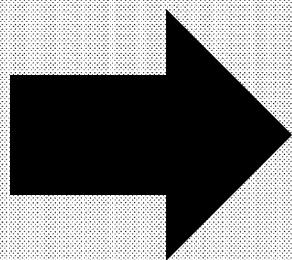


WHERE

&

If you're
strapped
for time:
Seven
brief, but
epic,
weekends



TO GO

36 WAYS TO MAKE THIS **YOUR BEST** TRAVEL **YEAR** YET



THIS YEAR, DON'T LET ANY VACATION TIME GO TO WASTE. WE'VE TAKEN 80 DAYS AND BROKEN THEM DOWN INTO EIGHT LIFE-CHANGING TRIPS. READY TO WANDER IN **PORTUGAL**? RECHARGE IN **TASMANIA**? ROAD TRIP THROUGH **THE SOUTHWEST**? TURN THE PAGE AND START PACKING. ➔

Two
Unforgettable
Trips
**WORTH A
SPLURGE**

2016



↑ Cruisers, take note: A shiny new hub for river cruises will open in the Port of Lisbon in late 2016.

PORTUGAL'S NEW AGE OF DISCOVERY

The country has something to prove to the world in 2016: It's done being overshadowed by its neighbors. *by* JENNA SCATENA

1

Lisbon Gets Tastier

Locals love Principe Real for its parade of new eateries. At A Cevicheria, star chef Kiko Martins serves classic ceviche with Portuguese flair (fresh cod with rosemary vinegar and chickpea puree).

Sweets go beyond the traditional *pastel de nata* pastry at Bettina & Niccolò Corallo. Try the pimento bonbons. And, at the recently renovated Time Out Mercado da Ribeira, you'll find a rainbow of Lisbon's artisanal food purveyors.

2

Porto Goes on Display

Rua de Miguel Bombarda, the city's new art street, is lined with galleries, from Ó! Galeria, a small space crowded with sketches by Porto illustrators, to the CC Bombarda, an incubator that

brings more than two dozen regional artists and makers together. You can even eat like an artist at newcomer Frida, where a husband-and-wife team serves Frida Kahlo's favorite dishes, such as duck with mole sauce.

3

The Central Coast Shines

The Algarve region gets most of the love for its dramatic beaches, but the oft-overlooked 200-mile stretch of coast between Porto and Lisbon offers the perfect excuse for a road trip. Start in

the coastal town of Nazaré, home of the largest wave ever surfed. From there, continue south to Peniche, then hop a ferry to the Berlengas archipelago, three rocky islands with sea caves and vibrant barrier reefs.

WHERE THE LOCALS WEEKEND HOP A FLIGHT TO SÃO MIGUEL, THE LARGEST OF THE AZORES ISLANDS, WHERE A NEW HIGHWAY MAKES FOR AN EASY DRIVE TO FURNAS VALLEY. HERE, THE SIGNATURE DISH—*COZIDO DAS FURNAS*, A MEATY STEW COOKED UNDERGROUND BY HEAT FROM VOLCANIC VENTS—REMINDS YOU THAT YOU'RE SITTING IN A VOLCANIC CRATER. TRY IT AT RESTAURANTE TONY'S. AFTER DUSK, THE RECENTLY SPRUCED UP POÇA DA DONA BEIJA NATURAL HOT SPRINGS ARE EMPTY, AND STARS SERVE AS NATURAL MOOD LIGHTING.

THE MEKONG LEADS TO EVERYTHING

For the ultimate grand tour of Southeast Asia, sail down this iconic waterway on one of a growing number of boutique river cruises. *by JENNIFER FLOWERS*



The *AmaDara*, AmaWaterways' second Mekong River-based ship, is the newest of the vessels making the journey down the delta, with 62 balconied staterooms and suites, and two restaurants (rare on smaller ships). My 16-day adventure began with a land-based tour of Hanoi, then we flew to the ship's launch point in Siem Reap. From there, we set sail on a seven-day trip that traversed two countries, ending in Ho Chi Minh City. The small boat allowed us to access remote rural villages but also to tap into the big, exciting cities that, if you come so far, you don't want to miss. I've spent years traveling throughout Southeast Asia, but I've never experienced it quite like this.

