

SJR TOUR NEWSLETTER

February 2024

www.stjamesrail.org / 0418 585 838



SRI LANKA BY PRIVATE TRAIN 25 Feb – 18 March 2024

Boasting eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 1,330 km of coastline, 15 national parks, an abundance of wildlife, 250 acres of botanical gardens, 350 waterfalls, and a culture that extends back to over 2,500 years. The island has a wonderful broad gauge colonial-relic railway system very much as the British left it, none of it electrified. **TWO PLACES LEFT !**



JAPAN 2024 / 2025

Takako includes unique elements in her **Japan** tours – ‘Autumn Colours’, ‘Kyushu by Rail’ and ‘Cherry Blossoms.’ With a focus to explore regional Japan with its rich nature, folk crafts, food and interesting history – plan to experience the stunning Japanese scenery on one of our rail tours. **Cherry Blossom 2025 and Autumn Colours & Festivals 2024 have places available.**

Iceland by land – 3 to 19 August 2025; and by sea to 2 September 2025 cruising to New York






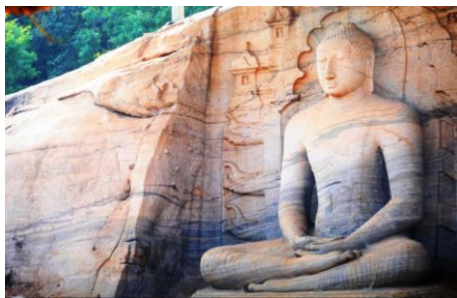
Fly to Reykjavik, then experience twelve days sightseeing by land around the island. Explore Iceland’s amazing landscape, from both land and sea, including visits to Skaftafell, the jewel in the crown of Vatnajökull National Park, which encompasses a breathtaking collection of peaks and glaciers; Vesturland and the Snæfellsnes Peninsula; journey through Höfn í Hornafirði, a small Icelandic fishing town in the southeastern part of the country, near Hornafjörður fjord, Djúpivogur and Egilsstaðir. Geological landscapes around Myvatn, Akureyri, Iceland’s second largest city, and to the Snæfellsnes Peninsula. Then cruise to New York aboard Silversea’s *Silver Shadow*. **A brochure is available.**






Switzerland / Austria by Rail – June 2024



(Brusio spiral loop on the Bernina Express from Chur to Tirano)
Enjoy the stunning landscapes of Switzerland and Austria by Rail. Amazing rail experiences – mountains, lakes, rivers – fantastic scenery, great hotels. Cruise the Lakes of Geneva, Zurich and Luzern, some on century old steamships; ascend Pilatus; the Jungfrau and Schilthorn. Rack and mountain railways that reveal fantastic views over the mountains and valleys of the Swiss and Austrian landscape. Cross the Bernina and the UNESCO listed World Heritage Rhaetian Railway – into Italy at Tirano – experience amazing engineering that enabled the landscapes of Switzerland and Austria to be settled. Lovely hotels and free time to explore in picturesque locations and villages. **A brochure is available – 2 places remain.**

<p>Various dates in 2024</p>	<p>Luncheon and sashiko lesson with Takako</p>	<p>Meet at the Tattersalls Club, 181 Elizabeth St, Sydney, overlooking Hyde Park. Enjoy a two-hour sashiko lesson – learning about its history and making your own creation. Takako will provide all the things you need – needle, threader, pattern and cloth – flown in from Japan. Join a relaxing luncheon in the restaurant before or after if you wish. Call 0418 585 865 or email to join.</p> 
<p>Sun 4 to Sun 25 February 2024</p>	<p>The Northern Lights, Scandinavia and the Norwegian Coastal journey</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div> <p>Explore Oslo and Bergen, before boarding the newest ship on the Norwegian Coastal journey. Travel north along the Norwegian Coast from Bergen to Kirkenes , returning to Trondheim, hunting the midnight sun. Experience Norway when snow covers fjords with a winter landscape. Explore the historic City of Kings in Trondheim, the UNESCO heritage listed village of Roros; horse sleigh rides and dog sledding in winter – and more. A brochure is available – call/email if interested.</p>
<p>Sun 25 February – Mon 18 March 2024</p>	<p>Sri Lanka by private train</p>	 <p>A place where the original soul of Buddhism still flourishes and where nature’s beauty remains abundant and unspoilt. Few places in the world offer such a remarkable combination of stunning landscapes, pristine beaches, captivating cultural heritage and unique experiences within such a compact location. Boasting eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 1,330 km of coastline, 15 national parks, an abundance of wildlife, 250 acres of botanical gardens, 350 waterfalls, and a culture that extends back to over 2,500 years. The island has a wonderful broad gauge colonial-relic railway system very much as the British left it, none of it electrified. The railway reaches the highest summit anywhere in the world of broad gauge railway at an impressive 6228ft. We travel with our private “Viceroy” train and explore the island. Cultural highlights and natural wonders, amazing bird life and nature reserves boasting elephants and other wildlife.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>

