

# TRAVEL QUEST

Winter 2013

## Totality 2012 p. 4

Four trips offered, four tales of success.

## On to Africa in 2013 p. 10

The Moon's shadow next appears over Africa.

# TRAVEL QUEST

## Features

### Totality 2012: Four Stories

From a cattle ranch in Australia and a ship off the Oz coast to a pair of vessels in the South Pacific, TravelQuest travelers were treated to fine views of totality.

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### On to Africa for Totality in 2013

We have three options for a TQ African adventure this autumn: one by sea with the mobility of a ship to chase totality, and two by land with the amazing experience of a total eclipse at sunset.

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### On the Cover:

Totality at sea. This composite, created by Richard Tresch Fienberg, shows totality from the *m/s Paul Gauguin*.



TRAVELQUEST  
international

305 Double D Drive  
Prescott, Arizona 86303 USA  
1-800-830-1998 (US and Canada)  
1-928-445-7754 (International)  
Fax: 1-928-445-8771  
[Travel@TravelQuestTours.com](mailto:Travel@TravelQuestTours.com)

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# Reflections

On a late, warm August night this past summer, I followed (via the Internet) the landing on Mars of NASA's 'Curiosity' rover. In particular, I was fascinated by the scientists in the JPL control room, each with a specific responsibility for the project's success. I can barely imagine the precision and detail involved.

In the moments leading to the landing, I watched the simulations of the rover's entry into the Martian atmosphere; the deployment of the parachute that in one 9G jolt took the Curiosity lander from 1000 mph to 200; the thrusters hovering the craft 20 meters over the Martian landscape; and the 'sky crane' lowering the rover onto the surface only to then fly off and land a safe distance away. Then it happened, just as those simulations showed! And almost immediately after landing, Curiosity sent back the first of two images of the Martian landscape.

All this was accomplished in one go, from millions of miles away. Only after many hours of contemplation, anticipation, and discussion (not to mention rehearsals via computer simulation), can something as monumental as this landing be accomplished. Everything was planned, and it all came off without a hitch. What an accomplishment!

We at TravelQuest plan and operate our eclipse trips along these very same lines. First, we identify where we are going to view totality, and then we decide how to build an eclipse trip

around that locale. Next, we assemble the best team possible to help us achieve our mission. Then, we all sit down and try to anticipate every possible action and reaction. And while one can never foresee every scenario, we believe that if we can identify 90% of them, we can handle the balance in real time while the trip is in progress.



**Greetings from the surface of Mars: a self-portrait by Curiosity.**

Seeing those serious scientists jumping up and down and hugging one another when Curiosity successfully landed, it reminded me of those 'after a successful eclipse tour' toasts and hugs our Trip Leaders all share before heading home. Whether it's landing a machine on Mars, or saying goodbye to a happy group of eclipse chasers, it is moments like these that make all the hard work worthwhile. 

Aram Kaprielian

## Notebook



Nearly 700 TravelQuest eclipse chasers journeyed to the South Pacific and Australia last November to see the November 14 total solar eclipse. Sadly, I wasn't with them. But at least in this issue, we can all relive the experiences of those who went. Four TQ tours, four successes.

Not bad considering many in the Cairns region were clouded out, and there were stories of one totality-bound ship not reaching the centerline in time (and rumors of another that wasn't completely successful at dodging the clouds). Organizing eclipse trips is not for the faint of heart!

Tour logistics are always challenging, especially when attempting to guide a large group a great distance. Having groups aboard a ship certainly helps, but in 2013 two of the three TravelQuest eclipse trips are on land. But thanks to TQ scouting trips well in advance of totality, experienced TravelQuest Trip Leaders, and guidance from Jay Anderson, TQ's eclipse meteorologist, we plan to always provide an excellent experience that includes totality. 

