

elegant, intelligent, professional tours +
news, reviews, postcards...



Newsletter Vol. 1 Issue 1

Winter 2009

Welcome to our first e-Newsletter. It seems to have taken forever to get this transitional, new, digital age way of being in touch, right, relevant and racy enough to capture your interest. Many of you have not heard from us in quite some time and others are hearing from us for the first time.

It seemed timely to create a more intimate and meaningful communication with the many hundreds of guests who have cooked and travelled with us in the past and all those armchair travellers searching for an insider's perspective.

We are passionate about unspoiled places, refined hospitality, and seeing the world slowly. We believe each day deserves a lovely meal and a good glass of wine.

We will be notifying of you of upcoming Art of Travel trips, local Art of Cuisine of Events, and sharing with you those things, people, places, restaurants, ideas, and products we love.

We also want to hear from you. Over the years we have collected an album of letters from guests. Your impressions, opinions, and inspirations matter to us and we look forward to your letting us know these things.

There will be 2 or 3 updates a year, and these newsletters now replace our annual Calendar mail outs.

We hope you Enjoy!

ART of TRAVEL 2009/10

The Aussie dollar is back! Thank goodness!! Given the gaining strength of our dollar against the USD and Euro as well as unprecedented discounted airline fares, this is a great time to start travelling again. Moreover, our prices are now quoted in the currency charged in the destination. This allows guests to pay for their travel arrangements when they judge the exchange rate to be most favourable.

There is never Time Like Now for Travel, time for personal discovery and the chance to meet kindred inspirational people. *"Travel does what good novelists also do to the life of everyday, placing it like a picture in its frame or a gem in its setting, so that the intrinsic qualities are made more clear. Travel does this with the very stuff that everyday life is made of, giving to it the sharp contour and meaning of art."* –Freya Stark

On our Calendar are Four Fabulous India Journeys and an inaugural exciting gastronomic tour to Northern Spain with a focus on innovation across many creative spheres including cuisine, art, and architecture. We invite you to book now.



mostly be taken as a late lunch.

[Northern Spain: the Creative Revolution 23 September – 5 October](#)

Spain is HOT! Recently Spain came up trumps in the San Pellegrino Awards for the World's 50 Best Restaurants **winning four of the top 10 positions.** ([link to the list](#)) Our inaugural and exciting tour of Northern Spain includes dining at two of these amazing restaurants. We meet in the beguiling Mediterranean city of Barcelona on **23 September** to begin an alluring exploration of molecular to authentic regional cuisine, atmospheric ancient walled *parte viajes*, and mountain villages of la Rioja to *haute moderne* contemporary architecture, traditionally made wines to award winning new style wines. Also, our opening hotel in Barcelona, just got the big gong in Condé Nast's Hot List! The only non-Spanish thing we do is eat late. Major meals will



Early **September** we kick off with a tour in **South INDIA**. Whilst most people hold a clichéd view of the South as being all about Kerala, our trips are never predictable. Whilst the best-selling travelogue 1,000 Places to See Before You Die describes the river kingdom of Kerala as “staggeringly beautiful,” and it is, the “Pearls” journey also travels to the utterly charming old French enclave of Pondicherry where colonial civilisation has melded with a special spirituality, and to the unique Chettinad region renowned for its food and romantic architecture as well as passing through spice and tea plantations...

[Pearls of South India: the Cultural Gems 27 August – 8 September](#)

In November another two great Indian sojourns with a difference.



Spirit of India capitalizes on the rich and diverse traditions of yoga and Ayurveda that takes an all-natural yet deeply scientific and synchronistic approach to mind, body and soul. We travel from superbly appointed intimate resorts to ashrams and provide profound insights into South India’s most ancient spiritual traditions, travelled at a leisurely, meditative pace....

[Spirit of India Yoga Journey 30 October – 13 November](#)



Tribals and Textiles will appeal to travelers who love to get off well-worn tourist paths. 15 November, we meet in Ahmedabad, the surprisingly charming and quite fascinating capital of Gujarat. Despite its modern day advances and relative affluence, travelling the State of Gujarat is like stepping back in time where tribes live often nomadic and still traditional lifestyles. Collectors of superb textiles, photographers, and adventurers will thrill to this journey that also shows off some remarkable architectural heritage...

