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TOURS

WINTER
—
SPRING
2017

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RAINBOW TOURS

Colombia

From the colonial Cartagena's walled Old Town, protected from modern influence for centuries, to the cobbled streets of the capital Bogota, Colombia oozes as much historical charm as it does colour. Covering the northernmost tip of South America, pockets of coffee plantations decorate a lush landscape that descends from snowy mountainous peaks to lowland valleys and a Caribbean coastline.

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SPRING 2017 WELCOME

EDITOR

Gill Leaning

editor@other-shores.com



FEATURE WRITERS

Emma Brisdon and Sarah Garrod

DESIGN

David Atkinson and James Arends

ADVERTISING

Emma Durkin

edurkin@regentholidays.co.uk

info@itc-uk.com

ITC
LUXURY TRAVEL
ESTD 1974

enquiries@westernoriental.com

WESTERN & ORIENTAL

info@rainbowtours.co.uk

**RAINBOW
TOURS**

regent@regentholidays.co.uk

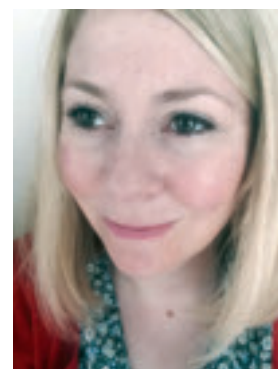
REGENT HOLIDAYS
holidays with stories to tell

Other Shores is an exclusive magazine for the clients
of the ITC Luxury Travel Group.

From the Editor

Winter sun or Arctic fun? That's the million-dollar question we asked our travel specialists on page 16. Right about now there's a good chance you are either excitedly embarking on a winter wonderland adventure, or contemplating your escape to warmer climes.

Sun-seekers can turn straight to page 12 for our guide to what's hot in the Maldives – the perfect winter warmer – or page 46 for a vision of white sands and turquoise seas in St Vincent and the Grenadines. Those who prefer to fly north for their winters can learn more about aurora holidays in Canada's Yukon territory on page 14.



At Other Shores HQ, we love to travel whatever the weather. Come rain or shine you'll find us walking with chimpanzees in Tanzania (p40), exploring the history of Moscow and St Petersburg (p32), horse riding across the wilds of Montana (p24) and even uncovering the secrets of North Korea (p18).

We look forward to inspiring your travel experiences this year and beyond.

Gill Leaning, Editor

C O N T R I B U T O R S



HILARY BRADT

Hilary is a publisher, writer and lecturer, and director of Bradt Travel Guides, which she co-founded in 1974. Since then she has written or contributed to a dozen or so books and numerous articles for the national and international press.

In 2008 she was awarded an MBE for services to the tourist industry and to charity.



CARLY HATLEY

As a Destination Expert at Western & Oriental, Carly thinks she has the best job in the world. Just last year she's been on a luxury holiday to Barbados, driven around Arizona in a Mustang convertible, experienced the glitz of Dubai and had the holiday of a lifetime at a Montana ranch. It's a tough job but somebody's got to do it.



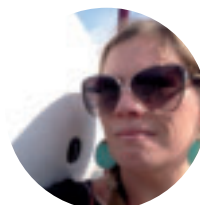
HELEN TABOIS

As a senior product manager at ITC Luxury Travel, small ship luxury cruises are what floats Helen's boat, especially when she can combine them with her true love: the Caribbean. Her holiday guilty pleasure is being wined and dined in style as the scenery drifts by – which explains why she travelled on Canada's Rocky Mountaineer earlier last year.



ELLIE MARR

Having spent five years as a Russia and Balkans Specialist at Regent Holidays, it's no surprise that Ellie enjoys discovering the lesser-known corners of the world. She's explored Albania and Montenegro, led group tours to Kosovo and Bosnia, and last year she embarked on a river cruise between Moscow and St Petersburg.



GEORGINA WILSON- POWELL

Travel Editor at Good Things magazine, Georgina is a journalist and guidebook author contributing to Monocle, Lonely Planet and USA Today. She has a passion for sustainable living and is the founder of a new sustainable lifestyle magazine called pebble. She lives in London.



SARAH GILBERT

Sarah is a globetrotting freelance writer and photographer based in London. She contributes to a variety of publications including Wanderlust, The Guardian and Lonely Planet online. She has visited 66 countries and counting, and feels equally at home in a lux Indian Ocean resort as a wooden hut in the Amazon.

ESCAPE

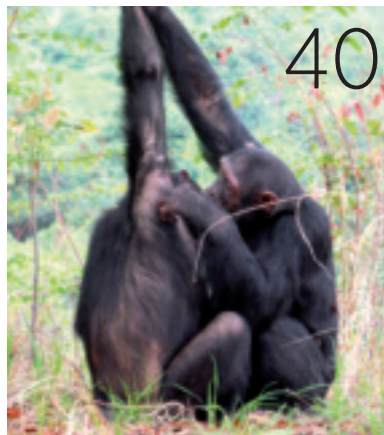
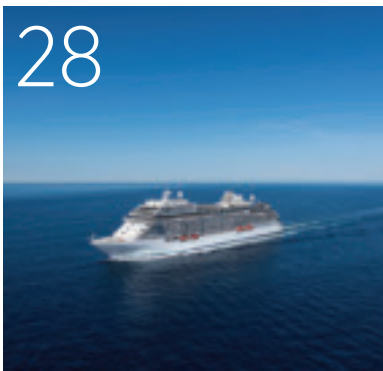
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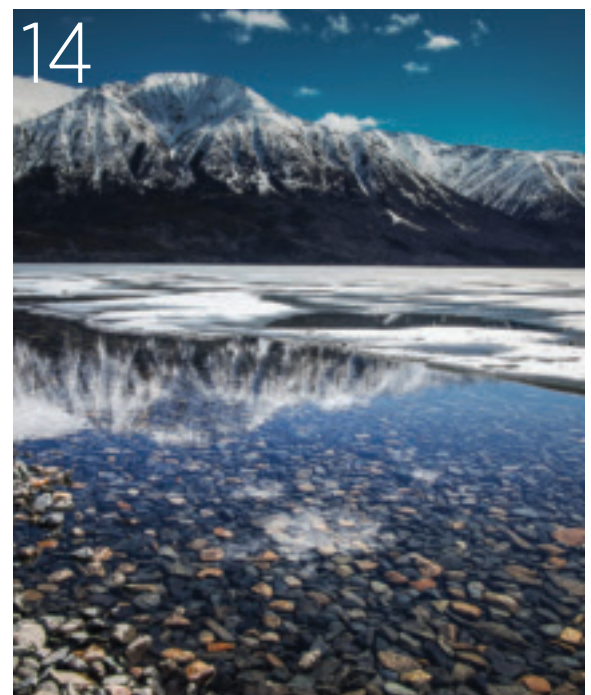


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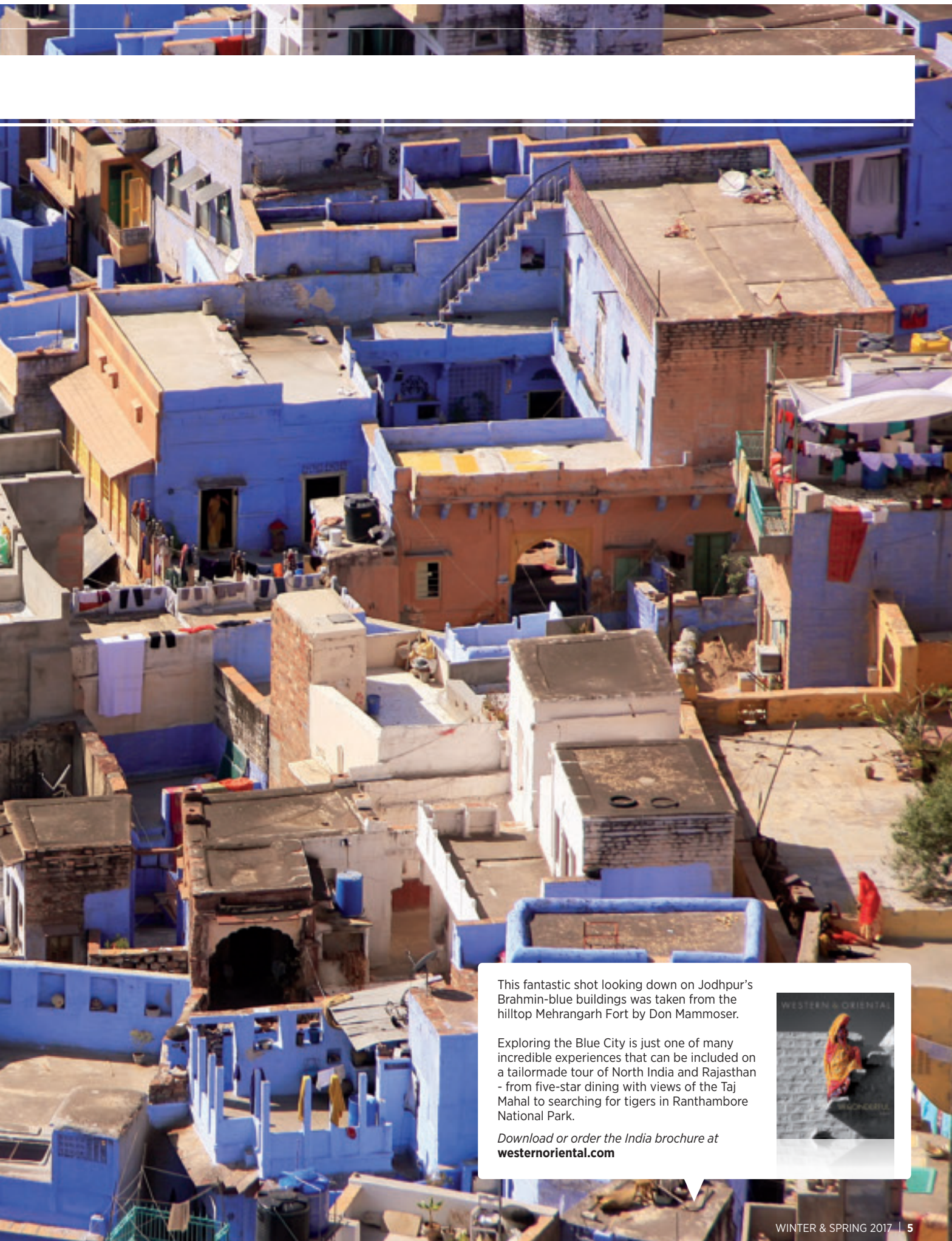
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ESCAPE

PICTURE THIS





This fantastic shot looking down on Jodhpur's Brahmin-blue buildings was taken from the hilltop Mehrangarh Fort by Don Mammoser.

Exploring the Blue City is just one of many incredible experiences that can be included on a tailormade tour of North India and Rajasthan - from five-star dining with views of the Taj Mahal to searching for tigers in Ranthambore National Park.

Download or order the India brochure at westernoriental.com



TRAVEL NEWS



WESTERN & ORIENTAL IN CANADA

2017 is the year to visit Canada, when the country marks its 150th anniversary of Confederation with a packed programme of events. North America specialist Western & Oriental has launched a brand new range of luxury tailor-made Canadian holidays to coincide with the anniversary, including fly-drives, wildlife adventures, scenic rail journeys and ranch holidays. ● westernoriental.com

RAINBOW CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

Rainbow Tours is gearing up to celebrate its 20th birthday. Founded by responsible travel pioneer Roger Diski in 1997, Rainbow has continued to foster his ground-breaking ethos of supporting wildlife and communities through travel. Celebrations will include special 20th anniversary donations to local NGOs and charities supported by the company.

○ rainbowtours.co.uk



INDIA OBEROI OPENING

Oberoi Hotels and Resorts is opening a new luxury property in the foothills of the Outer Himalayas. Set to open in spring 2017, the Oberoi Sukhvilas Resort & Spa in New Chandigarh is surrounded by 8,000 acres of natural forest, and invites guests to unwind in a range of Luxury Villas and Royal Forest Tents inspired by Rajput and Mughal architecture. ● westernoriental.com

MEET THE EXPERTS

Visitors to this year's Destinations Holiday and Travel Show will have the opportunity to meet the travel experts from Rainbow Tours and Regent Holidays. Regent will be hosting an after-show Meet the Experts event on the Thursday evening at Pizza Express Olympia, while show-goers on the Friday can attend a Rainbow talk on Africa's Primates in the Meet The Experts Theatre.

● Call 0117 280 0131 to book

REGENT LAUNCHES JORDAN

The alternative travel gurus at Regent Holidays have created a new range of tours to Jordan. Itineraries include the country's cultural and natural highlights, from Crusader castles and Roman cities to the Dead Sea and desert camps. The eight-day Classic Jordan tour includes two nights in Petra, the 2,000-year-old caravan city hewn from giant walls of rock.

● regentholidays.co.uk





NEW ICELAND BROCHURE

Regent Holidays has launched its new Iceland & the Islands Summer 2017 brochure, featuring a collection of short breaks, fly-drives and group tours in Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Norway, Finland and even the Azores. New for 2017 is a great range of campervan holidays in Iceland that offer the ultimate in flexibility for independent travellers.

● regentholidays.co.uk



NEW LUXURY RIVER CRUISES

Crystal River Cruises will launch two brand new river yachts, Crystal Bach and Crystal Mahler, for summer 2017. Setting sail in June and August respectively, the luxury ships will feature butler service in every suite, a choice of restaurants, as well as a pool and spa. Crystal Bach will sail between Frankfurt and Amsterdam while Crystal Mahler will sail between Amsterdam and Budapest.