Paul Deans

# A Lucky Australian Eclipse Adventure

Story and photos by Gary Seronik

There's just something in the nature of a total eclipse of the Sun that seems to invite anxiety. The issue of course isn't whether or not the event will happen — celestial mechanics ensure that's never in doubt. Rather, it's whether the weather will cooperate. All eclipse watchers seem to fall prey to a kind of meteorological madness that turns normally calm and rational individuals into anxious cloud watchers.

**4:00 am. Wetherby Station, Queensland, Australia. November 14, 2012.** We have arrived at our eclipse-viewing site and everyone is surprisingly alert considering that most got up before 3:00 am. TravelQuest guests stream out of a trio of buses, clutching tripods and camera bags, and head for a big open paddock that features a fine view of the eastern horizon. Stumbling around in the predawn with totality still hours off, no one seems to notice the low, puffy clouds that swim lazily across the sky, occasionally blotting out remaining bright stars. But of course, that will soon change.

**5:15 am.** As soon as tripods are planted and scopes and cameras are set up, anxious eyes scan the brightening dawn. "What do you think Gary?" I get asked that a lot. "I'm not a meteorologist, and I don't play one on television," I laugh. Then I quickly add, "Climate is what you expect, weather is what you get, but I've brought my lucky hat just in case."

The "lucky hat" is a joke left over from my previous night's eclipse briefing. After detailing the lengths that Aram and Jay Anderson had gone through to find us the best spot in Australia with the finest weather prospects, and after discussing Jay's last-minute predictions, I assured everyone that no matter what, we'd be okay because I brought my lucky hat. The lucky hat, I explained, has a perfect record. Every time I've worn it, I've had a perfect view of totality. What I didn't mention is that the hat's 100% success rate was earned at a single event, the 2006 Egyptian eclipse. No one needed to know that.

**5:57 am.** The Sun peeks over the distant gum trees that define our eastern horizon. It's greeted with enthusiastic cheers that echo up and down the grassy paddock. The solar disk is already partly covered, and the countdown to totality is underway. But there are still threatening clouds.

I don't let on that I'm getting a bit worried. The sky is now



**TQ travelers anxiously watching the late partial phases with their eclipse glasses. Most of the group was strung out along the upper end of the Wetherby Station paddock.**

more cloudy than clear, and there's a particularly menacing dark gray patch hovering perilously near the now mostly eclipsed Sun. The optimist in me notes that at least we can still see the Sun. The pessimist in me is already formulating the "well, at least we experienced the eclipse..." consolation speech.

**6:33 am.** With totality only minutes away, low clouds are everywhere, though still, miraculously, staying clear of the Sun. I walk back to where my scope is set up and feel...rain? Just a few droplets, but still — that's not good. Quietly, I reach into my tote bag and pull out my hat. "Here's hoping this really is a lucky hat," I mumble. In the scope I see the last silvery arc of Sun shrink down and then, with surprising suddenness, shrink to nothing.

**6:38:12 am.** Filters off! Totality! Corona! "Ohmygod! Lookatthoseprominences," someone yells! Giddy laughter, cheers, unintelligible cries of delight, surprise, and joy bounce through the air. With the eclipsed Sun only 13° above the horizon, the Moon illusion kicks in big time and the corona looks surreally large. It's almost as if we're seeing it through 2x binoculars. There's no time to register anything except the coronal grandeur in front of us.

And then, before anyone is ready, before anyone can quite believe it, our two minutes are up and the spectacle ends as suddenly and as beautifully as it started — with a dazzling diamond ring.

**6:40:15 am.** The spell is broken, and excitement yields to



Our cloud situation during totality, though the photo makes it seem worse than it appeared at the time. The buildings in the distance are part of Wetherby Station.

calm, exuberance to introspection. I see tears in the eyes of many of my fellow shadow-chasers. It's a combination of relief and pure happiness from having witnessed nature's greatest spectacle. Now the clouds, seemingly so patient, gradually move in to claim their prize. It's okay though. We saw the eclipse and they can do what they want.

And my lucky hat is still 100%. 

