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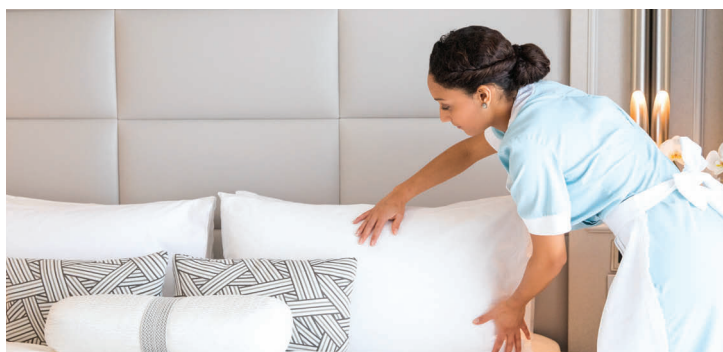




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**77**  
**SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL REPORT**  
News, luxury travel's turnaround, and trips that make a difference.  
**BY ARIEL SHEARER AND LISA WOGAN**

**88**  
**B-SIDE BETS**  
For every on-repeat destination, there's a place less traveled (and just as cool).  
**BY KIMBERLEY LOVATO**

**101**  
**20/20 VISION**  
A look at the last two decades in travel – and what's to come.  
**BY MARIKA CAIN, LARA HALLOCK, AND JUSTIN PAUL**

**112**  
**EMERALD STATUS**  
An introduction to Ireland through its craft traditions.  
**BY KORENA BOLDING SINNETT**

**DESTINATION INDEX**

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Australia          | 95     |
| Bahamas            | 24     |
| Bangkok            | 26     |
| Barbados           | 60     |
| Belize             | 126    |
| Biarritz, France   | 96     |
| Bruges             | 98     |
| India              | 82, 91 |
| Ireland            | 112    |
| Kitzbühel, Austria | 97     |
| Le Marche, Italy   | 33     |
| Mallorca           | 90     |
| Nashville          | 66     |
| Nepal              | 82     |
| Norway             | 89     |
| Okanagan Valley    | 94     |
| Peru               | 93     |
| San Antonio        | 54     |
| Takayama, Japan    | 92     |
| Whistler           | 40     |



Whiskey wishes: A taste of Ireland at Ashford Castle.

**On the Cover**  
**LIGHT THE WAY:** Mallorca's Cap de Formentor, called the "Meeting Point of the Winds."  
**PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALLARD SCHAGER/GETTY IMAGES.**

KORENA BOLDING SINNETT





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TAUCK 



# CONTENTS

ISSUE 115  
January | February 2020

- 16 EDITOR'S NOTE
- 20 CONTRIBUTORS
- 24 THE VIRTUOSO LIFE
- 26 VIRTUOSO REPORTS

- 33 PASSPORT

- 46 **BON VOYAGE**  
A new wave of wellness hits the high seas.

- 48 **SUITE TALK**  
Tennessee happenings, a holistic Hawaiian stay, and a Riviera Nayarit retreat.

- 54 **CITY TO GO**  
Head to San Antonio for culture, cuisine, and contemporary art.

- 58 **INSPIRED BY**  
**Wellness Resolutions**  
Gear up for a brand-new decade in good health.

- 60 **SEAT AT THE BAR**  
**Rum Luck**  
A spirited tradition gets fresh life in Barbados.

- 66 **ON THE TABLE**  
**Hit Parade**  
In Nashville, laid-back tasting menus sing harmony with hot chicken.

58



60



66



70



54

- 70 **WELL TRAVELED**  
**Bars None**  
The best way to connect with a place and its people: Stash the phone and leave the tablet at home.

- 74 **IN MY BAG**  
**My Travel Essentials**  
Gay Browne travels light – and packs sustainably.

- 120 **FIRST PERSON**  
**Wild at Heart**  
To get the most from the world around us, follow your animal instincts.

- 122 **NEED TO KNOW**  
**How to Travel Better**  
The travel tips, insight, and essentials you need now.

- 126 **SOUVENIR**  
**Just Back from Belize**  
Sun, sand, and seaside gift shopping.



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# Dawn of a New Decade

**W**ELCOME TO 2020! REFLECTING back on the turn of the millennium, I marvel at how much has changed in the world, and in my own life. In 2000, I was pregnant with my first child, who's now a freshman in college – and an avid traveler with a passport full of stamps. She's never known an airport where families could greet their loved ones at the gate, luggage without wheels, cameras with film, or trip planning without the Internet. As a global citizen, however, she does know the power of travel to unite. And as a digital native, she knows the volume of information out there is at once empowering and overwhelming.

That's the beauty of working with a Virtuoso travel advisor, who has the know-how and network of connections to help create personalized itineraries that might elude a DIYer. Interestingly, the digital age, which some predicted would mean

the end of the transactional travel agent, actually created demand for a more sophisticated travel advisor, who can curate through the clutter.

In honor of 2020, this issue takes a walk down memory lane, with an eye toward what's ahead (page 101). You'll also discover up-and-coming destinations Virtuoso travel advisors are recommending now (page 88), a report on the latest sustainable-travel news (page 77), and associate art director Korena Bolding Sinnett's gorgeous photo dispatch on Ireland's maker movement (page 112).

I hope you'll find plenty of inspiration to fill your travel calendar for the year ahead – and beyond. While only hindsight is 20/20, one thing is clear: There's never been a better time to see the world.



*Elaine Srnka*

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR &  
VICE PRESIDENT, CONTENT  
esrnka@virtuoso.com



**SOUVENIRS FROM MY TRAVELS:** I recently visited Bangkok for Virtuoso Chairman's Event (read about that trip on page 26). A few mementos, clockwise from top left: a Korat silk flower pin from the Tourism Authority of Thailand; an invitation and place card for a dinner at the Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok; The Peninsula Bangkok's vintage-look label; a handcrafted fan; and an admission ticket to Wat Pho, one of the largest temple complexes in the city.

(ELAINE SRNKA) KORENA BOLDING SINNETT





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"Start sending  
postcards again."

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"Live more intentionally  
and be in the moment  
while traveling."

"Involve our kids,  
now 11 and 13, when  
we plan family  
travel."

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"Update my travel  
gear, get away from  
basic black luggage,  
and donate my old  
pieces." – C. D.

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"Keep my exercise  
routine, eat less, and  
pack lighter."

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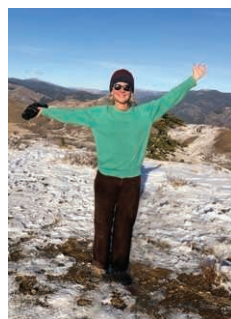


**Illustrator  
Ben Fearnley  
New York City**  
“20/20 Vision,”  
page 101

**THE REPORT:** “As a 3-D artist, I start by sketching out the letter forms to get an idea of what works best for the composition and the lettering style. Then I model and build the piece in 3-D form. The magic happens through texturing, coloring, and lighting to bring the model to life.”

**TOP 2020 DESTINATION:** “I’m looking forward to a return trip to Miami during Art Basel to check out the many galleries and events.”

@ben\_fearnley



**Writer  
Lisa Wogan  
Seattle**

“Real Country,”  
page 82

**THE REPORT:** “For my welcome dinner in Delhi, a true pro wrapped me in an emerald green sari. I learned that the trick for those lovely pleats is a very, very snug waistband. A multi-course feast drove the point home. I have a new appreciation for women who carry off the look with ease.”

**TOP 2020 DESTINATION:** “The Nakasendo, a feudal-era hiking trail from Tokyo through the mountains to Kyoto.”



**Writer  
Jen Rose Smith  
Richmond, Vermont**

“Rum Luck,” page 60

**THE REPORT:** “Even the breeze tastes like rum in Barbados, which I explored on winding backroads flanked by head-high sugarcane. Sipping cask-strength spirits straight from the barrel in the Mount Gay aging facility felt like tapping into something essential.”

**TOP 2020 DESTINATION:** “Late-night sunsets and iceberg spotting have me looking north, so I’m planning a trip to the Canadian Arctic and Torngat Mountains National Park.”

@jenrosesmithvt



**Photographer  
Scott Suchman  
Austin**

“Rum Luck,” page 60

**THE REPORT:** “The Friday-night fish fry in Oistins is a must-do. It’s frenzied and frenetic, but it’s the best meal you’ll have on the island.”

**TOP 2020 DESTINATION:** “I’m looking forward to getting back to Vienna this winter with my wife. It’s a timeless city and perfect to visit any month of the year.”

@scottsuchman





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# Just Back

## THE BAHAMAS

Open-air leisure and underwater adventure during a private-island stay.



**Royal Island hues, from left: Perfectly plated fresh fruit, secluded ocean views, and a table setting to match the tropical flora.**

Assistant editor Samantha Falewée recently visited the 430-acre, private Royal Island in the Bahamas. Run by **Cuvée** – which operates exclusive vacation-rental properties in 15 locales, including Saint Bart's, Aspen, and Los Cabos – Royal Island caters to groups of up to 18 guests in five oceanfront villas, plus a two-person spa suite, a king suite, and a kid-accommodating bunkhouse. Travelers come to these beaches for sun-worshipping, alfresco dining, and tailor-made itineraries.

### GETTING THERE

To get from Florida to North Eleuthera Airport on Eleuthera Island, head to the

Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport and catch a private flight. Your advisor can arrange a jet for a seamless flight to Eleuthera. After about an hour, impossibly blue waters ceded to swirls of dark-green land as we approached the islands. A ten-minute private car transfer took me to a launch, where I hopped on a boat and rode 15 minutes west to Royal Island.

### THIRST QUENCHERS

Bartender Krissy Cartwright's concoctions were reliably light and spruced up with surprising natural flavors: Expect ginger in your mojito, mango in your daiquiri, and rum in your straw-punched coconut.

### MEET THE LOCALS

In the early mornings, a black-crowned night-heron stood silently in a small inlet. I spied him again on my villa's wraparound porch near dusk. And following an afternoon exploring the ruins of nineteenth-century British colonial estates, our six-person ATV

braked to let a hermit crab in a shell the size of a baseball languidly cross our path.

### RELAX AND RECHARGE

One morning, former competitive gymnast Leila Dylla led a beachside yoga session. Another day, a massage therapist swept the tension from my shoulders. You can have a massage right on the beach or retreat to a cool, quiet room in the fitness center.

### DIVE IN

George Gross, co-owner of Valentine's Dive Center on nearby Harbour Island, has 46 years of experience and a penchant for shark diving. In 2018, he partnered with the Perry Institute for Marine Science to begin building a coral reef nursery. With a small group, I floated through a Technicolor valley of coral, dove dramatic rock swim-throughs, and saw a VIP resident – a placid reef shark, slinking along the sandy seafloor. Even underwater, Royal Island's locals and visitors enjoy life at a more leisurely pace.



# Travel Showdown

## CHECK A BAG OR CARRY ON?

Two travel pros unpack the perks of each.



### MY CHECKED PAST

Yes, I have in the neighborhood of two decades as a travel editor under my belt. And yes, I still need to pack that belt and probably three others for my next trip. I'll admit it: I like checking a bag. I'm not a total diva. I *can* carry on – and do most of the time these days. But to glide through security unfettered by a 22-inch ball and chain is to experience en route bliss (ditto skipping the overhead bin-space stampede and wedging my roly-poly roll-on into said space).

"But what about lost luggage?" everyone, especially my fellow editors, is shouting. What about interminable waits at the carousel? Guess I've just been lucky. Maybe I'll change my tune the day my precious things wind up in lost-luggage purgatory. And obviously, I'd never check a bag to JFK.

True happiness is boarding with just a tote bag and an embarrassing number of shoes snug in the cargo hold.

– Marika Cain, managing editor



### CARRY ON, CAREFREE

Here's a scene: In an old provincial house in northern France, my hard-sided, ketchup-colored suitcase is so packed it won't shut. A crowd of extended family watches with grim faces as *moi* – "*la petite américaine*" – struggle to shove yet another pair of 1990s bell-bottom jeans into an invisible crevice. Never again.

Fast-forward some 20 years. These days, we all have enough to manage when traveling, from tapping out work emails to calling the dog-sitter. I don't want baggage weighing me down. My vacation rule: Apply some minimalism to your headspace and your wardrobe, starting with a small carry-on that accommodates precisely what you need. You'll never have to face the creeping dread of standing by the luggage belt waiting, and waiting...

Here's the rule that helps: Bring half as much stuff and twice as much cash, and put the saved checked-bag fees to good use – I love a good vacay shopping spree.

– Samantha Falewée, assistant editor

## Sustainability Win

Virtuoso earns recognition for longtime efforts.



At a recent ceremony in London, Virtuoso chairman and CEO Matthew D. Upchurch accepted a **World Tourism Award** on behalf of the company. The honor recognizes Virtuoso's long-standing commitment to supporting global sustainability; protecting local cultures, environments, and economies; and encouraging travelers to embrace sustainable practices. "This award shines a spotlight not only on our work, but on the greater mission of working together to help protect the world's natural and cultural treasures while enhancing local economies," Upchurch said. "Sustainable travel allows countries to safeguard what makes them special and unique, ensuring their preservation for future generations to enjoy." The World Tourism Awards, founded in 1997, highlight efforts toward sustainable tourism and support for small communities.







Clockwise from top: Fireworks over the Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok; Virtuoso and Mandarin Oriental logos in lights on the Chao Phraya River; and a traditional masked Thai dancer at the farewell dinner.



## Bustling Bangkok

Thailand's capital city is a study in contradictions and culture.

BY ELAINE SRNKA

BANGKOK IS AN IRRESISTIBLE juxtaposition of past and present. Modern high-rises and a futuristic skyline dot its horizon, while tuk-tuks are as common as taxis and longtail boats ply the Chao Phraya, the scenic river that flows through the heart of the city. Despite all the hustling commerce, more than 400 temples lend an air of tranquility. Thailand is known as “the land of smiles,” and that moniker is evident in the City of Angels, where it seems everyone offers a sincere *wai*, the customary Thai greeting that involves graciously pressing the palms together while making a slight bow.

A select group of Virtuoso travel agency leaders recently visited for Chairman's Event, a recognition trip celebrating 80 of Virtuoso's highest-performing agencies from around the world. The itinerary featured insider experiences curated by local Virtuoso partners Abercrombie & Kent Southeast Asia and Luxe by Exo, ranging from private cooking classes to muay Thai boxing lessons from a master, guided tours of the best street-food stalls and floating markets, and more.

Most in the group stayed at The Peninsula Bangkok, which kicked off the week with a welcome reception cohosted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand. Attendees were among the first guests to see the newly updated Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok, fresh from the most extensive renovation in its 143-year history. The landmark hotel hosted a cocktail reception and





# THE BEACH CLUB AT BIMINI

(noun) /ˈTHə bēCH kləb at ˈbiməni/

~~A colorful waterpark with long queues.~~

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St. Tropez meets the Maldives, meditate all day then beach  
bonfire soirée, luxe experience.

**Set Sail The Virgin Way.**







## TIP

"Take a trip down the Chao Phraya River at night – it's a beautiful way to see temples, bridges, and other buildings all lit up."

– Andrea Svarc,  
Virtuoso travel advisor,  
Melbourne



Clockwise from top left: Floral *krathongs* to wish away your worries at the Peninsula Bangkok reception; Mandarin Oriental's Jill Kluge and Amanda Hyndman flank Valerie Wilson; a farewell dinner performance; *krathongs* ready to float; festive fans of Bangkok; Abercrombie & Kent's Belinda Shillcock, Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok's Greg Liddell, Virtuoso's Matthew D. Upchurch, Tourism Authority of Thailand's Srisuda Wanapinyosak, The Peninsula Bangkok's Joseph Sampermans, and Luxe by Exo's Maeve Nolan welcome attendees. Opposite: Performers at the farewell dinner, held at the National Museum.



dinner, complete with a fireworks display and dancing on the riverfront lawn. After business meetings and several days of sightseeing, the week wrapped up with a gala dinner at the country's National Museum, a former palace that now houses historic art and artifacts.

Visiting a temple or two was a must, particularly Wat Pho, one of the city's largest temple complexes and home to the massive reclining Buddha, which stretches nearly 150 feet long. A few of us were lucky enough to catch the resident monks gathering for their morning chants. Directly across the river, gilded Wat Arun is especially photogenic at night, when its spires are aglow.

Another photo-worthy nighttime locale (albeit a different kind of sightseeing): the pricey but picturesque Sky Bar, set on the 63rd floor of the State Tower. Marketed as one of the highest rooftop bars in the world – and made famous by a scene in *The Hangover Part II* – the alfresco venue offers incredible views of the metropolis far below.

Many attendees extended their itineraries with stops before or after their stay. Situated in the south, 25 miles inland from the Gulf of Thailand, Bangkok makes an ideal base for visiting other destinations in Southeast Asia, including elsewhere in Thailand for beach get-aways, wellness retreats, festivals, and natural wonders. Bangkok is just an hour's flight from Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai to the north, and

## THAILAND BY THE NUMBERS

**40,717** Temples in Thailand

**1,430** Thai islands

**28** Virtuoso hotels in the country

**127** National parks

**174** Letters in Bangkok's full name (Krung Thep Mahanakhon Amon Rattanakosin Mahinthara Ayuthaya Mahadilok Phop Noppharat Ratchathani Burirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amon Piman Awatan Sathit Sakkathatiya Witsanukam Prasit Prasit), making it the world's longest city name

an hour from coastal spots such as Phuket, Koh Samui, Krabi, and Koh Kood to the south.

As with most destinations, Bangkok is more than the sights you see – it's the people you meet. From dignitaries and tourism executives to hotel staff and street vendors, nearly everyone served as ambassadors for Thailand tourism – friendly, welcoming, and warm. VI



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Italy at ease:  
Roll from the  
mountains to  
the Adriatic in  
Le Marche.