● itcluxurytravel.co.uk



NEW BA FLIGHT TO SANTIAGO

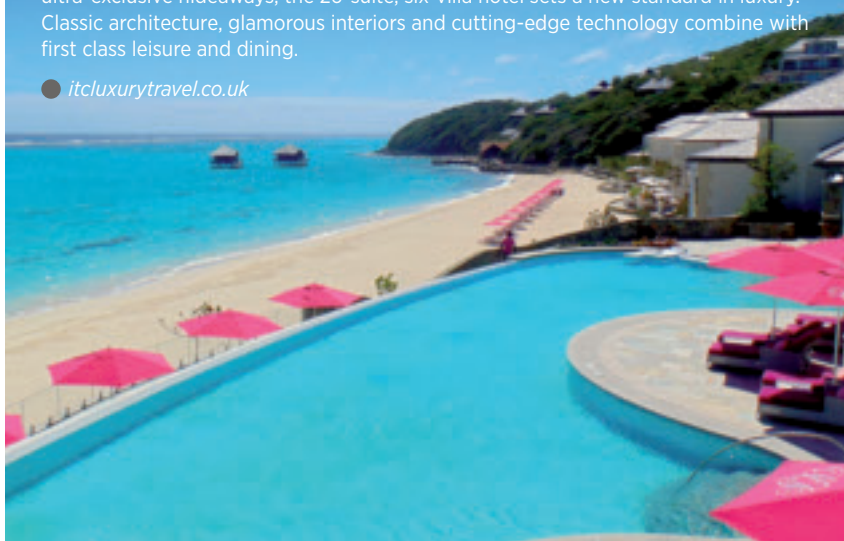
Chilean capital and gateway to the Andes, Santiago will become more accessible to UK travellers this year with the launch of a new direct service from British Airways. Departing four times a week from London Heathrow, the fourteen-hour 40-minute flight will become BA's lengthiest direct route. Return fares start from £813 in World Traveller class.

● rainbowtours.co.uk

PINK SANDS IN THE GRENADINES

The long-anticipated Pink Sands Club has opened in St Vincent and the Grenadines. Located on tiny Canouan Island, in a Caribbean archipelago already synonymous with ultra-exclusive hideaways, the 26-suite, six-villa hotel sets a new standard in luxury. Classic architecture, glamorous interiors and cutting-edge technology combine with first class leisure and dining.

● itcluxurytravel.co.uk



WORLD WINES

Naked Wines fund talented winemakers and give them the freedom to make wines the way they want to. Other Shores picks five bottles to get you through the winter, with personalities as big as their producers.



SOUTH AFRICA

Catoria Sauvignon Blanc: 2016: £9.99

Carmen Stevens, queen of South Africa's independent vineyards, produced this premium Sauvignon with an investment from Naked Wines that helped her to secure the very best grapes. Clean and crisp, with hints of lime and coriander, it's the ideal accompaniment to a steaming bowl of creamy mussels.



ITALY

Sacchetto Prosecco Col de L'Utia Brut: 2015: £9.99

With hints of green apple alongside pear and acacia, this elegant prosecco is a great bottle to get the party started. Available exclusively to Naked Angels as a thank you for their investment, this crisp, dry fizz is the latest offering from Paolo Sacchetto, a third-generation wine-maker at his grandfather's vineyard.



CALIFORNIA

F. Stephen Millier Angel's Reserve Chardonnay: 2015: £7.99

Millier's talent for creating award-winning wines caught the eye of Naked. Their investment and his 36 years of experience came together to create this New World Chardonnay that would rival any Chablis. Refreshing lemon notes with a hint of oak on the nose will complement a hearty tuna steak.



FRANCE

Virgile Joly Languedoc Organic: 2014: £9.49

Joly is obsessed with organic – but he's also obsessed with making sure the wine tastes great, as well as loving the earth. This bottle blends Shiraz and Grenache grapes for a full-bodied wine, bursting with joyful ripe red fruits, with the smoothest of finishes. Ideal served with a Sunday roast in front of a roaring fire.



ARGENTINA

Ocaso Gran Malbec: 2013: £10.99

After a business trip to Argentina's winelands in the 1990s, Patricio Gouguenheim turned his back on life as a city banker and became one of Naked's first winemakers. Smooth and fruity, this full-bodied red is everything you'd expect from Mendoza, where hot days and cool nights produce exceptionally refined fruit.

READER OFFER - £60 NAKED VOUCHER

Naked Wines is offering first time customers a £60 discount voucher to be used against purchases with a minimum spend of £99.99, made by 31st July 2017. Visit www.nakedwines.com/other shores16 and enter voucher code SHRS6 along with password ASP32XYN to apply the voucher. Full terms at www.nakedwines.com/terms

naked wines

BARBADOS

IN STYLE



Something of an institution on the Caribbean island of Barbados, The Sandpiper – sister hotel to Coral Reef Club – has been offering traditional, luxury hospitality to its guests since 1970. Owners of the property, the O'Hara family, told ITC Luxury Travel's Sarah Garrod about some of the new additions.

Sitting on the exclusive west coast of Barbados, the love and care with which The Sandpiper was built can be sensed at every turn. Service is five-star and luxury a guarantee, with a familial warmth to the place that ensures every guest feels special.

Having reopened at the end of 2015 to great acclaim, and following significant renovations, the multi-award-winning hotel now possesses an impressive 60-foot lap swimming pool and three new One Bedroom Suites with unbeatable views of the Caribbean Sea.

Long-time favourite 'Harold's Bar' has been extended onto a large seafront terrace, where guests can enjoy his signature rum punches, and on the top floor of The Beach House, a consummate new accommodation option – the Tree Top Suite 'Curlew' – offers grown-up visitors a terrace with its own bar, sundeck and plunge pool. A plush, spacious villa can be created for families by joining Curlew to the Beach House Suites below.

Alongside these new additions, The Sandpiper's timeless highlights continue to wow its guests, including complimentary tennis coaching with the hotel's resident pro, the outstanding shared spa at Coral Reef Club and evening entertainment such as the legendary weekly cocktail party and the Sunday night barbecue with live steelpan music.

● *ITC Luxury Travel is a specialist in holidays to The Sandpiper. A 7-night stay in a Garden Room costs from £1,749 per person including flights and transfers. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577*

TOP 5

ISLAND ATTRACTIONS

- **Festivals:** There's always a reason to celebrate on Barbados, with its annual Carnival and fish festival being particular highlights.
- **Sport:** Alongside its most famous pursuit - cricket - horse racing, polo and golf are also pursued in fine style.
- **Nature:** Top of every visitor's list should be a trip to see Harrison's Caves and the Andromeda Botanical Gardens.
- **Wildlife:** Swimming with turtles is a must, and you can stroll with the native monkeys at the Barbados Wildlife Reserve.
- **History:** Venture to a plantation house for a journey back in time, or learn about the island's most famous export at a rum distillery.

THE INTERVIEW



Last year Sir David Hempleman-Adams and his crew made history by becoming the first British team to sail around the Arctic Ocean anticlockwise in a summer season. Gill Leaning speaks to the modern-day explorer about the Polar Ocean Challenge.

The Polar Ocean Challenge took four months to complete - where did it take you?

We left Bristol on June 19th, went up to Tromsø, and up the west coast of Norway to Murmansk where we had a crew change for the start of the North East Passage. The Russian permit we had didn't allow us to stop at any port, so we knew it would be 3,000 miles non-stop to get around to Alaska.

We went up through the Barents Sea, over the top of the Novaya Zemlya archipelago - that's where the Russians do their nuclear testing, so we didn't want to have to over-winter there! We had to wait for ten days before we got a break in the ice and we were hit by a storm. Thankfully the storm drove the pack ice

away and that enabled us to shoot down the coast. We managed to get down into the Laptev Sea and from there we were through.

Then it was through the Siberian islands, into the Chukchi Sea, the Bering Sea and finally to Point Barrow in Alaska. Forty days from Murmansk with no stopping. We refuelled at Tuyuktuk and then it was a real race to get back because the ice was closing in. Looking at the ice reports we realise we got through with just one day's grace. That was late September.

Then on to Greenland for another crew change at Upper Narvik. By then the pressure was off - we knew we'd done it. We carried on down the coast, passing Disko Bay, passing Ilulissat, travelling between these magnificent glaciers and icebergs. By this time it was getting late in the season. In Murmansk we'd had 24 hours of sunshine, now we were seeing the northern lights. From there it was right across the Atlantic and back to the Bristol docks.

What were your personal highlights?

Wonderful sunsets, amazing icebergs on the Russian side and the pure wilderness. I loved the North West Passage actually. You can get quite close to the headland. We saw a polar bear, a lot of whales, seals, walrus. A lot of sea birds were following the boat, which was magnificent.

The aim was to document changes in the sea ice - did your findings match your expectations?

Probably worse. The North West Passage, which we did in fourteen days, we didn't see any ice whatsoever. So that was frightening. And some of the sea that we had was much higher than anticipated.

What's next on the agenda?

We've set up a charity called Wicked Weather Watch (wickedweatherwatch.org.uk) which aims to give youngsters an idea of what's going on in terms of climate change. It's an access point to find out about all things Arctic. And we plan to take the boat back up the west coast of Greenland in the summer.

● *Regent Holidays has a 9-day West Greenland and Disko Bay icebreaker cruise that departs on 22nd May 2017 and costs from £4,580 per person. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131.*

ASK THE EXPERTS

Q Where's the best place to eat in Lima?

Sarah Robertson, Birmingham

a Peru's capital Lima is THE place right now to experience one of the most exciting food scenes on the planet. For a really top-notch restaurant, you absolutely cannot beat Central in the historic Miraflores district. This place was voted the best restaurant in South America, and head chef Virgilio Martinez is renowned for his original use of new and traditional ingredients. Rainbow Tours can also arrange a bike tour around the food markets where the restaurateurs pick up their fresh produce, which is a great way to experience local life.

Sarah Frankish
Latin America Specialist,
Rainbow Tours

Q How easy is it to apply for a Russian Visa?

Mr Lashmar, Lancs

a There is rather a lot of bureaucracy, but don't let that put you off. Firstly, applicants must submit their passport, which needs to be valid for a minimum of six months after the visa's expiration date and have at least two blank pages. The passport needs to be submitted by yourself to the Russian Consulate in Edinburgh or London for either a one-day or five-day service, where they will also take your



fingerprints. Secondly, applicants must obtain a visa support document – tour operators such as ourselves will acquire this on behalf of the client. Finally, there is a rather lengthy eight-page online application form that needs to be filled in - Regent's Russian Visa Department can take care of the form for you at a cost of £35 if you wish.

Robin Armstrong
Visa Specialist, Regent Holidays



Q Where's best for a family holiday in Greece?

Mrs E. Smith, Swansea

a I would highly recommend The Romanos Resort, Costa Navarino, which has its own water park, bowling alley and cinema, plus a great kids club and youth club for teens. If your little ones are mad about football, then you could try Porto Elounda Deluxe Resort in Crete, which offers an

impressive soccer school. But if it's all-inclusive luxury you're looking for then I'd suggest Ikos Resorts' Olivia or Oceania, possibly the best five-star all-inclusives in Greece, both of which offer loads of activities for kids from tots to teens and, most importantly, total bliss for parents.

Neil Sutton
Europe Specialist,
Western & Oriental



We love to hear from you. Email your travel questions to editor@other-shores.com and your questions could be answered in the next issue



THE LUX FILES

Your guide to the best luxury travel experiences in the Maldives

1. LUX FAMILY SONEVA FUSHI

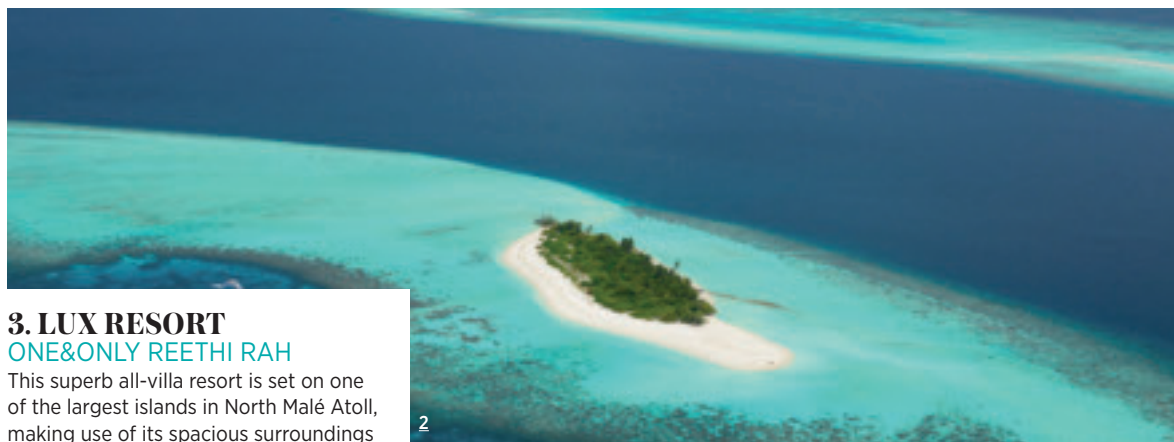
Hidden away in the tropical foliage of Baa Atoll's UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Soneva Fushi defines the essence of barefoot luxury. But this sanctuary is not reserved just for grown ups – the all-villa resort is a paradise for kids too, with family dolphin cruises, movie nights and children's cooking classes. The Den is the resort's complimentary new kid-zone and playground for the imagination with its own pools and waterslides, swim-up mocktail bar, pirate ship, LEGO room and music room filled with instruments.

● A luxury 7-night break at Soneva Fushi costs from £11,149 for a family of 4, including flights and accommodation in a Family Villa Suite. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577

2. LUX ISLAND VOAVAH PRIVATE ISLAND

A tiny piece of heaven, fringed by picture-perfect white sand beaches, Voavah Private Island is the world's first exclusive-use isle in a UNESCO-protected Reserve. Just a short hop from the Four Seasons Resort at Landaa Giraavaru, this truly exceptional seven-bedroom island is coupled with the exemplary service you would expect from Four Seasons: a PADI five-star dive centre; serene swimming pools; a luxury spa; a beach house with lounge, dining room and gym. To top it all, the island comes with its very own luxury 62-foot yacht for exploring the exquisite surrounding reefs and atolls.

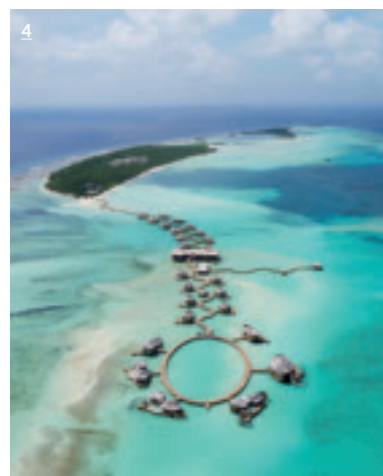
● Price for the Four Seasons Voavah Private Island is available on request. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



3. LUX RESORT ONE&ONLY REETHI RAH

This superb all-villa resort is set on one of the largest islands in North Malé Atoll, making use of its spacious surroundings to offer a completely private guest experience as well as an unrivalled level of choice: twelve white-sand beaches; six superb restaurants and bars; three glorious swimming pools; a fitness centre; a dive school and a luxury spa ranked in the world's top twenty by Condé Nast Traveller magazine. The resort's outstanding Beach Villas and Water Villas have been refurbished for 2017, offering a new level of comfort and style from which to enjoy sunset sea views.