From \$4,498. amawaterways.com

CAMBODIA FROM SIEM REAP TO PHNOM PENH

Some guests arrived early to explore the ancient city's ruins (such as Angkor Wat and Ta Prohm) and artisan crafts before boarding the *AmaDara*. As the ship made its way down the delta to Phnom Penh, we stopped to watch metalsmiths make bronze bowls in sleepy Koh Chen, which offers a window into traditional crafts that were

almost lost during the violent Khmer Rouge regime. The vibe changed completely when we landed the next day in Phnom Penh, Cambodia's rapidly developing capital. While a trip to the Killing Fields was a sobering reminder of the country's darkest chapter, it was refreshing to see busy streets and galleries showing work by young artists—proof that Cambodia is looking to the future.

VIETNAM FROM PHNOM PENH TO HO CHI MINH CITY

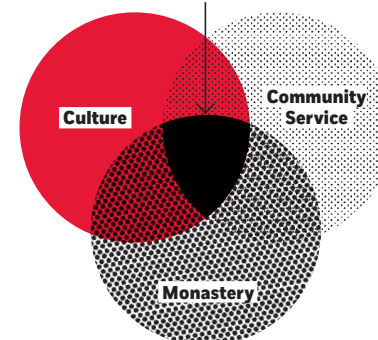
We spent a day on the river when we crossed the border to Vietnam—enough time for me to squeeze in an onboard massage and a Vietnamese cooking class. A bowl of pho noodles the next morning fortified me for an excursion to the agricultural village known as Evergreen Island, where we toured a local home and saw dragon fruit. We spent the afternoon in Cai Be Floating Market, where deals are made between boats for everything from coconuts to pigs. That night we headed downriver to Ho Chi Minh City, the region's fastest-growing urban hub. I stayed a couple of extra days for a historical walking tour with Trails + Tales and a flight of local craft beers at Pasteur Street Brewing Company.

YOUR 10-DAY VACATION

NEPAL IS BACK

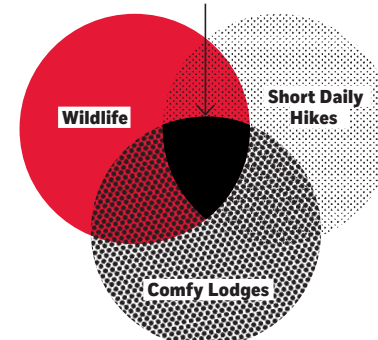
The best way to support Nepal's earthquake recovery? Go there. Read on and choose the right trip for you.

G ADVENTURES



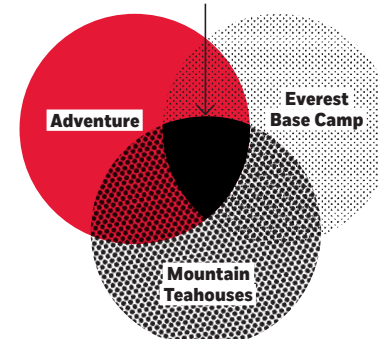
On this 10-day **cultural immersion**, travelers stay in a monastery and visit the SASANE Sisterhood of Survivors, a community project backed by G Adventures. From \$1,529. gadventures.com

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK



You're never too far from a cozy bed on MTS's 10-day Annapurna trek, which takes travelers to off-the-beaten-path spots in **Chitwan National Park**, and ends each day in a lodge. From \$3,495. mtsobek.com

INTREPID TRAVEL



You need time (15 days) and endurance to reach **Everest Base Camp**. Hiking an average of five miles per day, you'll trek from the town of Lukla up to 18,100 feet. From \$1,565. intrepidtravel.com

PREVIOUS PAGE: FRÉDÉRIC LAGRANGE; THIS PAGE: © DESTINATIONS/CORBIS

In 2016, drop into Ireland's County Kerry for a picnic—by private helicopter.



