

Testimonials

Croatia

“We would travel again with Gate 1”

Hi Mark,

We would like to congratulate you and gate1 on our Croatia trip it was first class. Elvis, our tour guide and Mario our bus driver could not do enough for us. We were very pleased with the trip and would travel again with you and gate 1.

Pauline & Peter Fleming, Tasmania

Egypt

“A magical time”

30/11/16

Dear Cati

Many thanks for organising my recent trip to Egypt. Actually my second trip in about 6 months.

Susan and Carole thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Our wonderful experience was enabled by the two best guides that I have ever met, Mostafa and Michael. We were made to feel special, they were caring and thoughtful. There was nothing that we asked that they wouldn't accommodate or tried to. Mostafa and Michael were just wonderful company, engaging, fun and definitely exceptional guides. They were constantly looking after us, providing ideas and giving advice. I would highly recommend them to anyone. These guides made our trip such an unforgettable and awesome experience.

It was a magical time for me as it was my second trip to Egypt and they welcomed me like a friend/family.

As a result of our experiences, I believe that there will be a lot more people using Destination International and Chrismar Travel in their plans to tour Egypt. I know that Carole and Susan will be letting their friends know about the safety and friendliness of the Egyptian people and the fabulous guides we had. They were in awe of the extent in what/how the guides did in order to accommodate our requests. The Chrismar team who was at the airport meet & greet, transfers etc. were also very accommodating, knowledgeable and brilliant. Meky stayed with us until we were checked in and safely through the gates even though there was a hold up and it took over an hour to complete this process. He was excellent, patient and understanding and stayed until we were through the check points on our departure.

Chrismar Travel has the BEST team that I have ever experienced so far.

I also want to mention that the Tour co-ordinator in Luxor was exceptional. He was aware that we had to continue on to Alexandria on arrival in Cairo airport and managed to upgrade us to Business Class and had tagged our luggage as priority at no extra costs, so there would be no delays for our onward trip to Alexandria. This was a very thoughtful gesture and superior service. We were very impressed and grateful.

In the beginning, I think Carole and Susan was worried and hesitant about travelling to Egypt but by the end of the trip they were convinced that they would need to return to see and absorb more of the extensive history that Egypt has to offer and the wonderful people who made it enjoyable.

Once again thank you Cati and Chrismar Travel for co-ordinating all aspects of this trip and making our holiday one of the best, enjoyable, and fantastic experiences.

Best Regards, Elaine Elphick

Egypt Testimonial

“We had a fabulous time!!!”

3rd June 2016, Destination International

Hi Cati

Thank you very much for organising a wonderful trip for us to Egypt and Jordan.

It was with great anxiety and trepidation that we decided to choose the 14 nights/15days Ancient Egypt Tour departing on 6th May 2016. Our family and friends were very worried about us and some thought we were crazy to travel to Egypt.

As you can imagine we had read a lot of write ups and asked you a lot of questions before we left as we were not sure what to expect and how safe it would be for us as tourists.

I must admit that I was quite surprised and overwhelmed at the welcome that we received from the minute we arrived at Cairo airport. Everything went like clockwork and the staff at Egypt Travel who met us at the airport and Luxor were extremely helpful and accommodating and took us under their wing. We were escorted from point to point. We didn't have to worry about a thing, even our wake-up call was organised.

However the highlight of the trip was the Nile cruise. We had an excellent guide who was very attentive, obliging and always taking care of us but also lots of fun. The guide went above and beyond what we expected. He was exceptional. He treated us with special care and wanted us to have a really great experience in Egypt. The staff on the cruise ship were also very accommodating and friendly and made us feel special and cared about their passengers. We had a fabulous time!!

In short our experience in Egypt indicated that it was very safe for tourists, especially Australian tourists. At the various tourist checkpoints, when the guards were told that we were Australians, we were waved to continue and they welcomed us.

Once again, many thanks for all the preparation, booking and of course your insight on what we required that helped make this the best holiday we've ever had. We are extremely happy that we decided to take this trip and we hope to visit Egypt again soon.

Regards

Elaine & Jen

Europe River Testimonial

"A trip to remember"

Hi Russ

Denise and I had a fantastic time! A trip to remember. Absolutely loved the cruise (my first river cruise so I wasn't sure how it would go!) The KK Opera Hotel you organised for us in Budapest was excellent. Lovely hotel and perfect location (unlike the American Gate 1 people who had a hotel that wasn't quite as central) Absolutely loved Budapest! There were about 12 Aussies on the cruise, rest were mainly Americans and Canadians. The Monarch Empress was beautiful! So new. The labels were still on the life jackets! Great accommodation and food. It was so relaxing not having to unpack for a week! All crew and tour guides were excellent. Great fun and very knowledgeable! Perhaps not as scenic as I thought (except the Wachau Valley - magnificent!) but we did travel at night. Great experience going through the locks. Shore excursions were wonderful, both the included ones and the 'extras'.