## Loving Le Marche

Italy provides more reasons for return visits than its grannies do pastas: Tuscan hill towns and vineyards, Amalfi Coast seafood, Milanese footwear, *aperitivi*. Take everything we love, skim off the tourist hordes, and you get **Le Marche**. Bordered by the Adriatic to the east and by Tuscany and Umbria to the west over the Apennine Mountains, this region of olive groves, wheat and sunflower fields, and sunny beaches provides the al dente antidote to classics overcooked by tourism. “This is the ‘real’ untouched Italy,” says Cincinnati-based Virtuoso travel advisor Janet McLaughlin, who lived in the country and frequently returns there. “The small region sports medieval hilltop villages, rugged coastal scenery, UNESCO sites, and so much more.” She’s particularly fond of the walled city of Urbino, Raphael’s birthplace and home to the fifteenth-century Palazzo Ducale – though it’s easy to get her going on everything from Le Marche’s regional cuisine and wines to shoe shopping (the majority of Italy’s handmade shoes are crafted here). This year, travelers can savor the region on **Backroads’** new six-day bike trip. After three days in Umbria, cyclists cross the Apennines and follow an ancient Roman road through Furlo Gorge to the Adriatic resort town of Pesaro. Multiple daily route options range from 10 to 50-plus miles, with downtime for walking tours, meals at *agriturismi* (farmsteads), and dips in the sea. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 10 through October 18; from \$3,699.*

SANDRA RACCANELLO/ISTOCK PHOTO

PASSPORT IS REPORTED BY: Michael Frank, Elaine Glusac, Bethanne Patrick, and Eva Seelye



SPACE TRAVEL

# STELLAR LOOKS

With the countdown underway for **Virgin Galactic's** first commercial flight, the spaceline has revealed what passengers will wear while peering down at Earth from spaceship *Unity*. Designed in collaboration with Under Armour, the five-piece **spacewear collection** – in-flight apparel and a separate training suit worn during prelaunch practice – features garments made of lightweight, temperature-regulating performance fabrics with cushioned elbows and knees, and footwear with soles designed for safe zero-g acrobatics. But it's not a matter of function over fashion: Personal touches include name badges, country flags, and a transparent pocket over the heart to carry photographs of loved ones to the final frontier.



From top: Virgin Galactic's new spacewear and the party gets rolling on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express.



THE GOOD LIFE

## West Egg to West End

**Belmond's Venice Simplon-Orient-Express** relives the heyday of high-society rail travel with *The Party*, a one-off 1920s-themed trip from Venice to London. Taking inspiration from the railway's vintage cars, the weekend fete kicks off with a night at the 96-room Belmond Hotel Cipriani in Venice for a lavish Gatsby-esque soiree. The next day, guests board the 179-passenger train, featuring cabins with lacquered wood walls and three new suites with private bathrooms. The overnight trip includes a black-tie, Champagne-fueled evening in the train's four opulent dining and lounge cars as they roll through the snowy Alps and European heartland en route to London. *Departure: March 27; from \$4,845 per person.*

(SPACEWEAR) VIRGIN GALACTIC



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GEAR UP

## STAR SHOOTERS

Smaller bodies, bigger punch: Elevate your vacation photos with a new travel companion.



A detail-rich image from the Fujifilm X-T30.



● The **Sony** leads the field in easy-to-use subject tracking, a key feature for safaris (just aim the camera at a lion on the move to frame it within the larger field of view). The new **a6600** is sealed against the weather and comes with a larger battery, so you won't run low on juice, even if you can't recharge for a day or two. \$1,800 with an 18-135 mm lens; [sony.com](http://sony.com).



● The **Sigma fp** is the smallest-ever full-frame mirrorless digital camera, allowing it to capture ultracrisp images with the field of view typically reserved for bulkier cameras. It's compatible with Panasonic, Leica, and Canon lenses, and can fuse in-camera GIFs within still shots and live-stream to computers via UVC connections. \$2,199 with a 45 mm lens; [sigmaphoto.com](http://sigmaphoto.com).



● The body of the **Canon EOS M6 Mark II** is nearly as small as the Sigma fp's, but it's more affordable. The camera shoots 4k video at up to 120 frames per second, snaps autofocused stills at up to 30 frames per second, and, via an adapter, fits with almost any Canon lens ever made. \$1,099 with a 15-45 mm lens; [usa.canon.com](http://usa.canon.com).



● Traditionalists will love the **Fujifilm X-T30**. It's a slimmed-down version of the X-T3, but retains the pro model's larger sensor for exceptional clarity and the physical knobs to quickly adjust modes, shutter speed, and exposure, rather than toggling through menus. \$1,199 with an 18-55 mm lens; [fujifilm.com](http://fujifilm.com).



Faena's dinner theater heats up Miami nights.

ART & CULTURE

## LAST SUPPER

Revenge is on the menu for Faena Theater's **cabaret-style take** on Peter Greenaway's film *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover* at the 169-room **Faena Hotel Miami Beach**. The production re-creates the fictional world of the opulent Hollandais restaurant, from cocktails (served by actors dressed as waiters at the hotel's Saxony Bar pre-show) through a three-course dinner. The fantasy unfolds around the audience, with performers dancing between tables as the thief and his wife's troubles become clear and her affair with a bookstore owner heats up. James Beard Award-winning chef Michelle Bernstein orchestrates the evocative meal featuring saffron-infused ceviche, Wagyu short-rib Wellington, and a chocolate dessert that packs a surprise. *Through April 26, spectator seats from \$95 and dinner seats from \$230; [faenatheater.com](http://faenatheater.com).*

(THEATER) JEFF EVARD





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<sup>†</sup>Private transfer is valid with vacations of 4 nights or more. Some conditions apply.



## Garden Fresh

London's new One Fen Court tower features a garden on its 15th-floor public rooftop and another beneath it in the recently opened restaurant **14 Hills**, on the 14th floor. Sunshine streaming through windows nurtures the dining room's mature trees and canopy of evergreen plants and pergola-climbing vines, which provide a verdant frame for skyline views stretching from the Tower of London to The Shard. Chef Thomas Piat, formerly of Bar Boulud, complements the English-garden setting with refined British dishes, such as Isle of Skye scallops baked in the shell and cabbage-wrapped lobster with scallop mousseline. A deli counter offers simpler takeaway fare for rooftop picnics. 120 Fenchurch Street; [14hills.co.uk](http://14hills.co.uk).

**14 Hills'** baked king scallops with chervil root and vermouth.



## ROLL CALL

Japan's 1970s *kaiten*-sushi (conveyor-belt sushi) trend gets a globe-spanning reboot with gourmet bites.

**LONDON** The world's first conveyor-belt cheese restaurant has opened in the West End's Seven Dials Market. **Pick & Cheese** serves more than 25 British options, à la carte or as seasonal plates, each paired with condiments and small-producer natural wines. 35 Earlam Street; [thecheesebar.com](http://thecheesebar.com).

**PARIS** Belly up to **Medi Terra Nea**'s belt for house-made Mediterranean tapas. From *burrata di bufala* to salmon tartare and beef tenderloin skewers, this ninth-arrondissement locale is a bruncher's not-so-guilty pleasure. 13 rue du Faubourg Montmartre.

**LAS VEGAS** Hot-pot lovers pluck fresh, healthy ingredients off **Chubby Cattle**'s refrigerated conveyor belt to add to their choice of seven soup bases bubbling tableside. 3400 S. Jones Boulevard, Suite 15; [chubbycattle.com](http://chubbycattle.com).

**NEMURO, JAPAN** Keep it classic at **Hanamaru**, which artfully plates *kaiten*-sushi with fish caught just beyond this Hokkaido port town. Try it with the local Nemuro sake or ask for a pairing from the expansive sake menu. 9-35 Hanazono-cho, Nemuro-shi; [sushi-hanamaru.com](http://sushi-hanamaru.com).

**TOKYO** Describing itself as a "sweets-go-round," **Cafe Ron Ron** dishes out bite-size, Harajuku-inspired desserts, ranging from cotton-candy-filled macarons and miniature dango dumplings to savory items, such as a potato-salad-stuffed cone. Chome 6-7-15 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku; [cafe-ronron.com](http://cafe-ronron.com).



Pick & Cheese's new market outpost and (left) savory bites.

(PICK & CHEESE) NIC CRILLY-HARGRAVE



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FOOD & SPIRITS

# MOUNTAIN OF FLAVOR

Where to eat après-ski in Whistler.

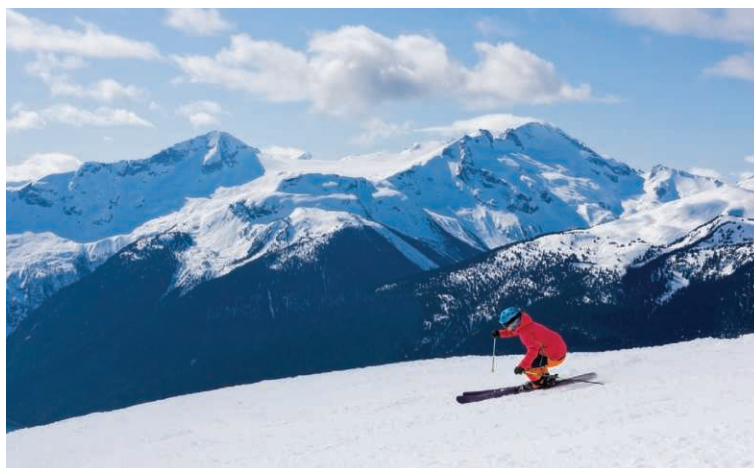
Family-friendly **Creekbread** is a must for straight-up delicious pizza from a wood-fired clay oven. They don't take reservations, and there's *always* a wait, but call 20 minutes before arriving and have your name put on the list. Bonus: A portion of every Tuesday's proceeds goes to local nonprofits. 2021 Karen Crescent; [creekbread.com](http://creekbread.com).

In the heart of Whistler Village, fine Italian restaurant **Il Caminetto** draws a crowd for its crisp Wagyu meatballs, seven or so daily house-made pastas, and mains ranging from British Columbian halibut to chicken saltimbocca (as well as the bar's nine riffs on Negronis). The main dining space can get loud: Ask for one of the crescent banquettes for a more intimate meal. 4242 Village Stroll; [ilcaminetto.ca](http://ilcaminetto.ca).

Laid-back **Hunter Gather Eatery & Taphouse** pours a dozen Canadian craft beers and ciders, most of which you won't find in the village. Pair them with sandwiches, such as the smoked lamb shoulder with preserved lemon yogurt and chimichurri, or larger plates, like the grass-fed, 18-hour-smoked brisket with jalapeño cornbread to sop up the drippings. 4368 Main Street; [huntergatherwhistler.com](http://huntergatherwhistler.com).

**The Mexican Corner**, a longtime village favorite, is undeniably kitschy but deep on flavors. Mezcal old fashioned, a pineapple and charred-jalapeño margarita, and the usual Tex-Mex cocktails keep things lively while diners wait for the likes of rockfish or chicken tinga tacos, jackfruit chile rellenos, and tomatillo- and pasilla-braised pork ribs with blistered tomatoes. 12-4340 Sundial Crescent; [themexicancorner.ca](http://themexicancorner.ca).

Wrap up the day with truffle fries, the daily flatbread special, and a tempura ahi tuna and avocado roll at top après-slopes spot **Garibaldi Lift Company**, above the Whistler Gondola entrance. Patio tables are coveted spots for watching skiers and snowboarders catch big air at Sunday evening's Fire & Ice show. 4165 Springs Lane; [whistlerblackcomb.com](http://whistlerblackcomb.com).



From top: The call of Whistler Blackcomb, Il Caminetto ravioli, and The Mexican Corner's treats.

(SKIER) STOCKSTUDIOX/GETTY IMAGES, (RAVIOLI) LEILA KWOK





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BOOKS

# CARRY-ON COMPANIONS



● **THE SECRET GUESTS** BY BENJAMIN BLACK (*Henry Holt & Co.*, \$27) Pick up this novel after binge-watching season three of *The Crown* for a different glimpse of those most famous sisters, Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret. Based on evidence that the young siblings spent the Blitz at an Irish estate, Black places

them at Clonmillis Hall, home of the Duke of Edenmore, with Miss Celia Nashe, a chaperone who proves to be more than a nanny. Children will be children, and townspeople will be nosy. Soon the action ratchets up, and Nashe, a secret agent, and her assistant, Garda Strafford, must fulfill their roles.

● **THE MAJESTIES** BY TIFFANY TSAO (*Atria Books*, \$26) Whereas *Crazy Rich Asians* took the rom-com approach to uber-rich family politics, here, Gwendolyn and Estella, scions of an Indonesian-Chinese clan, delve into the dark side of mega-wealth. The story opens with Gwendolyn in a coma, narrating from her subconscious about

Estella's poisoning of all 300 members of their extended family during a birthday party. Her unspooling memories recount a pampered upbringing, attending university on two continents, boyfriends and husbands, and curious careers: Estella runs the family silkworm factory, while Gwendolyn's lab has developed a serum that turns insects into temporarily stunned "bagatelles," or accessories. Is this a case of sibling rivalry run amok, or does Gwendolyn know something she can't share with anyone else? In a novel that's about family inheritance in many senses, readers' every guess will likely prove wrong.

● **CLEANNES** BY GARTH GREENWELL (*Farrar, Straus and Giroux*, \$26) The follow-up to 2016's *What Belongs to You* reads like a master class in turning lived experience into high art. In nine stories about a gay American man's years teaching English in Sofia, Bulgaria, Greenwell's novel conveys big concepts (desire, longing, alienation) with perfectly observed moments, from hands circling a coffee cup to the repetition of an unfamiliar word. Some subject matter is prosaic, some profane; both types are elevated by his sinuous sentences, which read more like poetry than prose.

● **THE TRUANTS** BY KATE WEINBERG (*Bloomsbury*, \$26) No burying the lede: Fans of Agatha Christie novels will fall for this debut thriller that moves from East Anglia to Sicily's Aeolian Islands, and from a group of university classmates to a shocking secret. And Christie herself plays a role in the mystery: The entire book plays off Dame Agatha's 11-day disappearance in 1926, and as its protagonists reach Italy, the plot thickens faster than a British pudding. Weinberg's obsession with Christie, as well as her own background in South Africa, at boarding schools, and at Oxford University, feeds into the menacing atmosphere.



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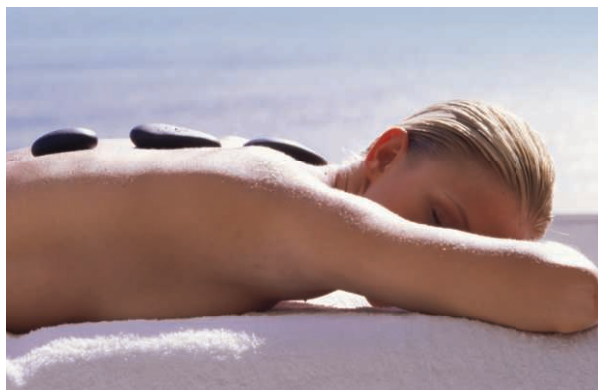
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## East Meets West

By January 22, **Oceania Cruises** will have rolled out the new Aquamar Spa + Vitality Center on each of its ships. Passengers can step off their cruise looking refreshed, thanks to an onboard acupuncturist and Dysport facial treatments (similar to Botox). Once on shore, passengers can seek treatments with local wellness experts: Among the offerings are a visit with a reflexologist aboard a rice barge in Bangkok and a hands-on lesson in apitherapy (a therapy using honey-bee products) with a beekeeper in Seville. Energizing meals such as poke bowls and green papaya and kelp noodle salad fuel the journey, as do snacks from the raw juice and smoothie bars.



Oceania Cruises' new, light-filled spa rooms, and (top left) the line's fresh-pressed juices.



## Fitness Afloat

The new Spa on Edge experience, which debuted on **Celebrity Cruises'** *Celebrity Edge* in November, has innovative offerings such as tables that use sound and vibration to increase relaxation during a massage. In the spa's thermal suite, eight therapeutic havens include a hammam, a salt room, a crystalarium, a float room, and a space where simulated rain showers shift from warm to cool and from light drops to waterfalls. Debuting in April, the second of the cruise line's Edge series of ships, the *Celebrity Apex*, will introduce fitness studios and an onboard cosmetic dentistry office. The inaugural voyage of the 2,910-passenger *Apex* sails round-trip from Southampton and makes stops in France, Spain, and Portugal. *Inaugural Celebrity Apex departure: April 5; from \$2,119.*

## In the Microcurrent

Soak in mineral baths once frequented by popes outside Rome or cap off a yoga session with a vegetarian lunch on Corfu as part of **Regent Seven Seas Cruises'** new wellness tours. At the line's new Serene Spa & Wellness, ports of call serve as the inspiration for some treatments (Brazilian bamboo massages, for example). Technology informs others, such as microcurrent facials. The focus on health extends to the dining room, with plant-based "power bowls" drizzled with flavor-loaded dressings, green curry vegetable stir-fries, and pear-brandied rosemary sorbet.



Big oms: Stop for yoga on Corfu.

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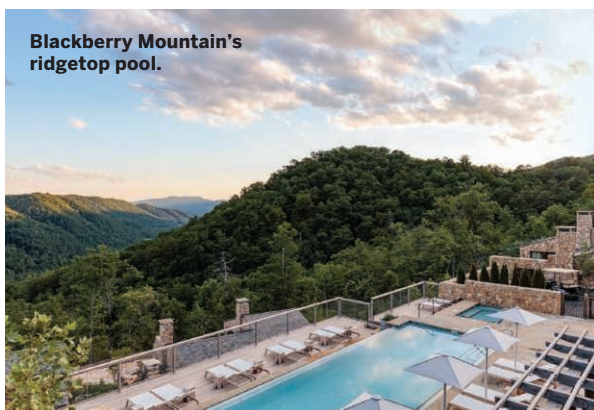


## The Global Humm

In his European debut, chef Daniel Humm of New York's three-Michelin-starred Eleven Madison Park opened **Davies and Brook** this December in London's landmark **Claridge's** hotel.

Named for the intersecting streets where the 190-room, art deco hotel resides, Davies and Brook – the less formal transatlantic kin to Humm's flagship – serves his signature honey- and lavender-glazed roasted chicken, four-course dinners, and three-course lunches, and casual snacks and cocktails from famed bartender Leo Robitschek in the adjoining bar. Davies and Brook marks a professional homecoming for the Swiss-born Humm, who originally cooked at Claridge's as a teenager. *Doubles from \$642, including breakfast daily and a \$95 hotel credit.*

**Chef Daniel Humm (above) designed the menu for Davies and Brook, including radishes placed atop triple-crème cheese (right).**



**Blackberry Mountain's ridgetop pool.**

## Appalachian Enlightenment

In east Tennessee, sibling resorts **Blackberry Farm** and **Blackberry Mountain** have announced their 2020 enrichment series. The first full year of events at the new Blackberry Mountain, which has 36 cabins and cottages and sits on 5,200 acres in the Great Smoky Mountains near the flagship farm, features **creative retreats**, including one with *New York Times* best-selling author Shauna Niequist (March 5 through 8). Fitness-intensive events star athletes such as ultrarunner Pete Ripmaster (May 3 through 6), while a weekend led by Ramona wines creator Jordan Salcito blends tastings with hikes (March 22 through 25). The 68-room Blackberry Farm, home to a restaurant supplied by an on-site dairy, brewery, livestock operation, and farm, underscores its culinary appeal with guest chefs, such as James Beard Award winner Mashama Bailey of Savannah's The Grey restaurant (February 16 through 19). Outdoor events include a weekend of **truffle hunting** with lagotto Romagnolo dogs (March 6 through 8). *Blackberry Farm doubles from \$895, including a welcome amenity, all meals, and a \$100 spa credit. Blackberry Mountain doubles from \$1,045, including breakfast and dinner daily, complimentary snacks and nonalcoholic beverages, and a \$100 spa credit. Events from \$700.*

## HAWAII HEALING

After a four-year hiatus, the Lodge at Koele in the tropical highlands of Lanai has returned as the **Four Seasons Hotel Lanai at Koele, A Sensei Retreat**. "Sensei guides" trained in nutrition, fitness, and spa therapies design custom itineraries for guests of the Four Seasons' first all-inclusive wellness enclave. Three-night-minimum stays emphasize **movement, nourishment, and rest** – key pillars supported by as many as 16 exercise classes a day, 30 spa treatments, a menu created by acclaimed Japanese chef Nobu Matsuhisa, and 96 tranquil rooms. Guided hikes, beach excursions, and cultural lectures supplement on-property activities in two movement studios, *onsen* soaking tubs, and ten private *hale*, or spa cottages. *Doubles from \$13,800 for three nights, including round-trip flights from Honolulu; all activities, excursions, spa services, meals, and beverages; and a \$100 resort credit.*



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NEW HOTEL

## Nayarit Retreat

Forest bathing meets sunbathing at a new Mexican hideaway.

