operators, can work with you to create a custom itinerary.

We can vary the transport (perhaps you would prefer a train or a luxury limousine?), the accommodation (perhaps you would prefer a five star hotel or a private villa?), the food (perhaps you have dietary constraints or you would like to track down Michelin-starred restaurants?), the length (perhaps you're taking a Gap Year!), or the time of year.

We have the knowledge and the resources to make your dreams come true.

Limited Only By Your Imagination...

Sometimes the best answer to an either/or question is both! Around The Sun will design a trip that suits you! Perhaps you'll start off with a small-group tour, then add on a private trip with some friends - and finish by staying in a private villa.

Our job is to organise the most appropriate logistics and to create the ultimate combination of experiences. The goal is to make each Around The Sun journey the experience of a lifetime.



WHO?

When you choose Around The Sun you are choosing to utilise the expertise and knowledge of **Richard Everist** and **Lucrezia Migliore** plus the expertise and services of a select group of Richard's and Lucrezia's trusted friends and colleagues.

Richard Everist

Richard Everist is an expert on the Himalayas, India, South-East Asia, South Africa, Britain and Australia - regions about which he has written guidebooks and numerous travel articles.

Richard started work with Lonely Planet in 1985 and co-authored guidebooks to Nepal, South Africa, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Malta and Britain.

After leaving Lonely Planet Richard was involved with a variety of internet and print publishing projects, many of them involving travel, and he was the CEO for Peregrine Adventures, an adventure travel company.

In 2004 Richard, Lucrezia and their three children escaped from Melbourne and started Best Shot! Publications in Torquay. Best Shot! published the definitive guidebooks to the Victorian goldfields – *'The Traveller's Guide to the Goldfields'* and the Great Ocean Road region - *'The Complete Guide to the Great Ocean Road'*.

Lucrezia Migliore

Lucrezia Migliore is an expert on Italy, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Britain and Australia, countries where she has either lived or travelled widely.

Lucrezia is a citizen of the world. Born in Melbourne to Italian parents, Lucrezia has lived and worked in Australia, taught in the United Kingdom and Spain and lived in Italy – as well as travelling widely through Europe and North Africa.

Lucrezia speaks English, Italian and Spanish – and gets by in French and German. Her career has encompassed language teaching, hospitality, industry training, sales and marketing, and counselling.

In 2009 Lucrezia, Richard Everist and two of their children spent six months living in Pisciotta, on the Cilento Coast south of Naples. On that occasion, and on subsequent trips, Lucrezia rekindled her connections with Italy and Spain - connections she is happy to share.



Around The Sun's Operators

Based on their experiences working with Lonely Planet and Peregrine and years spent travelling and living overseas, Richard and Lucrezia have chosen to work with a small number of friends who they consider run the best tour companies in the world. Around The Sun only offers itineraries when we are completely confident we are putting travellers in the hands of outstanding tour-operating companies. (Photo: Marcello & Anna, Around The Sun's Italian operators with Raph Everist & Maia Everist-Migliore)

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