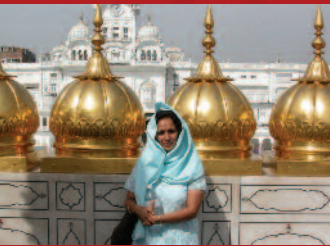


ASIA

Independent Touring

BY DISCOVER ASIA



2011-12



Add a relaxing day on the beach ...

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT TRAVEL?

Independent travel is when you, the traveller, control every part of your tour, from the planning stage -where you travel and how long you stay in each city; to the day to day operation of the tour – what time you start your sightseeing each day and which places you visit. Plus, such very important elements of any tour such as what kind of hotel you stay in, where you eat each day and the pace of the tour. Some travellers already know where they want to go, others only have an idea of the type of holiday they want and are seeking advice as to how to achieve it. To plan such a holiday you need the advice and assistance of an expert holiday planner. Discover Asia is your perfect partner to reach your goal – **the perfect holiday.**

The alternative to independent travel is a group tour, where someone you will never meet dictates the standard of hotel, your menu at each meal and even, when the coach stops to allow you to take a photograph & when is the best time for you to go to the toilet!!!

Some people like group travel, the social aspects of travelling with a lot of people you have never met before. The fact that you don't have to think for yourself, every day someone tells you what to do.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN AN INDEPENDENT TOUR?

Pretty well as much or as little as YOU want. The normal tour would include accommodation (in your choice of hotel); breakfast each day, lunch on sightseeing days, we normally exclude dinners as eating out is one of the great pleasures of an independent tour... however, some jungle camps, cruises etc do include 3 meals a day; sightseeing including entrance fees, private air conditioned car with driver and personal English-speaking guide; domestic travel by air, train or road whilst on tour.

YOUR HOTELS

On a group tour you have no say in what hotel you stay in. You may love the itinerary, but do you prefer 4 star heritage hotels and the group spends every night in 3 star modern blocks of concrete miles away from the night markets, cafes and bars? Well, bring us the itinerary and we will recreate the tour for you, staying in YOUR style of hotel.

To define tours as 4 or 5 star is now redundant... Just about any 4 or 5 star hotel in Asia is totally acceptable to most Australians. Of far more interest to most travellers is the 'style & atmosphere' of the hotel. What kind of hotel do YOU want to stay in... Heritage style (former villas now converted to boutique hotels), traditional style which reflects the local culture... or modern high-rise with every facility? Another major factor is the location of the property! Many Asian cities are so vast that where you stay frequently depends on what you intend to do in that city. Even small towns such as HoiAn in Vietnam offer you the choice of downtown, beachfront or riverside.

So, how do you navigate this maze of information and differing ideas? There is only one way, talk to an expert – someone who has visited the towns, inspected the hotels and has been selling the destination for years. On a website or in a brochure EVERY hotel looks grand! But, what is next door; how recent were the photos taken; how close is the hotel to the sights, markets and eating district and how do you show 'street noise' in a brochure! These are the things only an expert can advise you about. EVERYONE working at Discover Asia is an expert, many of us used to be tour leaders in the countries we sell. The most frequently used phrases when we are talking to clients and agents are... "When I was there what I did was", or, "When I go there I like to stay at..." We call this "THE KNOWLEDGE" it is something we are VERY proud of. Few other companies will ever speak of such personal knowledge, because the bulk of what they know is 'in their computer' – not in their heads.

EATING OUT

Tasting the local cuisine should be a fun part of any holiday. But, if you eat out with a large group you will not be visiting small traditional restaurants. Such groups are normally catered for in the hotels they are staying or by large purpose built restaurants – look around and you will see lots of other groups, few if any independent travellers and probably no locals. You could be forgiven for thinking that the restaurant was chosen not for its' cooking, but the low price they offer the tour company. And the menu will be fixed... so no 'a la carte' dining for you. Our independent clients always say how much they love being able to stroll the restaurant areas at night and choose not just where they eat but what they eat, sometimes splashing out with a lavish banquet, other times a simple pizza and glass of wine. Our expert consultants are always happy to share their favourite eateries with you before you travel.