● A luxury 7-night break at One&Only Reethi Rah costs from £3,589 per person including flights and accommodation in a Beach Villa. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



4. LUX ORIGINAL SONEVA JANI

Brand new for 2017, Soneva Jani in the pristine Noonu Atoll is the latest luxury resort in the Soneva portfolio. Spread over five beautiful islands and centred round a crystal-clear private lagoon, the resort's collection of two-floor Water Villas is truly exquisite. Each uniquely designed property features a retractable roof, open-air bathroom, private pool and some even come with water slides from the villa's top floor into the azure lagoon below. Butler service, beachside fine-dining and blissful spa treatments complete the luxury package.

● A luxury 7-night break at Soneva Jani costs from £5,339 per person including flights and accommodation in a 1-Bedroom Water Retreat. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577

5. LUX RESTAURANT ITHAA UNDERSEA RESTAURANT

Flagship restaurant of Conrad's Rangali Island resort, Ithaa sits five metres below the ocean surface, offering a completely unique 180-degree panorama of the coral reef and its inhabitants including reef sharks, manta rays, turtles and an array of colourful fish. With a contemporary six-course set dinner menu, or four-course set lunch menu, expect indulgences such as Maldivian lobster carpaccio or saffron champagne risotto, followed by white chocolate praline and salty caramel sable. Conrad continues to offer the largest wine list in the region with over 1,400 labels.

● A luxury 7-night break at Conrad Maldives Rangali Island costs from £2,419 per person including flights and accommodation in a Beach Villa. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



YUKON:

WILDERNESS TERRITORY

Bordering Alaska in the upper northwest corner of Canada, it's Yukon's remote location on the edge of the Arctic that has kept this vast wilderness so pristine. Roughly the size of France, with a population of just 36,000, the territory is a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts with its jaw-dropping landscape of towering peaks, wild rivers and crystal clear lakes.

THE LANDSCAPE

With three national parks, six territorial parks and four Canadian Heritage Rivers, over ten per cent of Yukon's dramatic landscape is fully protected. But that doesn't even begin to describe how wild this region is: over 80 per cent of the territory is pure, untamed wilderness. This is a place where moose outnumber people two-to-one and 5,000-metre mountains reign supreme.

Kluane National Park is Yukon's absolute must-see; home to most of the tallest peaks in North America, the largest icefields outside the polar caps and one of the most formidable white water rivers on the planet. The sheer scale and beauty of this UNESCO World Heritage Site is simply unimaginable.





1. Tombstone Territorial Park (c) Gov't of Yukon F.Mueller
2. Yukon Grizzly Bear (c) Martin Haeussermann
3. Dakka Kwan First Nations Dancers (c) Gov't of Yukon
4. Kluane National Park (c) Gov't of Yukon
5. Northern lights and star trails, Lake Laberge

THE ADVENTURE

Yukoners take adventure very seriously. In the summer months it means hiking, boating, mountain biking and fishing. The territory's extensive waterways provide some of Yukon's best escapades – canoeing, kayaking or rafting on Thirty Mile River will often deliver sightings of wolverines, grizzlies and golden eagles.

The one thing a Yukon winter can absolutely guarantee is snow. The town of Whitehorse, capital of the territory, is a great base for snowmobiling and dog-sledding adventures. Day tours head into the back country for an adrenaline-fueled ride across icy valleys, mountainsides, forest trails and frozen lakes.

THE HISTORY

It was the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898 that put far-flung Yukon on the world map. The tiny population of Dawson City swelled by some 30,000 as prospectors and adventure-seekers alike arrived in their droves to unearth their share of the much-rumoured gilded fortune.

Today's adventurers will find a wealth of Gold Rush history in charming Dawson City. There are walking tours of the historic downtown area, paddle steamer cruises on the Yukon River and even fun gold panning excursions where you can keep whatever treasure you find.

THE CULTURE

Archaeologists believe that the first people arrived in Yukon more than 10,000 years ago. Today about one quarter of all Yukoners are of Aboriginal ancestry, and their culture has evolved into a rich tapestry, largely inspired by the land and its wildlife.

Many of Yukon's First Nations communities welcome visitors to their cultural centres where ancient traditions are kept alive. Look out for festivals like the three-day Moosehide Gathering in July that celebrates Hän culture through dancing, drumming and singing.

THE AURORA

From late August to April, Yukon's skies are transformed by dazzling displays of the aurora borealis – the mysterious northern lights that flicker in neon ribbons across the dark night. In a wilderness area this vast almost everywhere is aurora viewing territory – just wrap up warm and step outside on a clear night to search for the ethereal light show.

Conversely the summer months bring the midnight sun, where skies are glorious and summer light never ends. Visit between May and August when landscapes explode with wildflower blooms and millions of migratory birds arrive from around the world.

YUKON WILDLIFE IN NUMBERS

160,000 caribou
70,000 moose
7,000 grizzly bears
10,000 black bears
254 species of bird

Some of the world's best scenic roads, like the Top of the World Highway and legendary Alaska Highway, make road-tripping the way to go in Yukon. Western&Oriental has a 14-day Highlights of the Yukon fly-drive that costs from £2,565 per person including flights, car hire and accommodation.
westernoriental.com 020 7666 1303

KNOWLEDGE BANK



Georgina James
Iceland & Arctic Specialist
Regent Holidays



Seema Kapur
Latin America Specialist
Rainbow Tours



Laura Long
Platinum Account Manager
ITC Luxury Travel



Deepavali Gaiand
India & Sri Lanka Specialist
Western & Oriental

WINTER SUN OR ARCTIC FUN?

I have definitely fallen in love with the Arctic. I've just been whale watching in Tromsø and we saw a pod of over 40 orcas just metres from the boat, alongside a humpback whale. It was amazing!



Arctic fun – I would love to wake up in one of those tree houses in the middle of nowhere and go for a husky ride and hopefully see the northern lights.

I love to ski but I think winter sun just tips it. The Maldives are great in the winter - I loved snorkelling in the warm Indian Ocean and thinking of everyone back home scraping the ice off their cars!

A cold winter definitely. My memories of winter are at home in Delhi, sitting with my grandmother on a cold day. The foggy mornings, the snow in Shimla... my heart says crisp winter mornings.

PLACE TO PROPOSE?

The Secret Lagoon in Iceland. It's much smaller and quieter than the Blue Lagoon. You can relax in the warm waters, surrounded by nature, and if you're lucky you might have the chance to propose under the northern lights!

I've just come back from a new eco-boutique hotel in Nicaragua. It was just beautiful, right on the beach. They only have eight cabanas so you would be guaranteed a private place to pop the question.

Rayavadee in Thailand. The Grotto restaurant there is real 'feet in the sand' luxury. There are just a handful of tables, and you could have barbecued lobster before getting down on one knee as the sun sets over the limestone cliffs.

For somewhere really alternative I would say Bhutan. The scenery, the landscapes, prayer flags flying in the air, beautiful monasteries - they will go straight to your heart.



2017 BUCKET LIST?

The Lofoten and Vesterålen Islands in Norway. Not many people have heard of them but everybody who visits comes back besotted. The mountains look beautiful and there's nobody around to spoil the view.

Colombia. It's such a diverse country. So much to see and do – the old city of Cartagena, trekking in Tayrona National Park or seeing wildlife in the cloud forest. It's number one on my bucket list.

I really want to go to Indonesia's new luxury resort, Nihiwatu, on Sumba island. It used to be a surfers' retreat and there's still a big focus on getting into the waves. Vietnam is also on the list - I'd love to experience the culture and the food.

Since it is a list I have many, but the top ones are the cherry blossom season in Japan, trekking in the Rainbow Mountains in Peru, and motorbiking in Ladakh, visiting the amazing monasteries.

BY AIR OR BY SEA?

Air! Flying over Iceland in a helicopter – that's the best way to see the scale of the landscape. It really is staggering.



Air. I've done a flight over the Nazca Lines, a helicopter ride over Victoria Falls, hot air ballooning in Luxor, zip lining through the cloud forest in Nicaragua, hang gliding over Copacabana Bay – I love being an air adrenaline junkie!

My experience on the Four Seasons Explorer makes me say sea. We spent three nights on board between the two Four Seasons Maldives resorts, sailing past atolls, diving off the deck and being treated like royalty with champagne on tap.

By air definitely. I love flying. I recently did a scenic flight in Bhutan between Bumthang and Paro, taking off from a tiny airport. Flying over the rivers and mountains with views of the snow-capped Himalayas. I highly recommend it!

Luxury British Virgin Isles

With its 1,800 acres of palm-fringed landscape, secluded coves and five exemplary beaches, Peter Island is an impressive setting for an 'under the radar' luxury Caribbean holiday. Helen Tabois from ITC Luxury Travel takes time out at the private island resort.

A Castaway Location

Despite being the biggest private island in the Caribbean's British Virgin Islands (BVI), the family who own Peter Island are avidly committed to preserving as much of their unspoilt piece of paradise as possible. In practice this has seen just seventeen per cent of the island developed, alongside green initiatives that have included the first windmill generators in the BVI. The very fact that the island is so remote – some four miles south of Tortola and only accessible via ferry, helicopter or private yacht – ensures that its feeling of exclusivity, and the protection of its outstanding natural beauty, are all the more pronounced. To gain a sense of the island's unique botanical habitat, guests can take a complimentary horticulture tour with the resort's head gardener.

Your Wellness Journey

Peter Island aims to create for its guests a place where they can relax and recharge, an 'away from it all' sanctuary with a focus on downtime. A highlight of the resort is its 10,000-square-foot Spa, where the ocean views and tranquillity garden present a space of calm and the Ayurvedic treatments are a specialty. Other peaceful activities include evenings at The Loop, the island's finest viewpoint to watch the sun set with a cold drink, or private beach dining experiences lit by tiki torches on the water's edge.

● ITC Luxury Travel is a Peter Island specialist. A 7-night stay in an Ocean View Room costs from £1,875 per person including flights and transfers. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



Home From Home

Accommodation on Peter Island caters for groups of up to twelve. The Beach Front Junior Suites, just steps from the sands of Deadman's Beach, are well-suited to honeymooners, while those who relish a room with a view will not be disappointed by the panoramic vistas enjoyed from the Ocean View Rooms. But for ultimate luxury and privacy there is a choice of three spacious villas: Hawk's Nest, Crow's Nest or Falcon's Nest, the latter being the largest of these superlative properties, boasting its own swim-up bar and infinity-edge pool with a dazzling outlook. Household staff ensure guests needn't lift a finger.



★ HILARY BRADT IN ★ NORTH KOREA

Bradt's ground-breaking North Korea guide by Robert Willoughby was first published in 2003. Last year the guidebook founder, Hilary Bradt, discovered that the DPRK is a country that continues to surprise. And then surprise some more.



DESTINATION
NORTH KOREA





1

How do you describe a place as bizarre as North Korea? Well, where else would you ride in a helicopter fitted with flock wallpaper, a floral carpet, sofas and armchairs to arrive at a 150-room cave dug deep into a mountain, guarded by soldiers with silver-plated Kalashnikovs? In what other country might

you climb to the peninsula's highest point, and then descend to a blue crater-lake down precisely 2,160 steps because that is a Great-Leader-specific number? On what other holiday, come to that, would you bow before 20-metre-high bronze statues, view an art gallery entirely given over to representations of former leaders, or admire a line of tractors, snug in their stables, and possibly unused since the Great Leader presented them to the collective farm a few decades ago?

North Korea, the DPRK, is unique. Unique as a country, unique in its government, and unique in what it offers to visitors. That's its appeal. So when Carl Meadows at Regent Holidays suggested I join their 18-day 'Pioneering' trip I was thrilled. Twenty years ago my interest had been aroused by the stories from Neil Taylor, former owner of Regent Holidays and pioneer in visits to communist countries, but like so many people, I assumed that it would be almost impossible to get a visa. Of the many surprises, this was the first. "We take care of that" said Carl, and indeed they do. All I had to do was fill in a few forms and turn up at the airport.



2

- 1 Art gallery painting of Kim Jong Il
- 2 Chongjin trolleybus driver
- 3 Chandeliers of the Pyongyang Metro
- 4 Rimyongsu waterfall, Mt. Paekdu CM
- 5 Holiday celebrations in Wonsan

DESTINATION NORTH KOREA

“On what other holiday would you bow before 20-metre-high bronze statues, view an art gallery entirely given over to representations of former leaders, or admire a line of tractors?”



What I particularly liked about this itinerary was that it took us all over the country. I'm not a city person, so I wanted the opportunity to see the natural world and rural life as well as the truly extraordinary Pyongyang. It's a capital like no other. First of all it's spotless, not a speck of litter to be seen. Each citizen is responsible for keeping their area clean, the grass clipped (with scissors), the weeds eliminated. "It's our patriotic duty" explained our Korean guide. The vast squares with statues of ferocious soldiers achieving heroic victories, towering monuments, and its truly amazing Metro were special to Pyongyang. The Metro out-marvels, and out-marbles, that of Moscow; chandeliers hang from the high ceilings and huge murals of smiling peasants greeting the Great Leader at the steelworks or as war hero cover the walls. At the far end of Kaeson station is, inevitably, a golden statue.

Such statues dominate every visit. I knew that we had to pay our respects to representations of the first two leaders, but every day? We became very practised at buying flowers and taking it in turn to lay them before the statues, waxworks, or mosaics, looking up respectfully, then lining up to bow. Initially I just dipped my head but by the end I was doing a deep bow from the waist; it went some way towards relieving my aching back from so much standing around listening to explanations from factory managers, soldier-guides, or very beautiful young women dressed in their national costume. And that was something else I didn't expect: the full-length dresses worn by all official site guides, hotel staff, and just ordinary Koreans enjoying their national day were exquisite.

“ The long bus journeys on empty roads allowed us to observe everyday life as it happens rather than as the authorities would like it to happen. ”

The talent demonstrations, often from tiny children, were one of the delights. At the Pyongyang Schoolchildren's Palace we watched their accomplished piano playing, dancing, embroidery and, as a contrast, taekwondo. Out of town, after a factory visit, we were entertained by an enchanting group of workers who sang, danced and played musical instruments to a standard that I found mind-boggling. And we had a chance to interact with older children - at a language school we shared desks with precocious teenagers who seemed extraordinarily self-assured as we talked about our families and pets.

