



Living her own story

Fiona Harper

A business student once asked Richard Branson, the iconic founder of The Virgin Group, how to become rich. To which the famous (and very wealthy) entrepreneur replied: "That is the wrong question. Do what you love doing and the money will come."

Whether she knows it or not, Fiona Harper has followed Branson's advice – by following her passion. "I stumbled into travel writing about 15 years ago. I was on an extended Australian cruise and started writing. I've been writing ever since," recalls Fiona. "I love travelling and I enjoy the creative process of crafting an interesting story about the journey. I am extremely lucky to be able to visit some amazing destinations as part of my job."

An Australian by birth, and a citizen of the world by nature, Fiona grew up in western Australia where the majestic karri forests and the pristine beaches gave her a lifelong love of camping. "The further I can get away from civilization, the more I enjoy it," she says.



Today, Fiona Harper is a well-known travel writer, having written hundreds of articles for scores of magazines around the world. Her words get read too – that's why she has a Google #1 page ranking for the top Australian travel writers. In 2008, she launched travelboatinglifestyle.com as a portal for her writing and adventures. Once she's picked up the scent of a story, Fiona is fully committed to capturing it. On her many assignments around the world, she has experienced extremes of comfort and discomfort. "I've slept in the same bed that was once occupied by a rock star (and probably numerous other A-list celebrities) at the Dorchester in London, lapping up all the luxuries on offer at one of the world's great hotels. I've also hiked to Mt. Everest's base camp, where I succumbed to altitude sickness and was medevacked off the mountain. I've slept on countless aircrafts, ships, buses and benches. I've even perfected the art of sleeping while waiting in a check-in line," she says with a smile.



But Fiona's life is not a solo adventure. She was on assignment in Fiji when a fellow traveler walked into her life. South African by birth, David Hartman is a photographer, artist and web producer. "He's my partner in love, life and creation," says Fiona. David shares Fiona's passion for adventure and storytelling. With his camera always handy, he has traveled the world capturing stories and stunning images for some of the world's leading media outlets, including Time Magazine, the New Yorker and CNN. "I love real stories about real people," he explains. "I once spent a year cycling round my native South Africa, taking pictures reflecting both the culture and the spirit of the time. I saw with my own eyes how the injustices of apartheid affected ordinary people – and my camera captured it for the world to see," he remembers.



Fiona and David are a formidable team. Both are master storytellers and both have seen more of the world than most people could dream of in a dozen lifetimes. They compliment each other superbly; he is the wizard of visuals, she is the wordsmith – though they're both adept at doing each other's job. Do they have any tips for fledgling nomads? "Don't put off going on an adventure just because you don't have enough money or the right gear or the time," says Fiona. "If you keep waiting for the perfect moment to head out, you'll never leave. Part of the pleasure of outdoor adventure is the challenges you meet along the way – and how you deal with them."

But if there's one challenge that Fiona and David no longer have to overcome it's knowing where to put food that needs to be frozen and beverages that need chilling. "Our Dometic CFX 75DZW cooler is a game changer! I love the flexibility that comes with it being sectioned into two parts with options for using either section as a fridge or freezer. Cold drinks and chilled food are assured – an important factor when you spend as much time in the tropics as we do," says Fiona.