

Creating ADVENTURES

TRIP REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025

Fiona's Egyptian Odyssey

Sand devils skittered across the vast desert plateau before me. Beyond, almost as if a mirage, I saw the silhouette of a camel train loping over a low hillock. Amid the dust and heat, the faint outline of **Cairo** city was just visible on the horizon and rising from the desert in the foreground were the otherworldly outlines of **Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure**, the three great pyramids of **Giza**.

The memory of my last visit did not diminish their magnificence - figures swirl in my head - an estimate of nearly 6 million tons of rock moved by 30,000 workers taking up to 27 years to complete. We encircled the largest of the three and clambered inside - at times bent double, at times climbing steep rock-hewn steps to go deep into the central tomb to marvel at this miracle of engineering.

I'm in **Egypt** with my husband and sons - for me a happy return and for them a dream fulfilled since they studied **Ancient Egypt** at school.

On our first night we found a tiny street café full of locals and enjoyed sizzling *kebabs* and *shwarma*, fat round breads and flavour filled *houmous*, fresh salads and *baba ganoush* washed down with zingy minted lemon and sweet fresh mango.



Dear Adventurer

Last year was full on! Trips to **Norway** for dog-sledging, **Poland/Czech Republic** for WWII history, **Argentina** for wine, **Egypt** for its extraordinary pharaonic treasures and **South Georgia / Falklands** for iconic **Antarctic** wildlife. Early 2026 sees me keeping my feet firmly under the desk but that does not mean you need to! I'm looking forward to hearing from you so I can get creative with your 2026 travel plans. If you'd like help, catch me before my travel diary starts to fill!

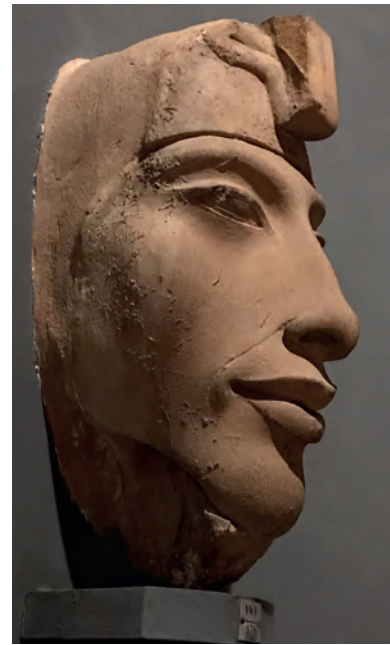
Fiona Brijnath

Fiona Brijnath, Director

DON'T FORGET

Our **showcase brochures** are waiting for you... **40 pages** of **inspiring travel ideas** there for the taking. **Ask for copies.**





Later, in the vast echoing museums of **Cairo** we encountered the colossal 11m high /83 tonne, statue of **Ramses II**, skilfully carved in 1200BC from one piece of red granite and brought in a seemingly superhuman effort from ancient **Memphis**. In days to come we would visit a dusty quarry in **Cairo** to see how these gargantuan masterpieces were chiselled out of the rockface and floated down the **Nile**.

In the faded halls of the old **Egyptian Museum** we stood in awe in front of the solid silver casket of **Psusennes I** who ruled from 1047 - 1001 BC (at that time silver was more expensive than gold). We strolled past solid stone sarcophagi and copies of the famous archaeologist **Howard Carter's** telegrams to **Lord Carnarvon** to find the 10kg gold bejewelled death mask of **Tutankhamun**. We ended our day by tiptoeing through the dark, silent black and gold vaults of the new **Egyptian Museum of Civilisation**, final resting place of the Royal Mummies after their journeys from the **Valley of the Kings**.