YOUR SIGHTSEEING

Do you have special interests? Group tours rarely allow time for you to indulge in them. It is easy for us to include a cookery school, extra time in museums, a school visit or absolutely anything else that interests YOU. All you have to do is ask a Discover Asia consultant where to do it.

FREE TIME TO DO YOUR OWN THING

On an independent tour your days can be as full or as free as YOU want. For example, for many of our travellers to the temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, we frequently reduce the number of temples they see in a day, bringing them back to the hotel at lunchtime for a refreshing shower, leisurely lunch and time to relax around the pool, before recommencing their temple sightseeing at 3pm. On a longer tour, why not take a day off (sightseeing free) in the middle to relax, do your washing or simply go to a riverside café and people watch? After all, it is meant to be a holiday, not an endurance test!



The Great Wall of China



Pyramid Temple - Bagan, Burma



Terracotta Warrior, Xian

Discover Asia is the perfect answer to all your Independent travel needs to the following destinations...

CHINA, VIETNAM, INDIA, STH KOREA, CAMBODIA, LAOS, THAILAND, MYANMAR, NEPAL, PAKISTAN, BHUTAN, PHILIPPINES, CENTRAL ASIA, SRI LANKA, TAIWAN, BORNEO, BANGLADESH, TURKEY, JORDAN, SYRIA, UAE, OMAN, plus, EXPEDITION CRUISES TO THE ANTARCTIC & ARCTIC REGIONS

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT WE OFFER

This brochure is just a taste of what Discover Asia can offer you. Our main sales tool is the biggest travel brochure in the marketplace... it has 2500 pages. So we could not fit it onto a travel agent's rack. It is our website. It is full of not just touring ideas, but all of the important facts that you need to know about a destination. (climate, electricity, health etc.) It also contains a complete "Glossary of Cities" for every country (so you will know what you will see wherever you go). The information on our website is updated every Friday - a brochure can be up to one year out of date!

INDEPENDENT 'ADVENTURE' HOLIDAYS

Adventure is a state of mind. To us that means that adventure travel is an attitude, not necessarily entailing physical hardship or extreme challenges. We design our tours for people who believe travel should be an enjoyable experience, not a survival test. We believe that the more comfortable your accommodation & transport, the better you can enjoy the delights of the country you are visiting. For example, our 'bushwalking' holidays in Nepal stay in eco-lodges with private bathrooms & flushing toilets, kitchen cooked meals served in cosy surroundings and Happy Hour watching the sunset over the snow-capped peaks. On your daily trekking you are accompanied by a private English-speaking guide and all your bags are carried by a porter. All of these creature comforts, yet at hardly more cost than a tent trek.

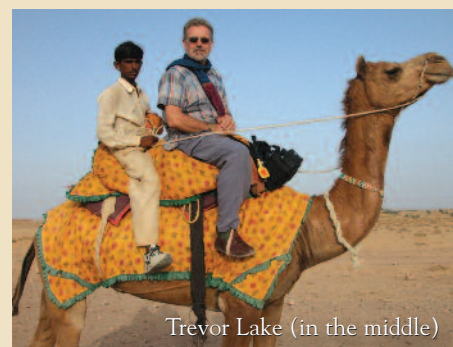
THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW

The founder of Discover Asia, Trevor Lake has gained the reputation around both Australia and Asia as "Mr Asia". His intimate, personal understanding of this complex region is your guarantee of the best holiday Asia has to offer.

We do not pay actresses and sports stars to say nice things about us, we leave it to the experts. In 1996, the well respected Australian Financial Review wrote a series of articles about "Pioneers of the Australian Travel Industry". One of only SIX people featured in these articles was Trevor Lake, about whom they said 'Trevor makes people's dreams come true'. In just 6 words they summed up what Discover Asia is all about.

IT'S YOUR HOLIDAY

The tours you will find on our website are mostly intended as 'thought starters' - whilst you can book all of them as they are shown, our intention is that they get you started on planning YOUR custom-made tour. They show you what you can do in a certain period of time and roughly what they would cost staying in different standards of hotel.



Trevor Lake (in the middle)

But, every tour can be extended, have extra cities included or change the hotel standard.

