



**We all have a list of dream destinations we'd love to visit once in our lifetime. *Tatler Traveller's* society correspondent Elaine Kim recently checked off one such destination on her list. She reports on other memorable holiday experiences from her family and friends.**



**ELAINE KIM  
CHILE, ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL**

"South America had always beckoned from across the world, but eluded us because of its sheer distance and inaccessibility from Singapore. The chance to visit finally arrived when a job opportunity came my husband John's way and he had three months of garden leave. With this precious period to spend time together, we boarded a plane with our five-month-old boy, Kyan, and set off for a month-long adventure in South America.

We visited beautiful cities (Buenos Aires, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro); stayed in a far-flung lodge on windswept plains (Eolo lodge in Calafate); enjoyed a room overlooking a stunning lake (The Singular in Puerto Natales); played polo in Estancia Villa Maria in Argentina; whale-watched in Puerto Madryn; went fly-fishing in Calafate; rode on horseback in Puerto Chacabuco; and hiked in the stunning Torres del Paine Park in Patagonia. On our way to Patagonia, we embarked on a Silversea cruise that sailed past the southernmost city of the continent and through the Chilean fjords.

From our villa in Casa Lapostolle, we watched the sun set over Colchagua Valley and got tipsy on Chilean wine. Kyan had his first seaside experience – on Brazil's Ipanema Beach, right across from the fabulous Hotel Fasano. We experienced the spectacular Iguazu Falls from above and below it. At the end of our trip through South America, we flew to the US to be with family for Christmas, with turkey, presents, and so much to give thanks for."

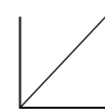
**ELVINE NEO  
NEPAL**

"Of all the cities I have been to, Kathmandu probably tops my list for the biggest shock factor. Nepal has a rich heritage, but in Kathmandu, years of political instability have contributed to poorly maintained Unesco heritage sites, sewage-filled rivers and electricity cuts all day and every day. However, taking a step back from Kathmandu, you will start to see how truly beautiful Nepal is. A short trek from Pokhara was all I needed to convince me that my trip here was worth it. Up in the mountains, the children would rather you offer them a bar of chocolate than your loose change. The trek was tough and at times I felt like giving up completely, but at the end the view of the Annapurna range was absolutely breathtaking. Nepal is not a place often considered for a luxury holiday and at first glance, it isn't hard to see why. However, there are a few hotels in Kathmandu and Pokhara where even a princess wouldn't find any complaint. I highly recommend a stay at the Dwarika's Hotel in Kathmandu to reward yourself after a few days of vigorous exercise – sure to be an unforgettable experience."



**IROSHINI CHUA  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

"A place that has always fascinated me and where I recently had a chance to visit is South Australia. With its striking landscapes, awe-inspiring views of the ocean, beautiful flora and fauna, and delicious fresh produce and cuisine, the region is captivating. And Kangaroo Island, off the coast of Adelaide, is all that and more! My husband Kevin and I are photography buffs and we were delighted to capture the beauty of the wildlife in their natural habitat on Kangaroo Island. Our accommodation in the wilderness there, the Southern Ocean Lodge, is luxury redefined. It organises interesting tours and will bring fresh produce to the lodge from the nearby farmlands. 'Kangaroos and canapes' was one of our favourite escapes!"



**SUDARAMPAI  
PAM CHIANG  
TAIWAN**

"I had always wanted to visit my husband Andre's birthplace, with the hope that it would give me a chance to know him even better after seven years of marriage. My wish was recently granted. We finally had the chance to see a little town in northern Taiwan, which is full of character and charm. It is called Hualien, which means beautiful lotus. It is a land of mountains surrounded by streams and waterfalls in an incredible bright turquoise. The scenery there made us feel like we were in heaven. We could touch the fog floating above our heads; hear birds singing; smell the forests and the freshness of the streams; and imagine ourselves back in a time when the Ahmei and Toroko tribe used to hunt and live, one with nature. It was beautiful, truly heaven on earth..."

**JOY SU-TAN  
RWANDA**

"A trip to Rwanda changes your perspective of morality and mortality. When I was 12, I recall vividly the haunting images I'd seen of genocide victims dominating the front pages of publications, depicting an unfathomable situation unfolding in a then-obscure East African country. Moved beyond comprehension, I rallied schoolmates to pool funds for the Red Cross relief efforts. Since then, Rwanda and its people remained etched in my heart. Recently, 17 years later, as I arrived in Rwanda's capital Kigali, I was greeted by an air of hope and dynamism. The city of a thousand hills, Milles De Collines, had slowly but surely made significant strides to recover from the genocide, which saw the extermination of almost 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus. As much as we were struck by Rwanda's dark past, its vast beauty took our breath away just as much. We trekked three hours in undulating mountainous terrain to come face-to-face with a group of 33 mountain gorillas, including three silverback gorillas. We then spent a magical hour observing these gentle and majestic creatures who were barely five metres away."



**LOH LIK PENG AND MIN LEE  
CALIFORNIA**

"One of our most memorable trips together was in the Big Sur, California. We drove down from LA on Highway 1, a really scenic and lovely drive along the California coastline. There, we stayed at Post Ranch Inn, a retreat perched on a cliff right by the ocean. From our little house we had a magnificent view of the ocean, and we went on a few great hikes as well. We loved it so much we returned six months later and we'd go back again anytime!"