A short flight took us south to **Luxor**, the 'Green City', where the fabled **Valley of the Kings** made a memorable day. The preservation and decoration is



For those wanting to go that extra mile - some of the "specials" we can arrange include :

- Meeting before immigration at **Cairo** airport by our rep who escorts you through the airport formalities
- **Hot air balloon** at sunrise over **Luxor**, offering breathtaking views of the **Nile** and the temples at dawn
- Private charters of **luxury 'Dahabeya' boats** on the **Nile** for any numbers of nights between **Luxor** and **Aswan** - with the flexibility to choose your preferred sites, including special access to locations not available on regular cruises
- Private visits to the **Valley of the Kings** after it closes in the evening
- Exclusive access to the **Tomb of King Horemheb** in the **Valley of the Kings**, a site closed to the public and reserved especially for you
- Exclusive meeting with **Dr. Zahi Hawass** at one of his current excavation sites, where you'll gain firsthand insights into ongoing archaeological work
- Private dinner at **Luxor** or **Karnak Temple**, a truly unforgettable setting among ancient wonders
- Private after hours visit to the **Grand Egyptian Museum**, where you will enjoy the complete treasures of **King Tutankhamun** without the crowds. A private dinner can also be arranged on the museum terrace, overlooking the illuminated **Pyramids**
- Breakfast or lunch on a traditional felucca in **Luxor**, privately catered by a deluxe restaurant for an authentic yet luxurious experience on the **Nile**



narrow passageways, the noblemen's painted tombs of **El Kab** and the intricate relief carvings of **Kom Ombo Temple** in a stunning position on the riverbank.

We dined on a small island mid-stream and swam in the cool waters of the **Nile** at sunset (mercifully all the crocs are the other side of the **High Dam**)! We sailed into **Aswan** with heavy hearts not wanting to leave the warm embrace of our *Dahabeya*.

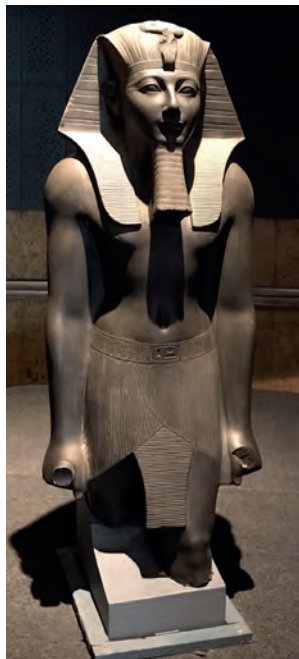
On our final day, rising early with the call to prayer echoing around the city, we headed south to the great **Temple of Abu Simbel** on the shores of **Lake Nasser**. Once again gigantic statues of **Ramses II** stared down at us - this huge temple and the adjacent masterpiece for his beloved wife **Nefertari** - a perfect illustration of the might and power of the pharaohs of **Ancient Egypt**. As if that was not enough, the whole temple was moved in the 1960s in a monumental feat of engineering to escape the rising waters of the lake.

My return to **Egypt** has been nothing short of pure magic. Friendly locals, superb guides, easy travelling, short direct flights, e-visas, great food and at every turn the wonders of this ancient civilization whose power to awe and inspire like its colourful tombs and temples will never diminish. As a family there was something for everyone and we always felt completely safe and looked after. Who knows - maybe I'll come back here in an afterlife!

a sight to behold. Indigo blue ceilings dotted with golden stars, scarabs and serpents, **Horus** and **Ra**, ibis, jackal and Gods of the afterlife, winged falcons, crocodiles and everywhere hieroglyphics and cartouches all documenting the resurrection and afterlife of the incumbent. One could well understand that famous **Howard Carter** quote in response to **Lord Carnarvon's** question "*Can you see anything?*". As he broke through into **King Tut's** tomb - open for the first time in 3,300 years - he uttered the magical words - "*Yes wonderful things*".

Next came a stroll among the huge lotus topped columns of **Karnak Temple**, redolent of a scene from **Agatha Christie's** famous novel **Death on The Nile** before boarding a beautiful houseboat for the 5-night journey on the **River Nile** from **Luxor** to **Aswan**. What a journey! Passing tiny mud brick villages thick with sugar cane, palm trees and banana plantations, donkey carts, fishermen and small boys playing in the life-giving **Nile**, we had the ever-present backdrop of low slung limestone hills. A timeless scene.

Each day we stepped off the boat in the relative cool of the early morning to explore a tomb or temple - the great **Temple of Edfu** with its 36m high intricately relief-carved pylon walls and



When to go: October to April for ideal conditions
September and May for hotter weather, but lower rates and fewer visitors

Contact: fiona@farfrontiers.com for a chat about your own tour of **Egypt**. Itineraries tailored to your budget.

