

THE MAGAZINE

EUROPE





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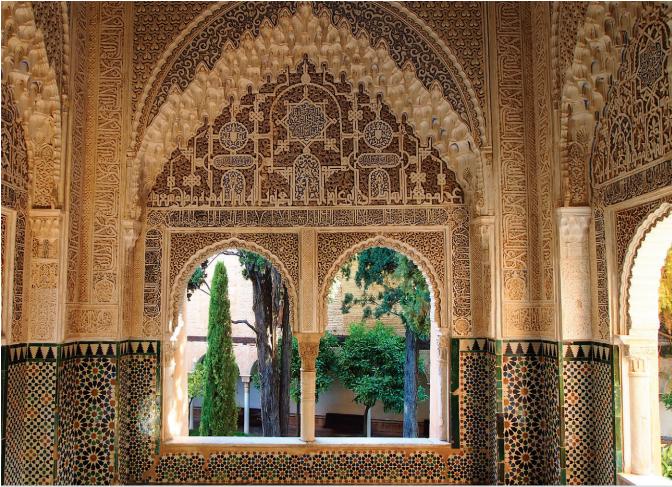


AND NORTHERN EUROPE

We're locals, worldwide

REVEALING THE WORLD'S BEST-KEPT SECRETS

With its monuments and museums, its rich history and breathtaking scenery, and its iconic art and architecture, Europe has long been a land of captivating wonder. From Barcelona to Bodrum, as grand as the Mediterranean Sea may be, Silversea is uniquely experienced in revealing its hidden secrets because this is our home. This unparalleled destination knowledge follows us north to discover the fairy-tale castles and magnificent fjords, gilded palaces and picturesque villages of the British Isles, Baltic, and beyond. Come with us as we navigate windswept isles and glorious cities in one of the happiest regions in the world.



Decorated room inside Nasrid Palace in Alhambra, Granada, Spain.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Marvel at the grandeur of Spain's Alhambra Palace, the Moorish citadel overlooking Granada
- Treat yourself to an exclusive evening concert at UNESCO-listed Ephesus
- See Europe's largest glacier up close in an iceberg-filled lagoon in Djúpivogur, Iceland
- Journey deep into Norway's iconic UNESCO-listed fjords to witness some of Mother Nature's greatest works
- Explore the Scandinavian cool and Prussian elegance of capital cities on the Baltic Sea, with overnights in Stockholm and Tallinn

THE MEDITERRANEAN

EXPLORE ANOTHER WORLD

It's easy to get lost in the grandeur of the Mediterranean; for centuries, its fabled lands and iconic monuments have inspired both the muse of artists and the wanderlust travelers. Exploring this treasured destination with Silversea can be summed up in just three words: unparalleled destination knowledge. These shores are our heritage – no one understands the Mediterranean Sea better than us. From the French and Italian rivieras to the Holy Land, the Black Sea and beyond, our small ships access both tiny ports and marquee destinations with revealing expertise. Prepare to be amazed as you wander leafy villages in Provence, savor a spicy Corfiot bourdeto, and feel the rhythm of a sultry flamenco in Seville.



THE MAGIC OF NORTHERN EUROPE

Welcome to Northern Europe, a melting pot of people, history, architectural styles and cultures. A place where thriving modern capitals are surrounded by vast open landscapes that hold the key to centuries of legends and traditions. Thanks to our small, intimate ships, we'll take you to these close and faraway places for a deeper understanding of the magic behind it all. From Goðafoss, the majestic "waterfall of the gods" in Iceland to the deep blue fjords of Norway, you'll be in awe at how nature has lovingly sculpted this part of the world.





SILVER NOVA

Surrender to the sensory allure of Italy or Norway – or a myriad of other European realms steeped in history. Perhaps you'll experience your journey on board the boldly innovative *Silver Nova*, spending much of its inaugural 2023 season in these waters. Thanks to unprecedented, state-of-the-art technology, *Silver Nova* will be one of the most sustainable cruise ships ever built. She is a true reflection of our deep commitment to the oceans, the environment and the communities we find at each of our splendid destinations. The ship's pioneering architecture will also offer a brand-new suite experience, including aft suites that deliver stunning 270° views. Welcome to the Nova way of traveling.

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BESPOKE, ALL-INCLUSIVE LUXURY FROM THE VERY FIRST MOMENT



ALL-SUITE SHIPS, DESIGNED FOR COMFORT

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INSIDER INSIGHTS & ENRICHING DISCOVERIES

Our expertise in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe is unequaled. Step away from shallow and everyday tourist experiences – and plunge with us into the depth and breadth of discovery, Silversea style. Enjoy privileged access to sites both renowned and undiscovered. Choose from a comprehensive program of expert-led, small-group shore excursions designed to put you in the know, everywhere.



EPICUREAN ADVENTURES

Some of our most innovative new travel insights are edible. On select sailings, Silversea's pioneering culinary program, S.A.L.T. (Sea and Land Taste), incorporates local market trips, winery visits, food lectures, and hands-on cooking experiences.

OUR ALL-INCLUSIVE DOOR-TO-DOOR FARES INCLUDE:

- Private executive transfers (between home and airport)¹
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- Shore excursions (one per port, per day)
- Butler service in every suite category

- Premium beverages in-suite and throughout the ship
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- · Onboard gratuities



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ROCCO FORTE HOUSE ROME ROCCO FORTE PRIVATE VILLAS SICILY VERDURA RESORT SICILY HOTEL ASTORIA ST PETERSBURG
FUTURE OPENINGS: ROCCO FORTE HOUSE MILAN THE CARLTON MILAN

















INTRODUCING A BOLD NEW VISION FOR OCEAN TRAVEL

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Remarkable itineraries will blend celebrated destinations with lesser-travelled ports for a memorable journey. You will enjoy sweeping sea views and a private terrace, as well as four pools, private cabanas, spa and curated entertainment.

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FEATURED JOURNEYS

All journeys include high speed unlimited Wi-Fi, access to sophisticated, varied experiences across 18 food and beverage venues, including six restaurants, five lounges and in-suite dining, unlimited beverages, fine wines, premium spirits, a welcome bottle of champagne, access to the spa thermal area, onboard gratuities and more.*

A Maiden Journey into Epic Fjords & the Arctic Circle

15 NIGHTS | EXPLORA |

EMBARKATION SOUTHAMPTON, UNITED KINGDOM JULY 17, 2023 COPENHAGEN, DENMARK AUGUST 1, 2023



Ocean Suites fares from USD 11,900 pp

An Extended Journey from European Canals to Scottish Lochs

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Danish Designs & Hanseatic Style

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REYKJAVIK,
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SEPTEMBER 9, 2023



Ocean Suites fares from USD 10,450 pp

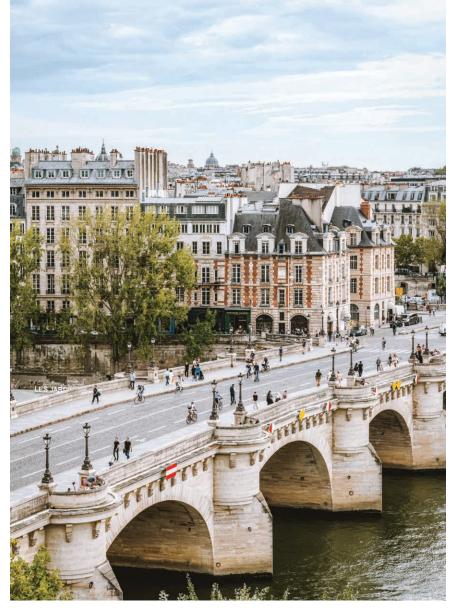
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Stolen moments at Sicily's Riserva dello Zingaro. Photography by Lucy Laucht.

PUSH YOURSELF

From the Arctic to Antarctica, go beyond your comfort zone. Follow your curiosities, free your spirit and expand your mind with new experiences you've never known; polar kayaking, ice fishing, polar diving and so much more.

THE EDGE.





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LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT



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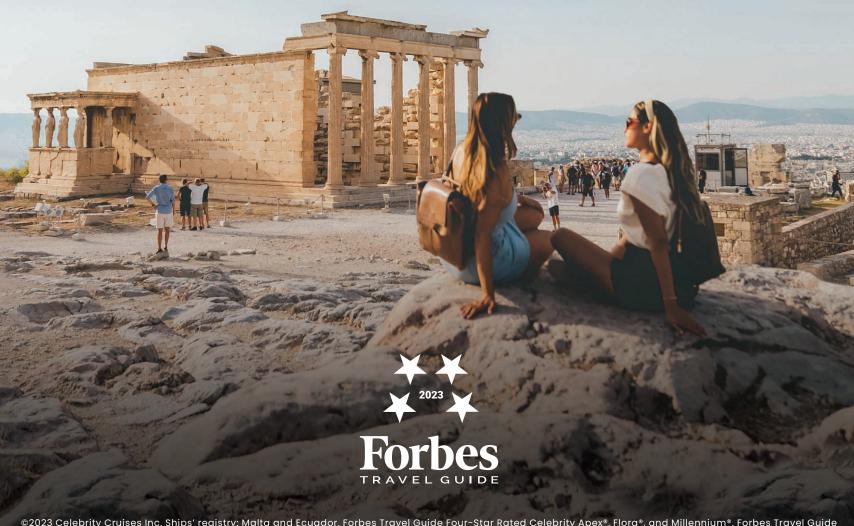


JOURNEY EUROPE

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN WITH THE FIRST AND ONLY RELAXED LUXURY RESORTSM AT SEA TO BE STAR RATED BY FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE

Whether you love art, history, natural wonders, fine cuisine, or all of the above, a Mediterranean cruise lets you experience something amazing at every stop.

