



# FLYING HIGH

BY KAREN ROLFE

**T**he phone call at 7pm Friday night was the news we were waiting to hear.

Clear weather in the morning, we were good to go with our first ballooning adventure.

Driving out to the launch site at 5am we were a mixture of excitement, anticipation and looking forward to being involved in the experience from start to finish.

Meeting Graeme Day at the helicopter pad in Limestone Park, Ipswich we jumped in the back of the 4WD and drove further around to our launch site for the morning.

As Graeme explained he has a few to choose from depending on the wind direction for takeoff.

When you sign up for a Floating Images experience that is exactly what you are in for.

We were hands on from the start, unpacking the balloon and getting everything set up for inflation.

As Graeme briefed us on the ever important safety issues, we were all too busy watching the

burners and fans inflate our massive balloon and waiting for it to tip up the basket so we could all jump onboard.

Graeme has been flying commercial balloon flights since 1991, after falling into the industry in France, the birthplace of ballooning. His skill and ease is obvious and very comforting at 2200 feet above the ground. I was very impressed that of the ten guests onboard, he knew everyone by name and was an absolute wealth of information as we effortlessly floated through the sky.

If you are worried about motion sickness, don't be. Ballooning is the most surreal exhilarating feeling; you really are floating on air.

When the basket leaves the ground, you don't feel like you are moving, everyone was surprised at how smooth the lift off was.

We saw everything as the sun rose, the clouds lifted and we floated through the sky for about 30kms; breathtaking views of the City of

Ipswich, the RAAF base, Queenslanders galore, Flinders Peak, Mt Walker, The D'Aguiar Range, Wivenhoe Dam, The Lockyer Valley and the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers.

After about an hour in the air, we slowly descended onto a beautiful local property where Ron appeared in the 4WD to take us back to the launch site and onwards for a restaurant champagne breakfast where we all shared our excitement of the morning.

Everyone was involved in deflating and packing up the equipment (many hands make light work) which was definitely a team bonding experience.

If you are looking for a way to spoil your partner, snuggling up together 2200 ft in the air is a sure fire winner. Best date ever! You'll be hard pressed to top this adventure.

Call 3294 8770 or visit [www.floatingimages.com.au](http://www.floatingimages.com.au) for more information. ■