BOOKING IS JUST THE BEGINNING

After 40 years in Asia Trevor has become close personal friends with the management of the companies who will look after your arrangements whilst you are overseas. They know the high standards that Trevor sets and ensure that you are treated like 'visiting friends' throughout your tour. In most countries we include the mobile phone number of the manager of the local operator, to ring in case you have a problem.

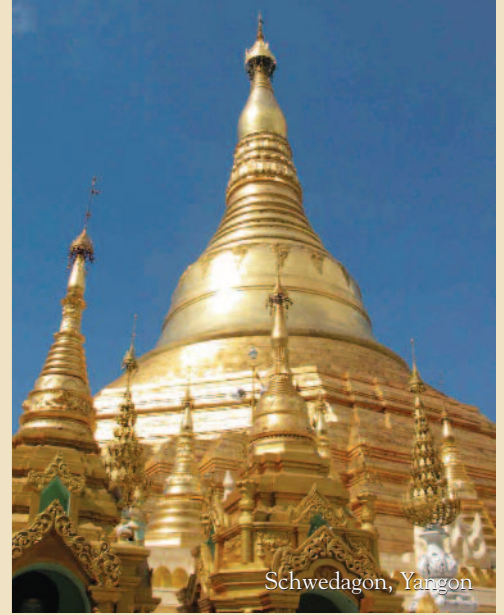
THE INTERNET V. DISCOVER ASIA

We hear it all the time... "Why should I book through you, I have the Internet?" Have you ever seen an internet site that showed you their bad side??? We are totally independent and have no bias. The most important person to us... is YOU. We are one of the few companies in Australia who will give you our PERSONAL insight about a hotel, a city, an attraction. Is there a construction site next to the hotel? When they say... "This is a must see attraction" - are they talking from the standpoint of an Oriental, or from the standpoint of a Westerner? I was once taken to the grave of a great Chinese hero... after climbing 650 steps, I was told that he was a fictional hero!!!

We have been in Asia for 40 years, you can never know more than we do. Sometimes an independent tour may cost slightly more



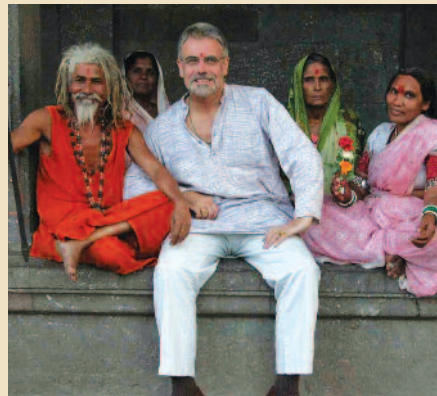
Angkor Wat, Cambodia



Schwedagon, Yangon

than a group tour - but the extra value is incalculable. We recently had a very experienced traveller who was taking a 2 month holiday, he booked his entire trip through Discover Asia. Why? Because this trip was important to him, he would never do it again and he wanted it to be perfect. IT WAS!

Try this simple test... click on 'Contact Us' on any website, or, if you are a travel agent, ask an overseas ground operator... "Is there anything more that I could / should do?". Then ring Discover Asia and ask us the same



question... we guarantee that the response from Discover Asia will be TEN times more comprehensive than anything you get from the internet! Most internet sites are 'order-takers'... not consultants. Many internet sites are happy to help you with their little bit of the world, but abandon you once you go outside of their sphere of involvement. Discover Asia is a total travel company. We are not only available on our toll-free number during business hours, but, if you prefer, we can ring you after hours in the comfort of your own home to discuss your travel plans.

INDEPENDENT TOUR REQUEST

Passenger Name: _____
 No. of people: _____ Contact details _____
 Destination: _____
 Total number of days: _____ Date of entry _____
 Room type: Twin/Double Single Triple
 Hotel Standard: _____
 Sightseeing: None Seat-in-coach Private vehicle
 Inter-city travel: Most logical Plane Train
 Cities to visit:
 (or attach your itinerary) _____
 Purpose of trip (tourist etc): _____
 Meal plan (B,L,D): Breakfast Lunch Dinner
 Special Requests: _____

FORWARD TO DISCOVER ASIA VIA YOUR TRAVEL AGENT

YOUR AGENT

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