Take your trip to the next level when you plan your Celebrity cruise with your Virtuoso travel advisor, you can expect personalized planning, invaluable firsthand knowledge and when booking a veranda, Concierge Class or AquaClass you receive an exclusive specialty dining experience for two PLUS a \$75 shopping credit when booking a suite.



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Euro Visions

ELL ME YOU'RE AT THE BEACH in Europe without telling me you're at the beach in Europe. Lucy Laucht's cover image – captured in Sicily's Riserva dello Zingaro using a Pentax Spotmatic camera with actual 35mm film – says it all. It's a moment that encapsulates the type of escape that's become a little more elusive, thanks to peak-season crowds. But we're here to show you how to have a European vacation that's as good in real life as it is in your mind's eye.

Allow us to guide you to the Continent's quieter corners. Associate editor Emma Franke spearheaded our guide to Italy, tapping Virtuoso advisors and other insiders for their tips and must-sees in this perennial favorite, from top to toe (including Sicily). There's also a river cruise/e-bike journey along the Danube, a *pintxo*-hopping tour of San Sebastián, actor and author Andrew McCarthy's Camino de Santiago picks, diving for wine in Croatia, and a photographic ode to the oh-so-Parisian pursuit of just strolling around.

From Venice's secret gardens to Edinburgh's design vanguard (and a city guide to Montréal, the French-inflected outpost on the Saint Lawrence), we hope the stories here put you in a Euro state of mind.



MARIKA CAIN EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

What I'm Loving Lately: The Packing Edition

After years of friends and colleagues swearing by **Briggs & Riley** luggage, I packed the 22-inch Baseline Essential for a recent trip. It feels indestructible and has smart features like a pick-your-size expander and external handle rails that mean maximum interior space. I also caved to the ads on my IG feed and bought **Cadence**'s leakproof toiletry capsules – I love having a cosmetics case that's straight out of a Marie Kondo dream. I've never subscribed to the rolled-clothing method (too wrinkly!), but a new **low-fold approach** has revolutionized my packing. The gist: Fold every article of clothing as little as possible. Layer in clothes first and put shoes and toiletries on top. You'll fit much more and avoid wrinkles.



EUROPE'S NEW RIVIERA

 $\label{lem:constraint} Discover\ a\ nautical\ playground\ on\ Montenegro's\ Adriatic\ coast.$ One & Only's first resort in Europe.

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VIRTUOSO

THE MAGAZINE

"What's your dream European hotel?"

Editorial Director Marika Cain

"I'm excited about Violino d'Oro, a truly special 32-room jewel box opening soon in Venice."

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Managing Editor Justin Paul
Senior Editor Amy Cassell
Associate Editor Emma Franke

Design

Design Director Melanie Prasetyo Fowler
Art Director Korena Bolding
Graphic Designer Mariela García Ramírez

Contributors

Copy Editors Miriam Bulmer, Diane Sepanski
Researchers Donna Blinn, Jillian Dara, Sierra Juarez, Jessica Mueller
Photo Researcher Mary Risher

Digital Retoucher Walter Kelly
Writers & Photographers

Adam Erace, Luis García, Elaine Glusac, David Hochman, Jeff Koehler, Kimberley Lovato, Kevin J. Miyazaki, Chris Schalkx, Kim Brown Seely, Jen Rose Smith, Clara Tuma

Marketing/Advertising

"Portugal's Bela Vista Hotel – it's close to the best kitesurfing in the Algarye." Partner Marketing Strategist Katy Loucks
Senior Director, Marketing Programs & Distribution Robert Duncan
Senior Manager, Marketing Programs & Distribution Kelly Kirchner
Senior Manager, Consumer Product Marketing Magdalena Jama
Manager, Digital Content Marketing Stephen Cordebas

Circulation/Data Services

Lanecha White, Amy Hyde, Gaylynn Magers

Marketing Operations

"I'm dreaming of beautiful views of the Seine at Cheval Blanc in the heart of Paris." - C.L. Senior Director Kathy Niwa Terrell

Manager Natalie Sherman

Specialists Katie Harnish, Carol Lewis, Denise Rodriguez

Coordinator Hailee Buchanan

Account Sales

Ilianna Aller, Sara Archibald, Amy Bailey, Scott Bryan, Rick Cazzell, Carol Coleman, Xabier Eguren, Trisha Foresman, Christine Gilbert, Mallory Hayes, Judy Keller, Zoe Kim, Gregg Nielsen, Daniela Trotta

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"Passalacqua on Lake Como. I want to stroll the gardens and read by the pool for days."

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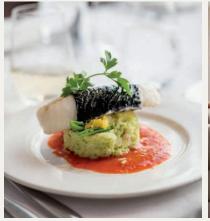


EXPERIENCE NATURE UP CLOSE.

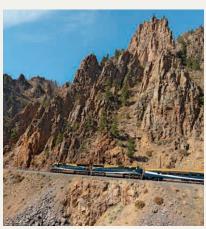


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ROCKIES TO THE RED ROCKS MOAB | GLENWOOD SPRINGS | DENVER



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"Where's your next big adventure?"





"I'll likely visit Greece this summer with my family. In December, we're planning to take our daughter to India for the first time - it's where my husband grew up, and most of his family still lives there. We're expecting it to be epic." THE REPORT: "Photos can't truly capture the majesty of Peljesac's 45-degree slopes, which plummet into the Adriatic Sea. The stunning Croatian peninsula showcases the raw beauty of vines that struggle to survive on an incline - and you can taste that assertiveness in the wine. It's a force." Ø kristinvukovic



Photographer
Joann Pai
Paris
"The Soul of the City," page 124

"Northern Vietnam for

my first big work trip since

the pandemic."

THE REPORT: "I hadn't done a travel story in Paris for a while, so I enjoyed rediscovering my own city. I walked to old favorite spots and found new ones. It was nice to fall in love all over again."

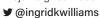
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Writer Ingrid K. Williams
New York City and Stockholm
"Another Round," page 116

"Next up is a long-awaited return to Denmark, where I can't wait to check out what's new in Copenhagen before heading up the coast to Humlebaek for the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art and the white-sand beaches said to be among Europe's most beautiful."

THE REPORT: "It was a dream to interview Elena Arzak and discover that we share a favorite *pintxo*: the spider-crab tartlet (*tartaleta de txangurro*) at Ganbara, a classic bar in San Sebastián's Parte Vieja neighborhood."





Photographer **Richard James Taylor** London "Distinctly Dalmatian," page 61, and "Another Round," page 116

"I'm heading to Southeast
Asia to attempt an ascent of
Malaysian Borneo's Mount
Mulu. I'm also hoping to spot
orangutans swinging through
the treetops of the Semenggoh Nature Reserve near the
capital, Kuching."

THE REPORT: "Retrieving a bottle of wine usually involves nothing more strenuous than opening the fridge door, but at Edivo Vina, Croatia's first underwater winery, it requires a speedboat, scuba equipment, and sound knowledge of local tides. Winemakers Edi Bajurin and Ivo Segovic took me out onto the Adriatic, where Bajurin dove in and returned with an amphora of naturally chilled plavac mali. The subsequent tasting was a highlight of my trip to the Peljesac Peninsula." @ richardjamestaylor