South Georgia and The Falklands

I've long wanted to visit **South Georgia** so I'll never forget the day I first set foot on its windswept shores. This remote, jagged-peaked island in the middle of the **Southern Ocean** proves to be all that I had hoped for and more. It is here that **Sir Ernest Shackleton** played out the final scene in his extraordinary escape from stranding in the pack ice of the **Weddell Sea** with his miraculous 17 day/800 mile journey from **Elephant Island**. The history of his time here is intrinsically woven into the fabric of the landscape.

Sailing down the **Beagle Channel** and on our way to the **Falkland Islands**, the excitement builds as we settle into our cabins and attend important briefings from expedition staff. Personally, I'm already greatly enjoying the company of the truly lovely clients who've opted to join me on this exciting expedition voyage.

As the wind got up, our first landing at **Saunders Neck** was deemed too tricky, but moving round to the more sheltered **Keppel Island** we enjoyed a lovely hike over a windy hillock dotted with Upland geese to an Imperial Shag colony, where in the nearby tussock grass, nesting albatross rubbed shoulders with Macaroni penguins.

The 2.5 days sail across to **South Georgia** was filled with anticipation - when would we see land, who will spot the first iceberg, which albatross are we seeing following in the wake of the ship? Many hours were spent on deck and several times we were rewarded with a whale 'blowing' in the distance and the occasional fin showing above the waterline. At one point a small pod of Commerson's dolphins came alongside the boat giving us a welcome distraction from the big seas.

We wondered whether the (continuously very windy) forecast would follow us to **South Georgia** and try to scupper the ship's plans. However,

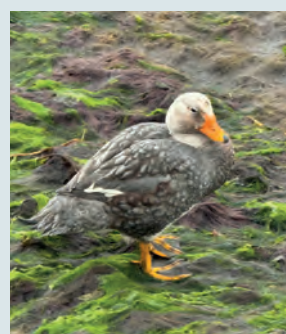
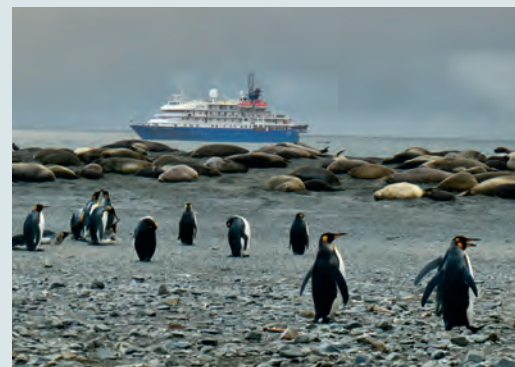
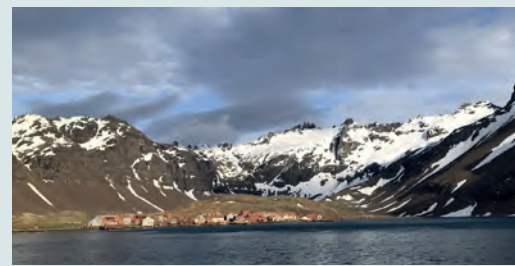
our expedition team worked tirelessly with the ship's captain and as fast as one landing was not possible, another possibility would open up - creating an ever-changing canvas of mesmerizing wildlife and extraordinarily beautiful landscapes. **South Georgia** is notorious for its difficult weather conditions and high winds. Despite this, the expedition staff and captain managed to deliver us all the 'greats' of the island and we barely missed a landing.

Sailing past **A23a** (the world's largest iceberg at around 1500m²) the ship made our first landing at **Right Whale Bay**. We heard the grunts, squeals, barks and whistles of the King penguin colony and smelt the huddle of Elephant seals on the beach even before we saw them. Over the coming days, this dramatic sea of black, white and yellow plumage surrounding a creche of adorable chocolate brown chicks would become a familiar sight.

After the whaling stations of **Leith Harbour** and **Stromness**, we called in at the still occupied settlement of **Grytviken** and toasted 'the BOSS' laid to rest in the hauntingly beautiful cemetery - a mass of white crosses on a gently sloping hill. His tombstone which faces towards his beloved **Antarctica** bears the poignant **Robert Browning** quote.