As you know we didn't book any shore excursions beforehand for the cruise, but this wasn't a problem. We were able to pay by credit card. Prices were very reasonable and the local guides (usually very young and enthusiastic!) were amazing.

Bus trip from Regensburg to Prague went smoothly. Prague was another highlight. (there were so many!!) and the hotel, the Imperial, an art deco hotel, was amazing, and again centrally located. We walked everywhere as we did in Budapest! Sad to leave. Could have easily filled in a week there.

Flight to Istanbul with Turkish airlines was great. Actually more room than Qatar, which was very cramped. Great flight attendants on both though!

Loved Turkey. Too much to write about. But Izmir and Cappadocia were the highlights. Hotels (all business hotels) were good, with the exception perhaps being the one in Antalya, a 'resort' hotel, at a pebble beach. Although the weather had warmed up, needless to say we, as Australians, didn't swim! The pool looked nice but the rooms were basic and quite grubby. We had been spoilt in Budapest and Prague! Breakfasts in all hotels were great. Lots of choice. Lovely cheeses and yogurts!!

Our tour guide (Mehmet) was very knowledgeable, but did put us to sleep at times, especially on the bus!! Also some problems with the voice boxes for tours. Often didn't work properly. We did book one tour from home (Our balloon flight with Voyager Balloons, who also arranged a private tour for us. Full day in Cappadocia and Dervish performance. Not much dearer overall.) also a day out in Izmir with Viator that ended up being with Fez Travel. This was meant to be a group tour but was only Denise and I! Tourism seems to be

down by 50 to 60 percent in some places, and locals are glad of any work. We never felt unsafe at any time by the way. Didn't even think about bombings etc!

It was probably just as well we did book some tours beforehand, as when we wanted to do the ones with Gate 1, booking through our guide, we could only pay in US dollar or by credit card if over US\$200! We should have done a few with you.

By the way (though I think Denise may have mentioned this) we have not received any contact from Gate 1 re any kind of feedback (though we were told on the cruise at least that these would be emailed to us 'very soon'). No mention of any feedback from our Turkish guide.

Thank you Russ for organising such a brilliant holiday for us!!

Truly memorable!!

We will gladly recommend DI Travel to all our friends! Also let me know if you want more detail, or if you want me to speak with any prospective travellers!!

Europe Testimonial

“I will be happy to recommend DI Travel”

Hi Russ

Just a quick note regarding our trip to Europe and Turkey. Jan and I had a great time and were very happy with the arrangements you made. We loved the K&K Hotel in Budapest. It was in an ideal position and enabled us to fully explore the city on foot. The only time we needed transport was to go to the thermal pools. The river cruise with Gate 1 was excellent. Lovely boat, informative Guides and excellent food. The transfers were reliable and in particular Chevy who took us from the hotel to the airport in Istanbul attentive and helpful. I hope you get to meet him in person some time because he was absolutely charming and looked after us very well. We had no troubles in Turkey and enjoyed the included tours. Our guide, Mehmet, was very knowledgeable and explained in great detail the historical facts about Turkey. It is a shame the tourism industry in Turkey has been so severely affected by terrorist activities. We were very lucky to be given a hotel upgrade for our last few days in Turkey and that rounded off the holiday nicely.

I will be happy to recommend DI Travel to others as all arrangements made by you were excellent. We had expected to receive something from Gate 1 asking for feedback but we have received nothing so far. I hope your trip to India went well. Please thank the girls in your office who handled our queries promptly and efficiently. I think you have a great team so keep up the good work. Very kind regards Denise

Well done to Gate 1

"Seamless, top notch, knowledgeable, organised, colourful and entertaining"

Hi Laura,

No complaints at all.

Flights and connections to hotels were seamless. Hotel quality and service was very good and comfortable. We have travelled a fair bit overseas on tours and found the Gate 1 tour guides in India and Thailand top notch. They were very knowledgeable, organised, colourful and entertaining. The Thai tour guide, Lift, was particularly good. She was an absolute entertainer and comedian.

The content of all of the options and tours was well paced. There was very good balance between the pace and the temperature (30's)

There was good variation in the food choices and exposure to local cuisine and always guidance by the tour director on what was safe.