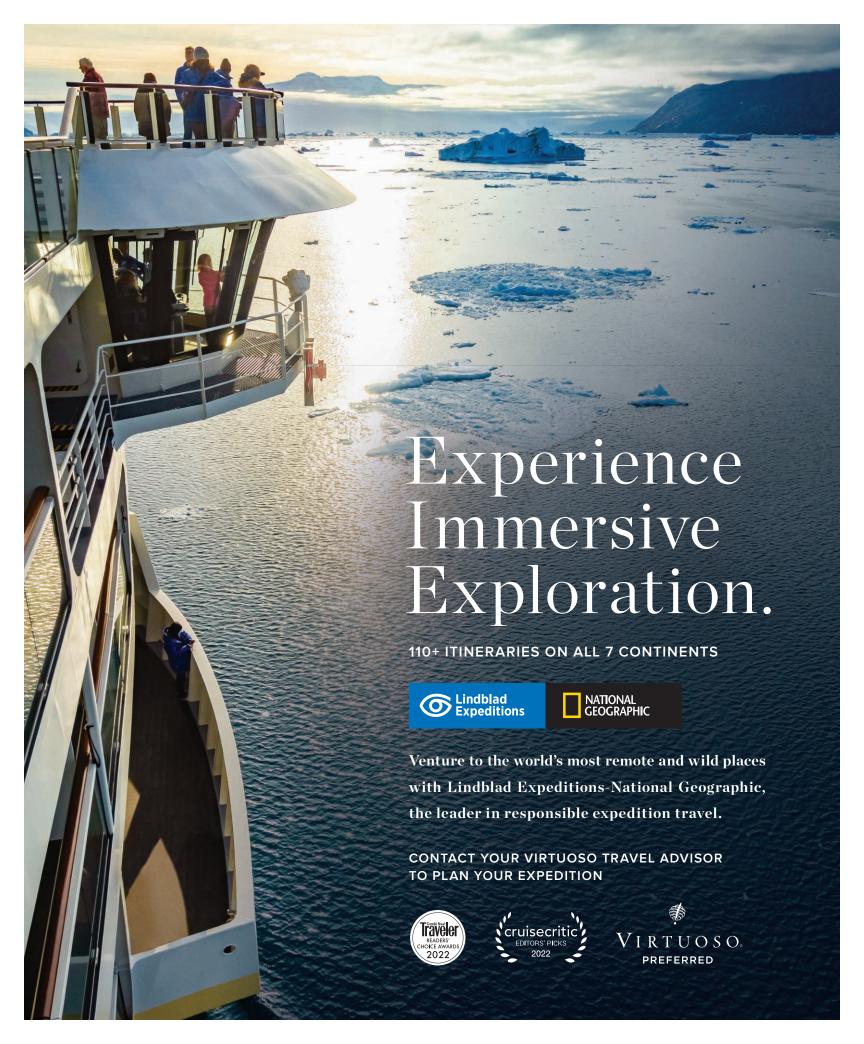


DISCOVER BOSTON uncommon

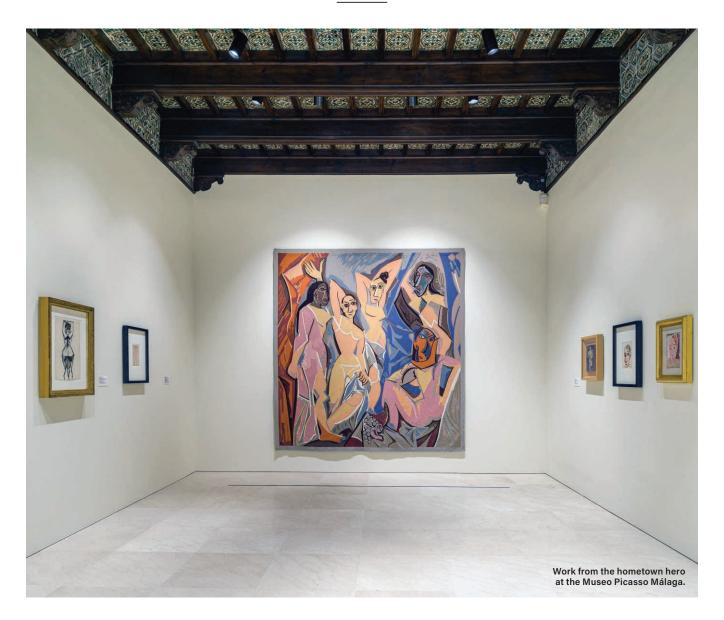
From high above Back Bay, Boston fascinates. Distinctive dining and drinks that captivate at every turn. A world of experiences for both the lively and the literary. A character that stands apart—and welcomes you to an oasis for the well traveled. In 2023, Raffles comes to America.











Picasso to Piano

In Europe, a summer of big-ticket openings.

- To mark the 50th anniversary of Pablo Picasso's death, 50 new exhibitions and events around the world this year commemorate the master of cubism. At Spain's Museo Picasso Málaga, in the artist's hometown, Picasso sculptor. Matter and body. (May 9 through September 10) highlights more than 60 of his threedimensional modernist works.
- London's National Portrait Gallery reopens in June after a three-year renovation, welcoming patrons back to browse among 40 rooms displaying work from the Tudor period onward. An opening exhibition, *Paul McCartney Photographs 1963-64: Eyes of the Storm* (June 28 through October 1), provides a personal glimpse into the early days of Beatlemania.
- One of Istanbul's oldest trading districts, where the Golden Horn meets the Bosporus, will traffic in new ideas when the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art reopens later this year. A 113,000-square-foot Renzo Piano-designed building replaces the museum's former structure in Karakoy and will include an auditorium, sculpture garden, and riverside viewing terrace.
- With a name inspired by the record label that put Manchester, England, on the map with bands such as Joy Division and New Order, Factory International opens in June. The modern, warehouselike venue will host concerts, poetry readings, and special exhibits, including an immersive art installation by Yayoi Kusama (June 30 through August 28). Elaine Glusac

collette | VIRTUOSO.

Travel Beyond the Coach

Shake up your perspective of a destination on a small group Explorations tour with Collette with these cool rides.

Zipping through a busy city in a tuk-tuk. Cruising through iconic cities in the back of a vintage taxi. Off-roading in a 4x4. Gliding across the water in a tender boat. Break the mold and discover the roads (and waterways) less traveled with a small group.





Icelandic Adventure

Get close to the water on a whale-watching adventure in a 12-seater rigid inflatable boat.



Tuscan & Umbrian Countryside

Choose if you want to take a 1-hour ATV ride on the white, rubble roads of the Tuscan countryside.



Flavors of Portugal & Spain

Hop onto a private yellow tram to take in Lisbon's narrow, hilly streets.

Contact your preferred travel advisor to book.

Person of Interest: Bruno Amby, Aviarist

At the 213-room Four Seasons Resort Lanai, Bruno Amby cares for eight rescued birds – tropical species native to Africa, Australia, and Indonesia – making regular appearances at the pool with armloads of parrots and cockatoos for photo ops and Q&A sessions. The native *kupuna*, or elder of Lanai, has been caring for the birds for more than eight years.

A day in the life: You need to spend at least two hours a day with them to have good, happy birds. I groom them, feed them, and pet them. If you don't, they'll bite, stress out, and pluck their feathers. They'll think, "Nobody loves me." I can't pick a favorite. It

took me five years to touch Uliuli, the blueand-gold macaw. A bird has to know you to trust you.

Do they show affection? The umbrella cockatoo, Ke'o Ke'o, likes to unbutton my shirt and cuddle.

Does everyone get along? They get jealous a lot, and we have to separate them. They want me to themselves. It's like having children – they don't like to share.

Besides "aloha," what can they say? Lulu the Amazon green parrot's favorite phrase is "What's your problem?" or "Hello?" in a sarcastic way. When no one's talking, Hau'oli, the yellow-crested cockatoo, will ask, "What did you say?" And he can laugh hysterically.

Any cool tricks? Hau'oli will bob his head and flap his wings like he's dancing. Then he demands an almond as a reward.

What's his favorite song? He likes many tunes, but when I play "She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain" on harmonica, he always dances.

Doubles from \$1,720, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit. - E.G.

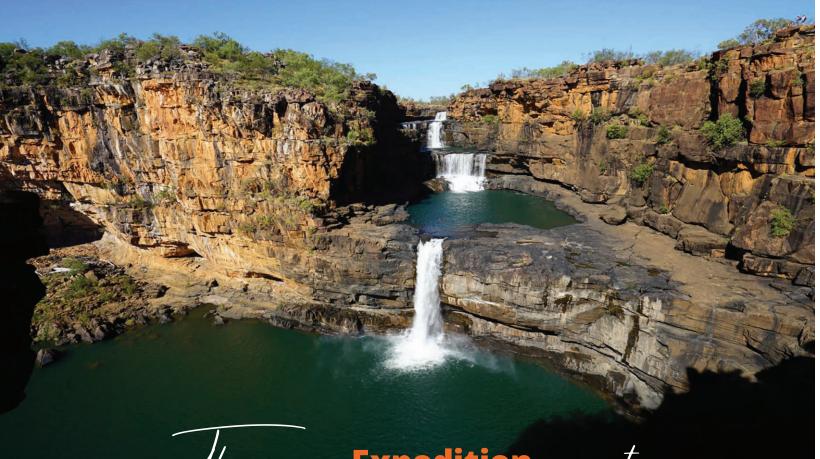


that moment when life becomes wild again.

The northernmost region of Western Australia is one of the oldest and most remote places on Earth, renowned for its otherworldly landscapes, abundant wildlife, and an Aboriginal culture that dates back some 50,000 years.

Join your expert Expedition Team for Zodiac® rides through horizontal waterfalls and guided hikes to surreal sandstone escarpments. Explore spectacular gorges and primeval caves richly adorned with rock art. Search for short-eared rock wallabies, crocodiles (both saltwater and freshwater), tawny nurse sharks, flying foxes and other unique creatures.

Seabourn Pursuit will operate six 10-Day voyages between Broome and Darwin, Australia in June, July, & August of 2024.



his is your Expedition moment.





HIGHLIGHTS

Immerse yourself in remote Indonesia on the inhabited island of Matakus. Take the opportunity to swim from a sandy beach and snorkel amongst coral and fish of the Timor Sea.

Wyndham serves as a gateway port to some incredibly remote places like the Bungle Bungles, El Questro National Park, and the Ord River.

Explore King George Falls, the two highest twin waterfalls in Australia at 80m/250ft in height.

Explore by Zodiac rivers and sandstone gorges that wind for miles with incredible geological sandstone formation.

Explore and learn about intricate mangrove eco systems that support a wide range of wildlife, including a variety of birdlife, osprey, white tailed sea eagles, Brahminy kites etc.

In Talbot Bay, large tidal changes make for a once in a lifetime viewing of the Horizontal Waterfalls.