'I hold that a man should strive to the uttermost for his life's set prize'

Strolling among the giant rusting hulls of whaling ships, and gigantic blubber ovens, we looked in horror at the huge flensing platforms where in its heyday - teams of **Norwegians** could process a whale carcass in under 20 minutes. The museum was fascinating - charting the rise and fall of **Grytviken**, superbly illustrating the tough life and sorrowful tale of the whaling history which stripped the seas almost bare of these majestic creatures until a merciful cessation in 1966.



South Georgia, Arcturus and the sights we encountered surpassed all expectations. Multiple landings, in comfort and safety, gave incredible close-up experiences of the wildlife and scenery. **Fiona's** arrangements were meticulous - **Arcturus** was such a pleasure to travel with, strongly recommended.

Alastair & Kate Turnbull, South Georgia and the Falklands on Sea Spirit with Chile, October 2025



ARGENTINA'S FAR NORTH-WEST

Despite two visits to **Argentina** in 2025 **Fiona** still did not manage to get to extraordinary **Salta** - incredible rainbow mountains, high altitude red rock vistas, colonial buildings and gorgeous rustic hotels. Take the four-hour **Train to the Clouds** with undeniably superb views. It combines well with the **Ibera Wetlands** for jaguars, **Iguazu** for the incredible falls or try crossing the border into **Bolivia** or **Chile**.

REMOTE WEDDELL SEA EXPLORER

Your ship travels to the very edges of the navigable map, aiming for the **Riiser-Larsen Ice Shelf, Queen Maud Land**, and the **Luitpold Coast**. Last season, this trip broke records, reaching a new record southerly position in the **Weddell Sea** for a non-icebreaker vessel - **78°03.471'S**. Flexibility is key but we aim to replicate this.

From: £29,495 per person in twin porthole berth on 110 passenger **Ortelius** (voyage only)

Voyage dates: 7 February - 6 March 2027



TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE IN ICELAND

Iceland will be one of the best places to witness this unique, rare and spectacular natural phenomena on 12 August 2026. It's the first total solar eclipse to be visible from **Reykjavik** since 1433. The path of totality will cross the **Westfjords, Snæfellsnes** peninsula, and **Reykjanes** peninsula. **Call us to plan your trip.**



BOLIVIA SALT FLATS BY HELI

Enjoy private helicopter rides taking off directly from your luxury **Airstream Camper** on the **Uyuni Salt Flats** for a superb aerial perspective of the sacred **Thunupa Volcano**, the colored lagoons and the vast white expanse of the world's largest salt flat. **Ask for details.**

Snippets



PLANNING SRI LANKA IN SUMMER 2026?

If you are keen to see local events or want the best months for surfing and wildlife, read on. The colourful 10-day **Kandy Esala Perahera** festival takes place in July/August. May to September is best for **east coast snorkelling, diving & whale watching**. Witness the **Gathering**, where large herds of elephants gather at lakes in **Minneriya** from July to October.

AND FOR THE PERFECT END TO YOUR HOLIDAY...

Occupying an elevated, elongated strip of land overlooking boulder-scattered **Balapitiya Beach, Kumu Beach** is a contemporary 10-room west coast boutique hotel with fabulous **Indian Ocean** panoramas.



IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON

Small ship **Heritage Adventurer's** 28-day ultimate bucket list voyage sails as far south as possible (via the Subantarctic Islands), crosses the **Antarctic Circle** and spends 10-12 days exploring the **Ross Sea**. Explore the historic, perfectly preserved huts of **Scott, Shackleton** and **Borchgrevink**, walk on the ice with Emperor penguins, visit the world's largest and oldest Adélie penguin colony and cruise along the astounding **Ross Ice Shelf**.

