

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Around the World in 24 Days: Is a Luxury ‘Jet Cruise’ for You?

With the ‘stop-and-see’ appeal of boat cruises, these once-in-a-lifetime trips on custom planes are a modern (and pricey) take on a Jules-Verne-worthy adventure.



FALL FOR IT Victoria Falls is a stop on a Four Seasons’ ‘African Wonders’ 2025 jet cruise. PHOTO: FOUR SEASONS HOTELS AND RESORTS

JULES VERNE’S Phileas Fogg and his valet Passepartout managed to get “Around the World in Eighty Days.” Had the heroes of Verne’s 1872 adventure novel had access to today’s “jet cruises”—the airborne equivalent of a multi-stop sea cruise—they’d have finished the feat in a brisk 24 days. This new way to holiday, on private jets kitted out with comforts worthy of nice hotels, was dreamed up by luxury travel companies such as Safrans du Monde and the Four Seasons.

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they enjoyed a Champagne cocktail “in the middle of nowhere.” And in Siem Reap, they attended a private ballet performance, hosted by the prince of Cambodia.

They paid around \$68,400 each to travel Première class, for a slightly higher caliber of meals, lodgings and excursions than the \$43,000-per-person in Club Safrans.

Jean-Pierre Lacombe, 62, called the Safrans du Monde Grand Classique aerial cruise he and his wife took last year “exceptional.” Among the stops the manufacturing wholesaler, who lives in Málaga, Spain, singled out: In Bora Bora, the couple swam with manta rays. In the Wadi Rum desert,

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Inside the interior of the Safrans du Monde Airbus, which has 100 seats and a lounge area with leather sofas. PHOTO: SAFRANS DU MONDE AND AIR X

Fellow passenger Joel Ruttenberg, 80, a retired textile executive from Katonah, N.Y., also splurged on the Première class in the spirit of YOLO. “My wife said, ‘If we do this, let’s do it the right way.’”

That “go for it” mentality keeps the seats filled. Guy Bigiaoui, president of Safrans du Monde, the Paris-based travel agency behind these air cruises, said each has been booked solid.



Seats turn into beds on a Safrans du Monde jet. PHOTO: SAFRANS DU MONDE AND AIR X

For 2024, both couples have reupped, booking a 24-day Special Edition tour (\$130,000 per person for Première; \$85,00 in Club Safrans). That jaunt touches down in costlier locales, like New Zealand and the Maldives, than the Grand Classique tour, and includes two helicopter excursions. The huge jump in price, said Bigiaoui, reflects how “the cost of the plane and all ground services has doubled

and the fuel base has risen sharply.”

The Four Seasons also offers globe-spanning private jet tours, on a custom-fitted [Airbus](#) operated by Titan Airways, with Italian leather chairs that open up into beds and bathrooms with changing rooms. Its 21-day “Uncharted Discovery” tour, including Antarctica and Machu Picchu, starts at \$205,000 per person.

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