View the aboriginal artwork of the Wandjina. As guests of the Traditional Land Owners, visit remote locations showcasing intricate Bradshaw/Gwion Gwion Art.

Gadawon is the local aboriginal name used for the "boab" tree (Adansonia gregorii) named after the Australian explorer Augustus Gregory. Stand next to these incredible trees and hear traditional stories.

his is your **Expedition** moment.



KIMBERLY EXPEDITIONS ON SEABOURN PURSUIT

10-DAY WATERFALLS & WANDJINAS

June 22; July 12; August 1, 2024 | Broome to Darwin June 12; July 2, 22, 2024 | Darwin to Broome

FEATURED ITINERARY

1 Transit to Lace	epede Islands
-------------------	---------------

- 2 Cruise the Indian Ocean Snorkel Montgomery Reef
- Talbot Bay
 Horizontal Waterfalls
- 4 Kuri Bay Hike to Raft Point
 - Hunter River
- 5 Helicopter from Naturalist Island Mitchell Plateau triple falls
 - Vansittart Bay
- 6 Transit to WyndamBungle Bungles, Ord River
- 7 King George River and Falls Cruise the Timor Sea
- 8 Matakus Island
- 9 **DARWIN, AUS**



View All Sailings







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Passport













Our Favorite Kind of Tasting Menu

It's no secret that New York City loves a food hall, but a new space at Hudson River Park's Pier 57 is entering the chat with a refreshing spin on the trend. Market 57 champions the city's underrepresented chefs and business owners, primarily women and people of color, with 17 kiosks including Japanese home cooking from restaurateur Maiko Kyogoku at Bessou, Italian sandwiches at Due Madri from butchers Erika Nakamura and Jocelyn Guest (aka the Butcher Girls), and Thai staples from Queens' popular Zaab Zaab. The James Beard Foundation is involved too, with a space for cooking classes and events and an incubator program featuring a rotating cast of fast-casual startups. It's a delicious, multicultural mélange worth celebrating: Raise a pint from Harlem Hops or a scoop of masala chai ice cream from Malai to toast to progress. - E.G.

Market 57 fare and vendors, clockwise from top left: Zaab Zaab, Mijo's Fany Gerson, Malai founder Pooja Bavishi, LoLo's co-owners Raymond Mohan and Leticia "Skai" Young, Local Roots, and Bessou's Maiko Kyogoku.



Sunken Treasures

Oysters aren't high on anyone's list of appealing cocktail ingredients, but the bivalves deserve a chance, says Bastien Rémillieux, head bartender at Ceto inside the 67-room Maybourne Riviera in the South of France. He counts an oyster-shell gin among his small but carefully curated collection of sea-inspired spirits: "So far, I've never had someone that wasn't pleased by it." Other salt-kissed elements, such as kelp, sea purslane, and samphire, are increasingly appearing in craft gins and vodkas as distillers look to capture the ocean's essence in a bottle. "There's a lovely salinity that comes from these ingredients," Rémillieux says. The spirits' savory hints make them a natural choice for a gin or vodka dirty martini, but they also bring a fresh twist to classic highball drinks such as a gin and tonic, where the quinine enhances the marine botanicals. To add a little more complexity to your at-home cocktails, stock your cabinet with some of these ocean-centric spirits, all available stateside.

THE BOTTLES

- The Industrious Spirit Company Ostreida. \$40. Each batch of this Rhode Island craft vodka is distilled using sustainably farmed oysters from a local producer to showcase the "merroir" (a play on "terroir") across coastal areas, including New England and New York.
- Hendrick's Neptunia Gin. \$40. Scottish coastal thyme and sea kelp blend with the classic cucumberand-rose profile Hendrick's fans love, bringing subtle saline notes to this limited-edition bottling.
- Manly Spirits Coastal Citrus Gin. \$35. Leafy sea parsley adds a savory edge to this fresh, punchy gin distilled on Sydney's Northern Beaches – each sip brims with citrus and Australian sunshine.
- Sheringham Distillery Seaside Gin. \$45. The Vancouver Island distillery's flagship spirit infuses locally grown, sustainably harvested winged kelp with other botanicals to express the island's wild coastal nature.

- Chrissie McClatchie





Get to Know Comoros

One of the world's most biodiverse marine areas exists in and around a tiny archipelago between Mozambique and Madagascar. Few travelers venture to the largely undeveloped Comoros Islands to see its underwater abundance, but beginning later this year, Intrepid Travel will take groups of up to 12 to tread lightly on these equatorial isles. Nine-day expeditions divide time between the islands of Mohéli, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve where more than 5,000 green turtles nest annually, and the larger Grande Comore. New to tourism, Comoros operators are adopting Intrepid's strict standards for animal welfare on treks to see endangered Livingstone's flying foxes and on waters that serve as nurseries for humpback whales. In a series of meetings with locals – including a national park ranger, a ylang-ylang farmer, and a restaurateur – travelers learn about island life and conservation. Other standout moments: overnights in beach bungalows run by citizens who double as sea turtle guardians and strolls around the ancient capital of Iconi with a descendant of a Sufi mystic. Departures: Multiple dates, August 19, 2023, through October 5, 2024; from \$3,125. – E.G.



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Carry-On Companions

THE WIND KNOWS MY NAME

BY ISABEL ALLENDE (Ballantine Books) In Vienna in 1938, Samuel Adler boards a Kindertransport train after his father disappears during the Kristallnacht. Eight decades later, El Salvadoran refugee Anita Díaz finds herself alone at a camp in Nogales, Arizona. As readers discover what connects these two, they'll also realize, as the 80-year-old acclaimed author likely intends, that age is no barrier to communication and the human mind has ways of escaping even the worst circumstances. The Wind Knows My Name is a treat for fans of Kristin Hannah, Christina Baker Kline, and Julia Alvarez, all authors who understand that history always affects current events.

THE FERRYMAN

BY JUSTIN CRONIN (Ballantine Books)
Cronin plays on locked-room mysteries in this futuristic stand-alone thriller.
Inhabitants of an archipelago called
Prospera live in luxury until their forearm monitors, which measure their physical and psychological health, run low. Will strange messages and support-staff mutiny result in Prospera's destruction?

SUMMER ON SAG HARBOR

BY SUNNY HOSTIN (William Morrow)
In her follow-up to Summer on the Bluffs, legal journalist and cohost of The View
Sunny Hostin introduces readers to the residents of SANS (Sag Harbor Hills, Azurest, and Nineveh Subdivisions), who are fighting developers to keep their quiet vacation enclave.

LADY TAN'S CIRCLE OF WOMEN

BY LISA SEE (Scribner)

Tan Yunxian is raised in a society that frowns on educated women, yet her grandmother, one of China's few female doctors, educates her as one too. Despite that, Tan's parents arrange her marriage, and she must struggle to break free and follow her calling. – Bethanne Patrick





Northern Lights in Northernmost Europe



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Cruising



TOUR THE CELTIC COAST

To lay eyes on Scotland's secluded northern isles (and maybe catch a glimpse of rare blue skies too), embark in Amsterdam for Azamara's 12-night Scotland-intensive voyage to Dublin aboard the Azamara Journey. The 702-passenger ship stops in Edinburgh, with time for travelers to catch a Festival Fringe show or two, and visits Invergordon and nearby Urquhart Castle, a perch to scan for Loch Ness' most famous resident. Smaller-island calls include the Shetlands, a melting pot of Scandinavian and Scottish heritage, along with the Orkneys and Lewis. At Oban's namesake distillery, drams of refined whiskey flow straight from the cask. Golfers can turn to onboard hosts to coordinate tee times at five of Scotland's classic links, including Royal Dornoch, where the game has been played since the early seventeenth century. Departure: August 17; from \$2,515.

BALTIC BEAUTIES

Celebrity Cruises' 12-night sailing out of Rotterdam calls on Scandinavia's choicest ports. The six-country itinerary aboard the 2,910-passenger Celebrity Apex includes Helsinki, Finland, and Estonia's capital, Tallinn. Best of all, Apex has scheduled overnight stays in two of Europe's great cities, landings that deserve more than a cursory glance: Stockholm's remarkably preserved core is home to its Royal Palace, along with endless craft shops in pastel buildings, and bike-friendly Copenhagen sets Danish history against a backdrop of contemporary architecture and quirky counterculture. The cruise ends in Amsterdam, where the works of van Gogh, Vermeer, and Rembrandt vie for attention amid craft breweries and veggie-forward restaurants. Departure: August 21; from \$2,132.

