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IN THE THICK OF THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC, INDUSTRY VETERAN YVONNE VERSTANDIG DID THE UNTHINKABLE; SHE LAUNCHED A NEW TRAVEL COMPANY.



Fueled by her vision of transforming the luxury travel mentality, Verstandig launched Y Travel in December 2020 to foster a more considered movement.



The impact of the pandemic on the travel landscape gave Verstandig, who co-founded Executive Edge Travel 20 years ago, time to pause and reflect on the role she wanted to play in the industry's future.



It presented her with a unique opportunity to bring to life the ethically focused travel company she had been envisioning for some time.



"I have always been an enthusiastic and immersive traveller who lives and breathes each destination I travel to, each hotel I stay in, each experience I embark on, and each community I visit," Verstandig explained.

"I noticed that this style of travel really resonated with my clients, so I started thinking about building something brand new; a company that would allow me to concentrate on empowering people to travel holistically, and with passion and purpose, like I do."

Even prior to the pandemic, Verstandig felt the need to create a new "genre" of travel – one that prioritises the preservation of cultures, communities and ecosystems.

"This concept is now known by a number of names: slow travel, regenerative travel, transformational travel, sustainable travel," she said.

"Regardless of which label resonates with travellers, now is the perfect time for them to hit the reset button on their travel mentality by weaving sustainable, ethical choices into every step of their decision-making process.

"Simultaneously, we see it as an opportunity to help clients enrich their own lives through their expeditions.

"We do so by building trips with nuance; itineraries that factor in their unique preferences, personality quirks and passions. We then go one step further and encourage them to think about how accommodation, tour and activity providers are making a difference to the environment and communities in which they operate, by shedding light on purposeful operators and destinations.

“IT MIGHT FEEL LIKE A SMALL ACTION, BUT THERE’S A LOT OF POWER IN CHOOSING TO SPEND MONEY WITH TOURISM PROVIDERS THAT SUPPORT THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES, HONOUR AND UPHOLD THE HERITAGE, AND ARE MAKING AN EFFORT TO REDUCE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.”

Upon launching, Y Travel acquired boutique Virtuoso agency, Trans World Travel, and enhanced its solid reputation – built over 42 years – with a fresh, contemporary ethos.

The 10-strong team now position themselves as Australia’s premier luxury, purpose-led travel agency. Specialising in high-end leisure travel, the forward-thinking team carefully curate every journey, drawing on their insider knowledge, unequalled access, and network of experts to create superlative travel experiences.

The team boasts decades of knowledge, incomparable lived experience, and the belief that travel can be positive for both the planet and its people. They promise personalised, professional and purposeful service for discerning travellers.

Like all great names, Y Travel is a play on words. It pays homage to the company’s founder; to its industry-leading set of ‘Y Factors’ that yield intuitive travel solutions; and to the team’s vision, which is to redirect the travel industry toward a more purposeful path by encouraging travellers to ask the ever-important question... ‘why?’

ECO-TRAVEL

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Y TRAVEL

YVONNE VERSTANDIG