One&Only Resorts has a knack for finding the next hot destination (Rwanda's Nyungwe Forest National Park, the Maldives' Reethi Rah). It keeps the streak alive with the forthcoming **One&Only Mandarin** on Mexico's untrammelled Riviera Nayarit, about an hour north of Puerto Vallarta. The resort will open in June on an undeveloped stretch of the Pacific, flanked by jungled hillsides that preserve ancient archaeological sites of the indigenous Cora people.

Canopied by rain forest, the resort's 104 villas come with private pools, outdoor living areas, and butlers. Inner walls made of cumaru wood blend with the outdoors, and furniture carved from parota and other tropical woods match the species found on the site. Tranquil views from floor-to-ceiling windows are just the be-

ginning of the compound's natural immersion. Guests can zip-line or hike through the forest, kayak through the bird-rich estuary, or paddleboard on the ocean. Starting in November 2020, an equestrian club will provide horses for trail riding, stage polo matches, and host demonstrations by *charros* (Mexican horse riders). A tree house, butterfly sanctuary, cinema, and game room fill the 85,000-square-foot children's club. Adults have a cliff-top infinity-edge pool and restaurant to themselves. In the One&Only Spa, glass walls and open-air pavilions allow for forest bathing during yoga classes, meditation sessions, and massages inspired by indigenous Mexican rituals. *Doubles from \$900, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit.*





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7 Days | Reykjavík to Reykjavík

#### Highlights:

- Meditate atop the volcanic slopes of Mt Hengill
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- Practice yoga on Reyinsfjara's black-sand beach
- Suit up with a pickaxe to hike Sólheimajökull Glacier

### Wellness Peru — Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley

7 Days | Cusco to Cusco

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- Taste local specialties at Parwa Community Restaurant
- Take a relaxing soak in the Lares hot springs
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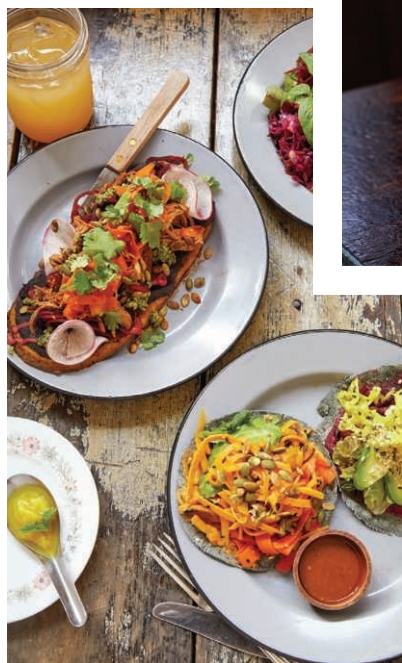




## South Texas Siren

Head to San Antonio for culture, cuisine, and contemporary art.

BY SALLIE LEWIS LONGORIA



Clockwise from top left: Little's boots, a city view, an Esquire Tavern refreshment, Ruby City, and a Pharm Table spread.

**GO FOR** While six different flags have flown over Texas throughout its history, in San Antonio, Hispanic influence reigns. Along the 15-mile-long River Walk, subtropical breezes ruffle the cypress trees and mariachi music drifts from bars and restaurants; during the April Fiesta celebrating the city's heritage, confetti and *papel picado* flicker against the sky. San Antonio is also one of only two U.S. destinations designated a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

**The Culinary Institute of America** here focuses on Latin flavors and hosts classes for the public throughout the year. The new David Adjaye-designed **Ruby City** museum, featuring contemporary paintings, sculptures, and installations from the colossal collection of the late Linda Pace and her foundation, has bolstered the city's flourishing arts scene.

**EAT** The menu at 2018 James Beard Award semifinalist **Mixtli** (5251 McCullough Avenue)

explores a new region of Mexico every 45 days. The chef's table seats just 12 diners per night, with tickets available online weeks in advance.

Since 2015, chef-owner Elizabeth Johnson has attracted national attention at **Pharm Table** (106 Auditorium Circle), her brunch- and lunch-only restaurant with an Ayurvedic, anti-inflammatory bent. The locally sourced, plant-centric menu features farm-to-table tacos, quinoa tamal bowls, and chilled beet gazpacho, to name a few. Johnson also offers small-group cooking classes on-site.

**DRINK** The James Beard-nominated **Esquire Tavern** (155 E. Commerce Street), home of the longest wood-topped bar in Texas, is a classic choice for a downtown drink. Downstairs, the low-lit, river-facing lounge is decorated with taxidermied fish and tufted leather banquettes that beckon nightcap seekers.



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## TIP

“San Antonio has great local boutiques. Richter Goods manufactures its clothing in the city, using premium specialty fabrics. Visit Felíz Modern for local art and unique gifts.”

— Deya Palmero, Virtuoso travel advisor, San Antonio



Clockwise from top: Hotel Emma's lobby, Mixtli chefs Diego Galicia and Rico Torres, and Dos Carolinas wares.



For swanky cocktails and live South Texas music, head to **Jazz, TX** (312 Pearl Parkway, Building 6, Suite 6001). Conceived by local musician Doc Watkins, this cozy subterranean watering hole is located in the cellar of the Pearl Brewery's revamped Bottling House.

**SHOP** Not much has changed at the family-owned and -operated **Little's Boot Company** (110 Division Avenue) since its founding in 1915. Today, local craftspeople still cut, hammer, stamp, and stitch at the on-site workshop. San Antonians – along with cattle barons, movie stars, and politicians – have invested in the family's made-to-measure cowboy boots, which start at \$1,250.

Latino culture permeates life in South Texas, and guayaberas are a staple here. **Dos Carolinas** (303 Pearl Parkway, Suite 102) makes bespoke, natural-fiber versions reminiscent of the styles worn in Cuba and the Yucatán. The shop also sells robes and dresses designed to breathe in hot, humid climates such as San Antonio's.

At **Rooms & Gardens** (5405 Broadway Street), shop for French antiques, Fortuny pillows, and Texas-style

entertaining essentials. Co-owner Laurie Saunders has gathered the best collection of cookbooks and coffee-table volumes in the city.

**STAY** Once a nineteenth-century brewerhouse, today the 146-room riverfront **Hotel Emma** is a symbol of San Antonio's layered and lovingly restored history. Dine on creative American fare at Supper or grab a cocktail at Sternewirth tavern and snag a coveted seat in one of the booths formed from the cast-iron tanks once used to ferment beer. *Doubles from \$350, including breakfast daily and one lunch or dinner for two.*

Overlooking 550 acres of pristine Texas Hill Country, **La Cantera Resort & Spa** has 496 rooms, including villa accommodations and 21-and-over rooms on the seventh floor. The 25,000-square-foot Loma de Vida Spa & Wellness offers classes ranging from high-intensity interval training to essential-oil mood enhancement, and treatments from full-day escapes in the private grotto with its heated pool to a two-hour massage and scrub that incorporates local honey, lavender, and beeswax. *Doubles from \$299, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit.* **V1**





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On the scene in Speightstown (left) and the spirit of choice with lime at John Moore Bar rum shop.

# Rum Luck

A spirited tradition gets fresh life in Barbados.

BY JEN ROSE SMITH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT SUCHMAN

**T**ROPICAL CLOUDBURSTS TOUSLE THE sugarcane fields at Mount Gay, urging their grassy scent toward a cavernous bond house filled with aging rum. Time turns slowly among the oak barrels, which are stamped with the name of the world's longest-running rum maker, in Barbados' rural Saint Lucy Parish. But inside a white-washed laboratory next door, master blender Trudiann Branker is distilling the future of her island's iconic spirit.

"Rum has had a marriage with the Caribbean cliché for many, many years," says Branker, the first female master blender at Mount Gay, which was established in 1703. "Now we're just more discerning drinkers." While a seventeenth-century visitor to Barbados called the local spirit "hot, hellish, and terrible," these days the island's rum is prized for its nuanced flavor profiles.

It's a remarkable turnaround for a drink first conceived as a way to use up molasses, a by-product of the sugar-making process. Connoisseurs have sought out fine rums for decades, but only in recent years have premium bottles elbowed in among the sweetened, spiced spirits that have long commanded shelf space in shops. On the ever-more-selective international market, great rum has finally made its own luck.

Along with a small cohort of ambitious distillers here, Branker is exploring the potential of the island's tropical terroir. The same postcard assets that draw



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## Seat at the Bar

travelers to this garden island – powdery beaches and sheltering cliffs, bright reefs, and generous winter sunshine – conspire to create ideal distilling conditions: Layers of ancient coral beneath Barbados filter the groundwater that Mount Gay uses to remarkable purity, while the Caribbean climate speeds aging and develops richly layered aromas.

Although some Caribbean distillers smooth their rums' rough edges with a dose of sugar before bottling, Barbados custom dictates that spirits are left to stand on their own. "It's what we've been doing here for decades," says Branker, whose first signature, limited-edition release debuted last October. "And what you have is the perfect situation to make rum."

At the eastern limit of the Lesser Antilles, Barbados measures just 21 miles from end to end, so it's easy to explore in a day or two of driving. Winding lanes join the island's 11 parishes, which rise into hills between the west coast's beaches and rugged cliffs to the east. Here's where to taste on a trip to the island.



From top: Beachside on Barbados, Trudiann Branker at Mount Gay Distillery, and barrels at Foursquare Distillery.



### The Original MOUNT GAY RUM DISTILLERY

Get the world's oldest rum from the source at Mount Gay, where the first stop on a distillery tour is a centuries-old well bored deep into coral bedrock. Branker's team pulls from rows of barrels that span decades, and visitors can use those same spirits to create personalized blends in her rum laboratory. *Tours from \$125 per person. Church Hill Road, Saint Lucy; [mountgayrum.com](http://mountgayrum.com).*

### Limited Releases FOURSQUARE RUM DISTILLERY

Distiller Richard Seale bottles rums for a long list of labels, including Doorly's XO and R.L. Seale's Old Brigand, but it's his limited-release bottles that inspire bidding wars on the secondary market. A self-guided tour of Foursquare's warehouse-like distillery ends

with a generous tasting at the on-site Copper Still Bar. *Foursquare, Saint Philip.*

### Rum Shops JOHN MOORE AND NIGEL BENN AUNTY

Clicking dominoes and rattling ice welcome visitors to Barbados' neighborhood rum shops. Hundreds of these often one-room shacks washed in eye-catching hues dot the island – places to meet locals and enjoy a dose of Bajan hospitality. John Moore Bar in Saint James serves iced Mount Gay in a shack with sunset views. Try glasses of Old Brigand rum at Saint Andrew's Nigel Benn Aunty Bar, owned by the aunt of champion boxer Nigel Benn, whose photos line the wall and whose winnings bought the brightly painted watering hole. *John Moore Bar, Highway 1B, Saint James. Nigel Benn Aunty Bar, Highway 2, Saint Andrew.*

(TRUDIANN BRANKER) COURTESY MOUNT GAY DISTILLERY





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## Seat at the Bar



From left: St. Nicholas Abbey distillery's grounds, Hunte's Gardens owner Anthony Hunte sips a rum punch, and Cobblers Cove.

### Sugar Purists ST. NICHOLAS ABBEY

A seventeenth-century Jacobean plantation house presides over cane fields at this family-owned operation. From a steam-powered sugarcane mill to a burnished pot-and-column still, their small-scale distilling pays off in elegant flavor profiles. The only distillery on the island that works exclusively with cane syrup, rather than molasses, St. Nicholas Abbey produces rum such as a 15-year-old single cask that has racked up awards for its satiny balance of fruit and warm spice. *Cherry Tree Hill, Saint Peter; stnicholasabbey.com.*

### Punch Point HUNTE'S GARDENS

Even purists like a good rum punch, made with the traditional rhyming recipe: one of sour, two of sweet, three of strong, four of weak. (That translates to a blend of lime, sugar, rum, and water spiked with spiced bitters.) Hunte's Gardens in Saint Joseph Parish serves an especially fine version on a breezy veranda overlooking the manicured grounds, where owner Anthony Hunte holds court as hummingbirds dart between blooms. *Highway 3A, Castle Grant, Saint Joseph; huntsgardens-barbados.com.*

## BARBADOS ESSENTIALS

Where to stay on the island.

- Wicker and candy-striped linen channel vintage ambiance at **Cobblers Cove** in Speightstown, where guests gather in the newly redecorated Great House for tropical tea parties and sunset rum punch. The 40-suite property's garden rooms open onto lush plantings, while oceanfront accommodations overlook turquoise water. *Doubles from \$888, including breakfast daily and one boat outing to swim with sea turtles.*

- At the **Port Ferdinand Yacht and Beach Club Residences**, all 46 villas offer dockside access to 50- to 90-foot berths for private vessels. Hawksbill

turtles swim just offshore here, so guests can wildlife-watch over a seafood dinner prepared in their villa by one of the property's chefs. *One-bedroom residence from \$1,047, including a full-service berth, breakfast daily, a \$100 resort credit, water taxi transportation, and Nikki Beach Club lounge spots.*

- Mahogany trees and 1,000 feet of silvery beach frame 113-room **Sandy Lane**, whose four restaurants range from café casual to intimate luxury. There's room to play at the family-friendly resort, with its Treehouse Club for kids and coastal breezes on three golf courses,

including two 18-hole Tom Fazio-designed courses. *Doubles from \$1,845, including round-trip airport transfers, breakfast daily, one 60-minute massage, and a complimentary round of golf.*

- A beachy palette at the **Fairmont Royal Pavilion** harmonizes with views of sand and sea from each of the 75 ocean-facing rooms. Afternoon tea is served in the beachside Taboras Restaurant, and activities range from sailing and catamaran cruises to swimming with wild sea turtles. *Doubles from \$1,275, including a welcome amenity, breakfast daily, and a \$100 resort credit.* VI





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Down-home and upscale: Bastion's apple pie, potatoes topped with paddlefish, slices of country ham, and cobia and hibiscus.

## Hit Parade

In Nashville, laid-back tasting menus sing harmony with hot chicken.

BY KELSEY OGLETTREE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUIS GARCÍA

JUST AS NASHVILLE'S country music has evolved to include many flavors, its restaurant scene is expanding to suit a wide variety of tastes – but not in the way you might expect. Leave the dimly lit fine-dining spots to L.A. and New York; Music City, U.S.A. does upscale in a more grassroots way, interpreting high-end as high-touch service and intimate tables. “Sit back, relax, and let us feed you” is the attitude of Nashvillian chefs these days.

“The influx of new residents, including chefs from all over, has contributed a new vitality to the already solid culinary scene,” says Chris Chamberlain, the primary food and drink writer for local weekly the *Nashville Scene* for more than ten years and a lifelong Nashvillian. “The same way that local songwriters have learned to play together in sessions, these new chefs embrace the atmosphere of creative



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## On the Table

collaboration to infuse Nashville cuisine with regional and international influences.”

True to Nashville form, these relaxed spots take the pretense out of tasting menus, making the most of fresh ingredients.

### Revamped Favorite THE CATBIRD SEAT

This spot, which opened in Midtown in 2011 with the city’s first tasting menu, put Nashville on the haute cuisine map. Eight years later, it has been transformed into an entirely different space, led by two new twentysomething chefs, Will Aghajanian and Liz Johnson. They’ve renovated the interior, a long hallway leading to a 22-seat counter; changed out all the serveware; overhauled the menu; and even swapped in playlists that match the food. The chefs have a laser focus on presenting ingredients in a new way. The flavor combinations are by no means classically Southern, but they’re rooted here. For example, a recent menu featured Maine bluefin tuna served in two courses: fatty tuna alongside country-ham-wrapped watermelon, followed by slices of lean tuna atop chilled ratatouille. “The lean tuna is finger food,” Aghajanian says – one that pairs well with whiskey. Finger food is one way the duo downplays the fancy factor. “For us,” he says, “a really good Georgia peach in the height of the season is luxury.” 1711 Division Street; [thecatbirdseatrestaurant.com](http://thecatbirdseatrestaurant.com).



From left: The 12South neighborhood, home to hot restaurants; Tailor Nashville's Gujarati-inflected dishes, including fall squash and bafeli singh peanuts; Josephine chef Andrew Little; and an edible floral design at The Catbird Seat.



### The South Meets South Asia TAILOR NASHVILLE

Although Vivek Surti, a first-generation American of Indian descent, was well known for his supper-club pop-ups that began in 2011, the Tailor Nashville owner didn’t have a brick-and-mortar in mind. “People would ask me if I’d open a restaurant, and I’d say ‘Absolutely not,’ ” he says. “I’m not somebody who runs a restaurant, but I entertain a dinner party.” Fast-forward to December 2018, when he debuted Tailor Nashville in the Germantown neighborhood. Tailor mimics the social affairs Surti grew up going to around Nashville: Diners let him know they’re coming (by making a reservation online, capped at 40 guests per night), then sit down with friends at a table already filled with snacks and work their

way through a menu that brings together elements of middle Tennessee and Gujarati (western Indian) cuisine as Surti tells the story behind each dish. For example, take the humble catfish: This middle Tennessee ingredient is prepared Indian-style here, with turmeric, ginger, and green chilies. “This is a restaurant,” Surti says, “that can only exist in Nashville.” 1300B Third Avenue N.; [tailornashville.com](http://tailornashville.com).