The length of the India and Thai tour was appropriate to give a good introduction to the culture, but of course no holiday is ever long enough.

The tour buses were also excellent. The pre-trip documentation seemed to indicate the bus may not be to the typical standard but this was not the case. Bus drivers were also very capable which we seem to take for granted on tours. Assistants were also very attentive.

The start times each day were easy, although I'm normally an early riser.

I've never really had a bad experience with tour organisation or content because I am accepting of the local conditions and environment.

The only thing that can usually influence the trip are the other passengers, but in this case they were all tolerable and all from North America which seems a contradiction.

It's interesting that of all the people on the Gate 1 tour in India that went on to Thailand, we were the only ones that were on Gate 1 in Thailand. The others ended up with Asiaworld Travel. On meeting some of these travellers along the way in Thailand we realised we were the lucky ones.

Overall, we were very happy with the tour and can now tick these destinations off the list.

The cost of the tour was remarkable and we could not see any influence of this on the "experience" compared to other travel we take.

Other travel we have used has been through SNA, Trafalgar, Travel Marvel, APT and cruise lines Princes, Holland and MSC so well done to Gate 1.

Regards Wayne

Gate 1 Tours

"Gate 1 tours are so organized and our guide from Cuzco was extremely approachable and nothing was an effort"

Hi Cati,

Would like to thank you for organizing our holiday. It was excellent. Everything went very smoothly. Gate1 tours are so organized and our guide from Cuzco was extremely approachable and nothing was an effort. We were the only Aussies in our group of 19 with everyone else from the USA and great company. We had some very long dinners with our fellow travellers.

It was a busy itinerary with very early mornings. We were the only one doing the optional excursions which meant we had a personal guide and driver, but gave us little time to rest up like our fellow travellers. But all the optional tours were great and deepened our experience in the culture of Peru. Being the oldest in the group we were treated so caringly by our fellow travellers. Really felt like the senior citizens that we are. Absolutely loved Maccu Pichu that we saw in perfect weather and probably the highlight were the floating islands in Lake Titicaca.

Our time alone in Chile was great too. Cannot recommend highly enough Chilean Wine Lovers Tours. Owner Mauricio designed and took us on our tour and we were well looked after at every one of the top class wineries by either the owner or the well experienced sommeliers. It was expensive \$250 each but as we are dedicated wine lovers and members of wine and food clubs and have experienced wine tastings all over the world, and had told Mauricio this when enquiring we expected a great day and were not disappointed as it was the best wine excursion we have ever done. We caught a bus to Valparaiso. What a wonderful art nouveau city. A day was not long enough.

Kind regards, Pam

Expat Explore Tours

"Susan our tour guide is an absolute gem and Kevin our driver an equal treasure!"

Hi Laura,

Just to let you know that I am having a wonderful time here in France with Expat Explore Tours and currently now in Lourdes having experienced a delightful past few days touring down to south of France via Dijon and Lyon, onto the French Riviera area of Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and Eze. Yesterday was Pont Du Gard and Avignon and today via Carcassonne into Lourdes.

Susan our tour guide is an absolute gem and Kevin our driver an equal treasure! Hotels have been comfortable and adequate for our needs and our coach very comfortable with regular comfort stops along the way. I would have no hesitation in booking with Expat again. Excellent value! 50% of our group are Australian! All very nice people of varying age group from teens through to older than me.

Tomorrow I continue the journey to Biarritz and then Bordeaux where a group of us hope to take a guided bike ride tour. Looking forward to that!

Cheers for now Laura, Kind regards, Jacquie.

Thank you

"everything you said it would be and more"

Dear Laura,

Just back and wanted to thank you and your company for putting together a wonderful experience for both of us, it was everything you said it would be and more, all transport was on time all hotels were good to rate the Keywest tour was exceptional and FYI they would have picked us all up at the hotel, they did drop us off at our hotel, just letting you know for future, nothing went wrong we were blessed with the best weather, there were a few little things but completely out of your control, so all in all a wonderful experience thank you all again.

Regards Alan & Agnes

USA and Canada trip

"a holiday of a lifetime"

Hello Mark,

Tricia Hockey here, well we are back from our USA and Canada trip and all I can say is a very big thank you for our superb holiday. Delta is a great airline to fly with and also Alaska air was great. The hotel in New York was in a great position for all our day trips and very comfortable. The bus trip to Quebec was great and Washington was fabulous, the hotel there was a real treat.