I expected the food to be dreary and scarce. Instead it was varied, plentiful, and often very tasty. Twice a day we sat down at a table covered in little saucers of delicacies: meat, fish (often cold), salad, kimchee - always kimchee, the pickled cabbage which is a staple of the Korean diet - and a range of

unidentifiable goodies arranged around a lazy Susan turntable. And the beer festival was a revelation! This is a new thing in Pyongyang and the locals were embracing it with gusto and opening their hearts to these cautious foreigners. We joined a group of men at one of the tables and managed a rudimentary conversation while we drank a lot of beer. The waitresses had somehow perfected the Munich skill of carrying five or six tankards at a time, so there was no excuse to go thirsty. Not that we needed an excuse - North Korean beer is very good. Taedonggang beer, named after the city's river, comes in many different flavours, from dark stout to light ale. The brewery was shipped, lock, stock and barrel from the old Ushers Brewery in Trowbridge.

Another alcoholic tippie that took my fancy was makgeolli, made from rice. I chose that, rather than beer, when we visited an outdoor bar where locals were drinking and chatting, fish was being grilled, and the activities of ordinary people passed gently in front of our eyes. And this is what I loved about this itinerary: the long bus journeys on empty roads bordered with pink cosmos flowers, and the short city ones, once in a local tram and once in a 1950s Skoda, allowed us to observe everyday life as it happens rather than as the authorities would like it to happen.



DESTINATION NORTH KOREA



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Perhaps the biggest surprise about this country, which is full of surprises, is that Buddhism is still practised. Not officially, but as the Russians discovered, you can't get rid of a religion by outlawing it. When we were deep in the countryside we watched families trudging along carrying covered baskets. Carl explained that it was Ancestor Day and they were visiting the tomb of a loved one, hidden in a secluded place in the hills. There they would picnic, share memories, and make offerings of food. The historic Buddhist temples have been beautifully preserved and restored. We visited several and relished the contrast with the austere modern monuments. Here were swirly paintings, carved dragons and tigers, golden Buddhas, and a whole host of charming Buddha followers.

The DPRK is changing. Those who've visited several times comment on how much more relaxed it is now than even five years ago. No doubt it will continue to change. I'm not at all sure that I would prefer the future North Korea. So visit soon!

● Hilary travelled to North Korea with Regent Holidays. The 18-day Pioneering North Korea Group Tour costs from £3,400 per person including visas, flights from Beijing, accommodation and sightseeing. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131

DESTINATION
NORTH KOREA




- 1 The Great Leaders in Pyongyang CM
- 2 Chongjin Foreign Sailors Club CM
- 3 Paekdu Secret Camp
- 4 Hilary summits Mt Paekdu
- 5 Mt Kumgang HB
- 6 Pyongyang vintage bus CM



DESTINATION
JUST RETURNED

ALL-AMERICAN RANCH

A photograph of a horse with a saddle and bridle, standing in a field of tall, dry grass. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with scattered clouds. The lighting suggests late afternoon or early morning.

Set among the towering pines of Trapper Peak, the highest mountain in the Bitterroot Mountain Range of the Rockies, Triple Creek Ranch is Montana's best-kept secret. Western & Oriental's Carly Hatley saddles up for an unforgettable all-American experience.

Bordered by Canada to the north and Yellowstone National Park to the south, and split into east and west by the vertical continental divide that is the Rocky Mountains, the state of Montana is a place of outstanding natural beauty. And somewhere in the state's remote southwest, hidden away in the midst of a mountainous pine forest, is Relais & Châteaux's Triple Creek Ranch.

It's a scenic one-and-a-bit hour drive from Missoula International Airport to Ravalli County, winding into the Bitterroot Mountains where the ranch sits at a lofty altitude of 4,500 feet. They call this place Big Sky Country and big is certainly the word: big views; big mountains; big trees; big spaces as far as the eye can see. And this is the setting that awaits guests at Triple Creek Ranch.

And let me tell you, this is no down-and-dirty ranch. In fact Triple Creek is as much lux-resort as it is ranch; an adults-only, all-inclusive place of rustic elegance and five-star service with the great outdoors right on your doorstep.

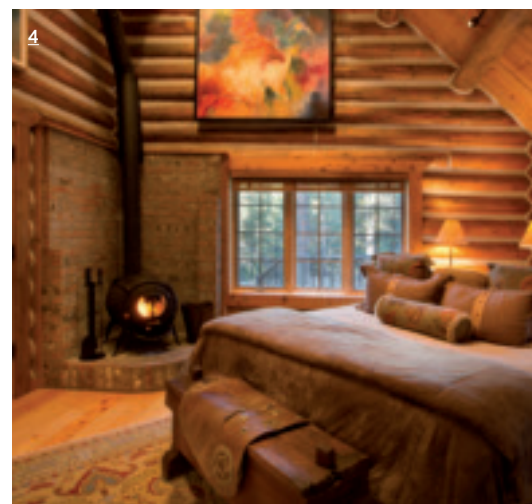
- 1 Big Sky Cabin at dusk
- 2 Panning for sapphires
- 3 Fly-fishing in the trout pond
- 4 Chipmunk Cabin bedroom
- 5 Cowboy style at Triple Creek
- 6 Riding in the shadow of the Rocky Mountains
- 7 Bison falafel at the restaurant

I checked-in to one of the ranch's luxury one bed wooden cabins; my own private sanctuary with palatial king size bed, cosy living space with roaring fireplace, and most excitingly, a wrap-around outside deck with private hot tub beneath the whispering pines. Each cabin comes with its own golf buggy for travelling around the 700-acre plot where the main lodge and guest cabins are located, and it was just a couple of minutes' 'drive' to dinner at the ranch's renowned restaurant.

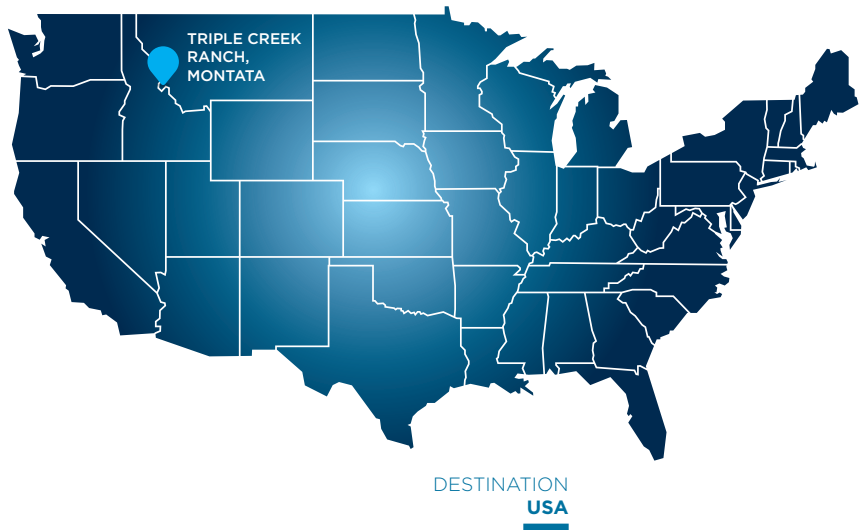
Executive Chef, Jacob Leatherman, has been curating the dining experience at Triple Creek Ranch for over ten years, and there's an exquisite new dinner menu each evening. This is high-end, gourmet dining, with produce sourced seasonally from the ranch's own gardens and orchard. Expect treats like grilled tequila prawns to start, followed by mouth-watering Durham Ranch wagyu beef with roasted date BBQ sauce, and rich chocolate brownie served with hot fudge sauce and caramelised bananas if you still have room.

An excellent selection of sparkling, white, red, rosé and even dessert wine is complimentary, but for those who wish to push the boat out, Sommelier Jeremy White is happy to recommend something special from the ranch's extensive wine cellar of over 700 labels.

Thankfully there are plenty of included activities on-site to work off any excesses, and the following day I headed off on my first horseback ride into the wilds of Montana. I am a total novice with no horse riding experience at all, as are many of the guests who come here, and I was paired with a horse who knew how to take it easy. While the more experienced riders trotted off for a three-hour adventure, our small group meandered through the richly-scented Ponderosa pine forest and along glorious mountain trails for around an hour and a half, getting to know our new equestrian counterparts and the beautiful landscape – home to white tail deer, mule deer, elk and the occasional bald eagle.



DESTINATION JUST RETURNED



2



5



7

6

For those who feel as at home in the saddle as they do on two feet, the ranch offers an additional range of Western activities at extra cost, like the day-long cross-country horseback adventure through 26,000 acres of privately-owned countryside, the thrice-weekly cattle drive in Sula Valley or the weekly Team Penning event - a true cowboy or cowgirl experience where teams of guests and cowhands compete on horseback to move calves into separate pens.

Fly-fishing and guided nature walks are also included as part of the Triple Creek experience, plus there are countless incredible hiking trails through the Bitterroot National Forest starting from right outside your cabin. Triple Creek will supply everything you need from trail maps, backpacks and bottled water to gourmet picnic lunches and sunscreen.

While I loved exploring the great outdoors, part of Triple Creek's charm is the joy of doing nothing at all. I spent many hours relaxing by the beautiful swimming pool and in my own private hot tub, or partaking in my new favourite hobby - panning for sapphires. It was glorious to sit in the sunshine with a huckleberry cocktail, finding around ten or so sapphires each time I panned. Montana is renowned for its sparking gems in blue, orange, pink and green, and you can keep as many as you find as souvenirs of your incredible time at Triple Creek.

“We meandered through the richly-scented Ponderosa pine forest and along glorious mountain trails, getting to know our new equestrian counterparts and the beautiful Montana landscape.”

● Carly travelled to Triple Creek Ranch with Western & Oriental. A 7-night all-inclusive holiday costs from £3,999 including flights and transfers. westernoriental.com 020 7666 1303

DESTINATION
JUST RETURNED





SUPERB SERVICE AT SEA

Regent Seven Seas Cruises® are renowned for their exemplary service and style, so when the newest addition to its fleet, the Seven Seas Explorer®, claimed to be “the most luxurious ship ever built”™, Helen Tabois from ITC Luxury Travel had to see it for herself.

I arrived at Rome's Civitavecchia Port more than excited about catching my first glimpse of the brand new Seven Seas Explorer®. When I finally spotted her I was reminded immediately of the benefits of small ship luxury cruising - no behemoth of the sea carrying several thousand passengers, but instead an elegant ship that hosts just 750 guests despite its capacity for almost double that number.

In contrast to the embarkation process of most cruise ships, Regent Seven Seas' guests are able to board as soon as they arrive and make use of sun decks, pools and restaurants straight away. My mum and I were welcomed aboard with a glass of champagne and set off to explore our new home - and what a home!

Designed to exceed even the loftiest expectations of luxury, no expense

has been spared on the Seven Seas Explorer®, with fixtures and fittings that exude quality. Exquisite chandeliers twinkle from the ceilings and every element of the décor, from the plush bedding to the thick carpets underfoot, has been chosen for its quality and style. The artwork aboard includes several Picassos, my favourite of which being the painting of a bull, hung, rather appropriately, in the entrance to the ship's gourmet steak restaurant Prime 7.

Perhaps the biggest luxury of all is exploring the coastal gems of three Mediterranean countries without ever having to re-pack, battle with an airport check-in or move bags. As the Seven Seas Explorer® skirted the famed Italian and French coastlines, we slipped easily into the gentle rhythm of life afloat. Blissful days were spent combining sun-drenched relaxation on the upper deck with cultural day trips to the Riviera's most stylish haunts.

A considerable benefit of travelling with Regent Seven Seas® is that all shore excursions are included, and we were hugely impressed with the slick organisation that saw small groups whisked away each morning and afternoon for personalised guided tours of each port's star attractions. We marvelled at the Leaning Tower in Pisa and imagined ourselves spinning the roulette wheel in Monte Carlo's opulent casino, rubbing shoulders with film stars and royalty.

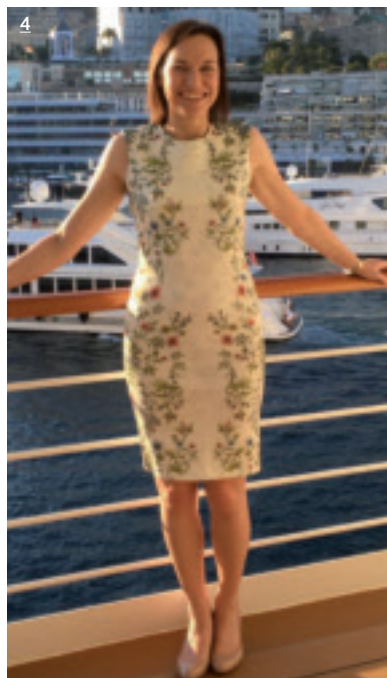
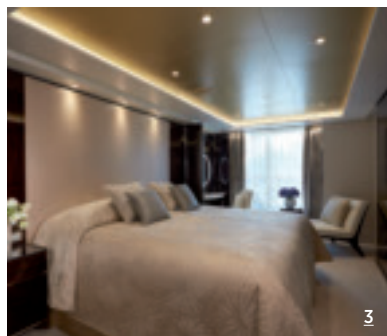
It was Monaco, and more specifically Monte Carlo, that I had been most looking forward to. I started my career at ITC Sports Travel and although I now specialise in luxury cruise and Caribbean holidays, my passion for sports has remained. My mum is a sports fan too and I was eager to show her the iconic streets that play host to the most glamorous race on the Formula One calendar. It was rather surreal walking around the circuit, seeing the familiar red and white Grand Prix corner markings while at the same time being passed by an everyday mix of cars, scooters and bicycles.

“Blissful days were spent combining sun-drenched relaxation on the upper deck with cultural day trips to the Riviera's most stylish haunts.”



DESTINATION JUST RETURNED

- 1 Night begins to fall over Monaco
- 2 Fine dining in the Compass Rose restaurant
- 3 Seven Seas Explorer® suite
- 4 Helen enjoys the view from her balcony
- 5 Sparkling chandeliers in the ship's atrium
- 6 The Seven Seas Explorer® at Sea



The ship's berthing that evening gave our luxury suite a superb view over glamorous Monaco, so we made the most of our privileged position and sipped champagne from the comfort of our private veranda, watching super-yachts bob and sway in the harbour as the sun prepared to set over the principality.