### Amped-Up Pairings BASTION

Josh Habiger, one of the chefs who started The Catbird Seat, has moved on to open a fine-dining spot in the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood. At Bastion, he’s adapted the tasting menu as a choose-your-own-adventure dinner, in which the eve-

ning’s 15 flavor combinations are arranged in a simple five-by-three grid on the menu. “It’s a hybrid tasting menu in that we’re not choosing everything; you as a guest have a say in the matter,” Habiger says. The equally unusual layout feels like a reverse speakeasy: Visitors enter through Bastion’s big bar, and a large metal door in the back slides open to reveal the Bastion kitchen, with ten bar seats and three tables. The cooks deliver all the food, emphasizing the space’s friendly feel. 434 Houston Street; [bastionnashville.com](http://bastionnashville.com).

### Dutch Oven JOSEPHINE

Many choice restaurants call the hip 12South neighborhood home. Chef Andy Little’s is among the friendliest. This casual yet elegant spot offers menus filled with up-





## TIP

“Don’t miss Belle Meade Plantation’s Bourbon at Belle Meade tour. Hear the history of the area, and learn to make a few famous bourbon cocktails.”

– Erin Logsdon, Virtuoso travel advisor, Nashville

dates to time-tested dishes (duck-fat hash browns with trout roe, duck-leg confit with black-eyed peas). The gem at Josephine, however, is the ten-course, chef-guided tasting menu, served to just ten guests on Friday and Saturday nights. Dubbed X|X (ten by ten) and served in a semiprivate dining area in view of the kitchen, the menu in this portion of the restaurant reveals only a list of ingredients – Amish cantaloupe and scallops, say. Little explains each dish as it’s delivered to the table. A central Pennsylvania native, he takes a Pennsylvania Dutch approach to cooking, transforming humble traditional dishes such as scrapple (a mash of pork scraps thickened with cornmeal and flour) into Nashville delicacies. 2316 12th Avenue S.; [josephineon12th.com](http://josephineon12th.com).

### Russian-Doll Restaurant THE RABBIT HOLE

Dinner at The Rabbit Hole begins with the playlist, a mix that heightens various phases of the meal. Queen’s “Don’t Stop Me Now” might set the scene at this *Alice in Wonderland*-meets-rock-opera, single-table restaurant-within-a-restaurant that seats four people, all tucked inside Henley, an American brasserie just off Music Row. Executive chef Daniel Gorman, a Charleston native, incorporates Low Country techniques, Tennessee ingredients, and a hefty dose of whimsy. The tasting menu, usually around 13 courses, changes weekly, but the playfulness remains, as in Basil’s Bowl of Crunchiest, for example: a sophisticated riff on Froot Loops. 2023 Broadway; [rabbitholenashville.com](http://rabbitholenashville.com).

## PILLOW TALK

Where to stay during a Nashville culinary trip.

● Nashville’s chic Gulch neighborhood is home to the 12-story **Thompson Nashville**, within walking distance of several music venues and The Catbird Seat. Aside from its 224 modern, light-filled rooms, it’s known for L.A. Jackson, a classy rooftop bar that draws locals and visitors for shareable cocktails and weekend brunch. *Doubles from \$305, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

● Located a block off Music Row, the 250-room **Hutton Hotel** is a warm, stylish property beloved by creative types. The Writers Studios, outfitted with state-of-the-art recording equipment, and Analog, a social club-cum-music venue, anchor the property. The musically minded can also borrow Fender guitars, basses, and ukuleles, along with amplifiers and headphones, for in-room sessions. *Doubles from \$297, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

● **The Hermitage Hotel**, opened downtown in 1910, radiates Beaux Arts glamour. Each of the hotel’s 122 guest rooms is decked out with Frette linens and Italian marble bathrooms with deep soaking tubs and Molton Brown products. The on-site Capitol Grille uses produce sourced from the hotel’s heirloom garden. *Doubles from \$429, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

● **Noelle’s** name pays homage to the hotel’s roots as Noel Place, one of Nashville’s first fine stays, dating to the 1930s. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Boutique Row property has a lofty lobby bar with pink Tennessee granite, and art and handcrafted pottery from local makers adorn the 224 guest rooms. *Doubles from \$329, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit. VI.*



**Solid reception:  
Rafting the Colorado in  
the Grand Canyon.**



## Bars None

**The best way to connect  
with a place and its people:  
Stash the phone and leave  
the tablet at home.**

**BY AARON GULLEY**

**A** FEW YEARS AGO, I TOOK A TWO-WEEK RAFTING TRIP through the Grand Canyon. The white water was smashing good fun, and the soaring geology more startling than I'd imagined. But what was most indelible – the takeaway that has changed the way I travel – was something I hadn't considered: In North America's iconic canyon, there's no cell service and no Wi-Fi.

Connectivity is all but ubiquitous in most places. According to UN data, as of 2019, two-thirds of people worldwide had mobile devices, and, given that many people have multiple devices, there were more than a billion more mobile connections than human beings. More than 50 percent of the global

JIM MALLOUK/GETTY IMAGES



## Research links digital detoxing to enhanced attention spans, less stress, and more-fulfilling relationships.

population has Internet access, and that number is surging. Meanwhile, 41 percent of travelers say they feel obligated to work while on vacation, even as the National Institutes of Health now links cell phone and Internet addictions to sleep disturbances, anxiety, and depression – and it's hard to find places where you can't be found these days. "Technology has brought us many great advances," says Jeremy McCarthy, the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group's director of spa and wellness. "But the expectations for instant communication and the increasing pace of change in the world can have negative impacts on our well-being."

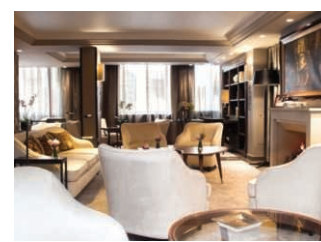
That's why the Grand Canyon was so eye-opening. For 14 days, I completely disconnected, something I hadn't done for at least five years. Even though I slept on the ground and gave up showers, the lack of external commitments felt more indulgent than a stay at any five-star resort. And it's not just me: Research links digital detoxing to enhanced attention spans, less stress, and more-fulfilling relationships. In the name of unplugged travel, here are a few favorite adventures and retreats to truly break away.

### GOING OFF-GRID

Travelers won't find Wi-Fi on **UnCruise Adventures'** Alaskan expedition ships, a feature designed to encourage better engagement with wildlife and landscapes. Daily activities on the 15-day sailing from Ketchikan to Sitka aboard the 76-passenger *Wilderness Discoverer* range from Zodiac outings to spot whales and paddling past sea lions in kayaks to hiking to the Mendenhall Glacier – no one misses surfing YouTube nature videos on their phone. *Departures: Multiple dates, April 18 through August 22; from \$6,645.*



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Many African safari operators have “modernized” with Internet connectivity, but **Ker & Downey’s** off-grid camps in Botswana are excellent for getting away from it all. Highlights of one of the company’s 12-day trips include walking safaris in the Okavango Delta, a wetland profuse with hippos and elephants in the country’s north, followed by overland and canoe explorations of the Selinda Spillway, an exclusive concession known for intimate big-game sightings. Even after leaving the bush, the Victoria Falls finale should drown out any thoughts of plugging in. *Departures: Any day, March 1 through November 20; from \$10,000.*

Few places are more remote and sparsely inhabited than Kamchatka, a wilderness peninsula in Russia’s far northeast reaches. **Remote Lands’** private ten-day adventure delves deep into this backcountry with activities such as a four-wheel-drive excursion and hikes to several volcanoes, a helicopter flight to the Uzon caldera’s geothermal field, and casting for monster rainbow and steelhead trout on untouched rivers. *Departures: Any day, June through September; from \$9,200.*

### RESORTS THAT REVIVE

Nestled in a thick rain-forest canopy just outside Costa Rica’s Arenal Volcano National Park, 35-villa, adults-only **Nayara Springs** has always focused on tranquility and seclusion, but now detox packages make it official. Upon check-in, guests hand over cell phones and laptops to be placed in resort safes, and

QUENTIN GUN/GETTY IMAGES





Elephants graze  
in Botswana's  
Okavango Delta.

plug into nature with bird-watching walks, open-air yoga classes, and soaks in each villa's private, mineral-hot-springs plunge pool. Thermal-water facials and hot-stone massages add to the relaxation. *Detox programs from \$2,089 for two, including three nights' accommodations and breakfast daily.*

The antidote for #southbeach overload: the 326-room **Mandarin Oriental, Miami's** digital detox, where guests store cell phones in mini sleeping bags and check into a suite stocked with a basket of puzzles and games in place of TV. A spa consultation provides Mayo Clinic tips on how to manage technology in life, while yoga, a singing bowl session, a massage designed to remove the strain of device overuse, and a healthy bento-box lunch at the pool ensure relaxation. *Digital detox from \$2,738 for two, including two nights' accommodations, breakfast daily, and a \$100 spa credit.*

Sun seekers at the 267-suite **Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit**, on the Pacific near Puerto Vallarta, can request Detox Concierges to cleanse their rooms of television and all personal electronics. At its sister resort, the 539-suite **Grand Velas Riviera Maya** on Mexico's Caribbean coast, surrendering devices entitles guests to complimentary activities such as bike tours, eco-walks, snorkeling, and more. *Doubles from \$381 per person at Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit and from \$478 per person at Grand Velas Riviera Maya, including all meals and drinks. VI*



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# My Travel Essentials

**Gay Browne travels light – and packs sustainably.**

PORTRAIT BY MARISA GUZMAN-ALOIA

**T**HE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE, author of *Living with a Green Heart*, and founder of the Green Media Group traces her travel bug to her early career in ad sales for *Travel + Leisure* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Unsurprisingly, her three kids caught it too. “My family jokes that the most important thing I taught my children was how to pack

a suitcase,” she says. As for her own packing philosophy, she’s devoted to carrying on. She buys quality items and keeps them for years, avoiding fast fashion. Among her favorite travel memories: watching the sun set over the Serengeti with her kids. “I’m always up for an adventure,” she says. “As long as the food is good and the sheets are clean.”

## I DON’T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT:

- 1.** My chocolate-brown **Rimowa Cabin S**.
- 2.** My ten-year-old **Louis Vuitton Neverfull** tote because the material is water-resistant.
- 3.** A navy **Jules Allen** pashmina.
- 4.** A **Tribute Project** blazer, made from repurposed vintage designer clothing.
- 5.** An **Ibiza roller brush** with an eco-friendly cork handle. I have a thing about doing my own hair when I’m on the road.
- 6.** **Dr. Hauschka** face wash, rose face cream,
- and lip balm. This pioneering natural-beauty company’s mission is “to support the healing of humanity and the earth.”
- 7.** A **Vince** T-shirt and navy suede slides.
- 8.** My **S’well water bottle** and a bag of sustainably grown almonds.
- 9.** Vintage **Ralph Lauren** skinny jeans – jeans and a blazer is my look.
- 10.** A white **Theory** dress shirt (also part of my uniform). **VI**





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**VIRTUOSO AMENITY:** \$200-value food and beverage credit per stay.



NAIROBI, KENYA

## Hemingways Nairobi



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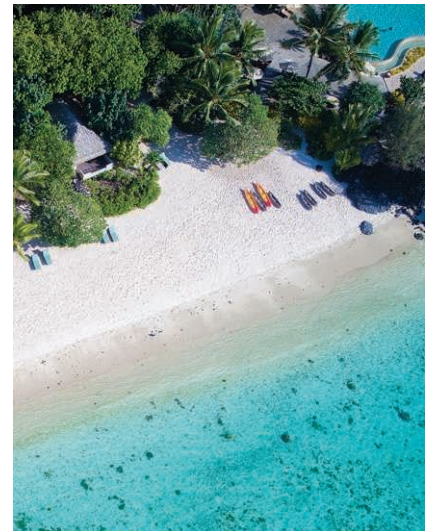
Visit Nairobi National Park to witness prowling lions, rhinos, giraffes, and other exotic wildlife. Take in unrivaled silhouettes of the Ngong Hills from your private terrace and over sundowners at the bar. Delight in refined cuisine in the Brasserie, and experience reinvigorating rituals in the spa.

**VIRTUOSO AMENITY:** 50-minute massage for two, once per stay.



AITUTAKI, COOK ISLANDS

## Pacific Resort Aitutaki



Encounter a tranquil oasis and savor endless views amid the South Seas of Polynesia.

Enjoy direct beach access from your private villa or bungalow. Sip cocktails poolside at Black Rock, dine on international fare at Rapae Bay, and indulge in treatments at Tiare Spa. Stay four nights and receive a complimentary fifth night, plus a romantic beachside dinner, when booked by December 20, 2020.

**VIRTUOSO AMENITY:** \$100-value spa services credit per stay.





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# SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL REPORT

News, luxury travel's turnaround, and trips that make a difference in India and Nepal.



KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI

**Mogul marvel:  
The Taj Mahal.**

Bahamas Recovery  
p. 79

What Sustainability Means Today  
p. 80

Social Entrepreneurship in India and Nepal  
p. 82



# WHAT'S GOOD

The latest in sustainable travel. REPORTED BY ARIEL SHEARER

News

## PEAK PERFORMANCE

Copenhagen makes sustainable waste management look effortlessly cool while vying to become the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025. At recently opened **CopenHill**, a waste-to-energy facility, visitors can ski and snowboard all year long on its rooftop artificial ski slope, which also has a climbing wall and hiking trail. The city's first ski destination provides a striking display of sustainable futurism: Visitors gliding down the silver mountain gaze out over an offshore wind farm, all while the plant beneath them burns waste to power a city well on its way to net zero.



Waste not, want not: Copenhagen's futuristic energy plant is an all-season ski hill.



## Hotels



Bahamas resorts are spearheading hurricane-recovery efforts.

## BOUNCING BACK

Tourism is vital to the Bahamas' recovery from Hurricane Dorian, and beach lovers can amplify their impact by staying at resorts that support recovery efforts. Atlantis, Paradise Island, home to the 497-room **Reef at Atlantis** and 600-room **Cove at Atlantis** resorts, escaped undamaged and pledged \$3 million to hurricane relief efforts. Through a partnership with World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit founded by chef José Andrés to feed communities coping with disaster, Atlantis employees helped bring much-needed meals to the Bahamas' hardest-hit communities. *Reef at Atlantis doubles from \$399 and Cove at Atlantis doubles from \$519, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

Also located on Paradise Island and spared from damage, the 107-room **Ocean Club, a Four Seasons Resort** has led significant efforts supporting recovery, including a fundraising dinner with Jean-Georges Vongerichten at his on-site Dune restaurant, which raised money for World Central Kitchen. The resort also made a \$50,000 donation immediately following the storm. *Ocean Club doubles from \$1,100, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

## RIGHT-FOOTED

Los Angeles-based **Amanu** has won a following for its made-to-order minimalist leather sandals. Now the sustainable footwear company, founded by Cape Town-raised Anita Patrickson, has partnered with **Singita** lodges in South Africa to provide guests with custom-sandal souvenirs. Visitors to Singita's 24-room Sabi Sands Game Reserve and 22-room Kruger National Park locations can select from multiple styles and leathers for their pair, which is crafted on-site by Amanu-trained Singita employees. In addition to supporting the longevity of a traditional craft, Amanu donates a portion of the proceeds toward environmental-education programming for sixth graders in Zimbabwe. *Sandals from \$275.*



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## Snow Sports

### FRESHER POWDER

Leave no trace: Three eco-friendly ski and snowboard waxes that keep chemicals out of the snow-melt, plus the greenest board on the mountain.



Purl's purple wax is toxin-free and engineered for peak performance in temperatures from 10 to 32 degrees. \$11, [purlwax.com](http://purlwax.com).



Prevent snow buildup with **MountainFLOW's** water-based, nontoxic anti-stick spray. \$14, [mountainflowecowax.com](http://mountainflowecowax.com).



Swix's biodegradable **North** waxes are designed for clean backcountry shredding. \$16, [rei.com](http://rei.com).



Made in the Pacific Northwest from environmentally friendly materials in a factory heated with biodiesel, **Lib Tech's T.Rice Orca** snowboard pairs a freestyle cut with evocative imagery. \$600, [lib-tech.com](http://lib-tech.com).



# PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY

**Costas Christ on how sustainable travel moved from nature-focused to nurturing us all.**

AS TOLD TO JUSTIN PAUL

**S**USTAINABILITY IS undeniably one of the most, if not *the* most, important transformations happening in travel today. Decades ago, conversations about “sustainable tourism” revolved almost entirely around nature-based travel – primarily African safari lodges and camps, along with a handful of small tour operators. From there, it spread to the Americas, in particular, Costa Rica and Belize.

The moment that really sparked the larger movement came in 2002, when the United Nations hosted the first World Ecotourism Summit in Québec City. It became clear that we needed to take the ideas that started with ecotourism – protecting the environment and ensuring economic benefits from tourism to local communities – and paint them across the entire travel industry, from airlines and cruise ships to city hotels, holiday resorts, and so on. In 2005, the United Nations Foundation asked me to help define a global set of sustainable-tourism criteria. Together with about a dozen other experts, I worked to create the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria. Today, those criteria

fall under three pillars: environmentally friendly practices, protecting natural and cultural heritage, and social and economic benefits to local people.

It was incredibly inspiring when the luxury travel industry and large organizations such as Virtuoso and the World Travel & Tourism Council also embraced these principles. Virtuoso launched the Sustainable Tourism Leadership Awards in 2011 and now hosts an annual Sustainability Summit with industry executives and travel advisors to help chart the path forward. *Virtuoso Life* was one of the early travel magazines that featured regular coverage of sustainable tourism to show travelers how they can have the vacation of a lifetime while also helping protect the planet for future generations.

Initially, success was a travel company committing to protect habitat, recycle, or build with local materials. Today, success is measured not by commitments, but by on-the-ground actions and impact – from eliminating single-use plastics to using renewable energy sources to not just employing locals, but also providing micro-enterprise funding and opportunities to empower



Ecotourism in Belize helped pioneer the sustainable-travel movement.

**“Today, success is measured not by commitments, but by on-the-ground actions and impact.”**

them as business owners.

Two decades ago, big cruise lines were among the worst environmental offenders, being repeatedly slapped with major fines for illegally dumping waste at sea. All-inclusive resorts were also a concern: Their business models were based on separating guests from the local community and keeping tourist dollars inside the resort, rather than going to independent businesses. Now, some of the large-ship cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean, are helping lead the way with environmental stewardship. And more all-inclusive resorts are adapting to travelers’ desire for cross-cultural connections. Along with the Slow Food movement, which supports small farmers and sustainable fisheries, we’re seeing resorts

source more supplies locally – not only to reduce their carbon footprint, but also to have a more positive economic impact on the destination and give guests a greater sense of place.