[Tribals + Textiles Gujarat 15-30 November](#)

“You do know how to put a good trip together don't you!”

2010



Royal Tented Camps + Exotic Estates of Rajasthan is now in its 15th year!

Our perennially popular, exotic and exclusive Royal Rajasthan tour highlights the best of genuine Rajasthan culture and glorious heritage properties and palaces. We always celebrate HH Maharaja Jodhpur’s birthday at his Umaid Bhawan palace. This very special tour takes in desert landscapes, private tented camps, stately regal palaces and a plethora of specially commissioned cultural events. At the conclusion of next year’s tour, we plan a very special extension at the illustrious and addictive Amanbagh property with renowned writer William Dalrymple and a number of the writers from his Jaipur Literary festival.

[Royal Rajasthan 10-23 January 2010](#)

"SECONDS TO THE FORE" Lunch at Cutler+Co Sunday 2 August

[Seconds under the spotlight. Second chefs work with second cuts, matched with second tier wines, on the second of August!!](#)

Young guns from Cutler+Co, Cumulus, Simone's of Bright and Momo come together in this unique city meets country event.

Following on from last year's phenomenally well-received gastro events with Andrew McConnell and Pietro Porcu, we are delighted to announce our next very special lunch.

We have invited five young upcoming second chefs to team together to create a delectable Sunday Degustation to demonstrate the craft of great, intelligent cooking, matched to wines also deserving the spotlight, to be held in the gorgeous space of Cutler + Co in Gertrude Street Fitzroy.

At some stage all great chefs worked under a wonderful master before they came to be recognised in their own right. To name just a few now at their zenith, chefs have included Chris Manfield out of Phillip Searle, Geoff Lindsay and Annie Smithers out of Stephanie Alexander, Andrew McConnell out of Tansy Goode, Greg Malouf out of Dennis Hagger, Janni Kyritsis out of Gay Bilson, Tetsuya out of Tony Bilson.....



These talented young chefs might explore culinary memories, forgotten vegetables, molecular techniques, haute barnyard ingredients....There is bound to be a little offal and no doubt some slow cooking too.

We are excited to confirm Brook Payne from Mo Mo, Josh Murphy from Cumulus, Anthony Simone from Simone's in Bright, John Paul Twomey from Cutler+Co and Leilani Wolfenden currently at St Judes.

Guests wishing to book whole tables may do so as tables of 6 or 8. Otherwise you will be welcomed at Shared Tables.

Final details will be posted on the web site 22 June.

However we are delighted to receive your expressions of interest now if you wish to be placed on the reservations list. Email us to hold a place at b@mariekesartofliving.com This event once announced publically is expected to fill quickly.

We look forward to welcoming you to another wonderful Shared Table.

Other Events to watch out for soon include a Thé Dansant and the Scarlet Dinner.

Dear Marieke,

I just want to thank you for the wonderful experience of last Sunday. It was simply divine - the food, the setting, the good company, the weather....

*You have a great gift for bringing people together with style, verve and above all love!
with love and thanks,*

Jo

Share the Long Table

Marieke has recently responded to popular demand and opened our kitchen to parties of 10-12 guests for classes and special meals, especially the Sunday Lunch.

We are able to cater for special dining parties and tailor a menu specifically for the season, the occasion and your food passions.

[Call us to plan a special occasion and book a shared table.](#)

This was the recent menu for a birthday dinner in Autumn

Steamed Oysters with ginger sauce
Tuna with Boudin Noir and Onion Jam

◆
Mushroom Cappuccino

◆
Roast Quail with rosemary
Bay Whiting with *salsa verde*

Beetroot Compote
Spinach + Kale creamed
Gratin of Turnip and Potato

◆
Garden Salad with 18 month Manchego, pears and crisp Dargo Walnuts

◆
Saffron Pears, Rhubarb Compote, Fig, Rhubarb Ginger Sorbet and Honey Pannacotta

"Thank you for Sunday and thank you for dinner. It was a gorgeous night - most convivial - and delicious food to boot. What more does one want? Talent is as talent is. I don't know anyone who can put together flavours as well as you do. But I like the way once that is done the food etc becomes the invisible background key that unlocks people, conversation etc rather than being some sort of focal point itself. Most civilised, as is the house. It has a lovely feel to it,....."