The hotel in Seattle was sadly not up to the standard of the rest of the trip and the shuttle to Vancouver was a bit of a nightmare as well as we got caught in a traffic jam unfortunately but the bus was smelly, as the toilet was really on the nose. I think we would have preferred to go straight to Vancouver. By the time we got to our hotel in Vancouver, which by the way was the best of the whole tour, it was close to 10.30 and we had to be up at 6 the next day to get to our Rockies Tour. To be fair that is about the only thing we can fault.

The Rockies tour was magnificent and the cruise was very enjoyable, if a bit cold and wet, but hey you can't control the weather.

Our five best highlights of our trip have to be Niagara Falls, Meeting my cousin and his wife in Banff, Hubbard Glacier, Butchart Gardens, and last but not least Whistler.

Our day in Whistler was magical as we had missed out on the Sulphur mountain cable as the weather was bad so we were able to do the cable car up to Whistler and the peak to peak cable as well as the ski lift down the mountain. Also we saw bears galore up close and personal. Before we had only seen the back end of them through a bus window but at Whistler they were everywhere. Please accept our deep gratitude for giving us a holiday of a lifetime that will take a long time to forget.

THANK YOU, Cheers Tricia and Owen.

South Africa trip

"unforgettable places of interest"

Hello Mark, just thanking you so for the fantastic organization of our South African trip.

You were so spot on with the whole package, it was amazing the accuracy of the itinerary, the quality of our accommodation, and the unforgettable places of interest we experienced.

We were upgraded on arrival to an exclusive boutique hotel in Cape Town, " Dockside." It was still part of the Victoria and Alfred Hotel, very glamorous indeed. This was a total surprise.

Our breakfasts in all hotels throughout the trip were really good, and we were given packed box breakfasts when we set off early for the game drives. How brilliant was that ha!

We loved the bus tour, have never experienced one before, but can recommend it to anyone doubting ever doing it. Our tour guide Tessa Easingwood from Gate1 was fantastic, so knowledgeable, happy to share her time with us all, we will never forget her and the friends we made on the tour. We have been invited to stay with friends from U.S.A. anytime we are travelling there!!

The food wine and shopping were all great and so inexpensive.....all the more to spend ha!

Our fellow travellers from Gate1 were blown away that inclusive in our trip was the three nights at Drifters Game Lodge, which they knew nothing about so thank you for that too. Drifters was really out of this world. We were upgraded there too. How lucky to get a brand new unit, instead of the glam tents. We sat on our veranda and watched two giraffe heads appear through the trees on the other side of the dry river bed, also buffalo and baboon, how unreal. The meals served were delicious at Drifters, the chef James did an excellent job.

The game drives blew us away. Yes it was an early rise to the beat of an African Drum, but to go through the African bush in full 4 wheel drive and see wild animals was amazing. Morning coffee while the sun was rising, out there on a small hill was truly beautiful. Sundowners was also amazing watching the sun go down with a chilled wine or beer and nibbles, before doing a night drive were the highlights.

Bush walks and learning so much about the bush species and animal habit so good. Karl our guide was so caring about our welfare. I was a bit scared walking so I asked "isn't this dangerous walking in the bush, what's stopping a lion etc attacking us?" He just replied "lions are more afraid of us, and besides they don't know what we taste like, so there is no problem." I felt a bit better...until he next said " however if they do attack us it's game over as we apparently taste good!!" I did two bush walks and lived to tell the tale ha!!

Adrian and Kim run Drifters and were really great folk, it was so nice sitting around the fire after a game drive having a drink before tea, it truly is a beautiful lodge. It has been extended, and all the cabins are new, I believe the tents are being replaced with more of the eco style cabins we stayed in.

Well there is one negative, nothing to do with your part of the package..... and that was the affect of the malaria tablets we took....probably not necessary as it was winter when we were there, but a small thing compared to contracting Malaria.

So a big thank you to the crew at Destination International Holidays on a job well done!! Trish and John Freeman.

China Trip June 2014

"mystical"

Dear Joan,

It has been remiss of me not to contact you sooner. You are right, we have already been back for a month.

Joan, we had such a great time. It was culturally enriching and very authentic. We had a tour manager who was well versed on everything and from China (Annie) and each place we went we had a tour operator who knew even more about where we were! The organisation was superb – we never had to check in luggage just get our boarding pass and off we would go. The cruise was very good too. The river is very mystical and almost futuristic if I can describe it like that with massive cities just popping out of the haze from nowhere as you come around another bend and on the other side is farm land with women lining up with their wicker baskets to do the washing in the river.

I hope all is well for you.

Bye for now.

Regards, Debra