

Bewitched by the midnight sun... PETER WILLIAMSON | POSTED: 24 DECEMBER 2014



In the run-up to our **Discovery Day** in early December 2014, we encouraged visitors to our website to submit a favourite photograph of a place or moment that really meant something to them, together with a few lines explaining exactly what made it so special.

Over the ensuing weeks, we were thrilled with how many people took the time to send us their 'Moments' in images and words – over 150 in all – with some fabulous pictures and evocative descriptions from destinations as diverse as Denmark, Japan, Ireland and Antarctica. Many of these have already been featured in our Moments gallery on [The Slow Lane](#).

The standard was extremely high and it was a close-run thing, as our panel of five expert judges whittled the entries down to a shortlist of just eight including the eventual winner. As the words were just as important as the image, it was not just a case of picking the most atmospheric photograph and, after much deliberation, the best eight 'moments' were selected and showcased at our Discovery Day in Harrogate on 6 December 2014.

On the day itself, we were delighted to welcome acclaimed landscape photographer



The first of the panel's two 'highly commended' runners-up is Allan Harris, whose photo at a shrine in Kyoto, Japan, was perhaps the most visually striking of all the entries, depicting a succession of bright orange and black *torii* gates in a beautifully composed shot. *"It was both very tranquil and also hard work climbing the mountain to see the start of the 10,000 gates,"* he said.

The second is by Frank Elston, who, after snowshoeing to a magical spot lying 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle in Finnish Lapland, captured a tranquil, unrepeatable moment. He called it a 'story of a windblown, snow-laden struggle at the treeline' depicted by a lonely branch

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PETER WILLIAMSON
24 December 2014

It's a Dog's Life

Using sleds pulled by teams of huskies, man has been able to explore and settle some of the most inhospitable corners of earth, and it's an exhilarating activity to experience on holiday.

STEVE JACK
27 August 2014

Rebel Land: a historical overview

Travelling through the Cévennes, a little-known mountainous region in southern France, author and walker Bill Rees became intrigued by stories of

Joe Cornish to announce the runners-up and winning entry.

Joe is kindly exhibiting all eight short-listed pictures at [his Gallery in Northallerton](#) from 9 to 31 January 2015, so do come along if you're in or around North Yorkshire during that period. They are worth a visit in their own right, and not only provide a wonderful insight into Joe's work, but also feature regularly changing exhibitions by a number of other artists, as well as an appealing gift shop and café.

RELATED HOLIDAYS

Canyons, Caves & Coast of Gran Canaria

Gran Canaria possesses scenery on a grand scale, with peaks rising to almost 2,000 metres; black volcanic cones offset by the vibrant green of Canarian pines, and a huge caldera reminiscent of the Grand Canyon.

[More about our walking holiday on Gran Canaria >](#)

Visit the Lofoten Islands

The winning photograph was taken amid the remarkable landscapes of Norway's Lofoten Islands, way above the Arctic Circle. Take 'A Journey to Å' and you, too, can experience the clear air, brilliant light and awe-inspiring views that so captivated Jo Sheperd.

[More about our walking holidays in the Lofoten Islands >](#)

in the snow.

And so to the winner... The panel chose Jo Sheperd's depiction of a magical moment in Norway's Lofoten Islands. Her picture is wonderful in its own right, but it was the sense of having captured a moment in time, both visually and through her words, that ultimately swayed the judges.

Jo's words speak for themselves:

"Ten days past the summer solstice, the Arctic sun silently traversed the horizon as the Lofoten Islands' midnight landscape bewitched us: neither sunset nor dawn; mist hovering; water transforming to cloud and the cotton grass whispering in the crystalline air, cold enough to keep snow on the mountains' peaks. Time stopped. A lone gull cried on the arctic wind. It was thirteen o'clock and we had slipped into another dimension."

Inspiring stuff, for which Jo won a week's walking holiday on Gran Canaria. Congratulations to all our finalists and a big 'thank you' to everyone who entered – we hope your future travels will bring you many more 'moments of discovery' to enjoy...

war and, in particular, of resistance to oppressive invaders, leading him on a quest to discover the real Cévennes, the subject of his fascinating new e-book...

BILL REES, AUTHOR
04 June 2014

Last Days of the Bus Club

The latest book from Chris Stewart, author of "Driving Over Lemons", is full of hilarious tales from his sheep farm in Andalucia, where he has been cooking for Rick Stein, getting his own back on a wild boar, and chomping through plate after plate of fish as judge of a tuna cookery competition. In this extract from from "Last Days of the Bus Club" a local farmer spins him a yarn...

CHRIS STEWART
22 May 2014

Just smile and say 'hello'

What is the essence of any walking holiday? What makes it memorable? Is it the landscapes, the accommodation, the food, the routes – or the people you meet along the way?

PETER WILLIAMSON
10 April 2014



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