Although guests can opt to dine in-suite, we wanted to experience each of Explorer's seven superb restaurants - but which to choose? Delectable steaks are served in the members' club-inspired Prime 7, classic French fine-dining can be found at the chic Parisian Chartreuse, and the traditional Italian fare of Sette Mari can be enjoyed alfresco. An interesting twist on à la carte is provided by the customisable continental menu of elegant Compass Rose, the ship's flagship restaurant, which allows guests to fully craft their meal from a choice of meats, fish, sauces and sides.

Every aspect of the Seven Seas Explorer® guest experience has been meticulously considered. On my more athletic days I was able to work off gourmet indulgences with a visit to the gym or a scenic run around the top deck jogging track, but I was equally happy devouring a lecture on Spanish history as we sailed towards Palamós.

This was indeed a luxury ship to surpass all expectations. All-inclusive, all-suite, all-balcony and all totally wonderful.

● ITC Luxury Travel is a Regent Seven Seas specialist. A 7 night all-inclusive cruise from Monte Carlo to Barcelona aboard the Seven Seas Explorer costs from £3,729 per person including flights and 37 shore excursions. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



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DESTINATION
JUST RETURNED

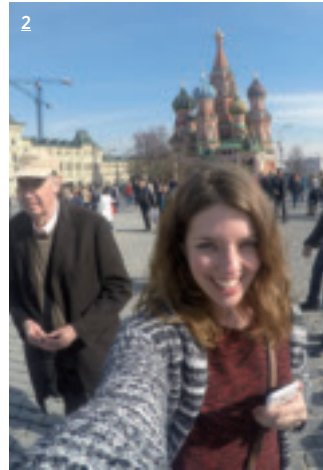


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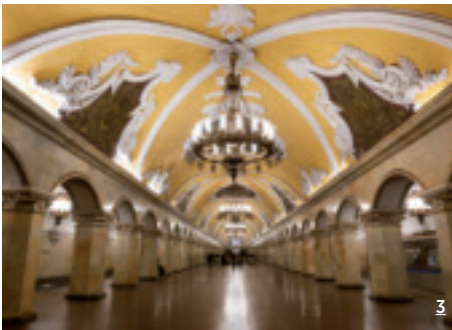
REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

Gleaming beacons of modern-day Russia, Moscow and St Petersburg have been reshaped and redefined by a century of post-revolution history. Regent Holidays' Ellie Marr visits the country's greatest cities as they gear up to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

DESTINATION JUST RETURNED



- 1 Monument to Lenin and the workers, Gorky Park
- 2 Ellie in Red Square
- 3 Moscow Metro, Komsomolskaya station
- 4 St Basil's Cathedral, Red Square
- 5 Moscow's Kremlin by night
- 6 The GUM State Department Store, Red Square



★ MOSCOW

Following catastrophic losses in WWI, the Russian Revolution of 1917 forced Tsar Nicholas II to abdicate, ending more than 300 years of Romanov rule. Vladimir Lenin became the founder of a new soviet state, ushering in an era of communism that would last for over seven decades. Now, a century after the Russian Revolution, I am visiting Moscow and St Petersburg - two cities shaped by the gigantic political and cultural shifts of the 20th century.

The sprawling capital comes caked in thick layers of history; here remnants of the soviet era are sandwiched between glittering treasures of imperialism and modern-day oligarch wealth. Every inch of Red Square - the beating heart of the city - oozes importance. Bordered by the colourful cupolas of St Basil's Cathedral, the imposing Kremlin walls and the vast GUM department store, this iconic square has seen every part of Russia's revolutionary history.

Despite signs being in Cyrillic, it's relatively easy to reach Red Square on the city's fantastic Metro. Built for the workers in 1935 and seen as a triumph of socialism, Moscow has one of the most decorative metro systems in the

world. Stations - tourist attractions in their own right - are adorned with ornate chandeliers, brass statues and imposing communist murals. I notice that English signs are now infiltrating some stations; proof of yet another change in modern-day Russia, as this once fiercely private society becomes more visitor-friendly.

Standing in Red Square, I can almost feel the pomp and ceremony of the immense military parades - Communist Party displays of power - that once took place here. On my left, the massive GUM department store, once state-run and stocking only basic supplies, is now an exclusive high-end designer fashion store. If you look hard enough, a small soviet-style restaurant serves a lacklustre menu to visitors set on experiencing a taste of communism, while Moscow's nouveau riche sip champagne from cut crystal glasses outside.

Nowadays, Moscow is a city renowned for its lavish five-star hotels and world-class dining, where wealthy Muscovites tower in designer heels, all but forgetting their gloomy socialist past. Gone are the days of tourists being greeted by a stern-faced KGB officer; now hotel guests are welcomed with champagne and a smile.

“Standing in Red Square, I can almost feel the pomp and ceremony of the immense military parades.”



- 1 The Winter Palace and Hermitage Museum
- 2 Monument to Lenin, father of the Revolution
- 3 Jordan Staircase in the Winter Palace

★ ST PETERSBURG

If Moscow were London, then St Petersburg is Oxford; charming and compact, a culture-culture heaven. While Moscow is glitz and new wealth, St Petersburg is the regal home of old money. Visiting the magnificent palaces and grand stately homes of the imperial Russians, I can see why the rest of the country was driven to revolt. Now enjoying life as museums and art galleries, the opulent palaces are open to visitors, and I have the opportunity to glimpse into the wildly extravagant lives of the pre-revolution elite.

The baroque Winter Palace and Hermitage Museum, main residence of Catherine the Great, is unrivalled in its grandeur, with endless gilded staircases and marble column-lined banquet halls. Here, the State Museum now houses one of the greatest collections in the world, with over three million artefacts and works of art; a collection not even the Romanovs could have amassed.

Catherine Palace, former home of Peter the Great, spans almost a kilometre and was once used merely as a summer residence by his daughter, Empress Elizabeth. Located in Tsarskoe Selo, an easy day trip from the city centre, the Rococo palace – recently used as a film set in the BBC's adaptation of War and Peace – was commissioned to rival Versailles. The lavish interior knows no bounds, with the entire ceiling of the Great Hall covered by a colossal fresco entitled The Triumph of Russia. The walls of the famous Amber Room, dismantled by Russian troops in 1941 and painstakingly restored in 2003, groan under the weight of over six tonnes of amber.

The palaces of St Petersburg suffered extensively during the revolution and again during WWII, and restoration projects continue to return them to their former glory. Once again the city stands on the reputation of its extravagant residences, once reserved for only the noblest of families, now to be enjoyed by all. A rather socialist approach to Russia's imperialist history.

● Ellie travelled to Russia with Regent Holidays. An exclusive 9-day Russian Revolution Group Tour departs on 13th September 2017 and costs from £2,445 per person. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131



ANTIGUA PRIVATE PARADISE

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Nestled on a private island just two miles from Antigua, Jumby Bay, A Rosewood Resort, is an exclusive 300-acre hideaway that has remained unspoilt thanks to a passionate environmental commitment. ITC Luxury Travel's Sarah Garrod takes a look at what makes this blissful Caribbean resort so special.

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Jumby Bay has been a private estate for many years, and today belongs to a group of homeowners, with the resort overseen by Rosewood Hotels & Resorts. Both have committed to retaining the island's renowned playful spirit and classic style, as well as its rich island ecology.

After touching down at Antigua's VC Bird International Airport, guests are chauffeur-driven to the resort's dock to board a private catamaran for the seven-minute private cruise to the island resort. This first-class start sets the tone for each visitor's Jumby experience; a place of fully inclusive indulgence where everyone is treated like a VIP.

Jumby Bay's chic rooms and luxury villas are spread across the entire island, just steps away from pristine white sand beaches and the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea. For groups and families, eighteen exquisite private EstateHomes (ranging in size from three to eight bedrooms) offer the ultimate in space and style, each with their own private pool and ocean view; deluxe retreats in their own right.



JUMBY BAY

A ROSEWOOD RESORT

ANTIGUA



1. The Pool Grille
2. Beach dinner
3. Pasture Bay
4. The Estate House
5. Estate Suite
6. Sugar Mill



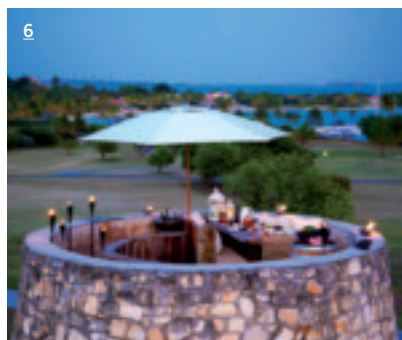
WELCOME TO THE ESTATE HOUSE

Having been sympathetically transformed to its former grandeur following a \$6 million restoration, the resort's glamorous Estate House reopened in November 2016. The 1830 plantation house now plays host to a new restaurant and bar, as well as three private dining rooms and a wine room, all of which are inspired by the island's colonial-era and West Indian heritage. Signature dishes include monkfish and black trumpet casserole with crispy jasmine rice pancake; spiny lobster with Armagnac flambé, tomato, saffron pearl, and sea urchin; and Black sea bass with potato confit.



The resort's culinary vision marries simplicity with sophistication. Five exceptional venues offer superb choice, from fine-dining romance at the Estate House to the casual Caribbean fare of the Pool Grille. Jumby Bay also invites guests to participate in 'A Sense of Taste' gastronomic experiences that delve into the rich culinary culture of Antigua and Barbuda, like the sea-to-table experience where sea fishing enthusiasts can catch their own entrée of the day.

Then of course there's the world-class spa with its five suites, each having a private terrace overlooking the sea. Treatments utilise native ingredients grown in Jumby Bay's own gardens, and unique experiences are often incorporated such as a yacht excursion to uninhabited Maiden Island for a beachside massage for two offered in the popular 'Castaway Experience'.



BRING ME SUNSHINE

● *Jumby Bay's warm Caribbean waters and picture-postcard beaches are the perfect antidote to the January blues. ITC Luxury Travel is a Jumby Bay, A Rosewood Resort specialist. A seven-night, all-inclusive Jumby Bay package costs from £4,415 per person including flights, luxury accommodation in a Beachside Courtyard Suite and transfers. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01224 355 577.*

JUMBY BAY

TO-DO LIST

- **Hawksbill Turtle Programme**
Play a part in helping the island's endangered hawksbill turtles between June and November.
- **Sunday Rum Brunch**
Indulge in rum-infused brunch dishes at the Estate House - we love the rum-raisin sticky buns with rum-infused honey.
- **Beach Shack**
Feel the heat at the brand new Caribbean-style street food joint on fully-serviced Jumby Bay Beach.
- **Tennis with a Pro**
Pick up a racquet and learn the ropes with resident tennis professional Jerry Williams; a Davis Cup veteran.
- **Pasture Bay Beach**
Channel your inner Robinson Crusoe on this private, secluded stretch of perfect white sand.
- **Sense, a Rosewood Spa**
Meditate in the Spa Yoga Pavilion before a signature massage and facial during the 'Jumby Signature Ritual'.

JOURNAL
SIX OF THE BEST

SIX OF THE BEST SCENIC FLIGHTS

Editor Gill Leaning recommends six top
aerial experiences for 2017



1

ATACAMA DESERT HOT AIR BALLOON

Sandwiched between the Pacific and the Andes, Chile's strikingly arid Atacama Desert is one of the driest places on Earth. With little human habitation in an area covering 41,000 square miles, its rust-red rocky landscape could be mistaken for Mars if it wasn't for the odd flamingo or llama on the horizon. Rainbow Tours offers hot air balloon flights from the small town of San Pedro de Atacama, a once-fertile oasis where the Atacama Indians thrived. Desert winds gently guide the leisurely flight, providing passengers with a gloriously serene journey over the sculptured rock formations, glowing in the early morning light against a backdrop of towering volcanoes.

● rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1340

2 ICELAND GLACIER HELICOPTER TOUR

Teetering on the edge of the Arctic, Iceland is home to some of the world's greatest geological wonders. Regent Holidays offers a 90-minute Glacier Landing helicopter tour from Reykjavik where passengers are swept over dazzling landscapes crafted by ice age seismic activity before landing on Langjökull – the country's second biggest glacier. Fifteen minutes are spent atop the crevasse-strewn body of ice where views of the wild highlands are second to none. On the return journey the helicopter hovers over an extinct volcano crater before overflying Þingvellir National Park where the continental drift of the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates can be clearly seen.

● regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 01317





3 DUBAI CITYSCAPE SEAPLANE

Rising like a giant from the desert, hedonistic Dubai is the glitzy jewel in the UAE crown. Western & Oriental offers aerial tours of the city by seaplane: a state-of-the-art Cessna that takes off and lands on water. The seaplane glides over the Persian Gulf for 40 minutes, showcasing the ingenuity of the remarkable modern metropolis and providing stunning views of the world's tallest skyscraper, Burj Khalifa, and the iconic sail-shaped Burj Al-Arab hotel. Best viewed from the air are Dubai's famous artificial archipelagos; reclaimed islands shaped like a palm tree and the globe, whose vision becomes clear when viewed from above.

● westernoriental.com 020 7666 1303

5 FRENCH POLYNESIA AERIAL ISLAND HOP

Often referred to as the Islands of Tahiti, French Polynesia is an exquisite collection of 118 islands and atolls scattered across the azure waters of the South Pacific Ocean. The region's hottest new resort – The Brando – comes highly recommended by the experts at ITC Luxury Travel. Located on a private atoll in the exclusive Society Islands, the only way to reach this little piece of paradise is by private plane. Guests are collected from Tahiti's international airport in an eight-passenger Britten Norman turboprop for what must be one of the world's most picturesque transfers, soaring above a patchwork of deep blue seas, turquoise lagoons and white sand islets before landing at the eco-lux resort.

● itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



4 RÉUNION ISLAND HELICOPTER

The diverse landscape of this rugged little Indian Ocean isle has been shaped by thousands of years of volcanic activity. Rainbow Tours recommends seeing Réunion by helicopter to truly appreciate its spectacular topography. A 45-minute aerial adventure covers almost the entire island from the volcanic craters of the southeast to the tropical lagoons and coral reefs of the west, and all the jagged folds of jungle-clad mountain in-between. Hold on tight as the helicopter flies between the deep canyon walls of The Iron Hole and over The Peak of the Furnace, one of the world's most active volcanoes, whose bubbling cauldron of bright orange lava is truly mesmerising.

● rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1340



6 NEW ZEALAND SOUTH ISLAND AIRVAN

Described by Rudyard Kipling as the eighth Wonder of the World, Milford Sound on the west coast of New Zealand is the country's most spectacular fjord; a place of rugged beauty where bottlenose dolphins swim between towering peaks carved by ice age glaciers. ITC Luxury Travel gives clients the option to make the return journey from Milford Sound to Queenstown by seven-passenger plane. Initially heading out over the Tasman Sea - where southern right whales can sometimes be seen below - the GA8 Airvan turns back to cruise over braided river systems, vast snowfields, jagged mountain ridges and deep blue glacier lakes before landing at the South Island's adrenaline capital.

● itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577



DESTINATION
TANZANIA



A chimpanzee is visible on the left side of the frame, partially obscured by a semi-transparent text box. The chimpanzee's dark fur and a portion of its arm are visible. The background is a lush, green forest with many trees and foliage, creating a bokeh effect. The overall scene is a naturalistic depiction of a chimpanzee in its habitat.

WILD WEST TANZANIA

The remote Mahale Mountains in Western Tanzania are home to one of the last remaining chimp populations in Africa. Sarah Gilbert heads into the montane rainforest to get up-close and personal with mankind's closest relatives.

DESTINATION TANZANIA



As Primus happily posed for the cameras, giving us first his left profile, then his right, I was spellbound by his strikingly familiar expressions, almost human brown eyes, and his hands – a more leathery, hairier version of my own. But this charismatic chimpanzee, the undisputed alpha male of M Group, was completely unfazed by the arrival of our small posse of Homo sapiens.

After a relaxed grooming session, the chimps were off foraging for fruit. And so we moved with them, following our machete-wielding tracker through tangles of branches and over snarling roots in hot pursuit. And it was hot, like a workout in a sauna, as I scrambled up muddy slopes, grabbing on to any available branch to haul myself up.

But it was all worth it. When we finally caught up with three of the chimps they filed past us one by one,

so close I had to stop myself reaching down to touch their hirsute backs. We followed them until our hour was almost up, when suddenly Christmas – named after his birthday – stopped, turned and sat down in front of us like a celebrity facing the paparazzi.

The base for my four-night chimp-tracking safari was Nomad's Greystoke Mahale camp – Mahale from the mountains and Greystoke after Edgar Rice Burroughs' fictional character, better known as Tarzan. The beautifully isolated camp is reached by boarding a traditional wooden boat for a leisurely journey past glorious green mountains reflected in the sapphire-blue Lake Tanganyika.

Chimps are nomadic, building new nests every night, and at first light trackers head into the forest to locate members of M Group, who could be congregating a short boat ride and an easy 30-minute walk away, or high in the mountains; a strenuous three- or four-hour hike.

There are around 700 chimps in the forest but this 60-strong troop has been habituated to short spells of human contact by more than 50 years of study by Japanese researchers and, like characters in a long-running soap opera, their lives are well documented and equally engrossing.

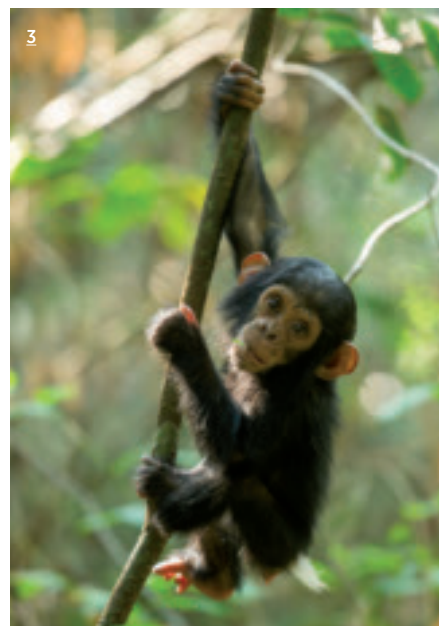
My final encounter with M Group found them in a very different mood. They'd been out hunting and Primus was holding court at the top of a tree, dispensing red colobus monkey morsels to his favourite females. Suddenly a high-pitched hoot rang through the bush. It was a call to hunt and one of the most spine-tingling sounds I've ever heard. Just one call at first, then another, then the whole troop joined in, getting louder and more frantic as, one by one, they swung down from the trees in a dazzling display of acrobatics and, just as quickly, dissolved into the forest.

I'd begun my journey at another Nomad camp, Chada Katavi, just a 45-minute plane hop from Mahale.

“Three of the chimps filed past us one by one, so close I had to stop myself reaching down to touch their hirsute backs”

Katavi is one of Tanzania's most isolated national parks, a pristine wilderness with only a handful of safari camps spread over its 4,500 square kilometres and just a few hundred visitors a year.

As I lay in bed I was immersed in the rustle and hum of the bush, thrilled to think that there was just a thin wall of canvas between me and the hyenas that whooped long into the night, and the lions whose booming call echoed through the darkness.



- 1 Greystoke Mahale Camp © Sarah Gilbert
- 2 Walking among Mahale's chimps © Sarah Gilbert
- 3 Baby chimp in Mahale Mountains
- 4 Chada Katavi Tented Camp © Nomad Tanzania
- 5 Katavi Lioness © Sarah Gilbert



I couldn't wait to meet them and the following morning we pulled up close to several of the powerful females of the Chada pride as they sprawled on their backs under the shade of the tree. My heart began to beat a little faster as one woke up and fixed me with a golden-eyed glare. Fortunately, I wasn't on her menu and she soon gave a gaping yawn and flopped back down.

Katavi is renowned for its large pods of hippos but I wasn't prepared for the spectacle in the Katuma River. During the dry season, hundreds of gigantic hippopotamus congregate to wallow in the diminishing pockets of mud, all fighting for space, while enormous crocodiles line the banks.

On my last evening, dinner was interrupted by the arrival of some unexpected guests – Josephine and her three offspring had dropped by in search of tamarind. I marvelled at how quiet the

elephants were as they scoured the ground, letting out low, contented rumbles, getting so close that I could see their wrinkled skin, the supple tip of their trunks, even their long mud-caked eyelashes.

When it was time to leave, Katavi had a final delight in store. The shaggy-maned male from the Chada pride was waiting at the airstrip, as if to bid me farewell.

Sarah travelled to Tanzania with Rainbow Tours. A 10-day safari in Katavi National Park and Mahale Mountains National Park costs from £6,850 per person including flights, accommodation, transport and chimp trekking. rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1304

A FLAVOUR OF CHILE

Stretching almost 2,700 miles down the west coast of South America, caught between the Pacific Ocean and the towering might of the Andes, Chile is the longest country in the world. And it's precisely this diversity of latitudes that makes travelling in Chile so unique; from the arid deserts of the far north to the southern tip where giant glaciers mark the last stop before Antarctica. With British Airways launching a new direct route into Santiago this winter, Other Shores takes a closer look at Chile's hot spots.

ATACAMA

With an average rainfall of just one millimetre per year, northern Chile's Atacama Desert is the driest place on Earth. The town of San Pedro de Atacama is a great base from which to explore and there are plenty of excursions that will take you to the highlights: walking or horse-riding in surreal Moon Valley; sand boarding down the dunes in Death Valley; making a dawn pilgrimage to the feisty El Tatio Geysers at 4,300 metres above sea level or visiting the remote salt flats of Los Flamencos National Reserve. Those with a head for heights should consider the trip of a lifetime, drifting over the Mars-like landscape and glistening salt flats, dotted with flamingos, in a hot air balloon.

SANTIAGO

Before you even touch down in Santiago, the giant snow-capped peaks of the Andes tell you that you've arrived in South America. The imposing mountain range acts as an omnipresent backdrop to this modern city, dwarfing even the tallest of glassy skyscrapers. Santiago's downtown Centro district is a cosmopolitan hub with its colonial heritage proudly on display: don't miss San Francisco Church or the beautiful neoclassical buildings in Plaza de Armas. But dig a little deeper and you'll find the true vibe in neighbourhoods like bohemian Lastarria with its pavement cafes and markets, or colourful Barrio Bellavista with its funky bars and restaurants that keep going well into the night.

THE WINELANDS

Just a few miles from the Pacific, Chile's lush central valley has been making wines since the 16th century. Closest to Santiago is Maipo Valley with its traditional French-inspired vineyards producing the region's renowned Cab Savs. Heading west along the coastal plain, Casablanca Valley is a cooler region with a more modern take on winemaking. Here, small boutique wineries welcome visitors to try their crisp Chardonnays and Sauvignon Blancs, as well as rich reds like Carmenere, Merlot and Syrah. Further south is the Colchagua Valley, where long hot summers and cool mountain breezes produce some of the finest reds in the country.



EASTER ISLAND

Discovered on Easter Day 1722, Rapa Nui, or Easter Island, is one of the most isolated places on Earth. Erupting from the Pacific Ocean, over 2,300 miles from the mainland, this tiny Chilean territory is distinctly Polynesian. Its most recognisable residents are the famous moai: 900 or so gigantic mystical heads, carved from the volcanic rock some 800 years ago. The mighty moai are far from the only reason to visit Easter Island however; allow three or four days here to explore the lush volcanic landscape, relax on white sand beaches or experience local Polynesian culture.

TORRES DEL PAINE

Designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1978, Torres del Paine National Park is the crowning glory of Chilean Patagonia. With its remarkable 2,000-metre granite towers, turquoise lakes, emerald forests and deep blue glaciers, it's best explored on foot or by horseback. A day-long trek to the distinctive Paine Massif is highly recommended, but shorter half-day treks or scenic boat trips on Last Hope Sound or Lago Grey are no less spectacular. Look out for the reserve's unique wildlife, from colossal Andean condors and bright pink flamingos to herds of grazing guanacos and their sleek predators – the elusive puma.

● *Rainbow Tours' 13-day Essence of Chile tour costs from £5,895 per person including flights, accommodation and sightseeing. A 3-night Easter Island add-on costs from £1,270 per person. rainbowtours.co.uk. 020 7666 1304*

- 1 Salar Aguas Calientes, San Pedro de Atacama
© Turismo Chile
- 2 Santiago cityscape
© Turismo Chile
- 3 Colchagua Valley
© Turismo Chile
- 4 Torres del Paine National Park
© Turismo Chile
- 5 Easter Island moai
© Turismo Chile

DESTINATION
CARIBBEAN



HIDEOUTS OF THE CARIBBEAN

With the fifth swashbuckling Pirates of the Caribbean film set to hit our big screens in 2017, Georgina Wilson-Powell sets sail for St Vincent and the Grenadines – and discovers there's still plenty of rum left.



DESTINATION CARIBBEAN

Thirteen years ago *Pirates of the Caribbean* cannonballed itself onto our screens, closely followed by a rum-soaked, staggering Johnny Depp as Cap'n Jack Sparrow. Aside from the hearty pirate myths it resurrected, its Caribbean backdrop brought the sleepy archipelago of St Vincent and the Grenadines to life for millions across the world.

St Vincent

The largest island and star attraction in the Grenadines, St Vincent plays the part of the fictional Port Royal in the *Pirate* films. Wallibou Bay is awash with memorabilia from the franchise and many of the locals were used as extras. The island's stunning green harbour, Kingstown, has seen it all – it has ping-ponged between being French and British and is where infamous real pirate, Blackbeard, started out. You can hire your own wooden schooner (just like they used in the films) to tour the Grenadines with Scaramouche.

Away from the high seas there are plenty of adventures still to be had. You can hike up to the crater rim of the island's volcano, La Soufriere; take in the majestic double waterfall, Dark View Falls or potter along various nature trails that crisscross the lush, lava-formed island.

Whichever way you turn in St Vincent you'll be reminded of the Caribbean Sea, with sandy beaches, hidden cays and even a Blue Lagoon. Diving and snorkelling here is some of the best in the world; the shallow reefs around Chateaubelair on the west coast attract a more diverse number of fish than much deeper reefs elsewhere in the world.

Bequia

Rustic, laidback Bequia, just an hour's ferry ride from St Vincent, is the alter ego of island playground Mustique. This thin zigzag of an island can be toured in a few hours but really you'd be missing the point. From the tiny harbour town of Port Elizabeth, you can stroll down the leeward side of the island to Princess Margaret Beach and Lower Bay – pristine paradises of white sand and azure clear sea, with driftwood bars dotted behind the tree line. It's possible to hire the original wooden schooner, the *Friendship Rose*, and drift around the neighbouring Grenadines. You might not find any real treasure, but the

islands are gold in their own right. Bob Dylan loved this boat so much that he had an exact replica commissioned.

Elsewhere on Bequia you can learn about the island's other seafaring folk – the former whaling community – at a tiny museum at La Pompe. Today the island's fishermen go out as they did in the time of the pirates: their brightly coloured boats adorned with religious sentiments, a net and a fishing rod and just a pair of oars. When there's fish to be bought at the market in Port Elizabeth, a conch shell is blown, just as it was in times of pirates.

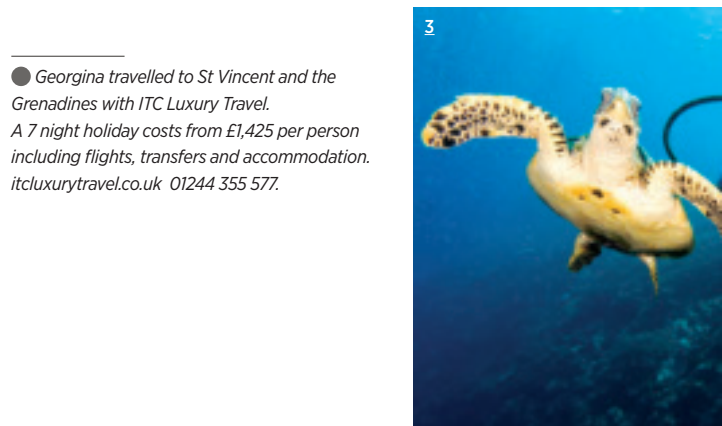
Mustique

Nine miles southeast of Bequia sits the island of Mustique. Where Bequia is a little ramshackle and old fashioned, the chic private paradise of Mustique is often celebrated as the A-listers' favourite winter getaway. With 100 villas and two hotels, exclusivity and privacy here are key – it's the Jagers' home-from-home, David Bowie owned a house here and the Middletons are in town every year. Boaters can anchor off the coast and tender in for drinks at Basil's Bar, the island's most buzzing beachside hangout, known for its blues festival and electric New Year's Eve celebrations.