These days, the industrywide push is to eliminate single-use plastics. I think the next focus will be biodiversity conservation to halt the cascade of plant and animal species extinction currently underway. What will we be talking about in five or ten years? A post-fossil-fuel world where renewable energy is the rule, not the exception.

---

*Costas Christ is chairman of the TreadRight Foundation and serves as Virtuoso’s senior advisor for sustainability. He is a former senior director at Conservation International.*



A vibrant photograph of a European village street. The architecture is characterized by half-timbered houses with white plaster and dark wood frames. The street is lined with colorful flower boxes under the windows. In the foreground, a cyclist in a bright green jersey and orange helmet is riding towards the viewer. Other cyclists are visible further down the street. A decorative sign for "Domaine MECKERT Michel" hangs from a building on the right. The sky is clear and blue.

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Locals welcome travelers at Indreshwar temple in Panauti.





# REAL COUNTRY

Exploring beyond Everest in Nepal and connecting with locals in India deliver tourism for good.

BY LISA WOGAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI

**T**HE HIMALAYA ARE, FOR MANY TRAVELERS, THE reason to visit Nepal. Skyscraping and storied, they top life lists for good reason. So a trip to “the roof of the world” that didn’t aim for the ceiling honestly seemed a little crazy to me – until now. Hiking in the foothills southeast of Kathmandu, with no plans to go any higher, I think I’m as content as any trekker in this country.

Lush terraced hills roll out in all directions, the morning haze keeping things a little dreamy. The altitude is a respectable 5,000 feet, yet these aren’t considered mountains – our guide explains that in Nepal a snowy cap is required for that designation. Goats and chickens browse outside simple stone and brick farmhouses; laundry and prayer flags flap in the warm May breeze. My companions and I have hiked for a couple of hours along dirt roads and footpaths, and we haven’t seen another tourist. We share the route with women in colorful kurtas lugging baskets, men in *topis* sipping chai, and kids clambering after dogs over rock piles.

Panauti feels far off Nepal’s tourist track, because it is. Expeditions to Everest Base Camp, the Annapurna Circuit, and the like leave much of the country unexplored – a boon for travelers seeking authentic cultural experiences, but a lost opportunity for Nepalis left out of one of the nation’s most important industries.

The six-mile hike from the small town of Sanga (home of the world’s tallest statue of Shiva) to the historic city of Panauti was developed as a draw for visitors, with help from the Planeterra Foundation. Founded by Toronto-based social entrepreneur Bruce Poon Tip, Planeterra embraces the idea that tourism can be a catalyst





**Clockwise from above:**  
A scene from a hike  
between Sanga and  
Panauti, Kathmandu  
style, a hillside harvest,  
potent *alla*, and Asan  
Market in Kathmandu.

## **TIP**

“Nepalis are warm and welcoming, and they understand that foreigners don’t always know their customs. But there are a few small things you can do to show respect. The Nepali greeting may be familiar from yoga – ‘namaste,’ with palms held together at the chest and soft eye contact. This is believed to connect our inner spirits. Rather than using just first names, Nepalis refer to each other as ‘mother,’ ‘father,’ ‘sister,’ or ‘brother’ by adding *ji* to the end of a name. So, for instance, you would greet Tshering by saying, ‘Namaste, Tshering-ji.’ ”

– Jean Pickard, *Virtuoso travel*  
advisor, Atlanta

to improve people’s lives and a spur for the protection of natural environments and local culture. It’s the nonprofit offshoot of Poon Tip’s small-group adventure-travel company, G Adventures.

Since it began in 1990, G Adventures has embraced ecotourism, responsible tourism, and sustainable tourism – none of which, Poon Tip says, quite captures the extent of its approach. In 100 countries, the company offers immersive experiences that follow industry-leading guidelines about responsibly interacting with wildlife, indigenous people, and children. Itineraries include visits to social-enterprise projects that infuse trips with meaning and a sense of purpose.

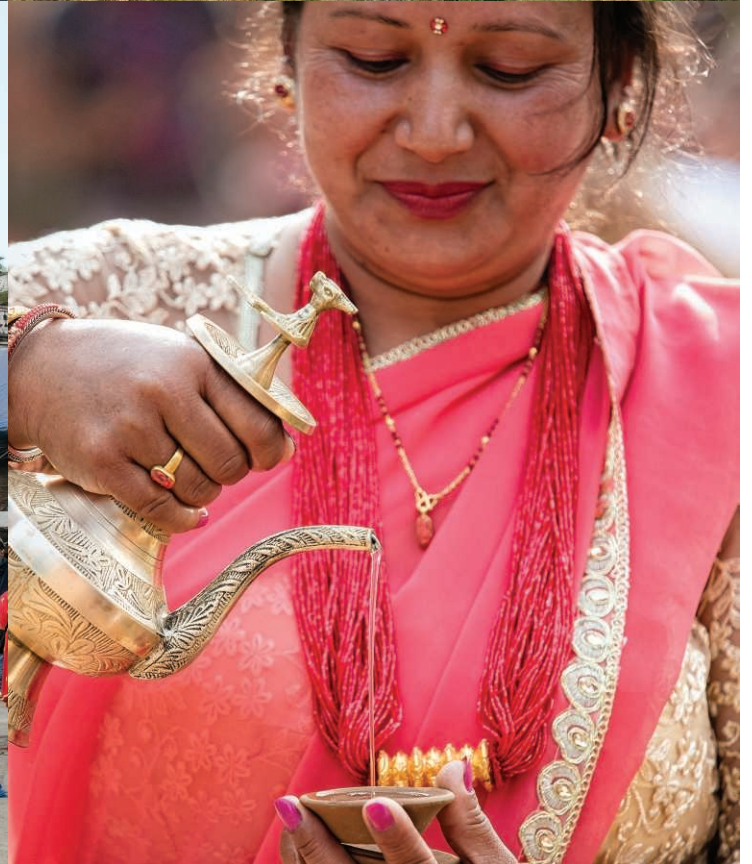
Last year, G Adventures began providing something called a Ripple Score for its tours as a measure of positive impact. Working with Sustainable Travel International, Poon Tip says, “We looked at the entire supply chain to find out what percentage of

the money we spend on the ground actually goes into locally owned businesses and local talent management. We were surprised, and it changed our behaviors.”

My day in Panauti is part of a trip showcasing some of G Adventures’ G for Good experiences in India and Nepal. Like most of its trips, this one blends guided outings and tours with hands-on activities, such as learning to wrap a sari, and visits to social-enterprise projects.

OUR HIKE EVENTUALLY DESCENDS through rice paddies until we thread into narrow lanes in the Old Town that seem little changed since the fifteenth century, when Panauti was an important kingdom for the Newari, who have lived in the region for centuries. Our destination is the Indreshwar Mahadev temple. Unlike the better-known Hindu temple complexes of Bhaktapur and Patan, Indreshwar wasn’t









damaged by Nepal's devastating 2015 earthquake. The tiered, pagoda-style temple stands tall. Beneath it, women in embroidered silk greet us with flowered garlands. Young men play drums and cymbals, known as *dhime* and *chali*. I'm told that these once-neglected traditional Newari instruments are being revived by a younger generation for events such as this one.

Into shallow terra-cotta cups, women from the community pour *aila*, a local fermented liquor that burns going down. Dancers soon fill the courtyard; their classic gestures span the ages. By the time we're invited to join in, the drink has done its work. We gamely try to follow the dancers' elegant moves until everyone is freestyling and laughing.

For dinner, our party breaks into more-intimate groups. As part of the Panauti Community Homestay, another Planeterra-G Adventures initiative, local families host guests in their homes for meals and overnight stays, with a percentage of the proceeds shared by the larger community.

Srijana Strestha, an outgoing young woman who seems perfectly at ease with strangers, walks four of us to her home in a concrete building that looks like a small apartment complex. In the third-floor kitchen, her father, Laxmi Narayan



Strestha, kneads dough in a metal bowl. Her mother, Ram Devi, slices okra. Anajani, her older sister, makes chai. A young boy scrambles in from next door to borrow a grater. There is plenty of good-natured yelling through windows. Anajani explains that 35 members of an extended family live in this building.

After a cold beer and peppery flatbread, we gather around a table on the rooftop balcony for a *yomari*-making lesson led by Laxmi.

*Yomari* are cone-shaped dumplings filled with a tarry mix of coconut, cashews, almonds, raisins, dates, and sugarcane syrup that originated in these parts. Anajani shows us photos of her wedding. Her husband works in Saudi Arabia – due to a lack of opportunity close to home, many Nepalese men work abroad. It's one of the reasons the homestay project was started by and for women.

We dine together back in the kitchen at a table purchased with homestay earnings.

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**GO G Adventures'** 17-day journey through India and Nepal in conjunction with National Geographic introduces travelers to highlights throughout both countries – as well as to projects that include SASANE in Kathmandu, the City Walk in Delhi, and Sheroes Hangout café in Agra. Travelers who want to experience a homestay like the one in this story can opt for a more modest seven-day trip in Nepal that focuses on living like locals and includes a stay with a family in Panauti. *India and Nepal journey from \$3,599. Nepal trip from \$649.*

Travel advisors can work with **Amber Tours**, one of Virtuoso's on-site connections in India, to craft special-interest itineraries throughout the country, from leopard tracking with nomads and Himalaya wellness retreats to gem shopping in Jaipur, visiting royal palaces and monuments, and more.





From opposite left: Teatime at Sheroes Hangout, making *yomari* in a Panauti family's home, *momo* dumpling preparation at SASANE, and a youth-led City Walk in New Delhi.

## We gamely try to follow the dancers' elegant moves until everyone is freestyling and laughing.

The same is true for the refrigerator. We put down our forks and follow the sisters' example, using our hands to eat the mustard greens, okra, beans, eggplant, and paneer. If there are other concessions to outsiders besides the forks, I can't spot them.

With the night comes rain, thunder, and a quick temperature drop. I imagine this cool air began in the deep freeze above the world's highest glaciers. But that's for others to contend with. I turn my attention back to these new friends, this cozy kitchen, and my first-ever *yomari*, which taste strange and sweet.

WITH VISITS TO OTHER SOCIAL-ENTERPRISE projects in India and Nepal, G Adventures connects travelers to real people, real stories, and real change. Here, a few examples:

### SHARE CHAI IN AGRA

If the Taj Mahal is a cool marble monument

to a noble love, **Sheroes Hangout** in Agra puts that story in perspective. This cheerful café is run entirely by the survivors of acid attacks. It's estimated that hundreds of women are attacked this way every year in India by the people who should love them – husbands, lovers, parents. The café offers purpose and community for victims in a culture that shuns them. For visitors, this is a chance to witness true bravery and to support these women in turning their lives around, which they do with grace and a surprising abundance of laughter.

### OPEN YOUR EYES IN DELHI

The **narrow lanes of New Delhi** are a maze of wonders: Banyan trees grow into ancient buildings, clusters of cables loom overhead like enormous gaudy nests, zipping rickshaws and motorbikes test walkers' composure. Get oriented to the

neighborhood with the help of those who know these complicated streets intimately. The poised, articulate teenage guides leading the youth **City Walk** once lived on the streets of India's megacities, surviving any way they could. As part of the **Salaam Baalak Trust**, they are given a home, secondary education, and preparation for careers in tourism (the tours are excellent practice).

### BREAK BREAD IN KATHMANDU

*Momos*, spicy Nepalese dumplings, are as close to a national food as you can get. Learn the trick of creating these neat little pockets with the women of the **Sisterhood of Survivors**, hosted by the nonprofit SASANE. The Planeterra project in Kathmandu supports SASANE in training women who have survived human trafficking for careers in hospitality and as paralegals to help them land sustainable long-term jobs and reduce the risk they will be abused or trafficked again. SASANE won a 2016 UN World Tourism Organization Award for Excellence and Innovation. The afternoon includes inspiring stories, a cooking lesson, and a shared lunch with the sisterhood in their Kathmandu office. VI

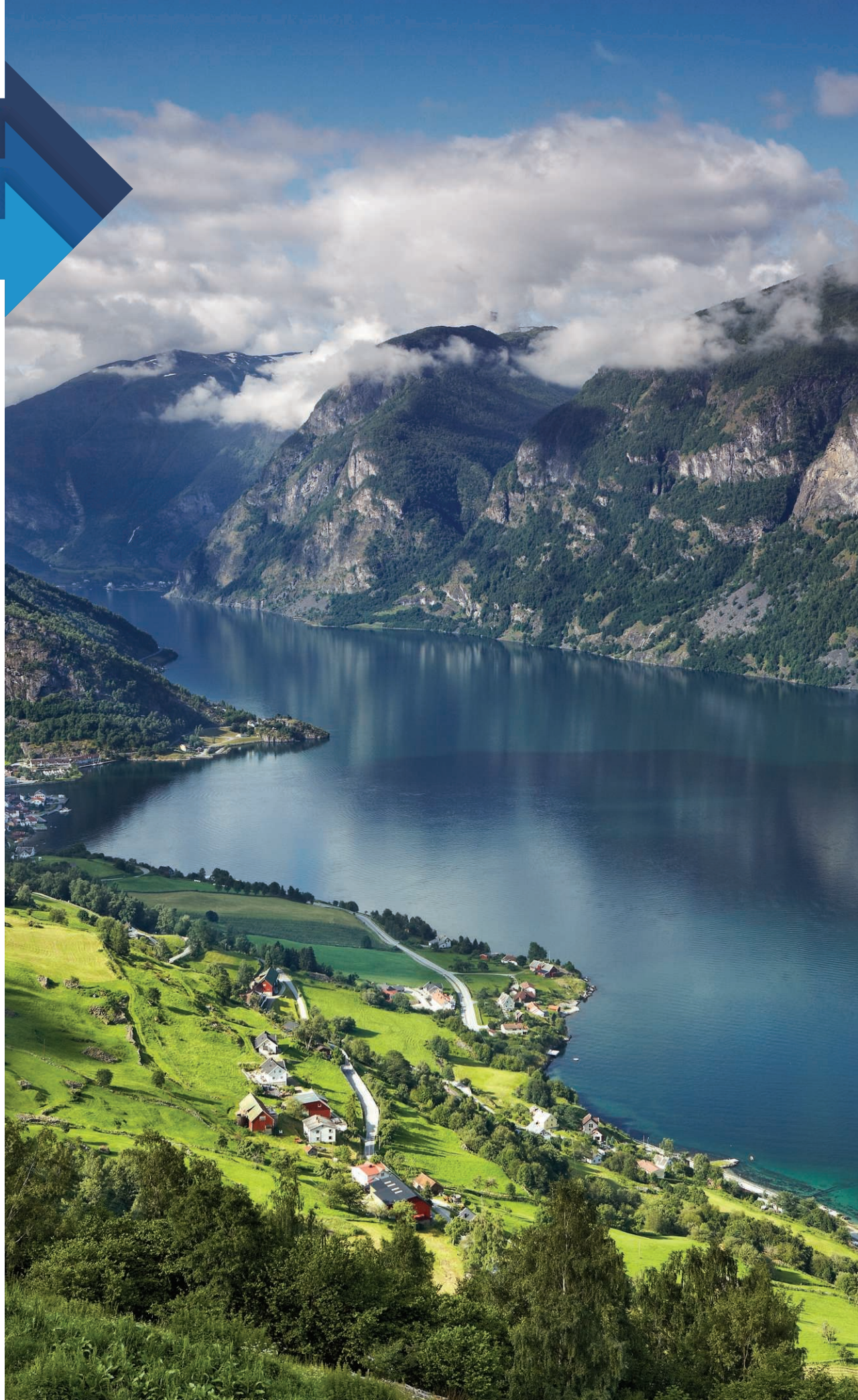




# B-SIDE BETS

For every on-repeat destination, there's a place less traveled (and just as cool).

BY KIMBERLEY LOVATO







THERE'S A REASON THE CLASSICS ARE THE CLASSICS. We love the romance and filtered light of Venice, Kyoto's temples and gardens, and *that* view of Machu Picchu. But with chart-topping popularity comes the strain of overcrowding: stress on fragile environments, landmarks, and local infrastructure – and an annoying lack of elbow room. Seasoned travelers know how best to see the favorites, visiting in the off-season, taking two wheels, and hiking hidden trails. Here, a fresh look at ten crowd-pleasers, contrasted with less-explored counterparts that are just as fascinating and fun – proof that when it comes to where to go next, there's always a new hit to discover.

#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### ALASKAN ADVENTURE

The Last Frontier's network of waterways carved by glaciers millions of years ago tops expedition-cruise to-do lists. Sprawling across 3.3 million acres, Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve is the place to find fjords and forests, not to mention whales, porpoises, sea lions, and bald eagles. "Take a Lindblad Expeditions cruise to get up close and personal, or a Natural Habitat Adventures trip to view the amazing grizzlies on the Kenai Peninsula," says Angela Wallace, a Virtuoso travel agency owner from Amelia Island, Florida.

#### UP NEXT

### NORWAY'S FJORDS

"From the fjords to Svalbard, Norway cruises reveal majestic scenery and charming port towns," says Jenny Westermann, a Fort Worth-based Virtuoso agency owner. Photo fodder: the country's southwestern coastal region, where deep blue inlets cut into mountains to form the country's famous inlets. A cruise or kayak into Geirangerfjord, a 62-mile-long behemoth of 5,000-foot gneiss walls and waterfalls, is essential, as is sailing through the 127-mile-long Sognefjord, which crosses three preservation areas. Norway's small towns make good springboards for outdoor adventures and visits to see medieval wood-stave churches around Bergen, and to Haugesund, homeland of Norway's Viking kings, who ruled the country between AD 800 and 1066.

**GO** A 15-day Nordic cruise on **Hurtigruten's** 530-passenger *Fridtjof Nansen* sails round-trip from Hamburg and glides through Geirangerfjord, continuing to brightly colored wooden villages such as Trondheim. *Departures: Multiple dates, April 1 through June 10; from \$6,598.*



Glassy water ready for ripples in Alaska's Muir Inlet, and (left) Sognefjord cuts 127 miles through Norway.

(NORWAY) RICHARD JAMES TAYLOR. (ALASKA) RIALTO IMAGES/STOCKSY





Lounge at Cala d'Or's pine-shrouded beach on Mallorca.



UP NEXT

## MELLOW ON MALLORCA ▲

For a less-trafficked, idyllic beach scene, Jenny Westermann recommends Mallorca. On this largest of Spain's Balearic Islands, about 120 miles off the country's eastern coast, sites such as the Royal Palace of La Almudaina draw visitors, and people meet at the San Juan Gastronomic Market for snacks and drinks at stalls and bars. The capital of Palma thrums with dance clubs, while more than 200 beaches offer a chance to lounge and swim during the island's 300-plus sunny days per year. For cooler air and sheer-sided mountain views, hike in the Tramuntana range, along the island's northern coast.