From: £26,275 per person (triple berth) voyage only. Single cabins available in 2027

Voyage dates: 6 January - 2 February & 1-28 February 2027

CAMPING ROAD TRIP AROUND OMAN

Experience the beauty of **Oman** - from **Muscat's** coastline to the dramatic **Hajar Mountains** and golden **Wahiba Sands**. Sleep under stars, explore wadis and enjoy the freedom of the open road. This is rich culture and nature at its purest. **Ask to see our itinerary.**

FIONA'S TRIP REPORT OCTOBER 2025 - SOUTH GEORGIA AND THE FALKLANDS



We slogged through wetting rain and knee-high tussock grass to find a **Gentoo** colony atop a steep hill in **Godhul** and at **St Andrews Bay, Fortuna Bay** and **Gold Harbour** we got a taste of the enormous scale of wildlife which makes **South Georgia** an absolute must if you - like me - love wildlife. Here we landed on beaches littered with grunting **Elephant seals** and snuffling **Fur seals** and hiked out to marvel at the incredible spectacle of 200,000 strong **King penguin** colonies.

At many landings it was difficult to find a place to come ashore such was the profusion of seals hauled out on the beach. The beachmaster - ever watchful over his harem - was never hard to spot and the length and quality of our landings meant we had plenty of time to observe them lying in their giant huddles sometimes snoozing, sometimes fighting, sometimes mating while the pups with their huge imploring eyes mewed plaintively when they wanted to suckle. Another common sight - the **Fur seals** sitting up like sentries - their pointy noses and long whiskered muzzles turned skywards when they were not dualling, snoring or swimming gracefully in the shallow pools of kelp.

Our final landing was at **Salisbury Plain** where at last we encountered the adorable **King penguin** chicks at closer quarters. Here the expedition staff proved their worth in getting the zodiacs



ashore in extremely tricky conditions with waves crashing onto a steeply shelving pebble beach. There's a good reason why not many ships make landings here - the sense of relief once we were all back on board the ship was palpable.

As the greats of **South Georgia** with its profusion of wildlife slipped by, we headed once more to sea - a lumpy crossing left the dining room relatively quiet for a day or so but there were lectures to distract us from the rolling waves and deck time was rewarded with **Wandering** and **Black-browed albatross**, **Cape** and **Giant petrels** and the occasional glimpse of a **Humpback, Fin** or **Sei whale**.

A final day back in the **Falkland Islands** proved literally to be the icing on the cake - starting with a 2km walk across golden yellow gorse strewn hills to a bustling **albatross** and **Rockhopper penguin** colony and ending with cake and tea in the resident **Falklander's** home.

Sailing once more up the **Beagle Channel** to **Ushuaia** - there was time for a little reflection on our journey. I sincerely hope this is not my last visit South - as **Shackleton** found - these snowy vistas can become addictive.

Sea Spirit will repeat this journey in **October**. I urge you to book.

When to go: 22 October - 12 November 2026 UK to UK
From: £16,620 per person in triple cabin, private facilities UK to UK
Contact: fiona@arcturusexpeditions.co.uk to book your berth

HOLIDAY SPECIAL
15% off all cabins except triples from 15 December 2025 - 30 January 2026



CALLING BIRDERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS TO THE FALKLANDS

Inspired by her recent trip and having forged new contacts on the **Falklands**, **Fiona** is now delighted to be able to offer land-based trips for serious birders and photographers. We have access to a sixth generation **Falkland Islander** who besides being a lovely chap will take you on an unforgettable tour of these remote, rugged and unspoilt islands teeming with bird-life. With direct **British Airways** flights to **Santiago** and connections on to **Stanley** there is no excuse not to go. **Ask for details!**

A fabulous trip, with wildlife in abundance - a photographer's paradise! Perfectly planned by **Fiona** and executed by the team on the ship with many landings. I really had the most wonderful experience and would recommend this expedition to anyone looking for a little adventure.

Clare Rigler, South Georgia and the Falklands on Sea Spirit - October 2025



Client COMMENTS

A memorable and most interesting visit to a country I knew very little about and (to be honest) until Fiona's write-up of her visit two years ago had not included on my list of places to go. Highlights included **Kazbegi**, lunch at an old winery in **Kakheti** and the visit to **Vardzia** cave city. Alas, time was against me and precluded a visit to **Svaneti**, but if I revisited **Georgia**, I would try harder to fit in a visit to the west. For me the real pleasure though was learning about **Georgian** culture and history. Arrangements and personal touches throughout were excellent and explain why I am a repeat customer of **Far Frontiers**

Travel, and Irakli was a most interesting guide, very happy to engage in conversation and willing to be flexible.