YOUR 10-DAY VACATION

3 NEW WAYS TO SEE IRELAND

Hiking through an Irish mist is a must. But there are several ways to get a new perspective on the Emerald Isle.

By Rail

The Belmond Grand Hibernian is Ireland's first luxury train, and it's as close to an Irish fairy tale as you can get. The 20 cabins are named after Irish counties, and the onboard restaurants serve regional fare. On the weeklong Grand Tour of Ireland, you'll explore nine cities, with stops at the Jameson whiskey factory in Cork and St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. From \$8,500. belmond.com

By Ship

A new eight-day cruise offered by Lindblad Expeditions and the National Geographic Society hugs the coastline as it circles the island. You'll stop at Inishmore, in the Aran Islands, and visit Skellig Michael, where you can explore sixth-century monastic ruins and get an up-close look at puffin nests. Also on the itinerary: a Zodiac tour of the Cliffs of Moher. From \$7,990. nationalgeographicexpeditions.com

By Helicopter

Outfitter Black Tomato's new seven-day tour takes travelers on an overview tour of western Ireland by air. The customizable itinerary can take you anywhere in the region: You can see the limestone plains of Burren National Park, then have your pilot drop you off on the Aran Islands for a private lunch of locally caught lobster. From \$9,788, all-inclusive. blacktomato.com

YOUR 10-DAY VACATION

PLAN FOR IRAN THOUGH PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN STILL FACES HURDLES, INTREPID TRAVELERS ARE EYEING THE DESTINATION. U.S. CITIZENS MUST PLAN AT LEAST SIX MONTHS IN ADVANCE, SAYS LINDA DE LA TORRE, GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITIONS' DIRECTOR OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA: "TRAVEL TO IRAN HAS BECOME MORE POPULAR. IT'S PUT A DEMAND ON THE COUNTRY'S LIMITED TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE." THE VISA PROCESS CAN TAKE 90 DAYS OR LONGER AND REQUIRES A CONFIRMED ITINERARY FROM A TOUR PROVIDER AND A PASSPORT FREE OF AN ISRAELI VISA OR STAMP.



HOW TO DO RIO IN A WEEKEND

We sent writer **Mickey Rapkin** to Rio to test our theory that a continent-hopping weekend is the ultimate antidote to the Sunday Night Blues. Here's his argument for tackling a sprawling, far-flung city, one weekend at a time.

IT SOUNDS ABSURD: a three-day trip to Rio on the (metaphorical) eve of the Olympic Games? Who am I, Kanye's butler? The oldest member of Taylor Swift's squad? But the idea started to make delicious sense. We all know how life's roots can sometimes innocently take hold, conspiring to keep us married to routine. But the ambitious long weekend—one that requires a passport—can reboot your frontal lobe. It sharpens your senses, as all travel does, without draining your vacation bank.

The ambitious long weekend works like magic, provided you keep time zones and exchange rates in mind. Which makes Rio ideal. For one thing, the U.S. dollar is the strongest it's been in a decade, and since you're only paying for two nights at a hotel, you can afford to live like a boss and double down on thread count. Also, time is on your side. The clock change between New York and Rio is just three hours, the equivalent of flying from Los Angeles to

the East Coast. (See? Easy.) I boarded a Friday night flight from JFK, chased a glass of red wine with half an Ambien, and woke up with the salt air beckoning. *Bom dia*, Rio.