Smaller Islands

The smaller Grenadine islands shouldn't be overlooked. If you were a pirate looking to bury treasure, you'd pick one of these. In fact Petit Tabac in the Tobago Cays Marine Park is the deserted isle where Jack Sparrow and Elizabeth Swann were abandoned in the first film. The whole of the Tobago Cays feels like real pirate territory. Shallow lagoons and small clutches of palms are perfect for hiding the odd casket or two of pirate bounty. Yacht tours offer day-long snorkelling and diving trips (or you can anchor your own boat at certain points), and the famous Horseshoe Reef and Baradel Turtle Sanctuary are both must-dos.

Young Island, just off the coast of St Vincent, is where Johnny Depp made his home when he was not being a pirate years ago. But it's not the most remote resort in the Grenadines. Book into the private island of Petit St Vincent where there are no roads, phones or TV, and where you alert a member of staff by hoisting a flag. Palm Island also offers an amazing private island experience, where you can lounge with a cocktail in-hand just steps from the turquoise waters.



● Georgina travelled to St Vincent and the Grenadines with ITC Luxury Travel. A 7 night holiday costs from £1,425 per person including flights, transfers and accommodation. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577.

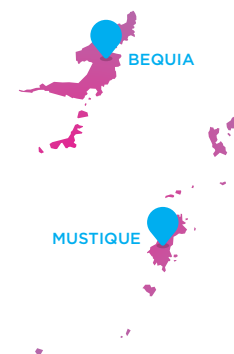
*“Whichever way you turn
in St Vincent you’ll be
reminded of the Caribbean
Sea, with sandy beaches,
hidden cays and even a
Blue Lagoon.”*



- 1 Picture perfect
Petit St Vincent
- 2 Aerial view of
Palm Island
- 3 Diving among turtles
off Petit St Vincent
- 4 Admiralty Bay, Bequia
Island
- 5 Sea view massage
at Petit St Vincent
- 6 Palm Island water
sports



DESTINATION
**ST VINCENT AND
THE GRENADINES**



NOYA'S KITCHEN VIETNAMESE SUPPER CLUB

The humble supper club has spread from London's basements and backrooms into pretty much every town and city in the UK. Editor Gill Leaning heads to Bath for a taste of Southeast Asia, supper club-style.

It was this time three years ago, at a Christmas drinks do for food and travel writers, that I first got that feeling. A renowned journalist declared that very top of her ever-growing bucket list was to try Noya's Kitchen Vietnamese Supper Club in Bath. And I had that feeling you get when you realise you have stumbled upon a hidden gem; something that even those in the know are yet to experience. I was one of Noya's inaugural supper-clubbers and had been lucky enough to go back more than once.

It was just six months prior that Noya first had the idea to start a supper club. Friends and family convinced her that her Vietnamese food was just too good to be confined to home cooking. On a whim she hired The Bear Pad café for a night and announced the date to friends on Facebook. It instantly sold out. A month later she announced a second date. Another sell-out. By Christmas she was running a supper club every Friday night with a six-month wait-list. These days it's twice a week, and a full-time career when you add cookery lessons and event catering to the mix.





And so tonight I have that feeling once again. Having patiently waited for dates to be released, and booked some eight months in advance, I am back.

There is a casual, homely feel you get at a supper club that is just different to a restaurant; like you've walked in on a big family celebration where nobody can quite remember who opened the last bottle of wine. Tonight at The Bear Pad café the atmosphere is effervescent, and Noya bounces out of the kitchen to greet each group of arriving guests like old friends.

When all 28 supper-clubbers are seated, our five-course menu is announced: a prawn summer roll and pork spring roll with hoisin dipping sauce; shredded chicken salad with pandang chicken and mung bean sticky rice; a steamed pork noodle parcel topped with five-spice pork belly; lemongrass beef in betel leaves with slow roasted pork rib served with peanut sauce and pickles; coconut crème caramel with an orange and coconut biscuit and poached star-anise pineapple. As each new dish is relayed, murmurs of delight from the hungry diners rumble around the room.

Vegetarians like myself are never made to feel left out, with each meat course having an equally creative meat-free counterpart. The standout dish tonight is the marinated lemongrass tofu – quite simply the best meat-substitute I have ever had – served with a zingy mango and pickled carrot salad, mung bean sticky rice and cassava fritters with their melt-in-the-mouth sweet potato-like filling.

For supper club junkies, Noya tries out some of her more adventurous dishes - little off-menu extras for those who come back time and again.



Delights like glutinous rice dumplings with a prawn and pork filling. With their translucent outer wrappers they may look like eyeballs, she tells me, but they taste out of this world.

Noya is just about to return to Vietnam for the first time with her mum and siblings since they left on a boat to Hong Kong in 1979. Aside from long-overdue family time there will also be the opportunity to get some new foodie inspiration and try out as many local dishes as possible so that she can replicate the authentic flavours back home in the west country. I have a feeling that my next supper club experience may be the best yet.



● Order a copy of *Western & Oriental's Far East* brochure for more Vietnamese inspiration. westernoriental.com

RECIPE BOX

Noya's Kitchen Vietnamese Supper Club runs most Friday and Saturday nights (advanced bookings only) and costs £35 per head for five courses. BYO drinks or pre-order paired wines from greatwesternwine.co.uk

**The Bear Pad Café, Holloway,
Bath BA2 4QW
www.noyaskitchen.co.uk**



NOYA'S RECIPE FOR VIETNAMESE DIPPING SAUCE

Every Vietnamese dish should be served with an individual bowl of dipping sauce. Noya shares her recipe for the traditional salty-sweet accompaniment.

- The juice of one lime
- One bird's-eye chilli, finely chopped
- One clove of garlic, finely chopped
- One tablespoon of sugar (add more to taste)
- Two tablespoons of white rice vinegar
- Three tablespoons of fish sauce (Noya recommends Three Crabs fish sauce found in most Asian supermarkets.)

Mix together in a jam jar and serve in individual dipping bowls. The mixture will last for four days in the fridge.

Pioneering small group tours

Editor Gill Leaning takes a closer look at four of the best intrepid small group tours for 2017



THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO MADAGASCAR

There are few people who know Madagascar as well as Daniel Austin. Having spent a total of almost two years exploring and photographing the island, he is co-author of three Bradt Guides – Madagascar, Madagascar Highlights and Madagascar Wildlife – and secretary of the Anglo-Malagasy Society.

This year will be the third time that Daniel has partnered with Rainbow Tours on a very special exclusive small group tour. Just eight travellers will have the privilege of joining him for an in-depth exploration of the island and its unique wildlife, visiting remote spots like Camp Mantella in Marojejy National Park, a seven-kilometre trek from the last drivable road, where 118 species of bird, 149 species of amphibian and reptile, and eleven species of lemur – including the critically endangered Silky Sifaka – reside in the wild rainforest.

● *Rainbow Tours' Daniel Austin Madagascar Wildlife & Discovery small group tour departs on 12th October 2017. The 16-day tour costs from £6,150 per person. rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1304*

ANCIENT WONDERS OF SUDAN

Pharaohs and pyramids, desert camel trains and Nile cruises; the picture may sound familiar but the destination is not. Just like Egypt, its northerly neighbour, Sudan is awash with archaeological treasures. But unlike the tourism hot-spot, Sudan's wonders of the ancient world have remained largely undiscovered by western travellers.

With the news that the FCO has relaxed its travel advice for much of the country, Rainbow Tours is launching a Sudan group tour for 2017. The pioneering adventure will include explorations of the major northern sites such as the Christian Coptic Old Dongola on the banks of the Nile and the spectacular Royal Necropolis of Meroe – an archaeological gem where more than 40 pyramids rise from the dunes, each decorated with bas-reliefs showing the king's life and offerings to the gods.

● *Rainbow Tours' Sudan small group tour will depart in November 2017. Dates and prices to be announced shortly – contact an Africa Specialist to express interest. rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1304*



NORTH KOREA

TREKKING

Think of North Korea and no doubt socialist architecture and sprawling cities spring to mind, but the DPRK has a wealth of natural wonders that are frequently overlooked. Away from the news, sacred mountain ranges, deep blue lakes and picturesque Pacific coastline are the country's alternative headlines.

Regent Holidays has launched a North Korea hiking tour for 2017 that combines the highlights of Pyongyang with some seriously off-the-beaten-track trekking. Departing at the end of September, pioneering hikers will have the opportunity to experience the beautiful autumn colours of Myohyang and Kumgang, following mountain trails rarely trodden by other travellers. Off limits to tourists until 2012, the tour explores the Kumgang Mountains with a full day trek to Sejonbong, passing Kuryong Waterfall before branching off into true wilderness territory.

● *Regent Holidays' Hikes & Highlights of North Korea small group tour departs Beijing on 25th September 2017. The 13-day tour costs from £2,750 per person. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131*



SOVIET STYLE

in

ABKHAZIA

There's unusual and then there's downright off-the-map unusual. Never heard of Abkhazia? That's probably because it isn't officially a country. This breakaway Caucasus republic declared independence in 1992 – an independence recognised almost only by Russia.

Never one to shy away from the unusual, Regent Holidays has launched a brand new small group tour to the republic that includes everything from wine tasting at a minefield-turned-vineyard to visiting one of Stalin's dachas. The adventure starts in true pioneering style by crossing the Georgia-Abkhazia border on foot, and continues to surprise and delight with a flight on a Soviet-era biplane, visits to local homes in the Tsebelda Valley and time at the Black Sea resort of Pitsunda – a favourite of Russian holidaymakers and largely unchanged since its Soviet heyday.

● *Regent Holidays' Pioneering Abkhazia small group tour departs on 18th May 2017. The 12-day tour costs from £2,750 per person. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131*

TAKE ME THERE

WHERE

Loisaba Tented Camp, Kenya

WHAT

Perched high on the edge of a steep escarpment, this intimate, luxurious camp boasts breathtaking views over the wildlife-rich plains of Loisaba Conservancy and onwards to snow-capped Mount Kenya. The glorious outlook is best enjoyed from the serene infinity pool or from the comfort of one of the camp's innovative Star Beds: handcrafted bedsteads that can be wheeled out onto the private veranda for a night under the African sky.

WHY

Recently purchased by The Nature Conservancy and partnered with Space For Giants elephant foundation, Loisaba Conservancy is one of Kenya's conservation success stories. This private wildlife haven is famed for its population of elephants and big cats, as well as being one of the best places to see African wild dogs.

HOW

Rainbow Tours has a 7-day Kenya Safari including 3 nights at Loisaba Tented Camp and flights that costs from £4,495 per person. rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1304



DESTINATION
KENYA



SPREAD YOUR WINGS

Rainbow Tours has joined forces with Condor Travel in South America to support WINGS, a non-profit organisation helping disadvantaged people in Peru live a better quality life. Emma Durkin, Marketing Manager at Rainbow Tours, reports on her recent visit to Huatata Preschool and Primary School where Rainbow has funded food and the construction of a vegetable garden.

WINGS was established in 2007, its mission; to contribute to the development of sustainable and responsible tourism in Peru, helping people to live a better quality of life in areas of extreme poverty. Through the development of various community-based projects, tourists can visit and learn more about people living in these areas of Peru and contribute to their development through donations and volunteer work.

Current projects include the construction of a system to filter rainwater (providing access to safe drinking water to 150 families), supporting underprivileged children through sponsorship opportunities, and rural home improvements to create a better living situation for families. The organisation also manages donations supplying food and educational materials for some of the poorest public schools in the country.



RAINBOW TOURS & WINGS

Rainbow Tours is committed to responsible travel and in September 2016 chose to support Huatata Preschool and Primary School based in the Chinchero District, located around 150 kilometres from Cusco. Forty-nine children attend the school in total, seventeen at the pre school (aged four to six) and 32 at the primary school (aged seven to twelve) and because of a very poor diet, a staggering 85% are anaemic.

A report carried out by WINGS highlighted the fact that food is the main priority for the school, which has very high rates of malnutrition. What is currently being delivered to the school each month by the government doesn't even reach a quarter of what is required to feed the children basic breakfast and lunch each day. Rainbow Tours has donated money in order to supply food and has funded the construction of a vegetable garden enabling the children at the school to grow their own food, add fresh produce to their diet and lead a more sustainable life.



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The vegetable garden, complete with its own irrigation system, took one month to construct, and on November 20th 2016 the school held an opening ceremony where a local priest blessed the garden. Chard, onions, pumpkins, broccoli, cauliflowers, radishes, spinach, carrots, lettuce and tomatoes have all been planted. The teachers have been trained on how to take care of the garden and in turn they are teaching the children, who are involved in planting the seeds and picking the crops once they are ready. Amanda Sweeney, Latin America Product Manager at Rainbow Tours, travelled to Peru in November to attend the opening ceremony and delivered over 40 kilograms of children's clothing to the school, gathered from employees at Rainbow Tours, Regent Holidays and Western & Oriental.

Rainbow Tours will continue to support the school throughout 2017. A new roof is required for the main building, chairs and tables need replacing, a kitchen-diner needs constructing and recreational games such as swings and a slide are all on the list to help the children of Huatata Preschool and Primary School have a better start in life.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1) Sponsor an underprivileged child for a small donation per month

WINGS will ensure that your sponsored child receives nutritious food, new clothing, educational materials and medical care. Visit www.condorwings.org/en/projects/ to find out more and apply.

2) Book your Peru holiday with Rainbow Tours

For each booking to Peru, Rainbow Tours will donate £15 per passenger to WINGS in order to continue supporting Huatata Preschool and Primary School.

- 1 Amanda Sweeney visiting the children at the school
- 2 Receiving the food delivery
- 3 The school children queuing for food
- 4 The vegetable garden under construction
- 5 Dry goods being delivered

trips for your tribe

From adventure-fuelled activities to beachside breaks, Emma Brisdion picks the best family getaways making the most of the great outdoors

TEENAGE KICKS IN GREECE

Teenagers require just as much entertaining on holiday as the little ones, but preferably without parents in tow. Blissfully, the Sani Resort in Greece has it all figured out. A chill-out lounge allows teens to relax with friends made during dance, football or sailing classes, while the new Sani Dunes Adventurer programme gives them a chance to take advantage of their newfound independence. Here, they're encouraged to trade their digital screens for exhilarating sports and to interact with the natural environment. Parents can relax on the white sand beach while their youngsters take to the water in paddleboats where they'll have the opportunity to snorkel and dive, participating in ecological research. The outdoors meets tech on a mountain biking adventure through the forests and wetlands of Sani Reserve, where guides teach the group to identify native bird species and turn their calls into mobile phone ringtones.