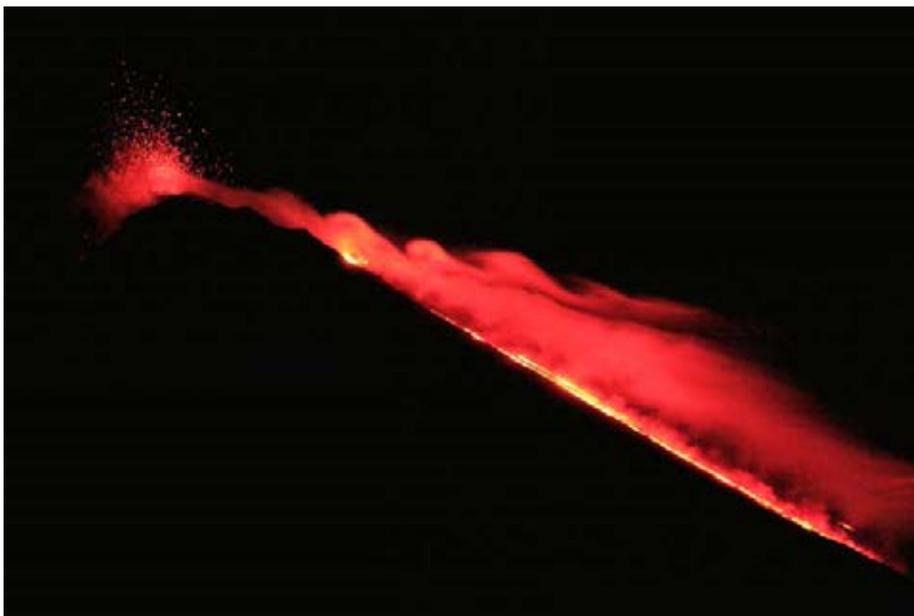
**Gary Seronik is the 'resident' astronomer for TravelQuest's annual Costa Rica Southern Sky Party, and a freelance writer and editor who writes for a variety of astronomy-related publications.**

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## A Volcano and Totality

Story and photos by Jay Anderson

"Tonight we have a barbecue on the back deck — with a special treat. Tonight, about 8, we'll be passing Manam Island where there is an active volcano. We don't know how active, but lava was visible the last time we passed this way."



An eclipse expedition with an active volcano? Now that would be a treat. And what a volcano!

It wasn't long afterward that the approaching gloom of night revealed the orange glow of devilish fires off the port bow, shining on the low-hanging clouds that had bothered the trip up to that point. We were 91 happy travelers on board the *Orion*, intent on a little adventure before installing ourselves within the shadow track in time for the eclipse. But for that night, Manam was the treat, with sparks of incandescent rock arcing high into the air above the caldera, while rivulets of glowing magma ran down the slopes (*left*).

### Through Papua New Guinea

Our eclipse expedition assembled in Cairns on November 3rd for a quick look around and an overnight stay, and then flew north the next day to Rabaul on New Britain Island to join the *Orion*. Rabaul was once the

capital of East New Britain province, but it was largely destroyed by a volcanic eruption in 1994. The port was spared, however, and so for the remainder of November 4th and for the whole of the 5th, we were able to explore the remnants of the city and the nearby volcanoes.

Rabaul is a shadow of its former glory. Broad avenues of stately homes, businesses, and mango trees are now little more than foundations shrouded in dusty excreta of the volcano. It isn't completely gone, as the ash falls spared the port and the southernmost reaches of the community. Economic activity, mostly connected to the port, continues at a much slower pace, but government functions and most of the residents have departed for the new capital, 20 kilometers to the south.

From Rabaul, the expedition was all business. After a day at sea, we anchored off the Sepik River and traveled upstream by Zodiac to be welcomed at Watam Village by a nautical procession and a dragon. Here we had our first opportunity to buy artifacts and souvenirs. The following day, we reached Madang, a community verging on city-size, where facilities allowed us to dock and go ashore to visit the teeming markets and purchase more unique local crafts.