Debbie Downers may protest: What can you possibly see in three days? But that's sort of the point. In a potentially overwhelming city like Rio, where you might be tempted to run yourself ragged ticking off every so-called must-see spot, you're now free to focus on one thing (food, say, or the beach—or, in my case, both) and have the immersive experience you crave. You know, before NBC's camera crews topple the city. Besides, the ambitious weekend gives you bragging rights—we're looking at you, Instagram—with a *carioca* (local to Rio) tan as your badge of honor. As bossa nova star Antônio Carlos Jobim once said, "Brazil is not for beginners." **Luckily, we've got your master's class here.** ↓

See Rio like a carioca

Jewelry designer **Antonio Bernardo**, whose Puzzle Ring was an instant classic among the ladies who lunch, shares his go-to haunts in town.

1 For a Bite

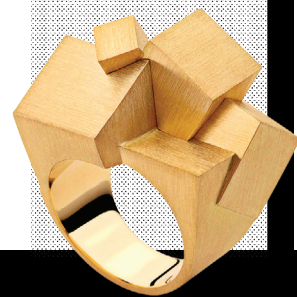
"Guimas is a French bistro with a carioca (local) soul in Baixo Gávea, a meeting point for young people and intellectuals." Try the steak béarnaise. People-watch for hours.

2 For Design

The four-floor Arquivo Contemporâneo is "focused on furniture with a Brazilian design," Bernardo says. Don't miss the modernist chairs by late design deity Sérgio Rodrigues.

3 For Art

Stop by Anita Schwartz and Silvia Cintra + Box4 for "a hand-picked selection of the best Brazilian artists." Then hit A Gentil Carioca, a collective that "goes beyond the boundaries of conventional art."



Where to Eat, Sleep, and Samba

Breakfast on acai bowls at Polis Sucos. Hunt for antiques at Feira do Rio Antigo. Tour the new Museum of Tomorrow. Sunbathe on Ipanema. Try Lasai's Michelin-starred coconut and yam "egg." Eat Brazilian comfort food at Academia de Cachaça. Drink caipirinhas at Bar dos Descasados. Go for round two at Galeto Sat's. Listen to samba at Bip Bip. Unwind at Hotel Fasano Rio De Janeiro.

SEE GRANADA'S TRUE COLORS

THIS NICARAGUAN CITY IS ON THE RISE.

WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

GRANADA, A COLOR-SATURATED CITY ON THE SHORES OF THE MASSIVE LAKE NICARAGUA, IS MADE FOR ADVENTURE-TOURING AND PEOPLE-WATCHING. A SLEW OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS—HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS—IN NICARAGUA MEANS WORD IS GETTING OUT, SO GO NOW WHILE THE VIBE IS STILL INDEPENDENT AND LOW-KEY.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

MOST NICARAGUAN-GROWN COFFEE IS EXPORTED, WHICH MEANS LOCAL APPRECIATION FOR THE COUNTRY'S OWN BEANS IS RELATIVELY NEW. THE CITY'S CAFÉS ARE NOT YET HIPSTER MAGNETS BUT RATHER COMMUNITY HANGOUTS.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

LESS THAN A SEVEN-HOUR FLIGHT FROM THE UNITED STATES, GRANADA IS A COMPLETELY WALKABLE CITY THAT OFFERS EASY ACCESS TO LAKE NICARAGUA AND THE SURROUNDING VOLCANOES.

Carve Park City

Utah's ski capital just got cooler. Now open: A 7,200-acre mega resort—just a hair smaller than Whistler Blackcomb—with a sleek gondola and après-ski bites that go beyond the standard chalet fare.



WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

In November, neighboring ski mountains Canyons and Park City Mountain Resorts joined to become the biggest ski resort in the country: Park City.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

The Sundance Film Festival in January can actually be a pretty chill time to ski, since most visitors fly in just for the parties, the celeb-spotting, and, you know, the movies.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

Shuttles from the Salt Lake City airport mean you can skip the car rental.

Go Deeper into Cuba

WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

Booking a no-hassle (read: no red tape) weekend in Santiago, Cuba's second-largest city, with outfitter Insight Cuba.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

Santiago is as culturally vibrant as Havana; art and music have an Afro-Cuban spin.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

Direct one-hour flights from Miami are still restricted, but Insight organizes all transport.



