Uzbekistan: The Leopard Print Luggage

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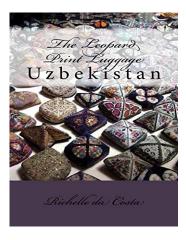
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Uzbekistan is an exotic travel destination, but doesn't always come highly recommended. It borders on a war zone and is, itself, politically unstable. But what an enticement... The hub of Central Asia and the cradle of the region's culture for more than two millennia; home to ancient Silk Road cities oozing history and intrigue; a landscape of harsh desert and wild mountains; a proud and resilient people. This book is the latest in my 'Leopard Print Luggage' travel narrative series. It documents my journey through this astonishing, dazzling, fascinating and timeless land.

Richelle da Costa was born in Sydney, Australia. She lived for a short time in Shellharbour, on the mid-south coast of NSW, then moved with her family to Newcastle where she completed her schooling and a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in German and Psychology. The next ten years of her life followed a reasonably conventional path: marriage, a teaching job in a local school, a six-month journey through Europe in a Combi van, a few visits to predictable destinations like Hong Kong, Singapore and Bali, and the birth of two daughters. The following twenty were less predictable: divorce, domicile and career changes, the ups and downs of parenting alone. Suddenly she was fifty. She was single, the mortgage was paid off and her children had spread their wings. The wanderlust, spawned by that first trip through Europe was re-ignited, and creative pursuits, always relegated to secondary place, became more important than income. It was time for adventure. Curiosity

can lead her to exotic, off the beaten track destinations, but wherever she is, she's looking for the essence of a culture. She's passionate about music, dance, language, food and wine, design, and the different ways people behave and express themselves creatively. Her Leopard Print Luggage stories are a response from friends and family to publish her travel diaries. She hopes that fellow travel addicts will find inspiration and ideas for new destinations and experiences; that her stories will re-kindle past travel memories for others; and that her descriptions will be sufficiently vivid and satisfying for those who choose to travel vicariously.