At Tami Island, a coral atoll gave the snorkelers a chance to sample the local waters, and after another reception, a chance to buy artifacts and souvenirs. On the 10th, we hove to at Tufi, where the residents took us hiking across the hills to an overlook high above the coast — followed by yet another opportunity to acquire handcrafted mementos.

Leaving New Guinea for Australia across the Coral Sea exposed us to the wind and wave of open water. But after eight days of nearly continuous cloud cover, it was a delight



Going ashore from the *Orion* on a typical “wet” landing.



to see stars and constellations of the Southern Hemisphere, and the evenings were punctuated with green laser flashes as we sought out the nebulae and clusters.

### Totality Off Australia

Eclipse day found us inside the Great Barrier Reef, in a sky of scattered cumulus clouds. For the first time on the voyage, we were able to see the Sun climb out of its horizon bed and shortly thereafter, the first nudge of lunar limb against the solar disk. There were moments of concern when a cloud would intervene and the tension grew as clouds seemed to thicken with the climbing Sun.

As the minutes before second contact (the start of totality) eroded away, it became apparent that we were drifting into one cumulus cloud, and 91 travelers paused in their collective breathing. By now many were convinced that the eclipse would be muted by one insignificant obscuration. The Captain was up to the task, however, easing the ship's speed from six to four knots so that the cloud moved ahead of the Sun and totality began and ended in a cloud-free hole.

The eclipse, with its startlingly symmetrical corona, was a delight. Everything was there — chromosphere, prominences, plumes, corona, Venus, beads, and diamond ring at the end — all in a magnificent setting. The consensus was that it was a perfect eclipse trip, made all the better by Manam Island and its volcano, and the precious artifacts and mementos that we'd gathered along the way. 

**Jay Anderson is a meteorologist who specializes in predicting eclipse-day weather. As well as being a TQ Trip Leader, Jay is an instrumental part of TravelQuest's eclipse-site scouting team.**

# Eclipse 2012 Aboard the m/s *Paul Gauguin*

Story by Richard Tresch Fienberg

The Pacific Ocean is big. How big? It covers about a third of Earth's surface and could hold all the planet's land masses with room to spare. If you had to guess where any particular total eclipse of the Sun might be visible, you could do a lot worse than to say "somewhere in the Pacific Ocean." Indeed, in all three of the most recent total solar eclipses, and in four of the last six, the Moon's umbral shadow spent much of its time on Earth crossing the vast South Pacific. All four times the m/s *Paul Gauguin*, a luxury cruise ship based in Tahiti, maneuvered into position on the centerline.

And all four times the ship's 330 passengers and 211 crew members successfully experienced the profound excitement, beauty, and wonder that is totality.

In my experience, roughly half the passengers on an eclipse cruise are onboard to experience their first totality, whereas the other half have stood in the Moon's shadow at least once, and perhaps more than a dozen times, before. This was borne out on the *Gauguin*, but there was a twist: Many who'd cruised to totality in the past had done it on this very ship!

The same was true for numerous crew members too, but not for Captain Tony Mirkovic. By luck of the draw, his colleague Rajko Zupan had been in command for all three of the ship's previous eclipse expeditions. Capt. Mirkovic, a personable Croatian with a twinkle in his eye, projected all the confidence and competence of a seasoned skipper and knew exactly what he needed to do to achieve success, having been briefed thoroughly by Capt. Zupan before embarking. At the same time, you could tell he was tinged by the anxiety that afflicts all eclipse virgins. He knew he'd get us to the right place at the right time, but would the weather cooperate?



**Totality above the *Paul Gauguin*. Photo by Antonio Delle Monache, courtesy Paul Gauguin Cruises.**

## Eclipse Day

As we approached our eclipse-viewing position south of New Caledonia before dawn on November 14th, Capt. Mirkovic noticed a bank of clouds sitting nearly motionless a few thousand feet above calm seas. So he stopped about five miles short — still on the centerline, but well clear of the clouds — and waited. As twilight brightened, passengers began emerging from their cabins and setting up their equipment on deck. Capt. Mirkovic continued to monitor the wind and the current and soon realized that, if we stayed put, we'd eventually be overtaken by that pesky bank of clouds, which had begun drifting toward us. He turned the ship around, and we motored with the wind at our backs to stay one step ahead of the threat.

