

Brand Ambassador Jane Daniels



The Jane Daniels label is iconic with New Zealand design. High end fashion garments carefully crafted in New Zealand from fabric sourced from Europe's best mills.

Jane is an experienced and discerning traveller and is an avid reader of travel literature and biographies. She is the perfect litmus test for our Ancient Kingdoms Holidays. For the past four years she has acted as our travel ambassador. With Jane Daniels, Innovative Travel found a great synergy. Our companies were established over 20 years ago, with a passion to create only the best for our clients, combined with a mutual fascination for history.

"I unwittingly chose Innovative Travel 20 years ago. I have annually collected and kept Ancient Kingdom's holiday brochures for the one day when I will...."

Over the past four years I have fulfilled some lifelong dreams. A visit to Jordan and especially the rose red ancient city of Petra, followed by a "whirling" adventure through Turkey with exciting Istanbul and tranquil Cappadocia, onto ancient Syria visiting old Damascus and Palmyra amongst the desert sands, and finally unforgettable Egypt: Abu Simbel, the Sphinx, cruising up the Nile observing small hamlets from the deck of the luxurious Tu Ya cruise boat, visiting temples, absorbing history along the way.

Jane Daniels in Iran



In 2010 I chose to visit the ancient land of Persia: Iran, a land of hidden gems waiting to be re-discovered. I went searching for the Islamic architecture, a style I have grown to love having seen stunning examples in Venice and in the Alhambra in Granada. My passion for Persian carpets, calligraphy and richly coloured tiles drew me to the land of the fabled Scheherazade, Aladdin and Ali Baba from the One Thousand and One Nights.

Innovative Travel works with the best people on the ground in Iran. Their efficient system of using local people in each destination not only enabled me to see the key places of interest but also enabled me substantial insight into the local customs and the way of life: ancient and modern.

For all my efforts to blend in, I was often pleasantly greeted in English, and often by families wanting to chat and take photos together. Iranians on the whole are extraordinarily friendly and in Esfahan, Shiraz and Yazd I had sympathy for our guide as it was difficult to stay on schedule due to the number of families I met and their offers of hospitality.

I have books on Iran that are cover to cover with tiles, minarets and domes, but was not prepared for the sense of beauty you feel when you look at something in its own situation. Beautiful shimmering turquoise domes and tall minarets spring up from towns like the mountains in Iran spring up from the desert. Vibrant tiles contrast brilliantly with the old village buildings and desert colours.

Since reading, many years ago, Robert Byron's "The Road to Oxiana" with his superb description of Esfahan, this city has been a place of special interest to me. The main attraction being the Imam square: it is one giant polo field, curtained by shops and bazaars. At the head of the square, a giant mosque with a turquoise dome and on one side a 5 storey palace, resting on giant maple supports, looks across to a pale coffee coloured dome seemingly embroidered in navy and white. I visited all in turn. For the mosque, I was respectfully covered in a chador. As I entered, a portal covered in beautifully decorated squinches towered above me and led me into the main courtyard. Here a reflective pool allows a cool breeze and offers an extraordinary image in reverse to photograph. In a shaded side annex, a sea of women approaches in black chador. As the women pass, I look back through the tiled archway to see sails of billowing black emerge in the bright sunlight.

I reflect quietly...yes, I really am here.