<p>Wed 20 March to Thu 11 April 2024</p>	<p>Cherry Blossoms - Japan by Rail</p>	<p>Join us for one of our most popular tours to Japan - a twenty-two-day tour to view cherry blossoms on the Japanese islands of Kyushu, Honshu and Hokkaido. Even if you've been to Japan before, you'll visit different locations and have a deeper cultural experience. Travel first class on the high speed 'Shinkansen' trains, enjoy special scenic rail journeys through the countryside. A range of accommodations from modern city hotels, convenient business hotels and luxury Japanese traditional ryokans with ocean view. Splendid scenery, food and culture led by Japanese expert Takako Ishige, who designed and researched the tour. A highlight is meeting local people, sharing a wonderful seafood barbecue with local fishermen. Learn of arts and crafts, textiles and fabrics, as well as seeing splendid gardens. Join our optional cooking class with local Tokyo residents and learn to prepare a simple home style Japanese meal. This tour is FULL – places in 2025.</p> 
<p>Sun 21 to Thu 25 April 2024</p>	<p>Anzac Weekend Rail Tour</p>	<p>Combine the comfort and elegance of rail travel in lounge, dining and sleeping cars of the Southern Aurora, with the opportunity to experience the fine food, wines and scenery of regional NSW. Explore and taste gourmet foods and wines of the Upper Hunter and Central West, as well as the scenery of the Hawkesbury and Brisbane Waters, Upper Hunter, the Liverpool Range, Central West, Capertee Valley and Blue Mountains – mark Anzac Day in Mudgee. Highlights include: Hawkesbury River luncheon cruise; Hunter Valley Gardens or winery visit; Quirindi's Rural Heritage Museum; Werris Creek Railway Journey Museum and Rail Monument; daylight travel from Werris Creek to Dubbo on freight only cross-country lines; Hillside Harvest breakfast on the slopes of Mt Canobolas; Anzac Day morning and luncheon in Mudgee; Capertee Valley scenery. A brochure is available.</p>  
<p>Tue 11 June to Wed 3 July 2024</p>	<p>Switzerland and Austria by Rail</p>	<p>Join us for a twenty-three day tour to experience the beauty of the Swiss and Austrian alps by rail during the summer months – we journey on some of the most scenic and spectacular rail lines of Europe; cruise on century old paddle steamers; enjoy mountain rack railways and cable cars; dine on the move; and swim in beautiful lakes. Delight in the wonderful mountain railways to the 'top of the world' and stay in lovely hotels - as we travel by rail through the remarkably beautiful mountains, valleys and lake districts of Switzerland and Austria.</p>

We have also planned the tour to provide some ‘rest’ days for those who wish, as well as a number of alternative activities on certain days, to explore a range of other historic, cultural or cosmopolitan activities, as well as special rail experiences. Enjoy the stunning landscapes of Switzerland and Austria by Rail. Amazing rail experiences – mountains, lakes, rivers – fantastic scenery, great hotels. **A brochure is available – 2 places remain.**



**Wed 3 to Mon
29 July 2024**

**Great rail
journeys of
Great Britain**

Join us for a great rail discovery of Great Britain. Explore the splendid scenery of coast and mountain by scheduled and heritage trains. Beautiful rail experiences with good food and comfortable hotels. To Cornwall along the Dawlish sea coast; the North Yorkshire Moor railway to Whitby; the night sleeper to Fort William; the Welsh Highland Railway and the great little railways of Wales and more. **This tour is FULL. Let us know if you’re interested in our 2025 UK rail tour – which is also almost full.**



**Fri 2 to Sat 24
August 2024**

**The Arctic –
Greenland,
Baffin Bay,
the Thule
Region. Of the
High Arctic,
Canada’s
Nunavit**

Experience an extraordinary journey to the far reaches of the planet. Discover the mythical region of Thule, the territory of the Far North, on a seventeen day cruise along the coastline of Baffin Bay. From Kangerlussuaq, along Greenland’s western shores, to the high Arctic of the Thule Region, revered for its untouched icescapes and sparsely populated Inuit communities. North of the Baffin Sea, in the region of Thule, you will experience a tricky but spectacular sail between drifting icebergs and sheets of ice floe. Between Greenland's west coast with its mountains softened by glaciers to the Arctic mountain range's steep slopes and Thule's high Arctic tundra, sail through the polar region's most spectacular landscapes. Then south along Canada’s Nunavit, a massive, sparsely populated territory of northern Canada, forming most of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. Its islands have expanses of tundra, craggy mountains and remote villages, accessible only by plane or boat. It's known for its indigenous Inuit people's artwork, carvings and handmade clothing. Polar bears, musk ox and Arctic wolves are amongst the amazingly rich fauna that populate these lands. **A brochure is available – prices based on availability at time of booking.**