The strategy paid off: We saw the entire eclipse in a clear sky. And what an eclipse it was! With the maximum of the solar-activity cycle predicted to occur next year, we expected to see a "round" corona, with streamers extending in all directions around the silhouette of the Moon rather than only parallel to the Sun's equator, as is usually the case at solar minimum. As the first diamond ring gave way to totality and the solar corona took center stage, that's just what we saw: a



Courtesy Michel Girardin.

attention from the waning partial eclipse to the waxing full breakfast! Suddenly a voice came on the loudspeaker to announce the impending appearance of a third diamond ring. With onlookers cheering, Michel Tournay slipped a diamond ring on Susan Petry's finger (*left*), and she accepted his proposal. The two met while traveling separately with TravelQuest to Easter Island for the July 2010 total solar eclipse, and from now on, they'll see all their eclipses together!

As each eclipse ends, the inevitable question arises: Where's the next one? You could guess "somewhere in the Pacific Ocean," but that wouldn't be right, at least not for the November 2013 or March 2015

eclipses. But the Pacific is too big a target to miss for long, and in March 2016 the Moon's shadow falls there once again, this time in the vicinity of Indonesia. That's too far afield for the *Gauguin*, which has probably seen its last eclipse for quite some time. But that won't stop most of us from making our way to the centerline, on land or at sea, for another chance to delight in Nature's greatest spectacle. 

**Richard Tresch Fienberg is the press officer for the American Astronomical Society. He is scheduled to be a Trip Leader on TravelQuest's 2013 West Africa Total Solar Eclipse Cruise.**

celestial sunflower, with a crown of petals made up of ghostly coronal streamers.

This was my 10th total solar eclipse. I consider myself experienced, but as anyone who's seen at least one totality knows, it's impossible to become jaded. The fact is, each time totality begins, I find myself awestruck at the sight of the resplendent corona. Inevitably I find myself temporarily dumbstruck too — which is inconvenient, and not a little embarrassing, given my role as eclipse narrator!

Soon after the second diamond ring heralded the end of totality, all but the most dedicated diehards turned their

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## Picture-perfect Totality From the *Millennium*

Story and photos by J Kelly Beatty

On paper, the prospects of seeing November's total solar eclipse from aboard the Celebrity *Millennium* were excellent. During its 20-day cruise from Honolulu to Sydney, the big ship would intercept the Moon's shadow about 100 miles equatorward of New Zealand's North Island — a region dominated by high-pressure weather patterns and noted for generous amounts of cloud-free sunshine. Our position would afford 3½ minutes of totality, more than at any of the other TravelQuest viewing locations farther west along the track. And of course the *Millennium* could be moved to avoid clouds if necessary.

Yet, even with such advantages, this was no "sure thing." Eclipse day was still more than a week away when we boarded the ship in Honolulu, but TravelQuest's staff (led by veteran Trip Manager Deborah Carter) got to work on logistics right away. Within hours she and I had met with cruise director Rich Clesen to get the ball rolling.

### Across the Pacific

After a stop in Hilo, we headed southwest across the Pacific. Although this was my third eclipse expedition aboard a ship, I'd never crossed the equator or the international dateline while at sea. As we steamed into the Southern Hemisphere,



**TQ trip leader/astronomer Kelly Beatty and trip manager Deborah Carter discuss eclipse-day planning with Captain Zisis Taramas and navigation officer Justin Palermo on the bridge of the *Millennium*.**

King Neptune assembled everyone around his poolside throne and decided the fate of many “pollywogs” (first-time equator crossers) during an elaborate and comical ceremony.

I don’t know any stargazer who doesn’t dream about seeing the magnificent southern sky from a dark location, and on several clear nights *Millennium’s* crew obliged us by turning off the lighting around the ship’s expansive aft deck. There we used binoculars, a few small telescopes, and just our eyes to view the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds, the famous Southern Cross, and a host of constellations that many TQ travelers had never seen before.