HUNT THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Seeking the aurora borealis, 12-night expeditions to Bergen aboard Viking's 930-passenger Viking Venus begin from London's Tilbury Docks, spending a day in Amsterdam before heading across the North Sea and up Norway's west coast via its scenic Inside Passage. Granite cliffs and a procession of tiny coastal villages lead to Narvik and the Arctic. Tromsø, a city

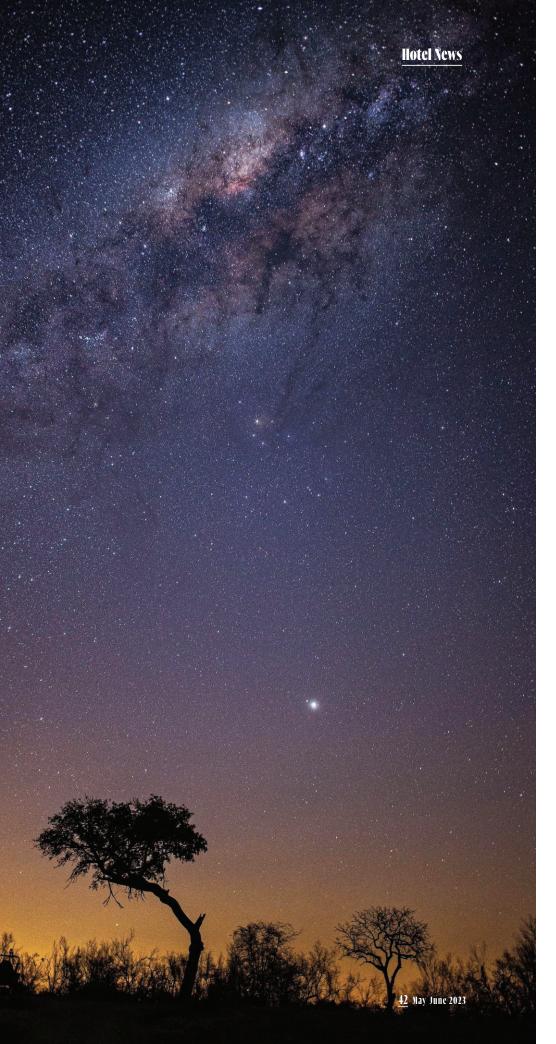
of more than 75,000 people, has approximately 50 days a year without sun; there, travelers choose between staying on the ship or bundling up for a night in ice domes with expedition sleeping bags and reindeer skins. Daytime activities throughout the trip include snowmobiling, ice fishing, and dog mushing. And when the northern lights come out, onboard announcements alert passengers to the show. Departures: Multiple dates, January 12 through March 24, 2024; from \$4,999.

ARCTIC WILDLIFE AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Located midway between the North Pole and the top of Norway, the Svalbard archipelago offers a new take on Arctic spectacle. Following a night in Oslo or Helsinki, travelers fly to Longyearbyen for a round trip on Quark Expeditions' Ocean Adventurer. The 128-passenger ship spends 12 nights under the midnight sun circumnavigating remote Spitsbergen, where nature thrives in extreme conditions. Rivers of ice carved the archipelago's fiord-filled mountains, and wildlife includes arctic foxes, reindeer, seals, and walruses. (Purple sandpipers, black-legged kittiwakes, and pink-footed geese represent just some of the avian color.) Keep watch for the Arctic's apex predators, polar bears, hunting from sea ice ringing the outer islands. Departures: July 7, 2023, and July 10, 2024; from \$10,469. - David Swanson

An arctic fox cub wears its summer fur and (opposite) the Copenhagen Opera House, designed by Henning Larsen.





Under the Milky Way

Far from bright city lights, these hotels offer prime stargazing perches.

- While vantage points from each of the 18 suites at remote Kinloch Manor & Villas on New Zealand's Lake Taupo yield impressively starry views, don't sleep on (or through) the lodge's guided night hike along nearby Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Shooting stars flickering across the Milky Way fade by the time guests reach the Red Crater to greet the sunrise over a picnic breakfast. Doubles from \$1,045, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.
- After a day spent wandering L'Albereta's sculpture park and sipping Franciacorta vintages, travelers in the 53-room northern Italian property's Cabriolet Suite can press a button to retract the roof of their room and reveal a spray of constellations above. Doubles from \$492, including breakfast daily and one 50-minute massage for two.
- The St. Regis Kanai Resort opened in February with 124 rooms in circular buildings arranged to imitate the star cluster Pleiades. The resort rests on a stretch of Mexico's Riviera Maya, part of the region known as the birthplace of the Maya people, where the stars and planets that governed their ancient calendar still shine over the lagoon-studded coast. Doubles from \$1,259, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit.
- For endless views of the South African sky, spend a night in the Wi-Fi-free openair Tinyeleti Treehouse, on the grounds of the four-lodge, 46-room Lion Sands Game Reserve. From their hideout above the banks of the Sabie River, guests may also catch glimpses of leopards or antelopes stopping by to water. On celestial safaris, guides point out planets and constellations made sharply visible in the absence of light pollution. Doubles from \$2,282, including all meals and one 45- or 60-minute massage per guest; tree-house stays from \$221.

– Emma Franke





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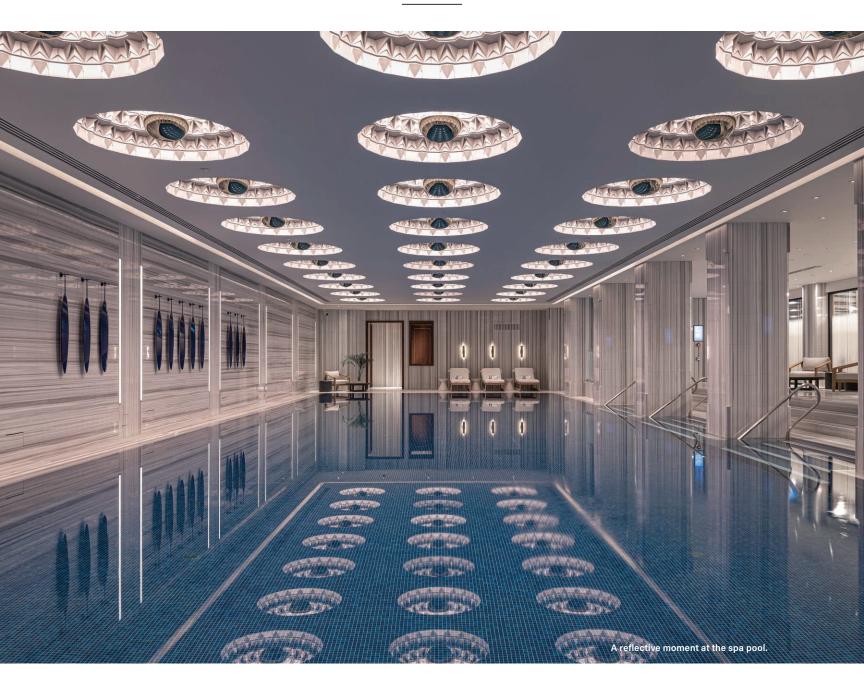
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Hotel News



Turkish Delight

At the mouth of the Bosporus Strait, a 1940s ferry terminal once greeted travelers arriving in Istanbul by boat. Today, **The Peninsula Istanbul'**s refurbished lobby and soaring 28-foot ceilings welcome visitors with the same water views – plus all-the-frills afternoon tea service. Part of a waterfront revitalization effort in the museum-centric Karakoy district, the recently opened 177-room urban resort sprawls among three historic buildings united by a glittering new ballroom and classic local design elements such as Marmara marble and kilim-style carpets. The 18,000-square-foot spa leans into traditional wellness with hammam rituals that refresh the skin through soaks and exfoliation, while a sleep treatment employs massage and a bronze *kasa* bowl technique to help rebalance rest patterns. In the nearly 5,500-square-foot Peninsula Suite, a terrace overlooks the Bosporus and the hotel's lavish gardens, while a private hammam, gym, and screening room beckon from inside. At rooftop restaurant Gallada, opening in June, chef Fatih Tutak (whose namesake restaurant earned two Michelin stars) will serve Turkish and Asian fare in the mosaic-tiled dining room or alfresco beneath pomegranate trees. And guests contribute to a cause with every stay: For every night booked at any Peninsula hotel in 2023, the brand will donate ten euros to earthquake relief efforts in Turkey. *Doubles from \$1,130, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit. - E.G.*

Abercrombie & Kent

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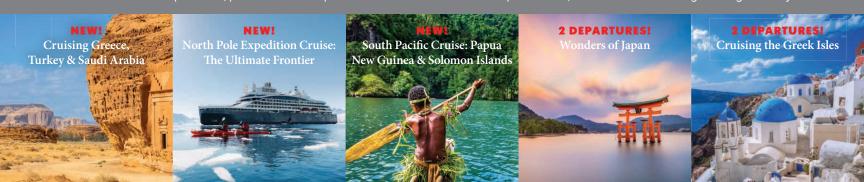
Every A&K voyage is led by our acclaimed Expedition Team on an exclusively chartered — and luxuriously all-inclusive — small ship, each featuring all-balcony accommodations, a fascinating enrichment program and an intimate guest capacity that never exceeds 199.

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With three all-new expeditions, plus additional departures of our Greek Isles and Japan cruises, this is our most exciting cruising season yet.