Louise

CLASSES



After 30 years of sharing my passion for food and cooking with many hundreds of students, I find myself back at the stoves once a month, inspiring a new generation of cooking enthusiasts and would be cooks with themed classes. Their popularity and the warmth of response has been truly rewarding and the Peninsula providing a rich diversity of produce to draw on.

A couple of months ago we held our first yoga weekend workshop on the Peninsula. Our wondrous 71 yr old guru, Albert Hennink inspired a full house of eager and dedicated students. As so many students/guests/friends came from out of town, we of course provided the dinners. Being yogic does not preclude being sensuous and seasonal about one's food. It was early autumn and quite some research had been going on around the Traditional Chinese Medicine view of nutrition supporting the body and spirit in each season so one feels optimum health and vigour. It is simply another dimension of invaluable information to be added to the instinct to cook seasonally and locally and provide pleasure. In the way of these things one thing led to another....."where did you but the food, how did you cook that dish?".....and before I knew it we had a class of enthusiastic cooking students.

I soon discovered that the apron strings have not been hung up and there is demand for classes that inspire domestic cooks to great cooking.

Most recently we tackled the mysteries of DUCK. By the time we had dismembered some 6 ducks from head to tail and prepared at least 7 different styles from rare *magret* to thrice cooked melt in the mouth asian style dishes, there were few mysteries left and much confidence instilled in the students to broach duck at home.....This proved so beguiling for one of the students we have been invited to travel the DUCK Show to her beautiful property in the King Valley. Regrettably these classes are now fully subscribed and in fact sold out overnight.

[only 3 places left for the Winter Class June 26](#)

[Following on will be Tastes of Spain, Five Fabulous Tartes, The Indian kitchen and more.](#)

[Contact us](#) for further information or to be put on the special classes mailing list.

PARTIES + SPECIAL EVENTS

Jaipur: the ultimate canvas for a grand celebration limited only by the imagination. The famed Pink City of Jaipur provides an incomparable backdrop to incomparable parties and wonderful celebrations. We have had an extravagant, exotic birthday party, a grand Rajput wedding, and a superb Literary Festival.

[In January](#) I was the event manager and guest coordinator for a magical weekend birthday party for over 100 guests from all corners of the globe. Two girlfriends from Sydney dreamed of a once in a lifetime part like no other and invited friends from UK, US, Australia, Hong Kong. Many months in the planning, we created, under a full moon, a fairytale royal tent with a Raj theme and lavish entertainments followed the next day by a superb, fun-filled and highly entertaining elephant polo party in the countryside. We also arranged the guest accommodations, excursions and pre and post party travel arrangements and discovered that in India almost anything is possible.



Even the ebullient *Monsoon Wedding*, Mira Nair's giddily joyful film, could not have prepared me for the scale and extravagance of a Rajput wedding last November.

Held at the home of Thakur **Durga Singh** my revered colleague and friend these last 15 years. Durga will be known to all of you those have experienced one of our Indian journeys. This was the long awaited occasion of the marriage of his eldest child and only son Nhirbay. A six-day extravaganza of the kind that might a century ago have been commonplace amongst royalty, the party was a dazzling array of peacockish and coquettish finery, glittering jewels, swishing turbans, brilliant coloured sarees, precious brocades and heirloom baubles retrieved from family vaults for the occasion and a banquet of feasting, music and dance. Even in the zenana (women's quarter) the dancing continued into the early hours. It was an astounding insight into the many blessings and rituals of a Hindu celebration as well as the complex interconnectedness and legacies of the Rajput clan. [To see more photos](#)



New Discoveries

[The Jaipur Literary Festival](#): What a treat literally! This year the end of our Royal Rajasthan Tour coincided with the finale days of the Jaipur Literary festival. Held at the shabbily chic Diggi Palace and open to all at no cost, the Festival was an exhilarating and uplifting coming together of famous writers in a healthy mix of East and West, exhibitions, discussions, readings and truly thrilling music performances.