As eclipse day approached, the planning sessions with Captain Zisis Taramas and lead navigation officer Justin Palermo got more involved. We agreed that the ship would follow the path’s centerline toward the east-southeast. But to

reach the path of totality in time, we had to leave Suva, Fiji (our last pre-eclipse port of call), hours earlier than usual and race toward our viewing location for 1½ days at a sustained speed of more than 18 knots.

Fortunately, eclipse morning dawned bright and clear. A wind-driven storm had passed through the area the day before, leaving behind dry, nearly cloud-free skies. As the *Millennium* made a broad turn onto the eclipse centerline, the seas calmed and the wind lessened to a light breeze.

TravelQuest’s 246 travelers and staff joined the ship’s 1,800 other passengers (and its crew of nearly 1,000) topside. In the moments before second contact, we could see the Moon’s shadow rushing up from behind us.



**To celebrate our successful observation from within the Moon’s shadow, *Millennium* pastry chef Guillermo Dolande created a special “eclipse dessert” for the TravelQuest staff.**

Totality was breathtaking and completely unobscured. Ironically, I saw only a few seconds of it! You see, I was providing eclipse commentary on the public-address system from the bridge, where Captain Zisis, his officers, and I had to take turns leaning out of a single open window to glimpse the corona. But it was hugely satisfying nonetheless — and my celebratory bottle of Corona beer never tasted better. 🍷

**J Kelly Beatty is a Senior Contributing Editor for *Sky & Telescope* magazine and is a member of the astronomy faculty at the Clay Center Observatory in suburban Boston. Prior to this eclipse, he journeyed with TravelQuest to see the 2012 Transit of Venus in Tahiti.**



**Second contact, courtesy Mike Reynolds.**

# On to Africa for Totality in 2013

by the TravelQuest Team

## Picture yourself...

- Sailing down the western coast of Africa aboard an intimate cruise ship, venturing ashore at colonial ports to explore exotic bazaars and haunting desert landscapes.
- On safari in Kenya's most renowned game reserves, traveling with expert guides in search of lions, elephants, giraffes, cheetahs, and countless other species as you cross the land of the Masai.
- Venturing deep into the heart of Ethiopia from the bustling markets of Addis Ababa to remote tribal communities seldom visited by outsiders.
- Watching in awe on November 3, 2013, as the Moon's shadow sweeps over you and the Sun's pearly corona and fiery red prominences are revealed.

While you can't do the first three in a single trip, TravelQuest does offer you options for an amazing African adventure and totality experience this November.

## West Africa Total Solar Eclipse Cruise

On this 15-day adventure cruise aboard yacht-like *Corinthian*, you'll sail from Malaga, Spain, down the west coast of Africa to Freetown, Sierra Leone. Some of the numerous stops along the way include Casablanca and Marrakech (Morocco), Lanzarote (Canary Islands), and Dakar (Senegal). Then in the ocean southwest of Freetown, you'll experience 1 minute 30 seconds of totality — a mere 10 seconds less than the maximum possible during this eclipse. The mobility offered by a ship-based platform, and the high altitude of the Sun, greatly increases the odds of a successful eclipse expedition.



Spices for sale in a market in Marrakech. Courtesy Paul Deans.

## Kenya Safari & Total Solar Eclipse

Your five days on safari include stays in two of Kenya's most famous game parks: Amboseli, overlooked by Mount Kilimanjaro, and Masai Mara, home to the legendary Masai, with their tall spears and distinctive red shúkàs. If you select this tour, you have two different post-safari eclipse-viewing options.



© iStockphoto.

The Uganda Eclipse option takes you to the Albertine Rift Valley and Murchison Falls National Park — home to nearly 80 species of mammals and more than 450 types of birds. The reserve is bisected by the Victoria Nile, which plunges over the remnant rift valley wall to create the park's dramatic centerpiece. Your eclipse-viewing site is nearby, where you'll see 22 seconds of totality prior to sunset.