**GO** The new **Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection**'s eight-day Barcelona-to-Palma de Mallorca cruise takes travelers around the Balearic Islands aboard the 298-passenger *Evrima*. Shore excursions over three days in Mallorca have cruisers hiking in the Tramuntana range and tasting local olive oils. *Departure: June 14; from \$6,800.*

## PLAY IT AGAIN

### MYKONOS BEACHES ▼

The party crowd descends on Mykonos every summer – as do scores of cruise ships. This is the Platonic ideal of Grecian glam: The windmills, painted doors, and bougainvillea-draped corners of whitewashed Mykonos town, with its cobblestoned streets, underscore the Greek good looks that have made the Aegean island a perennial favorite. Cerulean seas lap at the island's more than 40 beaches. At some, such as Paradise Beach, the party never stops, while travelers looking for the quieter side of Mykonos should unroll their towels at serene Panormos for reading and napping sans *nice-nice* music. Even within such a hot location, you can find plenty of hidden gems and tucked-away tables, says Rachelle Kontos, a Virtuoso travel advisor from Manhasset, New York. "I suggest visiting Kiki's, a taverna in Agios Sostis, which uses no electricity and serves up delicious homemade cooking. You can drink a complimentary glass of rosé and enjoy the view of the beach while waiting for your meal."



A quiet side of Mykonos.

(MALLORCA) JOAKIM BOREN/GALLERY STOCK, (MYKONOS) ALPINE GUIDE/ALAMY





A kingly encounter  
in the Maasai  
Mara National  
Reserve, Kenya.

#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### KENYA'S "BIG FIVE" BOUNTY ▲

Kenya reliably delivers the African safari of daydreams, with its vast savanna and majestic wildlife. The variety of landscapes shines here, from the grassy plains and gentle hills of the Maasai Mara National Reserve, home to the great wildebeest and zebra migration between June and October, to safaris in Amboseli National Park with Mount Kilimanjaro as the backdrop. Daily game drives reveal the "big five" (lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant, and Cape buffalo), as well as gazelles, hippos, giraffes, and warthogs. Joshua Bush, a Villanova, Pennsylvania-based Virtuoso agency owner, recommends off-season stays (March through May and October through December) for more-intimate treks, and visiting conservancies, which are privately run, for more-flexible game viewing than public parks can offer. "The Mara North Conservancy is a personal favorite," he says.

(KENYA) VICKI JAURON, BABYLON AND BEYOND PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES.  
(INDIA) SHIVANG MEHTA/GETTY IMAGES

#### UP NEXT

### WILD FOR INDIA ▼

Travelers have long flocked to India for the Taj Mahal, the Amber Fort, and Humayun's Tomb. But it's also a rising wildlife destination, says Kemi Wells, a Vancouver, British Columbia, Virtuoso advisor. While elephants, rhinos, reptiles, and 1,300 bird species draw visitors, it's the regal Bengal tiger that makes India a safari star. "India has one of the biggest and safest tiger habitats around the world," Wells says.

Of the country's 50 sanctuaries, Bandhavgarh National Park has one of the highest densities of tigers in the 40 square miles of the park open for tours, and the 514-square-mile UNESCO World Heritage site Sundarbans National Park counts around 100 Bengals. If you can stand the heat, visit between March and June, when the striped cats seek out pools of water to cool down, making them much easier to spot.

**GO** Take in three of India's top wildlife spots on **Remote Lands'** private 12-day trip from Delhi to Mumbai. Safari outings and game drives in Panna, Bandhavgarh, and Kanha national parks help travelers spot Bengal tigers, sloth bears, Indian bison and wolves, barking deer, and more. *Departures: Any day through 2020; from \$15,800.*

Love cats: A Bengal  
tiger and her cub at  
Bandhavgarh Na-  
tional Park, India.







Snap a photo at Kyoto's Fushimi Inari-Taisha shrine.

#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### KYOTO'S TRADITIONS ◀

As the cultural and historical heart of Japan, Kyoto's big – and busy – draws are its astounding number of gardens, temples, and shrines. The gleaming Kinkaku-ji (Golden Temple) is a must here, as is Fushimi Inari-Taisha, a shrine with wildly photogenic orange torii gates. Try kaiseki for dinner, perhaps in Kyoto's famous geisha district of Gion. The multicourse meal consists of precisely prepared seasonal dishes. For a new way to get to all the sites, go on two wheels, says Hong Kong-based Virtuoso agency executive Charlotte Harris: "The city is mostly flat, roads are well maintained, and there are plenty of places to rent a bicycle."

#### UP NEXT

### TAKAYAMA'S MOUNTAIN AIR ▼

Sometimes called "Little Kyoto," the mountain village of Takayama in the Gifu Prefecture distills the essence of old Japan. The narrow streets of its Sanmachi Suji historic district are lined with wooden merchant houses dating to the Edo period (1603 to 1867). They brim with cafés, shops, and restaurants, where Sydney-based Virtuoso agency owner Claudia Rossi Hudson recommends dining on miso soup and local Hida beef. Takayama is a major sake-producing region, and sake breweries are scattered around the neighborhood. During the city's festivals each April and October, gilded floats parade through the streets. In winter, a dusting of snow renders the alpine town a snow-globe scene.

**GO Backroads'** eight-day walking and hiking journey in Japan takes in both Kyoto and Takayama. During the two-day Takayama leg, travelers walk a seventh-century road past shrines and temples, sample sake at a private tasting, and soak in natural hot springs at a *ryokan*. Departures: Multiple dates, April 29 through November 9; from \$9,000.

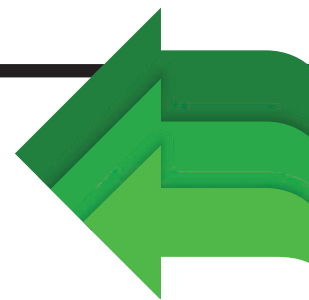


Processions follow gilded floats made for the Takayama Spring Festival.





Remote Kuélap valleys hide sixth-century ruins.



#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### MACHU PICCHU PILGRIMAGE ▼

Shrouded in mystery – and often in mist – at 7,972 feet in Peru’s Andes, the sprawling fifteenth-century Incan citadel induces awe with its temples, terraces, and huge blocks of stone. Many arrive via train from Cuzco, about 70 miles away, or stay the night in nearby Aguas Calientes. Hardier types can hoof it for several days along the breath-capturing Inca Trail. Even better: Hike the lesser-known Salkantay and Lares routes, says Cristina Buaas, a Houston-based Virtuoso agency owner. The UNESCO World Heritage site enforces strict visitation rules, including advance-ticket purchase, set entrance times, and mandatory guides. July and August are busy, as are Sundays, when Cuzco Province residents can visit the site for free.



Machu Picchu attracts more than a million visitors each year.

#### UP NEXT

### KUÉLAP EXPLORATION ▲

The fortress of Kuélap, which sits at 9,842 feet in northern Peru, predates Machu Picchu by nearly a millennium. “It’s hard to believe the Kuélap ruins, and the whole region of Chachapoyas, have remained so untouched,” says Calgary, Alberta-based travel advisor Geordie McDonald. “More bromeliad flowers grow on the

trees than people visit each day.” Overlooking the Utcubamba Valley, some 400 ruins spread over more than 1,100 acres here. Until recently, the walled complex was a four-hour hike or bumpy 90-minute bus ride from the village of Nuevo Tingo, but a cable car that opened in 2017 streamlines the ascent to 20 minutes.

**GO** Climb to Kuélap with an expert guide and walk in the footsteps of the pre-Incan Chachapoya civilization on a private five-day tour of northern Peru with tour operator **Big Five Tours & Expeditions**. Departures: Any day through 2020; from \$2,500.





A taste of Tench Vineyards in Napa Valley.

## PLAY IT AGAIN

### VINTAGE NAPA VALLEY ◀

More than 400 wineries pack Napa's 30-mile-long valley, with renowned labels such as Stag's Leap pouring the area's prized cabernet sauvignons and chardonnays. Travelers come to worship at the prix-fixe altar of The French Laundry and other Michelin-starred restaurants. Fall is golden, literally, when leaves change and wineries' crush season arrives. Melbourne-based Virtuoso agency director Anthony Goldman recommends getting off the main highway with a biking tour through the Napa Valley and adjacent Sonoma County. "By day, pedal through vineyards, sip on world-class wine, and enjoy fabulous Californian fare; by night, bed down at some of the region's premier hotels, including one of my favorites, Solage, an Auberge Resort, in Calistoga," he says.

## UP NEXT

### OKANAGAN VALLEY VINEYARDS ▶

"Imagine Napa Valley with a 90-mile lake down the middle," says Jill Anglehart-Hamilton, a Vancouver, B.C., Virtuoso travel advisor, adding that, in some ways, the Okanagan Valley feels like Napa did 40 years ago. The valley stretches about 125 miles between the Washington State border and Armstrong, British Columbia, punctuated with laid-back towns and crystal lakes with vineyards rising from their shores. Headliners are the pinot noirs and rieslings, but innovative boutique wineries, such as CedarCreek, offer robust reds, crisp rosés, and even ice wine. "Don't miss Mission Hill Winery, where Prince William and Kate visited on a recent trip to Canada," Hamilton advises. Summer brings alfresco dining and sandy lakeside beaches, while for active travelers, winter competes as the best time to go: Skiers and snowboarders can hit the fresh powder at nearby alpine resorts one day, and warm up during winetastings the next.

**GO** Delve into the Okanagan terroir with **Luxury Gold**. The tour company's 16-day Canadian adventure includes wine-paired dinners around British Columbia and Alberta, and two days in the Okanagan Valley with winery visits. *Departures: June 26 and July 2; from \$7,358.*



Okanagan Lake provides breezes for vines and views for visitors.

(OKANAGAN VALLEY) LAUGHING MANGO/GETTY IMAGES (NAPA VALLEY) RACHEL WEILL



## PLAY IT AGAIN

### GREAT BARRIER REEF DIVING ▼

For divers and snorkelers, the world's largest and longest coral reef system is underwater heaven. Off the coast of Queensland, Australia, the fragile system spans more than 1,400 miles and teems with marine life, including sea turtles, giant clams, manta rays, and clown fish. For unrivaled access, agency director Anthony Goldman recommends staying at Qualia, Great Barrier Reef. "Qualia flies guests to snorkel points by helicopter or seaplane, with sensational aerial views of Heart Reef, Whitehaven Beach, and the Whitsunday Passage," he says.



The Great Barrier Reef's extensive coral system.

## UP NEXT

### ELECTRIC BLUE IN NINGALOO ►

Halfway up Australia's west coast, the 186-mile-long Ningaloo Reef sits close to shore – only a few hundred feet away in some places – but is beautifully secluded, says advisor Kemi Wells. That means uncrowded encounters with turtles, manta rays, humpback whales, and 500 species of fish. What really sets the reef apart, however, are the elusive whale sharks that assemble here in large numbers – more than any other place in the world – from March through August. Launch from the towns of Exmouth or Coral Bay to kayak, swim with whale sharks, or take a scenic flight over the remote Indian Ocean reef.



An uncrowded dive on Ningaloo Reef.

**GO Monograms'** eight-day Australia adventure kicks off with three days in Sydney, then hops across the continent to Exmouth for three days of boating, sea kayaking, and snorkeling on Ningaloo Reef. Visit April through June for the best shot at swimming with whale sharks or July through September to spy humpbacks. Departures: Any day, March 27 through September 24; from \$2,189.





Stone walls and dramatic coastline in Biarritz.

## PLAY IT AGAIN

### FRENCH RIVIERA GLAM ▼

The stretch of southern France's Mediterranean coast is European glitz writ large and has attracted renowned artists and the upper crust for centuries. Travelers arrive en masse during July and August to bronze at swanky beach clubs in Saint-Tropez, channel 007 in Monte-Carlo, and dine at Michelin-starred restaurants in Menton and Nice. "Rent a car to explore at your own speed, and ask your hotel's concierge to book the best tables at fabulous regional restaurants," Kemi Wells says. September here is especially magical, when summer's frenzy wanes, but the sun still shines on the fabled coast.



Snag a spot under a Nice umbrella.

## UP NEXT

### UNDER-THE-RADAR BIARRITZ ▲

Napoleon III and his wife, Eugénie, shined a spotlight on this French seaside resort on the Basque coast when they arrived in the mid-nineteenth century. Globe-trotters still come for the coastal scenery and Basque *pintxos* and wine, Angela Wallace says. These days surfers also stop here, to test their skills on the Atlantic waves that pound Biarritz's sandy beaches. Try Basque specialties and seafood at Crampotte 30, one of several dozen small fishermen's huts in the old port, and pick up a pair of candy-colored espadrilles, summer shoes with Basque roots. At the boutique Les Sandales d'Eugénie, customize your own with ribbons and ties.

**GO** Six days of private touring in Basque Country with **Artisans of Leisure** include a seaside sojourn in Biarritz at the Hôtel du Palais (reopening this summer following a renovation), as well as Spanish stopovers – Bilbao, San Sebastián, and the vineyards of La Rioja. *Departures: Any day through 2020; from \$10,580.*

(NICE) DAVID MADISON/GETTY IMAGES, (BIARRITZ) CLARA TUMA





Homegrown fun:  
Snow polo in  
Saint Moritz.

#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### SAINT MORITZ SPARKLE

As posh alpine resorts go, Saint Moritz in Switzerland's Engadin Valley hits every mark. It has welcomed the Winter Olympics twice, and its modern and traditional restaurants and endlessly flowing Champagne draw an après set from around the globe. For off-piste action, the boutiques along Via Serlas can occupy an afternoon – and create a good-size credit-limit dent. The last weekend in January brings snow polo – a sport born here – on the frozen lake. Avoid traffic on nausea-inducing alpine roads, Charlotte Harris says, and arrive aboard the Glacier Express or the Bernina Express, which travel along a UNESCO World Heritage railway line.

#### UP NEXT

### STEEP SLOPES IN KITZBÜHEL

Forty miles southwest of Salzburg, the Austrian village of Kitzbühel is known for its punishing January downhill ski race, the Streif, on the mountain of Hahnenkamm. “When the snow is good, the skiing is fantastic, and avid skiers can try their hand at the Streif course,” says Jen Connelly of tour operator Alpine Adventures. She also notes that, at other times, Kitzbühel’s snow coverage can be patchy and runs icy. In those cases, the streets of

the Tyrolean town are waiting. “Kitzbühel’s thirteenth-century village center is incredibly picturesque, and the city has maintained the architecture,” she says. Browse the boutiques and warm up in mountain huts and bars, such as the popular Londoner, which has poured drinks for thirsty crowds since 1976. Also in January, the Snow Polo World Cup plays out, second in size and prestige only to the Saint Moritz tournament, and just as sensational.

**GO** Carve down Kitzbühel’s adrenaline-boosting Hahnenkamm with **Alpine Adventures**. Eight-day custom ski trips include five-star accommodations in the village, ski or snowboard rentals, and lift tickets for six days. *Departures: Any day through March 31; from \$3,150, including private round-trip transfers from Munich.*

A layer of snow  
dusts Kitzbühel's  
medieval buildings.







It's possible to escape the crowds in everyone's favorite canal city.

#### PLAY IT AGAIN

### VENETIAN VARIETY ▲

Built on 118 islands, the floating city in northern Italy sees around 20 million visitors each year – meaning summer can be downright uncomfortable. Recent floods have only added to the city's environmental stress. Well-trod but iconic activities include a gondola ride through the canals and a photo in the Piazza San Marco. But the warren of tiny lanes and dead-end alleyways lead over arched bridges and into small piazzas and quieter neighborhoods where the “real” Venice awaits. Another way to get to know the city? “Find your people,” says Eva Braiman, a New York City-based Virtuoso travel advisor. “My daughter and I visited the Jewish Ghetto, founded in 1516, and met some of the only 450 Jews who live in Venice today.”

#### UP NEXT

### BEELINE FOR BRUGES ▼

For waterways, cultural stimulation, and postcard serenity – without the crowds of La Serenissima – Kemi Wells steers travelers to the Belgian city of Bruges. Step-gabled houses from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries front pretty canals here, and cultural attractions run the gamut from tongue-in-cheek (the Frietmuseum, dedicated to french fries, Belgium's beloved snack) to classical (the Groeningemuseum showcases six centuries of Belgian and Flemish masters' work). Even the imposing Church of Our Lady houses treasures, including a Michelangelo sculpture. Hop aboard a boat tour of the town's swan-filled canals crossed by stone bridges. And be sure to stop at one of the many chocolate shops to taste the city's official sweet, *Brugsch swaentje*, a chocolate-covered praline embossed with a swan.

**GO AmaWaterways'** eight-day springtime sailings through the Netherlands and Belgium (aboard one of three ships) weave in a Bruges visit during a call in Ghent. It's a chance to explore the city's quiet squares, canals, and gardens in full bloom. *Departures: Multiple dates, March 20 through May 1; from \$2,669. VI.*



Opt for step-gabled architecture and alfresco eating in Bruges.



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# 20/20 Vision

A LOOK AT THE LAST  
TWO DECADES  
IN TRAVEL

AND WHAT'S TO COME

BY MARIKA CAIN, LARA HALLOCK, AND JUSTIN PAUL

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN FEARNLEY



# 1

## LUGGAGE Baggage, Claimed

Who remembers the days before luggage makers discovered the wheel? Many of our first recollections of travel involve our dads manhandling brown plastic Skyways off the carousel and onto a trolley, hoping the metal clasps held. Then came the advent of wheelie bags, which lightened the schlep and transformed baggage claims into a bleak but efficient parade of black, two-wheeled look-alikes. But now, friends, the glory days of luggage are upon us! We can have style *and* substance. We're all gliding through terminals with four-wheeled lookers in a monogrammed millennial pink or anodized aluminum or marble-effect polycarbonate. Charging our phones with our carry-ons. Monitoring our bags with Bluetooth trackers. Upstarts like Away, stalwarts such as Rimowa and Tumi, and a host of better-mousetrap luggage companies are making it a great time to get packing.

### ARLO SKYE ZIPPER CARRY-ON

Comes in sturdy polycarbonate with an antimicrobial lining and superfast built-in charger. *From \$350, arloskye.com.*



# 2



### VIRTUOSO LIFE ON STYLE

"Your clothes become part of your travel story. Don't forget that you'll be wearing these clothes in front of the Eiffel Tower, in the pictures you'll share and look at forever. It's worth it to take the extra time with packing!" – Christina Burns, stylist, September 2016



# 3

FROM  
OUR  
ARCHIVE

## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON SMART SHOPPING

"At the end of the day, we all figure out, 'If I would have just spent a little more money, I would have gotten a much better quality suitcase that would last for a much longer time.' "

— Sven Lepschy, vice president of electronic tag, Rimowa, July 2017

### The Best Luggage Is No Luggage at All ...

**Luggage Free** offers door-to-door (or, for cruisers, door-to-ship) delivery, leaving travelers free to skip onto the plane with only their in-flight essentials.