FEED YOUR SOUL IN NEW ORLEANS

WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

A visit to the Bywater neighborhood, an artist enclave with B&Bs, art studios, and resolution-busting eats.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

You could center an entire weekend around St. Roch Market, a gloriously restored market hall that showcases NOLA chefs. Bite to try: the Sweet Spot's bacon-pecan cinnamon roll.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

A soon-to-open streetcar line that links the Bywater to the French Quarter allows you to quickly access Café Du Monde's beignets without having to lodge in touristlandia.



SAVOR GUADALAJARA'S RED HOT ART

Jalisco's capital, the home of mariachi music and tequila, takes a surprising turn.

WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

Long considered Mexico City's staid sister, Guadalajara is loosening up and embracing its artsy side. New boutique hotels cater to travelers who come for

the galleries, from the homegrown Curro & Poncho to an outpost of Madrid's Travesía Cuatro.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

The latest addition to the hotel boom

is the 37-room Casa Fayette, from the south-of-the-border hotel collection Grupo Habita. Housed in a '40s-era art deco mansion, the hotel pulled a chef from Daniel in New York.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

Guadalajara, while beachless, is still a warm winter escape. Plus, March 4–13, the city hosts its annual international film festival—a snow-free Sundance.

Go Beyond Spring Break in Cabo



WHAT GETS YOU ON THE PLANE

As it continues to recover from Hurricane Odile, Cabo is reinventing itself as a retreat for serious luxury.

THE HAPPY SURPRISE

Star chefs, such as Enrique Olvera of the new Manta, are leading the way.

WEEKEND X FACTOR

Stay at the beachfront Mar Adentro by Encanto. Each of the 205 suites and villas looks like a floating cube.

PREVIOUS PAGE, FROM LEFT: JOSE M. CAMPOS/WMPIC/REDDUX; COURTESY OF ANTONIO BERNARDO. THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CULTURA CREATIVE (RF/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO); COURTESY OF STROCH MARKET; COURTESY OF MAR ADENTRO LOS CABOS; ADAM WISEMAN



Butterfly Falls

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YARDS.



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Discover a place where the
nightlife is only outdone by
the wildlife.

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YOUR 10-DAY VACATION

TASMANIA: RUGGED AND REFINED

Amid the placid bays, pristine forests, and sheer sea cliffs of Tasmania, there's a new crop of roughing-it and pamper-me ways to explore Australia's island state. *by SERENA RENNER*

WORK FOR IT

HIKE

Three Capes Track
A new 28-mile trail leads through eucalyptus forests and over dolerite cliffs on the Tasman Peninsula. It takes four days, and travelers sleep in shared cabins at night. threecapestrack.com.au

BOAT

Freycinet Adventures
After kayaking the electric-blue waters of the Freycinet Peninsula, travelers stay in a private camp on secluded Hazards Beach, circled by sea eagles. freycinetadventures.com.au

EAT

The Agrarian Kitchen
Set in a schoolhouse, this culinary retreat teaches everything from whole-hog butchering to vintage baking to cooking with foraged foods. theagrariankitchen.com

STAY

Satellite Island
Book a weekend at this private island in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel—kayaks, sparkling wine, local venison, and all-you-can-eat oysters are included. satelliteisland.com.au

RELAX

Wineglass Bay Sail Walk

This six-day hiking cruise touches on Three Capes and the best trails on Maria Island and the Freycinet Peninsula, with time for ocean dips and sunset dinners. wineglassbaysailwalk.com.au

Coral Expeditions

In November, the Australia-based cruise line launched its first Tasmania trips, which stop at an oyster farm and include a landing in remote Southwest National Park. coralexpeditions.com