Your other eclipse-viewing option takes you into northwest Kenya and a desert landscape where our earliest human ancestors likely watched the same phenomenon two million years ago. From our exclusive private camp on the eastern shore of Lake Turkana, you'll witness 14 seconds of totality, with the eclipsed Sun hanging a mere 12° above the western horizon.

## Totality in Ethiopia

This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to venture deep into the heart of Ethiopia — the only African nation never colonized by Europeans and one that remains largely unexplored by travelers. From the bustling markets of Addis Ababa to remote tribal communities seldom visited by outsiders, at every turn you'll encounter another dimension of this exotic land and its welcoming people.

From the headwaters of the Blue Nile to coffee farms growing the country's best-known export, from historic lakeside monasteries to villages of the Hamar and Konso

tribes, you'll see an Ethiopia that you'd have difficulty finding on your own. And then, of course, there's TQ's astronomical centerpiece. On November 3rd, at a southern site near the Kenyan border, you complete your journey with the experience of a lifetime: viewing an 11-second total solar eclipse with the Sun hovering over the western horizon.

No matter which journey you choose, it's sure to be an amazing adventure. For more information about each tour, visit [TravelQuest's website](#) or call us at 1-800-830-1998 (US and Canada); 1-928-445-7754 (International). 

Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile in Ethiopia. Courtesy Michel Girardin.



## Focus On Costa Rica: 10 Years and Counting

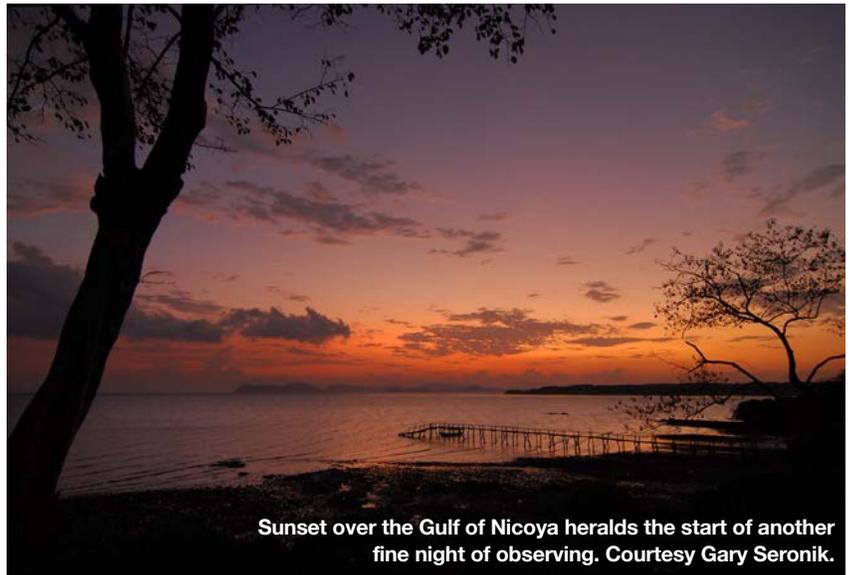
by the TravelQuest Team

Perhaps the best thing about our annual [Costa Rica Southern Sky Party](#) (other than the fabulous observing) is that you can do as little, or as much, as you please. During the day, you can sleep in late, relax in the lodge, take a dip in the refreshing pool or enjoy optional activities such as horseback riding or guided nature walks to spot exotic birds and wildlife.

Dinner is served nightly around 5:00 pm, allowing plenty of time to prepare for a great night under the stars. In mid-March, the nights at our viewing location are about 10 hours long: the Sun sets just after 6:00 pm local time, with astronomical twilight ending less than an hour later.

Then, of course, there's the observing. From our site at 10° N latitude, we can enjoy superb views of the southern night sky — exploring the Large Magellanic Cloud, Omega Centauri, the Southern Cross, the Eta Carinae Nebula and countless other gems of the Milky Way.

