

Tourists' chance to ape jungle man



Andreas Holland . . . giving adventurous tourists a taste of life on the wild side — Picture: GEOFF BEATTY

LIKE Edgar Rice Burrough's hero, Tarzan of Greystoke, Andreas Holland spent his childhood swinging through the trees of the jungle.

Armed with sling shots, spears and bows and arrows, the half-naked Andreas hunted with the Langua Indians in Paraguay for caiman (a ferocious crocodile), tapir (a large pig-like mammal) and birds.

Now Mr Holland wants to give Australian tourists a taste of life on the wild side.

As guest of World Expeditions, Mr Holland will tour Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane and Sydney from tomorrow until February 13 presenting adventure holidays in South America.

Mr Holland's variation on the Tarzan theme began in 1952, when he was two years old.

His parents had moved from

Shropshire, England, to join a 600-member community of middle-class Europeans in the rainforests and pampas of Alto Paraguay. But it was too much like suburbia.

"They moved out to live among the Langua Indians," he said. "We wore very few clothes and never had haircuts."

When he turned 12 his parents decided to sample civilisation again.

Unable to write, but speaking Langua, Spanish, German and English, with hair to his waist, he returned to England, confounding his Wiltshire schoolmates with his savage appearance and strange accent.

Later he became a mathematics teacher in London, but the call of the jungle proved irresistible.

In 1979 he returned to South America, to the small village of Ollantaytambo in Peru. He has since moved to the capital,

Cusco, where he lives with his wife and children.

Mr Holland lives on the wild side, leading treks throughout South America.

"We've got coastlines of unpolluted beaches, some of the best seafood in the world, snow peaks, jungles, rainforests and mountain passes up to 5000m," he said.

Then "there's the famous 40km-long Inca trail. It can be walked in four or five days and ends up at Machupicchu, the Lost City before it was rediscovered by Hiram Bingham 70 years ago".

Occasionally he has worked in film and television productions such as Shirley MacLaine's *Out On A Limb* series, the BBC's *Footsteps* series and a Grundy program, *High Adventure*.

— BERWYN LEWIS

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