I was specially enthralled by the Baul musicians from Bengal, whose unconventional earthy yet spiritual traditions share in Sufic inspirations. Also meeting William Dalrymple at an impromptu lunch hosted at the wondrously beautiful Amanbagh in Alwar inspired the design of a special extension to our next [Rajasthan Tour in 2010](#). Worth the detour as they say. [Register your interest](#) early as this will be an exclusive occasion with limited numbers.

NEWS



M on the Fringe closes. Our friend the incomparable visionary, Michelle Garnault has just announced the closure of her great Honkers institution *M at the Fringe*. After 20 successful, multi-award winning years at the forefront of Hong Kong's vibrant and ever evolving dining scene, the legendary *M at the Fringe* restaurant is to move from its current premises in the historic Hong Kong Fringe Club in Ice House Street at the end of this year. Whilst a new premises is being sought for this iconic meeting/eating place in Hong Kong a new door opens in September with the much anticipated exciting opening of *Capital*

M with a spectacular location overlooking Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

SPECIAL TRAVEL OFFERS

Marieke's Art of Living has secured some exclusive privileges for our guests from some of the world's leading hotels.



Aman has opened their first metro hotel in **Delhi** and now rivals the city's best. According to Travel + Leisure "No one is able to escape the tumult of New Delhi, but Aman embraced this challenge, unleashing the equivalent of design Xanax—interior spaces in warm sandstone; acres of manicured lawns that enclose the hotel like a verdant moat, plunge pools on the private terraces adjoining most of the rooms and a full-size pool that Italian designer Rosita Missoni described as "a perfect length for swimming laps, which you rarely find in a hotel," never mind one nestled at the center of a seductive and confound-ing capital city. Even Spain has come to India with the very hip tapas bar. There are luscious dining rooms and a soothing state of the art spa. This is THE hotel of choice for both leisure and business traveler with its wonderful proximity to many major commercial and tourist sites. [Enquire with us for free](#)

[upgrades.](#)

An INDIAN SUMMER! Luxury at Bargain Prices. The Oberoi group are indisputably industry leaders in the North India hotel market. Over the years, I have enjoyed all but one of their properties for their exceptional care of guests and superior facilities equally suited to leisure or business travelers. Apart from their stylish design, superior and solicitous service, their oasis-like quality away from the mayhem of Indian streets, I can vouch for the peaceful and uplifting experience these lovely properties provide. With an extensive network that includes, **Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur, Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve; Wildflower Hall, Shimla in the Himalayas, New Delhi and Kolkata**, it is possible to design a Summer Indian stay at considerable savings. The offer must include at least 2 nights and can combine any number of properties to attract super discounts. Although it is hot at this time of year, sightseeing or business is recommended early morning or late afternoon so you then enjoy the superb luxury of your

chosen hotels during the heat of the day. [Enquire with us for a quote](#)

WHAT'S COOKING?

If eating in is your new eating out, Marieke invites you to peruse a small selection of her [recipes](#). Shortly there will also be some inspiring Winter dishes, This is a time for home and hearth, friends and long slow cooked dishes. Having recently bought a lovely very simple Chinese clay pot, I am enamoured with the results of pilaus and braises cooked in this wonderful medium.

WHAT WE DO:

Art of Living offers both escorted tours that go beyond the façade of the usual tourist trails as well as exceptional bespoke travel arrangements for private travellers. All our tour programs share an abiding interest in cuisine, heritage, great local icons and identities, indigenous cultures and leaving a light footprint on the earth.

[Private Itineraries](#)

From curating a unique experience shared with your family or friends to planning the logistics of where to land your private jet, or dock your yacht in the Med, we've done it all. Each itinerary is different according to your brief and our experience.