According to tour leader Gary Seronik, we'll search the west as twilight fades for a possible guest appearance by recently discovered Comet Pan-STARRS. Then our observing night continues with the incredible expanse of Milky Way that runs from Carina into the Southern Cross. As that begins



Sunset over the Gulf of Nicoya heralds the start of another fine night of observing. Courtesy Gary Seronik.

to set, we see the Scorpius portion of the Milky Way rising.

Join TravelQuest and astronomy author Gary Seronik as we carry on a great tradition: our 10th annual [Costa Rica Southern Sky Party, March 9 to 16](#). You'll enjoy five nights of uninterrupted stargazing from the grounds of our private Star Lodge situated on the Gulf of Nicoya. Only a handful of openings remain, so if you're interested, please contact us immediately. 

# Travel Talk: You're Back; Now What?

Once upon a time, when Kodak was a company whose stock you wished you owned, coming back from a trip meant taking in your film to be developed. Then...well, it depended on the medium you used. If prints, you created a photo album to pass around to family and friends while sitting in the living room after dinner. If slides, you hauled out the slide projector after dinner and hoped that your guests wouldn't fall asleep (or at least wouldn't snore) during the show.

These days, what do you do with the thousands of digital images from your last trip? Many travelers select a handful of images and post them on their Facebook or MySpace site, upload them to Flickr or PictureSocial, or put them on their blog. If you shot video, YouTube is the logical display choice.

But speaking as a dinosaur (I admit it; I shot slides and inflicted slide shows on my family and friends), I still like to experience that personal interaction when it comes to showing trip photos. Getting a "like" or "thumbs up" attached to my online image from someone I don't know just doesn't do it for me. I'd rather have in-person reactions, even if they're not always positive. So I use two "old-school" approaches to showing folks the results of my latest TQ trip.

One is to put together a slide show using PowerPoint (or Keynote, Apple's equivalent). It can be very simple — fancy effects not needed. You can set it up to run automatically, or operate it manually. And best of all, it's now easy to hook your computer into a flat-screen TV and view your photos on a truly large screen (so they'd better be good shots!).

The other is to self-publish a book of trip images. This may sound like a lot of work, but creating a photo book requires less effort than did making a photo album in the old days. Photos, image captions, a little text — and you're done. Search "self-publishing ebooks" to find printer options; we use Blurb for TQ's Eclipse Memory Books. And you can always order extra copies as gifts for family and friends.

No matter what approach you take, most of your effort will involve winnowing those thousands of images. Ah for the days of film, when a few hundred photos defined a trip!

  
— PD

## Upcoming Adventures

### 10th Annual Costa Rica Southern Sky Party

A tropical climate, excellent southern-sky views, great accommodations, and the company of like-minded travelers. This is an amazing astronomical adventure close to home.

**March 9 - 16, 2013**

### Iceland: Fire, Ice & Aurora

Explore the surreal beauty of Iceland by day, and watch the aurora borealis by night.

**September 29 - October 6, 2013**

### West Africa Total Solar Eclipse Cruise

Sail down the western coast of Africa (from Spain to Sierra Leone) aboard an intimate cruise ship, and catch 1 minute 30 seconds of totality at sea on November 3rd.

**October 22 - November 5, 2013**

### Totality in Ethiopia

From the headwaters of the Blue Nile to historic lakeside monasteries, we'll show you the Ethiopia that you may never find on your own. Then we'll be in position for a stunning 11-second total solar eclipse.

**October 24 - November 8, 2013**

### Kenya Safari & Total Solar Eclipse

Go on safari in Kenya's most renowned game reserves, and witness a sunset total eclipse of the Sun in the heart of Africa (either Kenya or Uganda).

**October 26 - November 5, 2013**

### Totality 2015: Svalbard or the Faroe Islands & Iceland. March 2015

Be the first to learn about these two eclipse trips.

To learn more about our other trips, please visit our new and improved website:

[TravelQuestTours.com](http://TravelQuestTours.com) 

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