

The Royal Geographical Society with IBG Hidden Journeys Project



Have you ever gazed out of an aircraft window at a mountain range, city, island or small cluster of lights in the middle of a desert and asked “I wonder what that is down there? Who lives there? What mountain range am I flying over?”

The Hidden Journeys Project, run by Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), aims to answer these questions and enliven the flying experience by providing interactive guides to air travellers about the parts of the world they fly over from departure to arrival.

The latest flight path guide to be released covers the route from Singapore to Sydney, exploring some of the world’s most remote and spectacular landscapes in Southeast Asia and Australia.

From the isolated reefs of the Timor Sea, to the horizontal waterfalls of Australia’s Buccaneer Archipelago, to the red sand dunes of the Simpson Desert the interactive guide covers an amazing diversity of people, places and landscapes.

Vast stretches of the rest of the flight path have seen no human influence at all, yet others have been dramatically altered by their human inhabitants. Land reclamation in Singapore, rice terraces in Bali and the farmland in the Murray Darling Basin are but a few examples. Every country along this route also has its own colonial history: from the British in Singapore and Australia to the Dutch in Indonesia, each nation has left its mark on the landscape along the way.

To create these resources the Society uses its vast archives, containing the world’s largest private geographical collection, as well as its network of experts to ensure the content is accurate as well as entertaining to the passenger.

As well as Singapore to Sydney, Hidden Journeys has also revealed the breathtaking natural and human landscapes beneath flight paths including London Heathrow to Johannesburg, South Africa, and New York City to Los Angeles in the USA.

The Society is investigating how best to develop the project further for the enjoyment of air travellers across the world, including looking at how we could apply this geo entertainment content to an in-flight entertainment system.

Ben Jarman, Project Coordinator, says ‘Millions of passengers fly every year, unaware of the fascinating parts of the Earth that they cross between departure and arrival. The Hidden Journeys Project allows people to explore the patchwork of people and places under a particular flight path, transforming an aerial jaunt from A to B into a fascinating journey through the scale and diversity found along the route.’

The Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British Geographers) is the learned society and professional body for geography. Formed in 1830, our Royal Charter of 1859 is for 'the advancement of geographical science'. Today, we deliver this objective through developing, supporting and promoting geographical research, expeditions and fieldwork, education, public

engagement, and providing geographical input to policy. We aim to foster an understanding and informed enjoyment of our world. We hold the world's largest private geographical collection and provide public access to it.

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