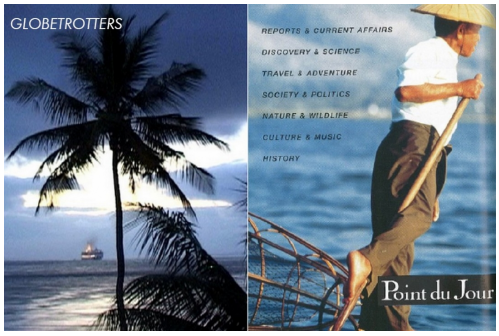


TURKMENISTAN: AKHAL-TEKKE, HORSE FOR THE PEOPLE

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The former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan is now an industrialised nation where the horse no longer has a role. And yet... when the newly-independent republic devised its emblem, a horse was the automatic choice. And not just any horse, an akhal-tekke, the forefather of all the world's purebreeds. The akhal-tekke was "designed" by a Turkmeni tribe (the Tekkes) to be able to cross deserts, gallop to the target and carry back the booty without being caught. The communists took away from the Turkmen their pride and joy. Banned from breeding or owning the horse, the akhal-tekke was destined to become salted meat. Fortunately, one or two enthusiasts managed to dodge the authorities and safeguard a genetic foundation that ensured the akhal-tekke's survival... for it to prosper again.

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