Franklin

At his acclaimed new restaurant, chef David Moyle uses Tasmanian ingredients such as King George whiting fish, which he roasts, stuffs with lemon leaves, and finishes with urchin butter. franklinhobart.com.au

Pumphouse Point

A 1940s hydroelectric plant at the southern edge of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park was recently transformed into a glass-walled, 18-room lodge. pumphousepoint.com.au



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF PUMPHOUSE POINT, ADAM GIBSON, ANDREW BAIN/GETTY IMAGES/LONELY PLANET IMAGES, ADAM GIBSON, COURTESY OF STILLWATER RESTAURANT, COURTESY OF PUMPHOUSE POINT, MARKUS KIRCHGESSNER/LAIF/REDOUX, COURTESY OF STILLWATER RESTAURANT, CENTER PHOTO: PAUL FLEMING, COURTESY OF SINGITA MARA RIVER TENTED CAMP

YOUR BIG TRIP East Africa's Wild Side



Singita Mara River Tented Camp

THE SAFARI CAMP, REINVENTED

Sleeping under canvas is the original way to go on safari. Tanzania's new fleet of tented camps nods to that authenticity, without sacrificing the pampering. *by JANE BROUGHTON*

1

Migrate with the Wildebeest

Opening in early 2016, Roving Bush-tops is a luxury camp on wheels. The camp typically sets up near Moru Kopjes, granite rock formations in the central Serengeti. But if the animals move, **Roving Bushtops** follows so that, from November to May, guests are surrounded by migrating wildebeest and zebra herds. bushtopscamps.com

2

Unplug in the Bush

The **Singita Mara River Tented Camp** is one of the few permanent sites in northern Tanzania. Singita, however, still mimics the vibe of a mobile safari. Its tents are outfitted with everyday African objects, such as textiles with Maasai-inspired patterns in red, black, and blue, that have been reimaged by local craftspeople. singita.com

3

Take the Whole Family

A renovation of the **andBeyond Grumeti Serengeti Tented Camp** introduces a new family suite. Everything about the camp communicates ease: A private butler rustles up parent-friendly cocktails and recharges mobile devices while well-schooled guides know exactly where to find large lion prides and hyena clans. andbeyond.com

4

(Pretend to) Rough It

Set in prime game-viewing locations for up to 12 guests, **Singita Explore**, an AFAR Collection property, is as close to nature as you can get without relinquishing the comforts of a game lodge. Yet it still feels like you're camping. The chef cooks on an open fire and the camp is designed for minimal environmental impact. singita.com/explore

Zimbabwe Ups Its Game

Finally, diverse, animal-rich Zimbabwe is gaining ground as a safari destination: The U.S. dollar is accepted, there is a new Victoria Falls airport, and a joint Zim-Zam, or KAZA, visa makes it easy to see both sides of the Zambezi River. Best of all, Zimbabwe offers value relative to its neighbors. Two companies are taking advantage of this heady

mix. **Wilderness Safaris** (wilderness-safaris.com) has reinvented the classic Zimbabwe safari in Hwange National Park with the opening of the sleek, nine-suite **Linkwasha**, where herds of elephants and buffalo often drink out of a pan just off the pool deck. **African Bush Camps** (africanbushcamps.com), which launched in 2006 (politically and economically challenging times), now

has eight sites in Zimbabwe and Botswana. **Somalisa**, a revamped version of its original camp, reopened in November. "We've had to move with the times and travelers' heightened expectations in the bush," says founder and CEO Beks Ndlovu. "The new Somalisa, while still tented, delivers the authenticity of camping with the addition of king-size beds, copper-clad slipper baths, and other comforts."