Hotel News

Greece's New Classic

In the 1960s, the likes of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Brigitte Bardot, and Frank Sinatra put the Athenian Riviera – a sun-washed stretch ten miles south of downtown Athens – on the map. Now a low-key beach alternative to bustling spots such as Sorrento or Santorini, Riviera town Glyfada welcomes the 127-room One&Only Aesthesis to its shores this fall. The resort, which recently began accepting reservations, pays homage to midcentury glam on 52 acres of beaches (one reserved for adults only) and pine forests. Minimalist furnishings and natural stone accents fill the waterfront bungalows and villas that welcome guests back from sunrise sea dips with private pools and outdoor fireplaces. Two restaurants showcase the bounty of Mediterranean cuisine with sustainably caught seafood and local wines, served at tables overlooking the Saronic Gulf. Just 20 minutes up the coast, travelers can explore the Acropolis in the morning before returning for a plunge in the thermal waters of nearby Lake Vouliagmeni, a walk in the resort's 15-acre forest preserve, or a sunset yacht turn. *Doubles from \$775, including breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit. – E.G.*



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Walking the Walk

Andrew McCarthy travels light and goes far.
INTERVIEW BY SALLIE LEWIS



EARLY THREE DECADES AGO, Andrew McCarthy walked 500 miles across Spain on the Camino de Santiago. "It changed my life," says the travel writer, New York Times best-selling author, director, and actor, who rose to fame in the 1980s with roles in classics such as St. Elmo's Fire, Pretty in Pink, and Less Than Zero. In 2021, he returned to the Camino with his 19-year-old son, a journey he recounts in his latest memoir, Walking with Sam: A Father, a Son, and Five Hundred Miles Across Spain, out May 9.

Today, McCarthy's work as an actor and a writer allows him to explore his curiosity and passion for storytelling. Wherever the road leads, he prides himself on planning very little and packing everything he needs in a carry-on. "One of the great benefits of travel is realizing all the things we can do without," he explains. "I try to go fast and loose."

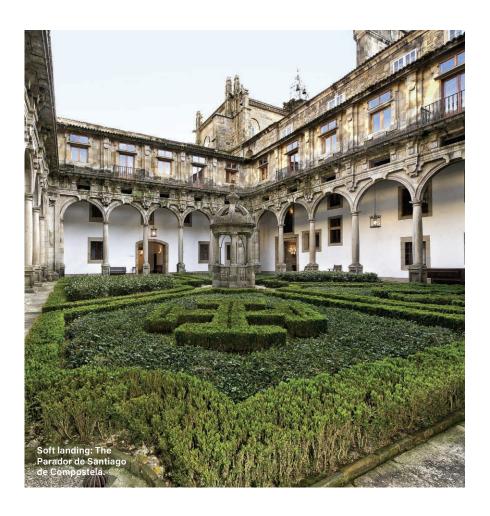
Although he doesn't consider himself a foodie, food has shaped some of his most profound experiences on the road. There was a perfect pain au chocolat on Paris' Avenue Kléber, a savory bowl of lemongrass soup on the streets of Luang Prabang, and even a slug in the Amazon. Over the years, McCarthy's love of remote places has guided him to far-flung corners, from Death Valley in eastern California to El Calafate and El Chaltén in Argentine Patagonia. Next up, he hopes, is a trip to the seventh continent. "I've wanted to go to Antarctica for some time," he says. "I'd like to get there before it melts."

MY TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

- **1.** A carry-on bag. I always carry on and need the same amount of clothing for four days as I do for a month there's nothing wrong with doing laundry in the hotel sink.
- **2.** An emergency stash of almond butter and rice crackers. Getting too hungry makes everything more difficult.
- **3.** My own tea, usually a Darjeeling first flush and a sencha.
- 4. A plot-heavy book, which is never about the destination I'm visiting.
- **5.** The smallest, soft-cover, unlined Moleskine notebooks for the story I'm covering.
- **6.** A handful of cheap pens: Bic or often hotel pens. Invariably, they stop working, so I always carry three in my pocket.
- 7. I wear a very inexpensive digital Timex watch and no other jewelry. Since I'm often traveling to places off the beaten track, I'm not interested in calling attention to myself.
- 8. A stash of melatonin because jet lag is a bitch.
- **9.** A **Tide to Go** detergent stick. It's a miracle at getting stains out quickly.
- 10. Extra Warby Parker reading glasses. You only need to lose your glasses once on the road to travel with a second pair.



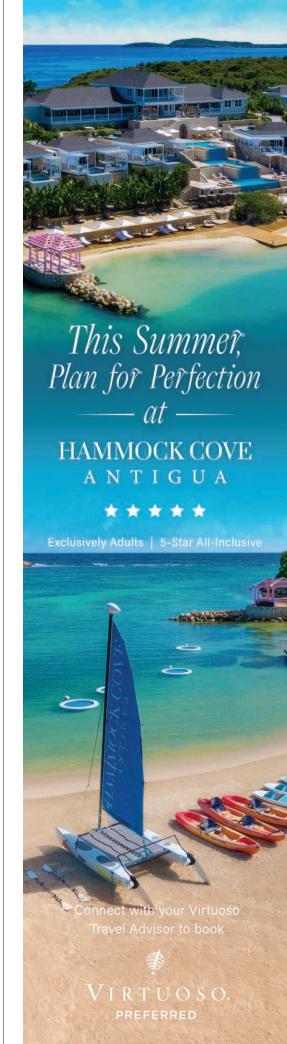
The Virtuoso Life



ANDREW MCCARTHY'S NORTHERN SPAIN

After three days of walking on the Camino de Santiago - also known as the Way of Saint James - the first town you come to is Pamplona. Founded in 75 BC, it has massive fortified walls dating to the sixteenth century. It's a center of Basque culture, with cobblestoned streets, great food, and the famous Running of the Bulls in early July. Each time I've been there, I've stayed longer than intended and had to drag myself away. Café Iruña in the Plaza del Castillo (Hemingway's favorite haunt) is the place to start; with coffee, cakes, and people-watching, hours slip by unnoticed. Walk in anywhere along Calle Estafeta or Calle San Nicolás and start eating pintxos, the Basque word for finger foods or tapas.

Farther down the trail is the city of León, with its famous Gothic cathedral and its nearly 20,000 square feet of stained glass. The nearby Húmedo neighborhood is buzzing with late-night street life, bars, and cafés. I've stayed out far too late every time I was in town and paid for it on the trail the next day. It was always worth it. And of course, there's Santiago de Compostela, the jewel of Galicia, in Spain's verdant west. The goal of every pilgrim is the cathedral, and the Praza do Obradoiro in front is the gathering place for walkers. I defy you to keep a dry eye as you see pilgrims arrive after a month of walking and witness the relief, the joy of completion. Then I always check into the Parador de Santiago de Compostela, Hostal Dos Reis Católicos across the square for some well-earned pampering. 9





Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, Québec City

Canada's Enchanted City

If you're looking for a vacation rich in culture and heavy on charm, Québec City is a revelation. Its natural surroundings offer a host of adventures that will open your heart to the unique history, flavors and peoples of the region.

Q CULTURE STOP: HISTORY ILLUMINATED

Onhwa' Luminia Night Walk *Wedake, Québec*

The Onhwa' Lumina Night Walk, an immersive experience shaped by the history of the Huron-Wendat Nation and created by renowned multi-media studio Moment Factory, is nothing short of magical. Under a blanket of stars, the 1.2 kilometer guided tour through the forests of Wedake, Que, just outside of Québec City, is a visually stunning, dream-like journey that celebrates Wendat traditions and way of life. (Tickets required for entry).



Known for its storied history, old-world architecture and sophisticated food scene, Québec City over-delivers on just about every measure of cultural charm. Steeped in French heritage and influences, its intimate atmosphere and unique features put it in a category of its own.

Among the most enchanting spots in the French-speaking provincial capital is Old Québec. The UNESCO World Heritage Site is the only destination north of Mexico City with historic ramparts still intact. Inside the walls, a bustling artisan and gastronomy scene comes to life against a backdrop of 17th and 18th-century architecture. Modern boutiques, cafés and galleries line its cobblestone streets and give way to spectacular sites like the Notre-Dame de Québec Basilica-Cathedral, the oldest church in Canada. But the crown jewel is Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, a castle-like luxury hotel perched above the St. Lawrence River that first opened its doors in 1893.

Québec City is also known for its worldclass museums, like the Musée de la Civilisation, designed by renowned architect Moshe Safdie. Don't miss "It's Our Story," a permanent exhibit produced in collaboration with 11 First Nations from the Québec region, that reflects on what it means to be Indigenous today. And for a taste of modern First Nations gastronomy, book a meal at Sagamité in Old Québec, where you'll also learn about Wendat culture.

To experience the full charm the region has to offer, head for the hills: Québec City's natural surroundings also make it the perfect gateway to a range of cultural experiences and outdoor adventures that fill the heart and feed the soul.



Les Fêtes de la Nouvelle France, Quebec City



Rue Saint -Jean-Baptiste, Baie-Saint-Paul

Q CULTURE STOP:

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Papeterie St-Gilles

St-Joseph-de-la-Rive, Québec

Watch artisans at work at Papeterie St-Gilles, a 60-year-old paper mill in St-Joseph-de-la-Rive, where paper is made from a cotton base, with gorgeous regional-flower inlays.



Charlevoix: A Chance to Recharge

Travel like a local with the six-day Romantic Québec City & Charming Charlevoix tour, hosted by active travel company Backroads. It starts and ends in the city, but the days in between are spent exploring the idyllic landscapes and quaint communities of the Charlevoix region by foot, bike and kayak — at whatever fitness level is right for you.

After a day hiking the coastal marshes and lush grasslands of Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Reserve, you'll hop on two wheels to explore the old stone cottages, churches and bucolic farms of the village of Isle-aux-Coudres.

