Travel Writing and Photography Tips

Wednesday 23 March, 12:30pm (ADST)
Guest Speaker – Rob McFarland
House Keeping;

• Session will be recorded
• Presentation will be available at www.afta.com.au
• Audience will be on mute
• Q & A will be taken at the end of the presentation
AFTA Update;

• National Regional TV Campaign, to reach 3+ million consumers
• 2016 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) Voting Now Open
• People’s Choice Retail Travel Agency of the Year! The votes are in with over 5000+ submitted
About Rob

In 2004 Rob McFarland abandoned a sensible career in IT to travel and write. He's now one of Australia’s leading travel writers with six awards including Travel Writer of the Year.

Rob is a member of the Australian Society of Travel Writers and is a regular contributor to the Sydney Morning Herald, Escape, GQ and National Geographic Traveller magazines.

He’s been tutoring aspiring travel writers since 2010, many of whom have gone on to be published in national newspapers and magazines.

While not averse to the charms of a five-star hotel, Rob’s most memorable travel moments have come from more adventurous trips. Highlights include scaling Wayna Picchu, the mist-shrouded mountain behind Machu Picchu and a six-day white-water rafting trip on the Futaleufu River in Patagonia.
In the year 1994…
Content

• What is good travel writing?
• The writing process
• The secrets to writing inspirational travel copy
• How to take great travel photographs
• Q&A
What is good travel writing?

Australian Society of Travel Writers’ awards criteria:

• Creativity and originality of writing
• Information value and reader enjoyment
• Interest generated in the destination or experience.
The writing process
The writing process

1. Plan
2. Write
3. Edit

“Writing without thinking is like shooting without aiming.”

Arnold Glasow, author
The writing process

“Writing without thinking is like shooting without aiming.”

Arnold Glasow, author
Travel Writing Toolkit

1. Be detailed and specific
   - Detail is what transports the reader to the destination
   - You need to paint a picture of the place in their mind

   “You will have a nice meal”
   vs
   “Surrounded by desert in the fading light of the day, you will sit cross-legged on red velvet cushions and devour a feast of garlic-infused oysters.”

2. Use all your senses
   - Remember smell, touch, hear and taste
   - Cloud of jasmine, cobbled street, excited chatter, bitter coffee

3. Include characters and dialogue
   - Locals, other travellers and historical figures
Mika sells reindeer jerky, but he still couldn’t believe that we eat kangaroo back home.

“One thing immediately strikes me about Mika. And it isn’t his market stall. Yes, that’s ongoing in a myriad meat strips on sharp hooks’ kind of way. But it’s his eyes that hold magical power. Piercing, intense and impossibly blue. Like a glacier, they seem to freeze me in my tracks. Now I’m the one about to be hooked.

He gestures to me with a group wooden chopping board. ‘Reindeer jerky?’ I’d been exploring Helskia since early morning, so there’s no hesitation. Smoky, salty, peppery with a hint of spice. Not sure what I was expecting, but it certainly tastes nothing like chicken.

Mika’s eyes smile back at me as my enthusiasm visibly transfers. Good thing too, as my jaws are momentarily preoccupied I can’t speak. When I do, he enquires where I’m from. His English is perfect and we start to chat under the warm winter sun. Interestingly, he’s as inquisitive about Australia as I am about Scandinavia.

Then suddenly, the conversation comes to an abrupt halt. ‘You eat kangaroo in Australia?’ Eyes wide open in disbelief, Mika seems genuinely shocked. This is the same man who minutes earlier had proudly asked me to sample his homestyle reindeer jerky in the hope of a sale. I slowly nod my head to confirm this revelation. For a moment I’m met by an awkward silence. Overhead a seagull fills the gap with a perfectly timed squawk. Than to my relief Mika lets out a laugh. “Huh! That, I never knew.”

We chat for what seems like an age before I relieve him of two bags of his finest reindeer jerky. His icy blues had indeed weaved their magic yet again.”

Anne Rogers, Melbourne.
Cruised on Viking Homelands May 2015

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4. Avoid cliches
   • “A tired, over-used expression that’s lost its descriptive power”
   • Breathtaking view, tropical paradise, land of contrasts, melting pot, up, close and personal, sun-kissed beaches, spectacular sunset, hidden gem, off-the-beaten track, best-kept secret, patchwork fields…
   • Start reading like a writer – jot down words and phrases

5. Show don’t tell
   “It was scary”
   vs “The moon has bathed everything in a ghostly half-light as I creep across the cobblestones of the palace's deserted main courtyard at midnight. I pass through a narrow brick archway and enter a dimly lit alley. It is eerily still and unnervingly quiet.”

“Don’t tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass.” Anton Chekhov
Travel Writing Toolkit

1. Be detailed and specific
2. Use all your senses
3. Include characters and dialogue
4. Avoid cliches
5. Show don’t tell
Travel Photography

Canon PowerShot ELPH 330 HS
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
Photography – include people
Photography – include people
Photography – include people
Photography – include people
Photography – include people
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
2. Use the rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds

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Photography – rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds

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Red arrows indicate the rule of thirds in photography.
Photography – rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds
Photography – rule of thirds
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
2. Use the rule of thirds
3. **Put something in the foreground**
Photography – put something in foreground
Photography – put something in foreground
Photography – put something in foreground
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
2. Use the rule of thirds
3. Put something in the foreground
4. Fill the frame
Photography – fill the frame
Photography – fill the frame
Photography – fill the frame
Photography – fill the frame
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
2. Use the rule of thirds
3. Put something in the foreground
4. Fill the frame
5. Use a frame
Photography – use a frame
Photography – use a frame
Photography – use a frame
Travel Photography Tips

1. Include people
2. Use the rule of thirds
3. Put something in the foreground
4. Fill the frame
5. Use a frame
Summary

What is good travel writing?
• Informative, honest, entertaining & inspiring

The writing process
• Plan, write & edit

Travel writing toolkit
• Be detailed & specific, use all your senses, include characters, avoid cliches and show don’t tell

Travel Photography tips
• Include people, use rule of thirds, put something in foreground, fill the frame and use a frame
Want to learn more?

1. Full-day workshops for aspiring travel writers in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

“Fantastic, inspiring, exciting, motivating. This kind of knowledge could take months, even years to establish on one’s own.” Annabelle S

2. Correspondence version of course that can be taken at your own pace from anywhere.

“I found the handbook to be incredibly detailed and helpful.” Allana C

3. Tailored in-house corporate training workshops.

“Rob thanks so much for the training. I haven't had such a positive response to writing training ever!!!” Kim M, Director of Klick Comms

More info:  www.robmcfarland.org
Email:    rob@robmcfarland.org
Questions?

Ask now via your “Question” tool shown below
Thank you

For more information on future AFTA webinars, please visit [www.afta.com.au](http://www.afta.com.au)

Thank you for attending our webinar, for any further information please contact us on the below details.

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