### ... Unless You're Talking about Lost Luggage

Travel advisors can work with **Blue Ribbon Bags** to insure luggage. For a pittance (\$5 to \$10, depending on total coverage), the company expedites missing-suitcase searches and will pay out up to \$2,000 if bags don't turn up within 96 hours.



### SAMSARA CARRY-ON

The flat top doubles as a desk, an easy-to-remove battery charges electronics, and a mobile app sends notifications if your suitcase is opened. \$690, [samsara.com](http://samsara.com).



### ROAM JAUNT HARD-SIDE POLYCARBONATE

Former Tumi employees developed this color-customizable-down-to-the-zipper-pulls case as an antidote to the basic black carry-on. \$450, [roamluggage.com](http://roamluggage.com).



### BRIGGS & RILEY SYMPATICO

Ratcheting compression-expansion technology allows this hard-side carry-on to expand for 22 percent more storage. \$579, [briggs-riley.com](http://briggs-riley.com).



# 4

## TECHNOLOGY Worldwide Wonder

"I don't think anyone could have predicted how travel would be so affected by social media posts and 'Instagram destinations,'" says Virtuoso agency owner Grace DeVita of Hollywood, Florida, "or the stress caused by being expected to stay connected to work while we're away." While travel sites and apps have freed our carry-ons of guidebooks, foldout maps, and more, they've also exponentially increased our choices, sometimes to paralysis-inducing levels. "Everyone has access to the same information these days," says DeVita, who credits the Internet for better collaboration with her clients too. The more travelers know, the more they appreciate the personal connections advisors like DeVita have around the world – and their help cutting through the digital clutter.



A world  
of connection.

# 5

FROM  
OUR  
ARCHIVE

### VIRTUOSO LIFE ON UNPLUGGING

"We feel like nothing is real unless it's recorded, but there's a different experience from face-to-face interaction than through a lens.

There's something to be said for having a mental picture rather than an actual one for Instagram."

– Jess Davis, founder, digital-wellness brand Folk Rebellion,  
September 2015

In the wings:  
Boom Superson-  
ic's Mach-2.2 jet.



# 6

## AIR TRAVEL Ready, Set, Jet

Humor those who pine for TWA's style and Pan Am's elegance – a quick taxi through the past two decades proves there's never been a better time to fly. Take the Concorde, says Jack Ezon, a Virtuoso travel agency founder in Manhattan. "It certainly got you there in a jiffy, but, truth be told, it was a claustrophobic cabin with upgraded premium economy seats." During the Concorde's final years, he notes, **British Airways** rolled out lie-flat seats, and the battle for the front of the plane was on. Celebrity-chef-planned menus, Wi-Fi, flat-screens, designer amenity kits, in-flight show-ers, **Emirates'** in-flight *suites* – the sky is no longer the limit.

With today's lighter, more-fuel-efficient aircraft, distance proves less of a barrier as well. **Singapore Airlines'** new 18.5-hour NYC-to-Singapore flight currently holds the ultra-long-haul record. But last October, **Qantas** tested a nearly 10,000-mile, 19.5-hour New York-to-Sydney route that it's looking to launch in 2022. And with Boom Supersonic's announcement of **Virgin Group** and **Japan Airlines'** orders for its 55- to 75-passenger jet, Mach-2 is even back in the wings, shrinking a New York-to-London hop to a proposed three hours and 15 minutes.

"Just going to the airport was a traumatic experience," Ezon says, recalling the post-9/11 security lines before Global Entry, PreCheck, and Clear. Now, with new lounge terminals such as The Private Suite at LAX, travelers can skip the departures area (and paparazzi), relaxing with a meal before a private security screening and chauffeured drive to the jetway. Wheels up, please.

(TECHNOLOGY) AILA IMAGES/STOCKSY





# 7



## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON FLYING

"Conventional wisdom says hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. I say: Don't ignore the wine list!"  
– Keely Crowder, *Virtuoso* travel advisor, July 2017

# 8

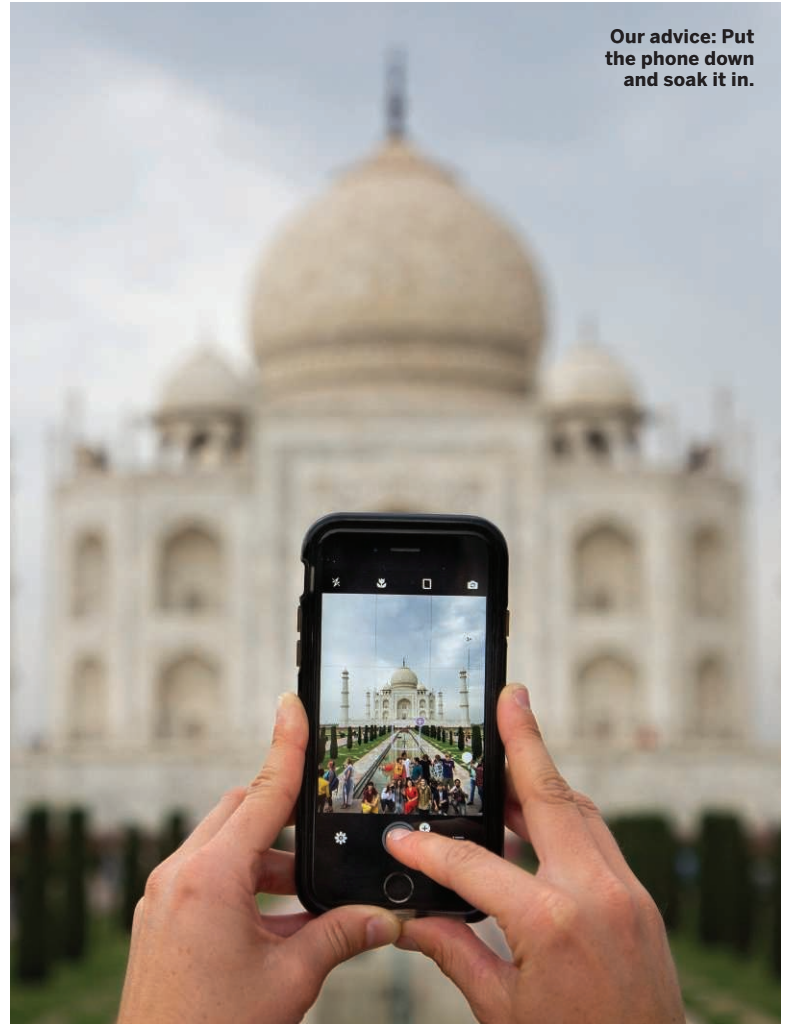
## PHOTOGRAPHY

Travel Looks Good on You

The Internet may have brought the world to our fingertips, but it was the iPhone that placed it in our well-edited social media feeds (#nobaddays). "The iPhone's impact on travel photography was remarkable," says *Virtuoso Life* contributing photographer Kevin J. Miyazaki. "The only time I'm not thrilled about everyone having a wonderful camera in their hand is at places like the Taj Mahal or the Grand Canyon, where you look out at this powerfully moving site and see everyone just staring into their screens."

While the digital revolution increased cameras' versatility, allowed instant image editing, and freed us from rationing Kodak rolls – and the worry of losing or damaging them in transit – it also made for overwhelming and often unviewed photo libraries. "People weren't printing many digital photos or really looking at them on their computers," Miyazaki says. "With the iPhone, we can view them all the time and instantly post or share with friends, no matter where in the world we – or they – are."

GoPro stepped in to let anyone video their awesome (or misguided) adventures. And more and more people are traveling with drones. Next up: the rise of 360-degree and 8K cameras. In ten years? Wearables – tiny sensors that frame and focus what we look at and shoot by voice command or the blink of an eye – and virtual-reality vacation "slideshows" in every home.



Our advice: Put the phone down and soak it in.

# 9



## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON FOCUS

"A common mistake is to try to capture a great family portrait *and* a dramatic setting in the same photo. Let your pictures of coastlines and castles be just that and simplify the setting for your loved ones."  
– Kevin J. Miyazaki, *photographer*, September 2013



10

FROM  
OUR  
ARCHIVE

## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

"Three questions to ask: What are your company's environmentally friendly practices? Can you give me an example of how your trips help protect wildlife and cultural heritage? Do you employ local people and directly support the local economy?"

— Costas Christ, Virtuoso senior sustainability advisor, September 2013

## SPECIALIZED TRAVEL

Niche  
Knowing  
You

Twenty years ago, dogsledding through Lapland, stargazing at a Dark Sky Reserve, or truffle hunting on a back forty in the Piedmont with Michelin-starred chefs weren't even on the menu. Today, says Aspen-based Virtuoso agency owner Brian Payntar Harris, niche trips "challenge travelers who have 'been there, done that' and want something new, exciting, and unconventional." Here, a few we've got our eyes on.



Out-there adventure: Antarctica's Phantom Coast.

11

## Expeditions of Epic Proportions

"The most remote places in the world can only be accessed by sea, and new ships will bring true luxury to expedition cruising," Payntar Harris says. In the 2020 Virtuoso Luxe Report, a travel trends survey of 1,300 Virtuoso advisors and agencies worldwide, Antarctica leads the adventure-travel category, and with good reason: New builds will make reaching the White Continent easier than ever. **Quark Expeditions' Ultramarine**, which

is set to sail for the 2020-2021 season, will take 199 passengers to distant areas of the continent, joining new ships in development from Silversea, Lindblad, Crystal, Hurtigruten, and Ponant. The Luxe Report also shows an uptick in desire to get closer to nature and connect with cultures. To that end: **Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley**'s monthly ten-person ultra-trail-running event, which kicks off with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony.

(ICEBERG) ANDY MYATT/ALAMY



## 12 Forks in the Road

Another Virtuoso Luxe Report finding: Some travelers make restaurant reservations even before booking flights. Local food experiences are on the rise too. (At Maine's **White Barn Inn**, guests can spend a day on a lobster boat and visit a market with a chef before a six-course lobster-themed meal.) And kids are making macarons in Paris and topping pizzas in Italy, says Lindsey Prumers, a Post Falls, Idaho-based travel advisor: "Cooking shows, particularly those involving junior chefs, have stirred up a trend."

## 13 Holistic Journeys



Inward bound: Hiking at The Ranch Malibu.

Treatments such as crystal facials, once the purview of new-age boutique spas, have spread to more-mainstream venues, such as the Willow Stream Spa at **Fairmont Kea Lani, Maui**. On the other end of the fitness spectrum, there's the seven-day intensive at **The Ranch Malibu**. Participants receive diagnostic testing, join arduous daily hikes, and sweat during group classes, while nutritionists take the decision-work out of dinner with meal plans that center around nutrient density. And in Alicante, Spain, **SHA Wellness Clinic** emphasizes mindfulness, natural therapies, meditation, and nutrition.

## 14 On the Heritage Trail

"I've seen a huge spike in clients requesting to visit small villages and towns overseas to trace their ancestors," Lindsey Prumers says. "Ancestry-tracking websites inspire people to walk in the steps of their great-grandfathers." One search revealed that her clients were related to the mayor of Bucciano, Italy. "The community threw a huge party in the streets outside the town hall," Prumers says. She also sees a huge demand for heritage tours in Ireland, where Dublin-based Virtuoso tour connection **Adams & Butler**'s in-house genealogist sleuths out family trees. "The wave of television programs on celebrities' roots has caused tremendous interest," says founder Siobhan Byrne Learat.



Small and mighty: Kids are venturing farther afield.

## 15 Global Citizens in Training

Once upon a time, a week at Disney or a fly-and-flop to Hawaii topped family-travel lists. "People willing to take their kids farther afield were the outliers. Now, it's the exact opposite," says Amie O'Shaughnessy, a Piedmont, California-based Virtuoso agency owner. More parents are looking for hands-on experiences to engage the whole group – and trips centered around raising globally focused kids. One step toward global citizenship: a private safari in Tanzania. Tour operator **Artisans of Leisure** builds eight-day trips with families in mind, down to nap-adjusted timelines. Along with spotting animals they know best from the Babar books, kids can make new friends while volunteering at local schools.

## 16



### VIRTUOSO LIFE ON OPENING YOUR EYES

"Take a kid along, if possible; you'll see the world differently through their eyes. Wherever you go, do everything you can to learn about what's there in the natural sense. Our lives depend on maintaining the good health of the natural world." – *Sylvia Earle, marine biologist, January 2001*



# 17

## CRUISES All-Out at Sea

With each year comes a slew of ever more extravagant cruise-ship features and diversions. Back in 2000, millennials were competing at Mario Kart 64 in their living rooms. Today, they can race IRL on **Norwegian Cruise Line's** onboard go-kart tracks. Expect more cantilevered bars with glass floors (**Princess Cruises**), 800-foot-long waterslides (**Royal Caribbean International**), and planetariums at sea (now on **Cunard's** 2,691-passenger *Queen Mary 2* and **Viking's** 930-passenger *Viking Orion*). According to a recent Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) study, for Generation Z and millennial cruisers, experiences take priority over material things, meaning more music festivals at sea and other on-the-water events. The big-ship boom – and the immense diversions it brings – doesn't show any signs of letting up.

The little guys are getting in on the one-upping action too. "In 2020, we have an explosion of small ships designed for true expedition cruising, such as to the Arctic and Antarctica," says Fort Worth-

based Virtuoso agency owner Ruth Turpin. As the CLIA report puts it, "Access is the new luxury." Cruise lines aim for harder-to-reach locations to sate cruisers' appetites for the undiscovered.

"One strong emerging trend is conscious travel," says Beth Butzlaff, Virtuoso's vice president of cruise sales. According to a recent study Virtuoso conducted with market-research firm YouGov, 47 percent of travelers said that preserving natural and cultural heritage affects their travel decisions, and 48 percent said sustainability influences their trip plans. Cruise companies take sustainability into account, with hybrid ships, dynamic positioning to help preserve sea floors, and renewable materials used for energy, including **Hurtigruten's** new biogas fuel, created from organic waste. "Cruise lines are also getting better at supporting women in the workplace," Butzlaff adds. Three female captains already helm **Celebrity Cruises'** ships, and last year **Virgin Voyages** started a program to support women's careers in its fleet, which launches in April.



Hurtigruten's new hybrid ship, the *Roald Amundsen*.

# 18

FROM  
OUR  
ARCHIVE

## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON CRUISING

"Go out on deck when everyone else is sleeping and listen to the stillness."  
—The editors, July 2008



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Rome, Italy



The Waterfront



St. Petersburg, Russia





Travelers today look for intimate, tailored experiences at hotels, according to the 2020 Virtuoso Luxe Report. Arlene C. Thompson-Brantley, a Dallas-based Virtuoso advisor, agrees: “Residences, villas, and homes are gaining popularity, as travelers want to enjoy hotel perks such as room service, spa and restaurant access, and a concierge desk with independent accommodations.”

As hotels feel more like home, their lobbies are getting an upgraded-living-room vibe. Take the La Libreria sitting room in the **Hotel Eden** in Rome: Bartenders roll drink carts right up to the velvet couches, and backlit shelves of vintage books give hotel guests and other visitors reasons to linger. **Aman Tokyo** encourages meditation in the Zen garden of its 33rd-floor lobby. For wandering minds, The Lounge bar, tucked away on the same floor, serves afternoon tea and evening cocktails.

Whether in the room or outside it, customization makes the hotel, Thompson-Brantley says: “Travel advisors used to just book a hotel. Now, we book experiences within a stay – transfers, restaurant reservations, spa treatments, etcetera – and enhance it with details such as preferred music, bed linens, pillows, bath products, and a personal welcome amenity with a note.”



Zen in the city:  
Aman Tokyo.

**Raising the (Mini)bar.** Look for hyperlocal offerings, distillery collabs, and themed cocktail packages. Also in stock: brand-appropriate batched cocktails (the Earl Grey old-fashioned in **The Langham, London**'s minibars is inspired by its afternoon tea) and creative wellness options, such as the canned oxygen stocked at **The Little Nell** in Aspen.

20



## VIRTUOSO LIFE ON INDULGENCE

“Splurge on some aspect of your trip. We try to book the best hotel at the end of an itinerary, so you’ll go home on a high note.” – *Damian McCabe, Virtuoso agency owner, September 2013 VI.*





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# EMERALD STATUS



A quiet moment  
in the Burren and  
(opposite) Louis  
Mulcahy pottery.





An introduction  
to **Ireland**  
through its  
craft traditions.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
**KORENA BOLDING SINNETT**



---

## I'VE ALWAYS BEEN DRAWN TO BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

I'm an art director and photographer by trade, and I dabble in painting and knitting, calligraphy and baking, and other creative pursuits. It's true that I once traveled solo to southern France for a pastry workshop that, for me, was almost as much about photos of the cream puffs and financiers as about the sweets themselves. A trip to Amsterdam and its museums led to my just-for-fun, Dutch masters-inspired still-life photo series.

So when an opportunity to visit Ireland came up, I thought, what better way to get to know the country than through its creative traditions – and the creative types keeping them alive? The well-connected people at on-site tour company Dream Escape (they work with Virtuoso travel advisors to craft trips and experiences in Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales) delivered my maker-centric itinerary. With my guide, I'd visit Ireland's western coast and southern counties, as well as Dublin, meeting some of the country's most talented artisans along the way – and staying at some unforgettable hotels.

The journey kicked off at 800-year-old Ashford Castle, former summer home of the Guinness family in County Mayo – and current haunt of two Irish wolfhounds, Cronan and Garvan. Afternoon tea there was as impressive as the property itself, with a tiered stand of treats as tall as I am and, at my selection, strawberry-and-cream tea.

My Irish craft immersion began the following morning in County Clare, site of the Burren, a lunar-looking landscape that's rich in



**A selection of custom-dyed wool at Lisbeth Mulcahy's studio. Opposite, clockwise from top left: John Sheehy, a thrower at Louis Mulcahy's pottery studio; the Dingle Peninsula; Sonia Reynolds, co-founder of Stable of Ireland; and a sweet surprise along Conor Pass.**







geologic and botanical resources. My guide introduced me to The Burren Perfumery, where owner Sadie Chowen and her staff make natural and organic perfumes, soaps, and skincare products inspired by the surrounding flora. Scent families are grouped by geographic zone and bottled and labeled by hand at the perfumery. Along with a parcel of products, I left with the recipe for the perfumery tearoom's just-right tomato soup.