● ITC Luxury Travel has an 7-day family holiday at Sani Dunes that costs from £3,219 for a family of 4 including flights, accommodation, transfers and activities. itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577





OFF-ROAD IN ICELAND

Iceland's epic landscapes are as stunning as they are varied, and when you're taking the family to see the sights there's only one way to get the full adventure experience: by Superjeep. These monsters of the road are fitted with oversized tyres that make light work of Iceland's volcanic terrain, and come with a fearless driver-guide at the helm. The Golden Circle, Iceland's renowned trio of natural wonders, is a real family favourite. Kids will love getting up-close to thundering Gullfoss Waterfall, watching mighty Strokkur Geysir erupting into the air and off-roading across Þingvellir National Park, following in the footsteps of both ancient Vikings and the Game of Thrones TV crew. In the winter months, it's back on board the Superjeep after dark to chase the northern lights deep into the countryside. These ready-for-anything vehicles can reach remote and isolated locations where the chance of seeing the aurora borealis is greatly improved.

● Regent Holidays has a 5-day Superjeep Winter Break that costs from £4,940 for a family of 4, including flights, accommodation and driver-guide. regentholidays.co.uk 0117 280 0131



HORSE RIDING IN COLORADO

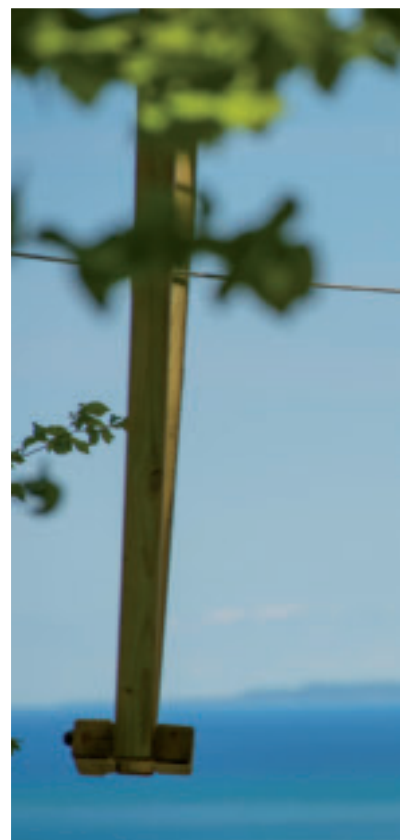
They say you should never work with animals or children, but at C Lazy U Ranch in Colorado the best holidays involve a hearty serving of both. With over 180 horses, the resort's steeds are handpicked individually for every guest, matching personalities and riding abilities. Young or inexperienced children can learn how to handle a horse while proficient riders gallop across 8,500 acres of stunning Colorado countryside. The holiday culminates with a lively 'Shodeo', where kids put their new skills to the test, competing in races or equestrian competitions. Out of the saddle too, this ranch has all the makings of a great family holiday. Activities like zip-lining, paddle boating, mountain biking and even white water rafting keep active children entertained, while fly-fishing, yoga and spa treatments offer a little adult-only time. In the winter months, snow covers the picturesque region and the ranch offers dog-sledding, snow tubing and ice-skating.

● Western & Oriental has an 8-day family holiday at C Lazy U Ranch that costs from £20,440 for a family of 4 including flights, accommodation, transfers and activities. westernoriental.com 020 7666 1303

PADDLE BOARDING IN COSTA RICA

Overlooked by a snow-capped volcano, Lake Arenal is a stunning place to get to grips with the latest water craze – paddle boarding. Active enough to keep kids entertained, yet gentle enough to appeal to even the most cautious of parents, stand up paddle boarding is one of the most enjoyable ways to explore this pristine corner of Costa Rica. The paddle board itself is wide and stable, allowing boarders to balance upright on two feet and propel themselves across the calm surface of a lake with a paddle. After a quick lesson and safety briefing, families follow an experienced instructor on a tour of the lake – the second largest body of fresh water in Central America – and kids can race and swim in the cool waters while parents drift at the leisurely pace of a sloth. Those who keep their eyes peeled may actually catch a glimpse of the iconic Costa Rican creatures slowly making their way through the branches of lakeside trees.

● *Rainbow Tours has an 11-day Costa Rica family holiday that costs from £8,310 for a family of 4 including flights, accommodation, transfers and a 4-hour paddle boarding session. rainbowtours.co.uk 020 7666 1304*





MOUNTAIN MAGIC IN CANADA

Not all holidays are for putting your feet up - especially when you have active kids to keep entertained. The Westin Trillium House in Blue Mountain, Ontario, provides boundless adventure for families with energetic over-fives. Kids can scale the mountain on foot or by bike, improve their doubles game with top-notch tennis tuition or embark on an exhilarating treetop walk. Then there's the airbag jumping, kayaking along the coastline and riding the exhilarating ridge runner roller coaster, which should be enough to tire everybody out. In the winter months, the forests and grassy slopes are buried with a few powdery feet of white stuff, and the resort transforms into a glistening, family-friendly ski resort. Routes ranging from beginner slopes to black diamond runs criss-cross a ski area covering 364 acres, and the frozen Mill Pond becomes the region's largest outdoor skating rink.

● *Western & Oriental has a 6-day family holiday at The Westin Trillium House that costs from £4,839 for a family of 4 including flights, accommodation, transfers and activities.*
westernoriental.com 020 7666 1303



SUN, SEA & SAND IN SICILY

Set on a 230-hectare patch of private Mediterranean coast, the luxurious The Verdura Golf and Spa Resort in Sicily knows just how to indulge adults looking for five-star service. However, this Rocco Forte hotel has also launched its brand new Kids' Club to entertain children of all ages, from tiny tots to troublesome teens, allowing parents some well-deserved holiday R&R. The Chefs R Forte programme nurtures budding cooks and encourages children to get hands-on in the kitchen, while active kids can try their hands at yoga, gymnastics or water polo. Even the youngest members of the family are well looked after, with a choice of not one, but two playgrounds and a dedicated sleep room for those all-important afternoon naps. Teens can take care of mind, body and soul with challenging assault courses, boot camp workouts and meditation, before chilling-out away from parents in the young adult lounge.

● *ITC Luxury Travel has an 8-day family holiday at the Verdura Resort that costs from £2,945 for a family of 4 including flights, accommodation, transfers and activities.*
itcluxurytravel.co.uk 01244 355 577

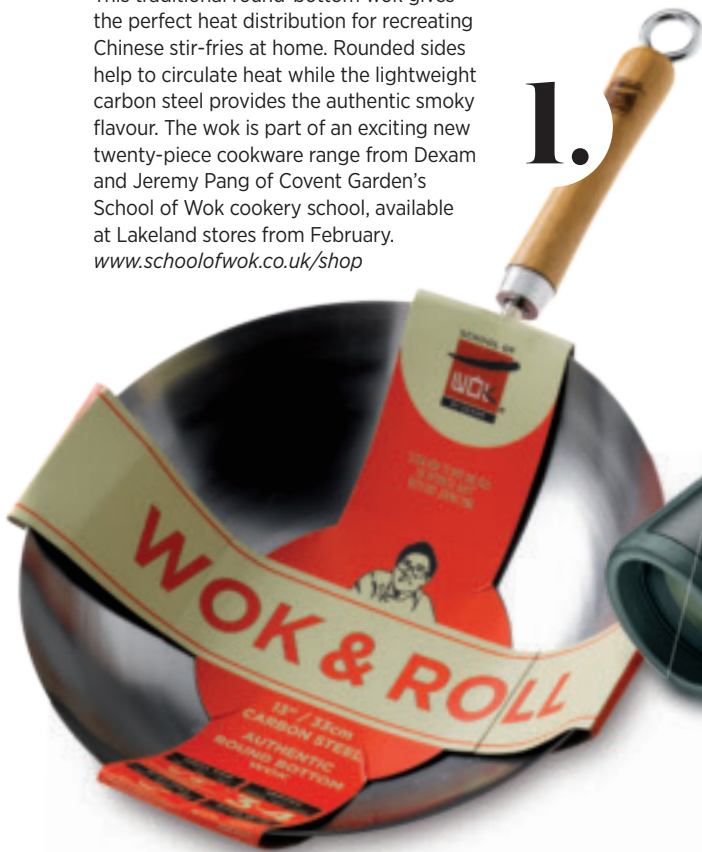
SHORE THINGS...

1. School of Wok Carbon Steel Wok £17

This traditional round-bottom wok gives the perfect heat distribution for recreating Chinese stir-fries at home. Rounded sides help to circulate heat while the lightweight carbon steel provides the authentic smoky flavour. The wok is part of an exciting new twenty-piece cookware range from Dexam and Jeremy Pang of Covent Garden's School of Wok cookery school, available at Lakeland stores from February.

www.schoolofwok.co.uk/shop

1.



Canon EOS 6D £1,458 (body only)

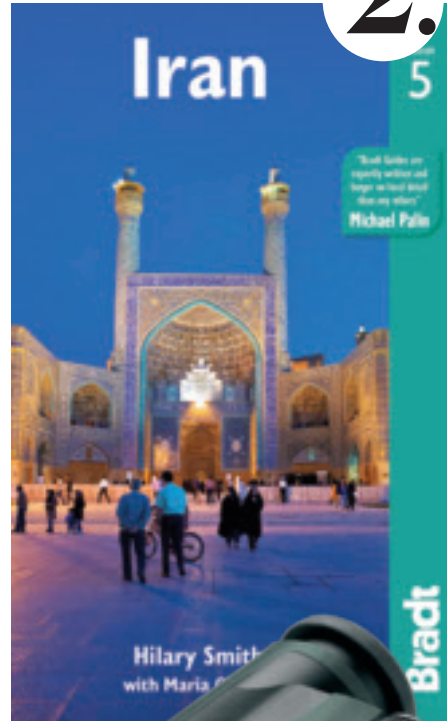
Ideal for travelling, the EOS 6D is Canon's smallest and lightest full-frame DSLR. The camera's 20-megapixel CMOS sensor and powerful DIGIC 5+ image processor deliver images that are packed with detail and clarity, and the built-in GPS determines the camera's exact location, geotagging each file. High quality images can be shared easily with friends and family at home via the integrated Wi-Fi connection.

www.canon.co.uk

4.



2.



Bradt Guide to Iran £17.99

Now in its 5th edition, Bradt's Iran guide has been thoroughly revised for 2017. There are new and updated details on everything from cultural developments to restaurants and shops, plus fresh sections on travelling around Tehran, Nishapur, Qaleh Rudkhan and the Kurdish villages on the Silk Road, not to mention handy new bazaar maps for Esfahan, Yazd, Kerman and Shiraz.

www.bradtguides.com

READER DISCOUNT

Purchase the Iran Guide at www.bradtguides.com and enter code **OTHERSHORES25** at checkout before 31st August 2017 to receive a 25% reader discount.

3.

Swarovski Optik CL Pocket

Binoculars £560 This sleek pair of binoculars may be small but the optical quality is outstanding. At a compact 11cm long they make the ideal travel companion for wildlife holidays, with precision 25mm lenses that offer 8x magnification. Even glasses wearers can fully benefit from the large field of view (119m) thanks to individually adjustable twist-in eyecups.

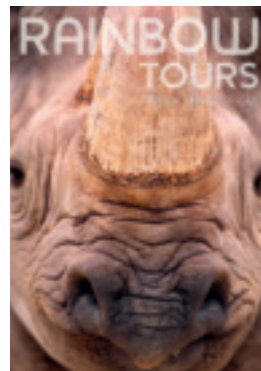
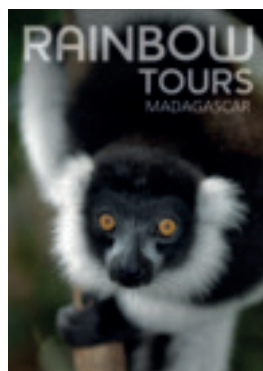
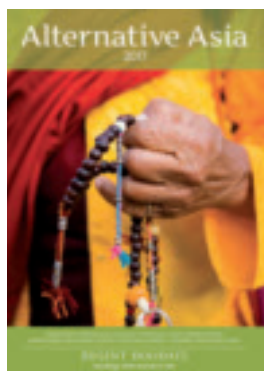
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HOW TO ENTER

Enter by 30th April 2017 at
www.regentholidays.co.uk/canoncomp

WIN A CANON POWERSHOT SX530 HS

Canon's lightweight bridge camera, the PowerShot SX530 HS, is as easy to use as a compact camera with the creative control of a DSLR. With a 50x ultrazoom lens with ultra-wide-angle, it will capture every detail far and wide, from sweeping landscapes to extreme telephoto shots of wildlife. There's aperture and shutter speed control for those who want to experiment with their creativity or a Smart Auto feature that chooses the perfect camera setting, whatever the scene.

A bridge camera for the digital generation, the PowerShot's 16.0 megapixel images can be shared straight from the WiFi-enabled camera and easily transferred to smartphone or tablet via NFC. There's even a dedicated smart device app to remotely control the camera from a smartphone. And this is not just a stills camera. With the touch of a button the PowerShot SX530 shoots superb Full HD movies at thirty frames-per-second with stereo sound.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1) The prize is one Canon PowerShot SX530 HS camera (subject to availability) including Neck Strap NS-DC11, Lens Cap (with Strap), Battery Pack NB-6LH, Battery Charger CB-2LYE, AC Cable and User Manual Kit only. 2) The prize draw is free to enter for Other Shores readers. No purchase necessary. One entry per person only. 3) Entry is via the Regent Holidays website at www.regentholidays.co.uk/canoncomp 4) The competition closes at midnight on 30th April 2017. The winner will be selected at random by an ITC Luxury Travel Group Limited representative and notified by 31st May 2017. Employees of ITC Luxury Travel Group Limited, their friends or family are not eligible to enter. 5) ITC Luxury Travel Group Limited will collect your personal data to process your entry. We may contact you about future promotions and events. Your details will not be shared with any third parties. You can unsubscribe at any time. 6) ITC Luxury Travel Group Limited may use information relating to the prize for marketing or promotional purposes, including use of the winner's name. 7) Except as otherwise required by applicable law, ITC Luxury Travel Group Limited is not responsible for any loss or damage associated with you entering into these terms and conditions, competition, or the provision or any aspect of the prize or any act or omission of any other person or party, and all warranties, conditions and representations (of any kind) not expressly set out in these terms and conditions are hereby excluded (except in the case of fraud). 8) Entry is deemed as acceptance of these rules.

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