A walk in the parks

Wellington photographer Rob Suisted roams the world in pursuit of the perfect picture. He told Travel editor Cameron Williamson about his travelling life.

IN HIS ninth and latest book, New Zealand’s 14 National Parks, Rob Suisted delivers a loving portrait of New Zealand’s 14 National Parks.

Interesting surname Rob. Scandinavian? Auld English? Suisted is anglicised Swedish “Sjo¨stedt”. Great Great Great Suisted is anglicised Scandinavian? Auld English?

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Contact Susan on 565-1193, meet the youngsters at 247 Major Drive, Kelston, or email catsprotectionleaguewgn@hotmail.com.
witnessed while travelling?

Heaps. In the natural world: 50 fin whales (second biggest creature on the planet) around our ship between Greenland and Canadian Arctic, Aurora Borealis in Greenland and the Aurora Australis playing overhead at Macquarie Island. Leopard seal killing adelie penguins in water I’d just waded through. Driving my Zodiac inflatable boat near a polar bear and cub, with the environment minister from Monaco on board: that was a special privilege and wild sight.

The most heartbreaking?

Seeing the Arctic melt. Two years ago I helped guide a delegation from the Monaco Government in the Arctic. Their historian had photos from Duke Albert I of Monaco’s Svalbard expedition in 1906-07. The glaciers are gone. It’s fast slipping away and we can’t see the creeping nature of it. That’s heartbreaking.

If you could be anywhere but here, where would that be?

Taking my Jeep far around the Wellington south coast, diving for paua, cooking them on a driftwood fire and watching the day end over Cook Strait with good friends and a wine. One of life’s treats, and a place that many Wellingtonians haven’t sadly experienced. I’d love to be doing that now as snow flurries past my window!

Where to next?

Just bought 20 acres of land near Wellington. Half of it’s regenerating forest and it feels great to put profits from nature photography back into forest and it feels great to put profits from nature photography back into looking after land. It takes a lot of my time, but is paying huge satisfaction.

Worst?

I can’t say I’ve had a worst trip. Frame of mind is the difference. I know that a tough trip in Fiordland would have been elation and satisfaction. If you’d stopped earlier, it would have been time, but is paying huge satisfaction.

Shoot it specifically?

My Majestic New Zealand book – just recognised in the Whiteouls book awards – is my greatest hits: heartfelt juicy love-of-New Zealand images that really turn me on. This new National Parks of New Zealand book gives easy access to the flavours of our parks. I want it to draw more people into seeing and then enjoying our network of amazing natural assets. It’s been designed to carry, not leave on a bookshelf.

What are the five pieces of kit that you never leave home without?

Quality boots, camera . . . with photography the rest are attitudes: respect for your subject, a clear mind open to possibilities, no set schedule.

What is the wildest sight you’ve seen?

Rob Suisted

Go with the floe: Rob Suisted navigates a Zodiac through the ice-strewn waters around the Antarctic Peninsula.

For all bookings: United Travel for more information, phone 0800 468 648 or see unitedtravel.co.nz.

TOP DEALS

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Vibrant Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a city of diversity where new and old meet at every turn. Wander through the side streets of Tsim Sha Tsui, ride the upper deck of a bus from Central to Stanley Markets or take a triple-decker Star Ferry from Kowloon on bustling Victoria Harbour. Hong Kong’s heritage is truly unique and this is reflected in the variety of Performing Arts, Museums and Galleries and Arts and Cultural Festivals. And there’s also the fantastic nightlife. Start in Lan Kwai Fong, the city’s premier entertainment centre, then head for Soho, packed with eateries and watering holes and then see the sun up in Wanchai. A four-night holiday in Hong Kong, including return airfares from Auckland flying Cathay Pacific and four nights at L’hotel Causeway Bay Harbourview, start from $1855 per person, twin share. Contact United Travel for more information, phone 0800 468 648 or see unitedtravel.co.nz.

Seeing red in Australia

Flight Centre has Ayers Rock tours including three nights: accommodation, the national park entry fee, touring by air-conditioned coach, a Sounds of Silence dinner, sunrise and sunset at Uluru and also taking in Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) from $979 per person, twin share. Airfares from $1132 ex Auckland flying Cathay Pacific and four nights at L’hotel Causeway Bay Harbourview, start from $1355 per person, twin share. Contact Flight Centre, phone 0800 427 555 or visit flightcentre.co.nz.

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