COMPANIES THAT CARE

These three programs support Africa's remaining wild places. How your safari dollars will help:

➔ SOUTHERN AFRICA

An arm of **Wilderness Safaris**, **Children in the Wilderness** is an environmental and life skills educational program that trains local kids to become custodians of key conservation areas. Besides running eco-clubs in rural schools throughout Southern Africa, the nonprofit raises funds for school nutrition programs, water supply projects, scholarships, and school buildings. childreninthewilderness.com

➔ ZIMBABWE

African Bush Camps Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Beks Ndlovu's Bulawayo-based company, works with the communities surrounding Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe to oversee education, empowerment, community infrastructure, and conservation projects. The foundation currently educates more than 160 children in a school on the park's outskirts. africanbushcamps.com

➔ THE SERENGETI

Bordering Serengeti National Park, Singita Grumeti's five lodges generate income to assist in funding conservation and community outreach programs in this biologically diverse region. An **Environmental Education Centre** was established in 2009 to build awareness and understanding of the benefits of conservation among teens living in communities surrounding the reserves. singita.com



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YOUR 10-DAY VACATION

ROAD TRIP: CANYON COUNTRY

The National Park Service marks its centennial in 2016. We've planned the perfect road trip through the otherworldly red-rock cliffs, canyons, and spires of the Southwest, with stops at Bryce, Zion, Capitol Reef, and the grandest of canyons along the way. *by* KELLY BASTONE



1

85 miles. Stop for homemade pie at Bryce Canyon Pines.

1 Zion National Park

From McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas, it's a three-hour drive to **Zion Lodge**, where rocking chairs on porches evoke summer-camp simplicity. Bonus: Guests can drive their cars into Zion Canyon. For most of the year, you can rent

a bicycle from the lodge and pedal along a paved road to Zion's best hikes, such as the one to **Angels Landing**, a breath-snatching rock promontory offering bird's-eye views down into Zion Canyon. After a day of exploring, retreat to the lodge's **Red Rock Grill** for bison meatloaf and Navajo fry-bread tacos.



2

2 Bryce Canyon National Park

Hike the strenuous eight-mile **Fairyland Loop**, which offers views of this park's iconic rock pinnacles, called hoodoos. Then check into the **Lodge at Bryce Canyon**, where TVs are verboten and the canyon rim is just a five-minute walk away. The 40

newly renovated cabins feature stone fireplaces and Douglas fir flooring. After dark, drive to the park visitor center for a ranger-led astronomy program and get a closer look at planets and galaxies with high-power telescopes.

121 miles. Snack: Black pepper biscuits at Hell's Backbone Grill & Farm.



3

Overnight in a tent in Moab, then it's 336 miles to Flagstaff.

3 Capitol Reef National Park

Just as stunning as neighboring parks—but with fewer paved roads and maintained trails—Capitol Reef is a lesser-known playground. Plumb golden slot canyons on a day hike led by **Redrock Adventure Guides**. Dine on watermelon-marinated pork at Café Diablo,

then move on to the **Saddlery** for boot-scootin' to live Western bands. Bed down at the **Lodge at Red River Ranch**, a retreat styled after Teddy Roosevelt-era lodges. Pick up a few fresh-baked fruit pastries from the Gifford Homestead for the 2.5-hour drive to Moab, where you'll sleep in safari-style tents at **Moab Under Canvas**.



4

4 Grand Canyon National Park

Head to Flagstaff to join the outfitter **O.A.R.S.** on its Rim to River trip, which unveils the region's ancient Puebloan ruins, stops at lesser-known viewpoints along the rim, and includes a stay at **Phantom Ranch**, a riverside lodge that dates back to the '30s at the bottom of the

Grand Canyon. Prefer to skip the nearly 5,000-foot climb down and back up? Opt instead to stroll a mile to the canyon's edge at spectacular Shoshone Point. Spend the night at **Bright Angel Lodge**, where rooms and log cabins are set along the rim and an old-fashioned soda fountain serves milk shakes.