John Nugée, Georgia, September 2025



My 19 year old son and I have just returned from two weeks in **Uzbekistan**. From start to finish our trip was impeccably organised. The itinerary was thoughtfully curated and without fail our guides and drivers could not have been more helpful. We had time to wander the backstreets by ourselves and from the very beginning, **Fiona** could not have been more sensitive to our slightly unusual requests. I greatly appreciated her extremely well-informed input at every step of the way. In the end, the slower pace of our journey made it easy to survive the considerable summer heat. We both loved every single minute and I could not recommend **Far Frontiers Travel** more highly.

Pen & Ben Harley, Uzbekistan, July 2025



Generally, having weighed up making this trip for over 45 years, I thought I was reasonably prepared for what I was going to see, but was still totally gobsmacked. Not only were the historical and cultural aspects as glorious as I'd hoped they would be, I also very much liked the country and the people. I was extremely happy and impressed with it all. A big thanks for all that you did!

George Goulding, Uzbekistan, October 2025

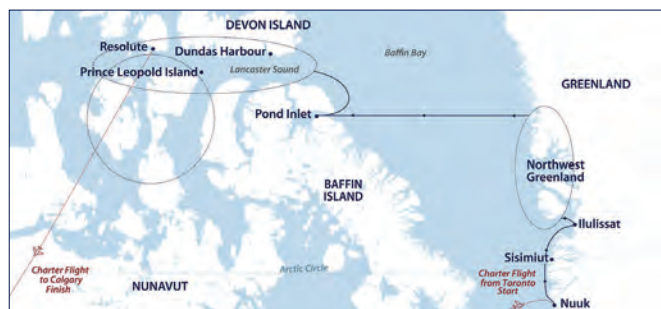


Christina Mathieu travelled with **George** and had this to say: *This was a good introduction to a country I have been fascinated by for a long time and I loved it. Truly a great experience and beautiful trip.*



We have just returned from a great 11-day trip to **South Korea** organized by **Fiona**. Lovely drivers and informative guides with great recommendations for where to eat and drink. Four days were spent in **Seoul** - cooking course, markets, palaces, gardens, good food and the very interesting **DMZ**. Then to the east coast for mountains and sea. Stunning scenery and good walks in the National Parks. **Gyeongju** next stop: a museum without walls, enchanting temples, pagodas and tombs. Final stop, **Busan**, a beautiful city with hills, beaches and port.

Robert and Anne Jenkins, South Korea, November 2025



Our ship, the **Greg Mortimer** was fantastic. I could not fault the ship, expedition staff, housekeeping, restaurant staff and onboard ambience. The trip was a little light on wildlife though we did see five polar bears (two sightings with cubs), musk oxen, Arctic hare, walrus and narwhal - the latter though at a distance. Big highlights were the stunning scenery and great weather. The logistics were seamless - impressive how they got everyone out into the zodiacs with minimum fuss. I much enjoyed the rich history of the area including hearing more of Franklin's lost ships **HMS Erebus** and **HMS Terror**.

Clew Hughes, The Northwest Passage aboard Greg Mortimer, August 2025

Thank you so much for organising such a brilliant trip for us all. We had an amazing time. Fascinating. The hotels were all wonderful. Our guide and driver were so kind - we felt like royalty. We loved everything we saw and everywhere we visited. Honestly **Fiona**, I can't thank you enough. I will be recommending you to others!

Antonia, Matilda & Cordelia Eriksson, Sri Lanka, July 2025



Very many thanks for once again a wonderful trip. It all went smoothly and we, 20 passengers, left **Akureyri**, heading north overnight to **Grimsey** with Humpback whales and a really good Aurora before bedtime! The presence of a road network meant that, with support bus, we were able to venture far from shore and see the sights/have good walks. As well as **Mývatn, Dettifoss**, etc, we had a lot of time on roads less travelled, exploring off the beaten track. The weather was exceptional - calm seas, very little rain and a lot of blue skies and sunshine. A fab trip.

Anne Robinson, Northeast Iceland Explorer, Aurora Borealis, Hike & Sail on Rembrandt Van Rijn, October 2025



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