More gorgeous scenery awaits in the mountainous surroundings north of Baie-St-Paul, where a trail through a pine forest delivers a panoramic view of the farmland that feeds the region's vibrant culinary scene. Then, it's off to paddle your way down the Gouffre River for a visit to the town itself, where you can browse shops, dine in gourmet restaurants and meet local artisans. (Fun fact: Baie-St-Paul has the highest concentration of art galleries of any town in Canada.)

The route back to Old Québec includes a

stop at the world-famous basilica of Saint-Anne-de-Beaupré, and a breathtaking view of 270-foot Montmorency Falls. Then it's one final ride to Québec's sister city of Lévis, and the most scenic picnic lunch you'll ever have, overlooking the massive waterfalls at Chutes-de-la Chaudière park.



Fromagerie Famille Migneron, Charlevoix

Q CULTURE STOP:

INTO THE OPEN

City Views

Sherbrooke, Québec

For a totally different perspective on the dynamic town of Sherbrooke, go for a paddle down the Corridor Bleu.



Water Views

Bromont, Québec

Relax with a long soak in open-air pools at the Balnea spa in Bromont, situated beside beautiful Gale lake.



Aerial Views

Coaticook, Québec

Appreciate the breathtaking scenery at Parc de la Gorge de Coaticook, from a spot on the longest suspended footbridge in North America.



The Eastern Townships: A Foodie's Dream

There's a good reason why the Eastern Townships made The New York Times' list of 52 places to travel in 2023: This stretch of peaceful countryside east of Montréal and south of Québec City is home to 31 idyllic towns and villages, four national parks and a dynamic culinary scene. The Flavors of French Canada Road Trip, provided by Canada By Design, offers a chance to slow down and truly savor this slice of foodie heaven.

Heading east from Montréal, the day's menu includes a visit to the chocolate museum in Bromont, and a stop at L'Orpailleur winery in Dunham, one of Quebec's top artisanal vintners. In Sherbrooke, enjoy a luxurious meal at Auguste gourmet bistro, which spotlights local produce.

From there, head to the gastronomical hub of Compton, which specializes in terroir, or to the Fromagerie Nouvelle-France to sample the region's distinct and savory sheep's-milk cheeses. Top it off by learning to saber a bottle of sparkling wine against an incredible natural backdrop at Le Cep d'Argent Vineyard in

This incredible journey wraps with two days exploring Québec City and Baie-Saint-Paul in Charlevoix.



Fromagerie La Station de Compton, Compton

Vignoble de L'Orpailleur, Dunham





Laurentides, Mont Tremblant

Mont Tremblant and Sacacomie: The Best of Both Worlds

If you're torn between the idea of immersing yourself in Quebécois culture and recharging in its vast, open spaces, a better question might be: why choose at all? Exploring La Belle Province, a 9-day tour by Entrée Destinations, offers the perfect balance for urban and outdoor enthusiasts.

Guided historical tours of Montréal and Québec City bookend this trip, with plenty of leisure time built in to explore the highend galleries, shops and restaurants of the province's two buzzing metropolises.

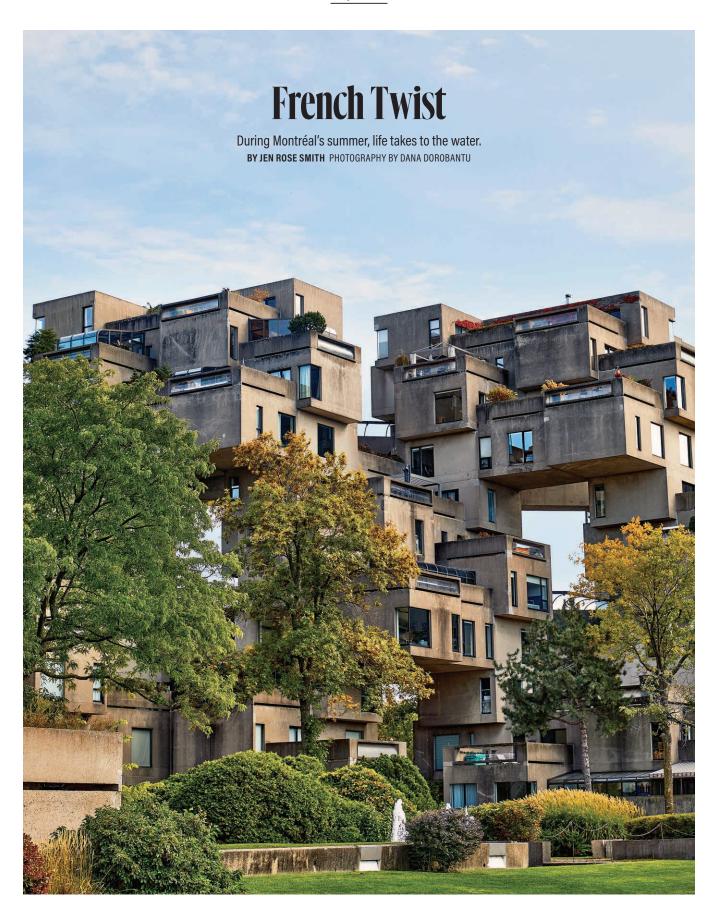
From Montréal, you'll escape into the great wide open on a self-guided drive through the Laurentian Mountains to Mont-Tremblant, a ski resort built for four seasons of outdoor adventuring. Spend the next two days basking in all the village has to offer: hike its gorgeous trails on foot or by horseback, ride the gondola to the mountain top for some truly epic views, or, if thrill-seeking is more your thing, jump on an ATV tour or river-rafting trip. Save some time to decompress in the thermal pools of the nearby Scandinave Spa.

Then, journey even deeper into nature as you drive three hours north-east to Sacacomie, which borders the Mastigouche Wildlife Reserve. A guided tour will connect you to the lakes, forests, flora and fauna of the region, while seaplane, boat and helicopter tours offer a totally different perspective. Either way, you'll want to have your camera handy: hares, wolves, black bears, beavers and moose are regulars here.

Before setting out for Québec City, take a pause and appreciate these awesome surroundings while relaxing in the pools at Hotel Sacacomie's eco-friendly GEOS spa.











Clockwise from top left: Surf's up on the Saint Lawrence River, cocktail hour at Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth's Nacarat bar, and the floating Canal Lounge. Opposite: Habitat 67.

GO FOR There's no salt air lingering in Montréal's cobblestoned port, but this is an island city nevertheless: Its yacht-lined wharves unfurl into the Saint Lawrence, a forest-filtered river wrapping the 182-square-mile Île de Montréal on its northeasterly way toward the sea. And when summer charges the city with highlatitude euphoria, a waterside perch feels like a spot at the town's most sparkling fete. A season-long fireworks festival fills sandy Clock Tower Beach with revelers, cyclists skim alongside the Lachine Canal, and surfers catch standing waves backdropped by brutalist architectural masterwork Habitat 67. In between, eddies of urban calm prevail. Ferry-turned-floating-spa Bota Bota, moored on the riverfront, has a water circuit with views to the downtown skyline.

EAT Inspired by eighteenth-century
Parisian guinguettes – open-air, riverside
wine bars – stylish Verdun Beach is an
indoor-outdoor hangout in the historic but
freshly hip Verdun neighborhood. Soughtafter Québécois bottles star on a wine list
tailored to summery menus of Canadian
oysters and locally sourced small plates.
(The restaurant's namesake beach, a



- 2. Riverside Saint Henri
- 3. Canal Lounge
- 4. Le Vin Papillon
- 5. Four Seasons Hotel Montreal
- 6. Ritz-Carlton, Montreal
- 7. Le Mount Stephen
- 8. Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth
- 9. Kamúy
- 10. Ssense Montréal
- 11. Bonsecours Market 12. Clock Tower Beach
- 12. Clock Tower Beach
- 13. Habitat 67
- 14. Bota Bota

City Guide



popular sunbathing spot, is an after-dinner stroll away.)

Island spirit prevails at intimate Kamúy, a Quartier des Spectacles restaurant helmed by Haitian Canadian chef-owner Paul Harry Toussaint. A pan-Caribbean menu changes with the seasons, but mainstays remain, such as Toussaint's jerk chicken, and ceviche enlivened by Scotch bonnet peppers and yuzu. And while beachy cocktails channel year-round sunshine, true aficionados go in for Kamúy's eclectic collection of fine rums.

In a city captivated by natural wine, intimate Little Burgundy eatery **Le Vin Papillon** offers glasses that surprise, from peach-hued Umbrian macerations to chilled natural Beaujolais. Unpretentious small plates play indulgent counterpoint: Vegetables star, but a mouthful of the restaurant's *jambon blanc* topped with browned butter and shaved Avonlea cheddar is among Montréal's signature pleasures.

DRINK Walking past an abandoned malt factory into summer-only **Riverside Saint Henri** is like stumbling upon a secret world – one with a basketball court, an ice-cream truck, and more – within the up-and-coming Saint Henri neighborhood. The hulking, graffitied ruins frame a lushly palm-fringed bar, which draws glittering revelers to sip cucumber-basil gin fizzes and Montréalmade IPAs as DJs spin music.