YOUR 10-DAY VACATION Cruise the Ganges

FIVE REASONS TO SAIL INDIA'S HOLY RIVER

Along India's most sacred river, history runs deep. And now, Uniworld Boutique River Cruises is upping the ante on exploring the Ganges with its *Voyager II*, custom built for the company's new itinerary, "India's Golden Triangle and the Sacred Ganges." This is why you should hop on board. *by* JENNIFER FLOWERS



TOURING THE GANGES HAS NEVER BEEN THIS LUXURIOUS.

A floating five-star hotel, the all-suite *Voyager II* has 28 staterooms sumptuously designed with French balconies, painted murals, and colonial-era furnishings—a welcome respite from the sensory overload on shore.

YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS SHIP-BOUND.

The first five days of your journey are on land, with stays in the best hotels along the way. The overland portion starts in New Delhi and continues to the Taj Mahal in Agra, then Jaipur, for a tour of the famous Pink City

and an evening in the palatial Oberoi Rajvilas, and concludes in Kolkata, the former capital of the British Raj.

YOU'LL SEE PLACES RARELY VISITED BY TRAVELERS.

Excursions along the river include a rickshaw ride through Kalna, which has the West Bengal region's highest concentration of temples, and a visit to a local craftsman's home in the artisan village of Matiari, known for its brassware.

THERE ISN'T A SINGLE BAD VIEW ON THE SHIP.

From the comfort of your stateroom, observe riverside life, palaces, and

temples, including a new Hare Krishna temple that will be twice the size of St. Peter's Basilica.

YOU CAN EXTEND YOUR CULTURAL ODYSSEY.

A three-day extension in Varanasi, the most revered spot on the Ganges, includes a private boat ride for an up-close look at the nightly Ganga Aarti ceremony at dusk, when hundreds of floating lamps are released, as offerings, into the river. *From \$7,599. uniworld.com*

THIS PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. ©ANDREW PEACOCK/FOOTLOOSEPHOTOS/TANDEM STOCK MARKET/VAULT ARCHIVES; COURTESY OF MOAB UNDER CANVAS. OPPOSITE PAGE: ©MARU/LANG



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THE PAMPERED GUIDE TO MONGOLIA

Mongolia's remote natural wonders—plains, lakes, deserts—used to appeal only to hard-core adventure seekers. But a few upscale hotels and a crop of top outfitters, such as Nomadic Expeditions, are making travel here not just easy but surprisingly comfortable. Here's what a trip with Nomadic might look like. by ANDREW SESSA

DAY 1-2 Arrive in Ulaanbaatar and spend the day visiting Buddhist monasteries, monuments to fallen Soviet soldiers, art and history museums, and cashmere shops. Your base for the night: the gleaming new 28-story Shangri-La.

DAY 3-4 Take the 90-minute flight to the city of Murun. A private driver will take you to Lake Hovsgol to hike in the green mountains and kayak on the massive blue lake. Overnight in a ger, the Mongolian equivalent of a yurt, at the Toilogt Ger Camp.

DAY 5 On your trip back to Murun, you'll stop to picnic at Lake Irkh while watching giant white swans fish for their lunch. Then return to Ulaanbaatar.

DAY 6-9 Fly to Dalanzadgad in southern Mongolia's Gobi Desert. A driver will drop you off at Three Camel Lodge, a collection of 35 luxury gers equipped with en suite bathrooms made from local stone. A safari-style 4x4 takes guests to Khongoryn Els Sand Dunes—known as the "Singing Sands" for the low hum they emit when you walk on them—and to

a valley filled with millennia-old petroglyphs. The day ends with a sundowner and dinner served alfresco at the base of the Flaming Cliffs, where some of Mongolia's most impressive dinosaur fossils have been found.

DAY 10-11 Fly back to Ulaanbaatar. Next up: A visit to Gorkhi-Terelj National Park to see endangered wildlife such as moose and brown bears. You'll spend the night in one of the 52 suites of the Terelj Hotel, Mongolia's first five-star resort, before flying home the next day.

↓ Nomadic Expeditions' Mongolia trips start at \$4,595. nomadicexpeditions.com.



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