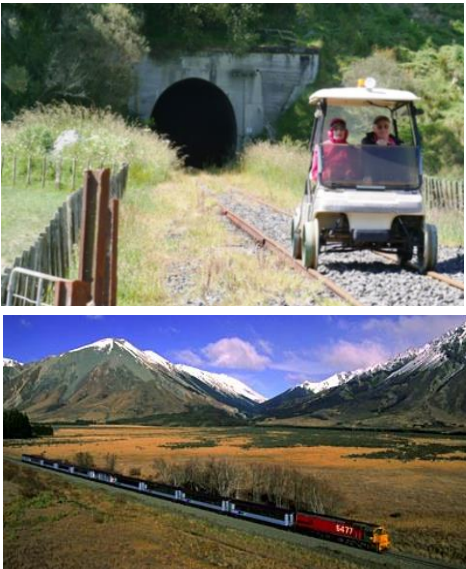


**Fri 27
September to
Friday 4
October 2024**

**Eastern and
Oriental
Express**

Enjoy three nights in a lovely Singapore hotel before boarding the luxurious Eastern & Oriental Express for the three-night journey from Singapore. Rich scenery and history, splendid dining, beautiful lounge cars and the style of a bygone era. Off train excursions at Taman Negara National Park to see tigers, and for Penang’s rich history. Overnight Singapore before a return to Australia. **A brochure is available. One State Compartment remains. Call/email if interested.**



<p>Sun 6 October to Tue 29 October 2024</p>	<p>Autumn Colours, Festivals, Art and Gourmet Japan by Rail</p>	 <p>The autumn colours of Japan are a splendid wave of colour as they move through Japan in the October/November period. We explore less well known locations with our expert Japanese tour leader Takako Ishige, who designed and researched the tour - from the famed Takayama Autumn Festival, southern Hokkaido, now linked with the Shinkansen, through northern Tohoku with its fine lakes and mountains, south through the main island of Honshu to Shikoku. Explore the Art Islands of the Inland Sea, and the stunning Miho Museum. Optional five day extension to include Tokyo's Meiji Jingu Autumn Grand Festival and two night's in the stunning Mt Fuji Lakes. A brochure is available and five (5) places remain.</p>
<p>Tue 19 November to Wed 4 December 2024</p>	<p>Forgotten World Railway Adventure – a unique rail journey through beautiful NZ countryside</p>	<p>An 11 day tour to the north island of New Zealand to the 'Forgotten World' – a 142 km railway adventure where we drive our own motorised rail carts through 24 tunnels and across 98 bridges – in each direction! Join the abandoned Stratford – Okahukura railway line and travel through the rugged king country landscape – a unique rail experience. An option three day extension to Christchurch to experience the Coastal Pacific, TranzAlpine, and dinner aboard the Christchurch tramway. A brochure is available.</p> 
<p>Fri 6 and Sat 7 December 2024</p>	<p>Christmas Luncheons</p>	<p>Our annual Christmas Luncheons – keep the days free and we will send details when finalised. Brochures will be available in mid 2024.</p>

2025

<p>Wed February 2025</p>	<p>Great Southern Rail cruise, Dale Chihuly Glass Exhibition, and Adelaide region sightseeing</p>	<p>Join us for a tour including the Great Southern train journey (4 days / 3 nights) from Brisbane through Sydney, Melbourne and to Adelaide, and then sightseeing in the Adelaide Region. Our tour features the work of the world's most celebrated contemporary glass artist, Seattle-based Dale Chihuly, who has chosen the stunning Adelaide Botanic Garden for the first major outdoor exhibition of his work in Australia and the wider southern hemisphere. <i>Image – glass flowers in garden.</i> A brochure will be available shortly.</p> 
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**Wed 19 March
to Thu 10 April
2025**

**Cherry
Blossoms -
Japan by Rail**

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**June/July 2025
(dates TBA)**

**Great rail
journeys of
Great Britain**

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<p>Sun 3 to Sun 19 August 2025</p> <p>(optional cruise to 2 September 2025)</p>	<p>Iceland, then cruise from Reykjavik to New York</p>	<p>Fly to Reykjavik, then experience sightseeing by land around the island. Explore Iceland's amazing landscape, from both land and sea, including visits to Skaftafell, the jewel in the crown of Vatnajökull National Park, which encompasses a breathtaking collection of peaks and glaciers; Vesturland and the Snæfellsnes Peninsula; journey through Höfn í Hornafirði, a small Icelandic fishing town in the southeast near Hornafjörður fjord, Djúpvogur and Egilsstaðir. Geological landscapes around Myvatn, Akureyri, Iceland's second largest city, and to the Snaefellssnes Peninsula. Then cruise to New York aboard Silversea's <i>Silver Shadow</i>. A brochure is available.</p>	 <p>The image consists of two parts. The top part is a landscape photograph showing a wide, flat valley with a winding river, surrounded by vibrant, multi-colored mountains in shades of green, yellow, and red under a blue sky. The bottom part is a map of the North Atlantic region, showing a cruise route starting from Reykjavik, Iceland, and ending in New York. The route includes stops at Havre St. Pierre, St. Anthony, Iles-de-la-Madeleine, Quebec, Saint John, and Sydney, with a note about the Cape Cod Canal Transit.</p>
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