ADVENTURE 2014

It's been a very adventurous year. TTPers joined me venturing to Tahiti in January, Somaliland and Somalia in February, Bolivia in March, Antarctica and remote islands in the South Atlantic in April, the Hidden Alps of Albania in July, Hidden China in September, after which I wandered off myself to Oz and lost islands in the South Pacific.

So, what's on tap for *Adventure 2014*? First up is Hidden China II in February. The picture you see above is real. It's the Hani Rice Terraces in Yunnan, China close to the border with Vietnam.

We're going to see a number of mind-blowing places like this - such as the Dongchuan Redlands and Tiger Leaping Gorge - plus experience the extraordinary non-Chinese ethnic cultures like the Naxi, Bai, Yi, Jinuo, and Aini. Here are some friendly Aini ladies:

This is an experience beyond exotic to unknown magical places. I hope you can be with me. Click on the link above or on *Hidden China II* now up in the left side bar for the details - and many more cool pictures.

I'm in the final planning stages for what follows. In March, there's *Hidden India: The Seven Sisters*. There's a part of India truly hidden away, separate from the rest of the country to which until very recently no foreigners were allowed. You still have to get special permits - which we have.

It is Northeast India surrounded by Burma, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and China, tenuously connected to mainland India by a narrow political isthmus called the Chicken's Neck. It's composed of seven distinct states, thus they are collectively known as The Seven Sisters:

Very few Westerners have ever been to one of them, and almost no one has been to all seven - yet that's what we're going to do. With the exception of Tripura (due to the exodus of Hindus from Moslem Bangladesh), they are non-Indian tribal cultures that have kept their traditional way of life in isolation from the world.

We'll see the Mizos of Mizoland happily celebrating Chapchar Kut, their springtime Festival of Joy - and the Angami Nagas of Nagaland celebrate *Sekrenyi*, their Festival of Purification:

We'll visit Tripura's 12 centuries-old giant rock-cut carvings of Shiva and other gods at Unakotri, and the fisherfolk who live on the floating islands of Manipur's Floating Lake of Loktak. We'll walk over rivers on the incredible root bridges of Cherrapunji in Megalaya. Here, the War-Khaisa people don't build bridges - they *grow* them.

In Assam, we'll get up close to one of our planet's rarest and impressive animals, the Asian one-horned rhinos of Kaziranga

And we top it off by crossing the world's highest motorable road at the Se La (Sela Pass) to the magnificent Tawang Tibetan Monastery at the very foot of the Himalayas. It is only a few miles from Chinese-Occupied Tibet, and it was to here the Dalai Lama made his famous escape in 1959 (which my friend and legendary CIA operative Tony Poe organized):

Best of all, we're here during the once-a-year Losar celebration:

The Seven Sisters is in March, with the details to be posted soon. Next up is *Hidden Safari* in May. We'll go to wildlife areas in Africa few know about, like Namibia's Etosha Pan, and Zambia's Luangwa Valley where we'll have our own private tented camp.

In August, there's the *Ultimate Triple Adventure*: three of the world's ultimate adventure destinations people dream about going to, back-to-back.

From the US via Quito, Ecuador fly to the *Galapagos Islands*. Via Quito and Santiago, Chile fly to *Easter Island*. From Easter to Tahiti and Mangareva in French Polynesia, then sail to *Pitcairn Island*, where descendants of the Mutiny on the Bounty still live. Then Tahiti back to the US. All in three weeks.

There's more, but you may be asking: What about a *Rendezvous*?

This year, which included all seven continents, was simply too hectic. Not 2014. We'll have Rendezvous XIV in April - cherry blossom time in Washington DC. Okay, Edd will bug me to have it in Colorado Springs, and Skye will say Vegas - so between these three, let me know what you

think. The location isn't set in stone, but the time is April.

We only have one life on this earth - an earth that is filled with magical places and opportunities for adventure. I hope you'll be able to experience that magic and have an adventure with me in 2014. I'm looking forward to your joining me.