At the neo-Gothic Adare Manor in County Limerick, I met another craftsman in mixologist Ariel Sanecki, who serves his innovative cocktails in over-the-top glasses, which he also designs. My favorite: the hand-blown swan, a vessel for the vodka, rhubarb, and pink peppercorn Cocktail King.



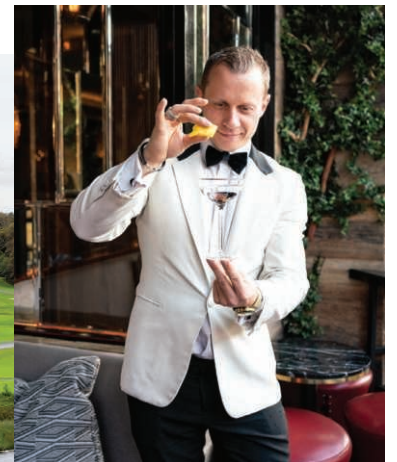
**A waterfall along Conor Pass. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Local flora, scops owl Tiny at Adare Manor, a Georgian door in Dublin, a classic martini at Dublin's Westbury hotel, Ashford Castle's grounds, the Gold Drawing Room at Ballyfin, and Ashford Castle's general manager Niall Rochford with resident Irish wolfhounds Garvan and Cronan.**

We explored the Dingle Peninsula next, motoring along steep, narrow curves on Conor Pass, a section of Ireland's 1,500-mile-long coastal Wild Atlantic Way. In the town of Dingle, weaver Lisbeth Mulcahy's studio houses two sizable looms and shelves of colorful custom-dyed yarn upstairs. In the main-floor shop, her rich scarves, throws, and wall hangings are on display. Farther down the rugged coast, Lisbeth's husband, potter Louis Mulcahy, and his team of skilled ceramists turn out the graceful stoneware/porcelain-blend pieces that earned Louis an honorary degree from the National University of Ireland. The Design & Crafts Council of Ireland described him as "the godfather of Irish craft." The ocean view from his workshop clearly influences his color palettes.

Irish butter kicked my nondairy diet out the window on my first day – this is a country where they do dairy right. Further dairy enticement popped up in County Cork, where we met farmer Johnny Lynch, owner of Macroom Buffalo Mozzarella – and a two-day-old baby buffalo, the newest addition to the country's first herd of Italian milking water buffalo.

Back in Dublin, adjacent to The Westbury hotel, I discovered a pocket of artisanal joy in The Westbury Mall, a collection of boutiques with an emphasis on local tradition. There's Stable, with handmade Irish wool and linen from around the island; Madigan, with Elaine Madigan's contemporary cashmere pieces; and – be still my heart – Paula Rowan's buttery bespoke gloves. I returned home, my suitcase heavier with tangible reminders of still-thriving Irish traditions and my memory bank richer with the images I collected.









## TIP

"If you're staying at Ballyfin, don't miss a tour of the Irish National Stud & Gardens in Tully, County Kildare, birthplace of many champion racehorses. The impressive Japanese gardens were created in the early 1900s by master horticulturist Tassa Eida and his son Minoru."

— Ginny Caragol, *Virtuoso* travel advisor, New York City







Clockwise from left: The Burren Perfumery; Elaine Madigan, owner and designer of Madigan cashmere in The Westbury Mall; The Burren Perfumery goods; and cheeses from Macroon Buffalo Mozzarella.



## IRISH INSIGHT

Where to stay and how to go.

**GO** On-site travel-design company **Dream Escape** can work with Virtuoso travel advisors to organize custom journeys in Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales, tailored to just about any interest. A two-week trip through Ireland and Scotland, for instance, has stops for single-malt tasting, golfing at St Andrews, falconry with Harris's hawks, an insider's look at Dublin, and more.

**STAY** At **Adare Manor** in County Limerick, views across manicured golf greens contrast with plush interiors, including dramatic freestanding black bathtubs and ornate tapestries. The 104-room hotel's resident falconers introduce guests to Adare's birds of prey, which range from Tiny, a petite scops owl, to Saoirse, an American bald eagle. *Doubles from \$400, including breakfast daily, complimentary valet parking, and afternoon tea for two once during stay.*

**Ashford Castle's** 83 rooms and suites are soaked with color – emerald, ruby, cobalt – and swathed in silk, satin, velvet, and brocade. The property, reopened in 2015 after a \$100 million cellars-to-chandeliers restoration by Red Carnation hotels, has a spa housed in a conservatory and a sixteenth-century coal bunker that's now a snug wine cellar. *Doubles from \$360, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

**Ballyfin** has just 21 rooms, set in a Regency mansion on a 614-acre estate at the foot of the Slieve Bloom Mountains. George and Amal have vacationed here, in appropriately ornate surroundings – carved and canopied French beds, early Georgian paintings, and rococo flourishes rule this gilt-to-the-max country escape. *Doubles from \$990, including all meals and a \$100 spa credit.*

In Dublin, **The Westbury** is a coolly sophisticated 205-room spot adjacent to Grafton Street shopping. The on-site retail offerings are not to be missed: The boutique Westbury Mall houses shops that trade in Irish-made goods, from jewelry to custom leather gloves and, of course, wool and linen. *Doubles from \$420, including breakfast daily and one lunch or dinner for two. VI*







# WILD AT HEART

**TO GET THE MOST FROM THE WORLD AROUND US,  
FOLLOW YOUR ANIMAL INSTINCTS.**

**BY AARON GULLEY**

**A** GUIDE IN ZIMBABWE ONCE OFFERED ME TWO PIECES OF ADVICE BEFORE WE SET OUT ON a walking safari: Stay in the middle of the group, as the suckers at the front and rear are likeliest to be picked off first by hungry game. If that fails, keep the guide with the rifle between you and the wildlife – or at least a less-fit-looking guest, in case it comes to a sprint. It was a wisecrack, of course, though I misplaced my sense of humor an hour later when, before either of my guides saw them, I spotted three lions gazing at us from 80 yards in thick vegetation. To my guide's credit, he put himself between us and the animals, and then backed the group to safety. It's a great dinner-party story, especially because no one was mauled. But what stuck with me from the experience was the primal awe of being in close, unchecked proximity to some of the planet's wildest creatures.

Some travelers love museums and city tours; many seek out festivals or the world's finest restaurants. Me? I'm just as happy sitting in a field of grizzlies in Alaska or swimming in a lake full of jellyfish in Palau. Coming face-to-face with animals is the ultimate reminder of the vitality and wonder still left in this world, which is probably why I continue chasing wildlife when I travel – though thankfully I've yet to have any chase me.

Perhaps my wildlife infatuation is a vestige of my youth. I was raised in the bush in Nigeria, where the first pet I remember was a duiker, one of those pocket-size antelope, which we didn't dare name as it was only a matter



of time before the creature made its way into the wrong villager's compound and ended up on a spit. For a while, we also had a small monkey.

In this age of manicured travel, with itineraries planned to the minute and "authentic" experiences buffed to a flawless sheen, free-roaming wildlife is a reminder of the visceral, unpredictable world out there, an antidote to beige airport-lounge furniture and hip hotel lobbies' just-quiet-enough ambient techno music. Once, on a photo safari at Ted Turner's Vermejo Reserve, our guide set up to call a bull elk so we could photograph it, and four of them came in so fast and hard and close – one within ten yards – that no one was able to snap a single image. Another time, on a diving trip off Colombia's Pacific coast to see whale sharks, we found zero of the big fish, but swam with blue whales, which weren't meant to be there that time of year. Setting out in pursuit of animals is as surprising and satisfying as sitting down to an *omakase* dinner, where you show up, the chef decides what you'll eat, and all you have to do is savor the results.

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## COMING FACE-TO-FACE WITH ANIMALS IS THE ULTIMATE REMINDER OF THE VITALITY AND WONDER STILL LEFT IN THIS WORLD.

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It doesn't hurt that animals also happen to live in pretty country – usually some of the most serene, bucolic, and disconnected spots on earth. At Little Makalolo Camp in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park, my wife and I spent a night at the Star Bed, a treetop platform half an hour's drive from the main lodge, where you sleep above the grasslands in total seclusion. A herd of elephants rustling in the acacias 20 feet below us kept us up much of the night, and dawn ushered a pride of lions to the watering hole. But the things I'll remember most from that experience are the night sky full of stars as bright

as headlights and the absolute tranquility of the African veldt.

Citing rapidly disappearing species, such as the rhinos in South Africa or Siberian snow leopards, some will say, "You have to go see the animals now, before they're all gone." But that sentiment gets it all wrong: The truth is, the more of us who go to witness the miracle of wildlife around the world, the more of us there will be striving to preserve it. Just be sure to keep your guide between you and the lions. You'll do very little for the cause if you wind up down the gullet. VI.



  
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# HOW TO TRAVEL BETTER

THE TRAVEL TIPS,  
INSIGHT, AND ESSENTIALS  
YOU NEED NOW.



## WHERE WE'RE GOING

"I'm headed to **SOUTH AFRICA** and **BOTSWANA** on a family trip. There will be ballroom dancing, game drives, and a wine-country visit. Fingers crossed for cheetah sightings." – *Samantha Falewée, assistant editor*

"**DENVER** is my first destination of the new year. I'll return to favorites such as Little Man Ice Cream and Tattered Cover Book Store before attempting a hike in the foothills." – *Rebecca Ratterman, assistant editor*

"I'm packing for **OAXACA** for the wedding of two members of my 'friend family' this March, and leaving space in my suitcase for mezcal and handwoven textiles." – *Lara Hallock, associate editor*



Iconic Uluru, home to 80 rock-art sites.

## TRAVEL INTELLIGENCE

### ● RESCUERS DOWN UNDER

The board of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in central Australia has decided to close the climb at Uluru. The area's indigenous Anangu people consider the 2,831-foot-tall sandstone dome sacred, and frown upon climbing it. The closure will help conserve Uluru's 80 rock-art sites, layered with pictures and symbols over millennia. Instead, the park will up its emphasis on cultural activities, developing new programs such as plant walks with Anangu guides and lessons in *punu*, the art of carving wood with fire and sharp stones.

### ● SNOW DAYS

Coming soon: a longer, larger, and more thrilling year of skiing at top Vail Resorts in Colorado. Breckenridge – which, starting this season, extends ski dates through Memorial Day – kicked off the year in October with four feet of snowfall, the most on record for the resort in the month's history. Also new at Breckenridge: updated slopeside guest-service facilities on Peak 8, with a children's ski and snowboard school, childcare, and ski and snowboard rental. Keystone's and Vail's improvements include expansions for more acres of skiable terrain.

### ● KOMODO ISLAND FIGHTS OVERTOURISM

Komodo National Park recently quashed rumors that its namesake island would close to visitors in 2020 due to conservation efforts. Not just hearsay: Park officials will limit the number of visitors and may increase the entrance fee to protect the archipelago's dragons, a goal that will also benefit the 260 species of coral and 1,000 species of tropical fish that make it a favorite diving destination. Park management also plans to establish a conservation program, including a Komodo dragon research center.

(CHEETAH) PJ MALSBURO/GETTY IMAGES, (ULURU) SIMON BRADFIELD/GETTY IMAGES



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<sup>3</sup>Certain restrictions apply. Select room categories, age restrictions, minimum length of stay and advance reservations may apply for certain amenities. Please ask for details. Blackout dates may apply.

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Toucan play: Costa Rica lands on Virtuoso's family-trip list.



### 1,300 EXPERTS CAN'T BE WRONG

The recently published **Virtuoso Luxe Report** gathered insight on travel trends from 1,300 Virtuoso travel advisors and agency executives around the world. The report revealed that authentic experiences and sharing adventures with loved ones factor most into vacation plans. Multigenerational travel topped the trend list, while travel with immediate family landed in the top five. For family destinations, Costa Rica made a new appearance among the usual suspects (though Hawaii and Orlando endure). And as always, the Mediterranean reigns: Italy leads the list of global hot spots, followed by Greece, and Croatia ranks first among emerging destinations.

## ASK THE ADVISORS

### WHAT ARE YOUR TRAVEL-WELLNESS TIPS?

"I travel with probiotics, vitamin C, and zinc to support my immune system. I also recommend bringing **walking shoes** to get outdoors upon arrival. Fresh air and sunshine are great ways to stave off jet lag." – *Melissa McKinley, Dallas*

"Pack things that bring you wellness at home, whether it's a healthy snack, special pillow, or **inspirational book or journal**. I bring almonds for protein, apples for fiber, and bananas because they're rich in potassium and magnesium, two minerals that

help prevent cramping and have natural muscle relaxants that can promote peaceful sleep." – *Barbara Nichuals, Bronxville, New York*

"In hot climates, I drop a **Nuun tablet** in water with my breakfast to stay hydrated. And avoid alcohol, especially in warm weather and high altitudes, as it will dehydrate you more quickly." – *Ajay Karah, Calgary, Alberta*



# 1.8 BILLION

Global travelers the UN World Tourism Organization predicts by 2030 – all the more reason to keep the overtourism conversation going.

## BACKGROUND RESEARCH IF YOU'RE GOING TO ...



### NORWAY

("B-Side Bets," page 88): Read Ruth Ware's *The Woman in Cabin 10*, a mystery that takes place on a cruise through the Norwegian fjords.



### SAN ANTONIO

("South Texas Siren," page 54): Sing along with the film *Selena*, and watch the trailer for the upcoming Netflix series about the Queen of Tejano.



### NASHVILLE

("Hit Parade," page 66): Pick up Ann Patchett's *Nashville: Scenes from the New American South*, then visit Parnassus Books, her Nashville bookstore.



## WE'RE OBSESSED WITH

Clean lines and metallic finishes add flair to **Quip's refillable floss dispenser**, and its retractable head makes it a snap to pack. \$20, [getquip.com](http://getquip.com).



## INTERVIEW

# ASIA, ALL IN

Simon Greer and Sharna Goldseker turned to Virtuoso travel advisor Matthew Gill for a trip that promised to be as rewarding for them as it would be for their 8-year-old daughter, Sasha, and 11-year-old son, Owen. As Simon reports, the 18-week, nine-country adventure was more life changing than they'd even dreamed.

**We picked Asia because** we wanted a destination totally different from our daily life and to experience what it's like being in the visible minority.

**Bring less than you think you'll need.** You can always pick things up on the road, and often a local version – besides, finding laundromats was part of the fun.

**Our best trick to get the kids to try new foods** was starting with a cooking class, like making sushi or dumplings – they're more apt to eat what they make.

**To tune out work and distractions from home,** I changed my phone number and didn't check email. It's incredible what we talked about instead – conversations about the economy with camel herders in the Gobi Desert; discussing Middle East peace, as a Jewish family, with a Muslim family from

Dubai, while learning about sustainable living in Indonesia.

**The first thing we learned about ourselves** is that we're more flexible than we imagined. We covered 27 cities and had many delayed flights and other obstacles. As long as our kids had a book and their favorite stuffed animals, and we were together, we were OK.

**Matthew worked with Gerald Hatherly of Abercrombie & Kent Greater China** to organize a kite-making class in Beijing; a fishing trip with locals in Vietnam; a visit to teamLab Borderless, the interactive, three-dimensional technology-art exhibit in Tokyo; and other fun activities that engaged the kids.

**We knew it was worth it when** Sasha struggled to crawl to the top of a giant sand dune in the south Gobi Desert on her hands and knees, and at the top said, "I feel accomplished!"

**After visiting the Summer Palace in Lhasa,** which the Dalai Lama fled in 1959, Owen asked how a country could take over such a peaceful place as Tibet. Our children's innocence and curiosity about people and places gave us a fresh take on every experience.

**I'll never forget** hiking to the top of a volcano to watch the sunrise on my 51st birthday, and Sharna and I holding hands while swimming and following sea turtles off Komodo Island.

**But if you ask Sharna, she'd say** Mongolia, for its vast untouched land – lush green in one direction, red-rock canyons and sand dunes in another.

**We still laugh about** mud-wrestling in Indonesia while learning about sustainable living at John and Cynthia Hardy's Green School.

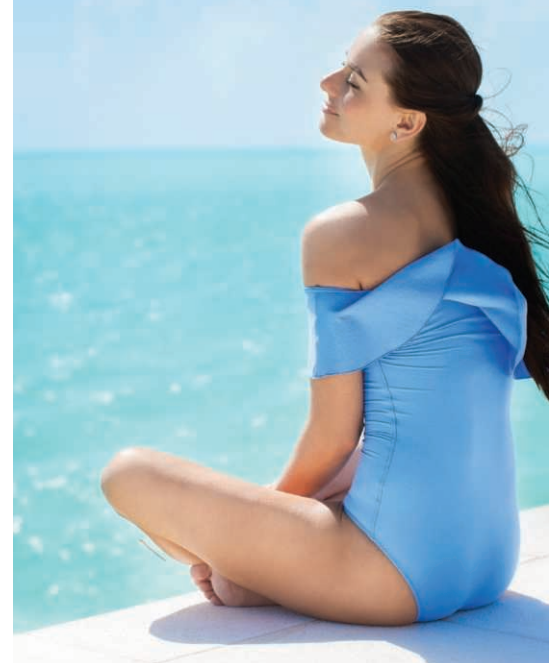


Trying on tradition in Hakone, Japan.



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**Contact your preferred Virtuoso Travel Advisor for additional details and to book your Wymara getaway.**



# BELIZE

## SUN, SAND, AND SEASIDE SHOPPING.

A week in Belize was the perfect spring-break getaway for two families with 18-year-old sons. We booked a three-bedroom beachfront villa at **Las Terrazas Resort & Residences** on Ambergris Caye, where daily breakfast came complete with a plate of warm fry jacks, a deliciously sinful local pastry. Everyone gets around by golf cart on this virtually car-free island, which was part of the fun. The action is in the town of San Pedro, a ten-minute cart ride from Las Terrazas, with shops, bars, and restaurants. Bring home a bottle (or two) of **Marie Sharp's**, locally made sauces that come in a variety of flavors and heat levels – they're tasty as a marinade or dipping sauce. You can also shop for handcrafted items from your lounge chair on the beach. I picked up a palm-tree ornament made of shell and half a dozen beautiful **woven purses**, great for gifts.

– Terrie Hansen, senior vice president of marketing

**Belize mementos:** A woven bag and palm-tree shell ornament from beach vendors, and Marie Sharp's hot sauces.



**TIP:** “Our favorite hangout, The Truck Stop, was busy every night of the week. There was live music, and a variety of food trucks meant everyone could eat what they wanted, from pizza to burgers to tacos – and of course Belikin, the local beer. Crocs Sunset Sports Bar, as the name implies, offers amazing sunset views.”



*Life is short.*

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