

A sense of place means everything to the Qantas ambassador. He's found it from Africa to New York – but never more deeply than in his own country.

The traveller

Adam Goodes

The lowdown

Former Sydney Swan; dual Brownlow Medallist; 2014 Australian of the Year



As told to Di Webster. Illustrations: Kat Chadwick



2005

NEW YORK CITY

The first time I went to New York, it seemed like everything I looked at had been in a film or TV show. I've been five times now and it has something new to offer every time. I love the history and culture and how people from all different parts of the world live on top of one another and it just works. They pile into subway cars, bumper to bumper, and there's no aggro; people just get along. I could really see myself living in Brooklyn. My fiancée [Natalie Croker] used to live in Greenpoint. It was nice to see her neighbourhood and do the things she used to do five or six years ago. The bars are great, the food is divine and I can't say enough about the people. The buildings, the architecture, the different cultures... it's a place I will always go out of my way to visit.

2006

EAST AFRICA

Getting to the Maasai Mara game reserve in Kenya involved an 11-hour journey in a big truck that had what looked like half a minibus plonked on top. There were about 12 of us on the tour, which ended up in the Serengeti in Tanzania. We camped, cooked our own meals, set up our own tents and stayed in national parks. To see animals in the wild was quite amazing to me. But the thing I loved most were the landscapes. I grew up in Horsham [in Victoria] – wheat-belt country, very golden-yellow and lovely mountains – so I felt a real sense of home in East Africa. The difference was there were lions resting in the golden grasses and a million wildebeest trotting through there. At night you could hear the hyenas rustling around outside the tent but we were never scared. You're in their element; this is the wild.



2013

FLINDERS RANGES, SA

I was in the SBS TV show *Who Do You Think You Are?* and part of the filming took place at Wilpena Pound and Iga Warta in the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. This is the home of my ancestors, the Adnyamathanha people. I stayed at the resort that the local Aboriginal people own in the national park. Wilpena Pound is a rock formation with a massive oasis in the middle. You can go on beautiful bushwalks and hike to the peaks for amazing outlooks. You can take joy flights and check out the landscape. And you can eat traditional food. I did all of it. The trip was a real awakening for me; it was my first time being back on those lands. I found a distinct connection to that place, the people who were there and the land I was walking on. It was incredible. ●