Docked beside the art deco landmark that houses Atwater Market – a stop for fine Québec-made cheese and other gourmet finds – the floating **Canal Lounge** has all the intimate charm of a yacht party. Windows spanning the restored 50-year-old bateau-mouche (touring boat) reveal a handful of indoor tables with expansive views across nineteenth-century Lachine Canal, built to bypass the Saint Lawrence River's powerful Lachine Rapids. The most sought-after seats, however, are in the teensy, greenery-draped rooftop pavilion, where visitors linger over crimson bottles of sangrialike tinto de verano.

SHOP The silver-domed **Bonsecours Market** lends a defining glint to Old Montréal's skyline. An agricultural market for more than a century, the 1847 building now houses three restaurants, plus 13 boutiques and three galleries stocking everything from Inuit soapstone carvings of Arctic animals to French-Canadian antiques and maple syrup.

The lone global storefront of luxury fashion purveyor **Ssense Montréal** is a fivestory heritage building in Old Montréal, its carved-stone facade wrapping a concrete showroom for brands such as Jun Takahashi's streetwear-inspired Undercover and haute headliners Prada and Givenchy. While displays are highly curated, reservation-only personal styling appointments are the chance to try any item from a vast online catalog.

STAY A brass-and-black plaque establishes the 129-room Ritz-Carlton, Montreal as a landmark of classic style amid the Golden Square Mile neighborhood's historic homes. An indoor, rooftop saltwater pool has enviable views across downtown and Mount Royal, while elegant afternoon teas in the ground-floor Palm Court are the 1912 hotel's genteel hallmark. Doubles from \$500, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

John Lennon and Yoko Ono recorded "Give Peace a Chance" during a 1969 "bed-in" on the 17th floor of the 950-room, downtown Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth. Suite 1742 is still replete with John and Yoko memorabilia, and their bohemian spirit extends to the hotel's bold colors, modern-art installations, and geometric motifs. Doubles from \$410, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

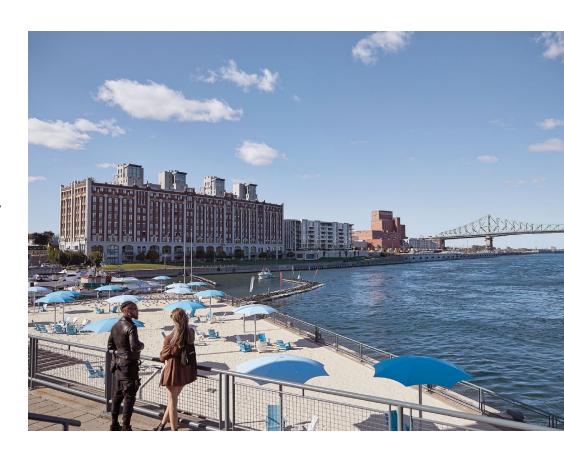
Fitted into a Scottish baron's stately neoclassical mansion, the 90-room

Le Mount Stephen retains all of its 1880 grandeur. The hotel's chandelier-lit, wood-paneled Bar George honors the British roots of George Stephen,

1st Baron Mount Stephen, with dishes that include a superb beef Wellington; locals know it for a fine menu of retro cocktails, such as the gin-forward

Corpse Reviver No. 2. Doubles from \$300, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

Opened in 2019 adjoining luxury department store Holt Renfrew Ogilvy, the 169-room Four Seasons Hotel Montreal is all gleaming marble and modernist chic. Swedish American star chef Marcus Samuelsson is behind the hotel's bar and third-floor Marcus Restaurant + Terrace, where an ocean-inspired menu features a famously sumptuous seafood tower. Doubles from \$585, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit. •







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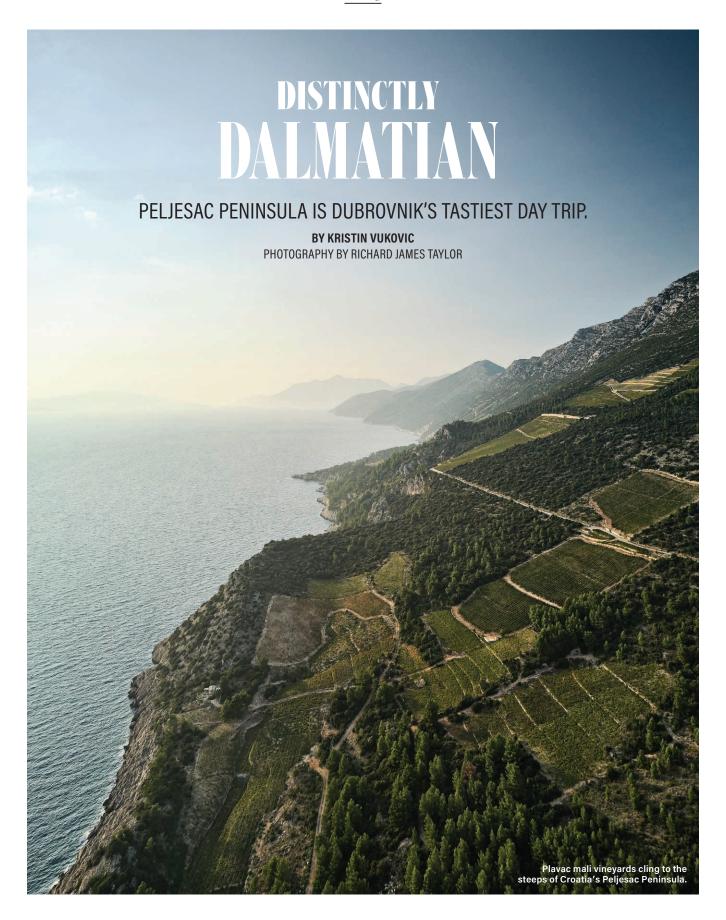


Best Service



Santorini, Greece

Best Value-For-Money





orange peel and white

chocolate mousse.

OU WANT TO EAT oysters already?" asked my guide, Ivan Vukovic, shaking his head. It was 9 AM.

Our waiter at Konoba Baca in the town of Ston on Croatia's Peljesac Peninsula, however, didn't blink at my order. "Naravno," he replied ("of course"), returning a few minutes later with a plate of freshly shucked European flats.

Farmed in Mali Ston Bay, a sheltered marine reserve, these Protected Designation of Origin oysters have a distinctive flavor that comes in part from the mineral-rich water of karst springs. Mixing with seawater, it produces bivalves with a briny minerality that lingers and awakens the senses. They're delectable at any time of day, but I drew the line at breakfast wine – there would be plenty of winetasting to come.

About an hour's drive north from Dubrovnik, Peljesac Peninsula is the perfect day excursion for wine and oyster aficionados. And now it's more accessible than ever, thanks to the new Peljesac Bridge, opened in July 2022, which connects Dubrovnik and the southernmost region of Croatia with the rest of the country; previously, travelers were required to pass through a narrow strip of Bosnian coastline with border control. The island of Korcula is also easily accessible from Peljesac via a short ferry ride from the peninsula's tip.

This famous Dalmatian Coast wine region provides ideal growing conditions for Croatia's playac mali grape,

Dining

most likely an indigenous descendant of ancestral zinfandel and another old Croatian variety, dobricic. In the peninsula's premier Dingac wine-growing region, steep vineyards plummet into the Adriatic. Combine its specific terroir with more than 2,800 hours of annual sunshine, and you get peak plavac mali.

Aside from some of the region's best shellfish, Ston draws travelers for salt pans that date to Roman times and for its more than three miles of snaking walls constructed over centuries, beginning in 1334. Pre- or post-oysters, visitors can walk these fortifications connecting Ston and the village of Mali Ston to take in sweeping views of Mali Ston Bay, but Ivan and I had an appointment at Edivo, Croatia's first underwater winery, so ten half shells the better, we pressed on.

EDI BAJURIN AND Ivo Segovic's grandfathers both owned vineyards on Peljesac, so wine-making was in the Edivo "There's no grape in the world that would function better in this crazy, sunny, stony, windy terroir – it's Dalmatia in a bottle."

founders' blood. Bajurin's idea for aging wine in amphorae was hatched after his sister gave him a gift basket for his birthday that contained a bottle of wine with a piece of an amphora on it. "Throughout history, people transported liquids in amphorae on wooden ships, and there are plenty of old sunken ones in the sea around Peljesac,"

said Bajurin, an avid diver who's found several broken pieces of amphorae on the seabed. "But it was only after my sister's gift that the idea was born to close the glass bottle in the amphora." People were skeptical about the idea of an underwater winery. "Ivo's father said that everybody was laughing at us," Bajurin recalls.

After aging for a year in Slavonian oak barrels, the plavac mali is bottled, encased in amphorae, and stored to continue aging 60 to 80 feet underwater for at least 550 days. The sea provides darkness and a constant temperature of 60 degrees, which are essential for developing the wine's dark-berry flavors and aromas. Visitors can pick up a Navis Mysterium amphora with a bottle of wine still encased in it - a natural work of art dotted with oyster shells, which attach themselves to the exterior during the aging process. "Every bottle is unique, shaped by the sea," Bajurin said.





A HALF HOUR up the peninsula, Ernest and Ivana Tolj's family-owned Saints Hills Winery earns international acclaim for its reds – all made from plavac mali grapes (the winery produces *Wine Enthusiast*'s highest-rated Croatian exports). With rich plum and cherry notes and an earthy finish, vintages from its Sv. Lucia vineyard in Dingac showcase the varietal best. "There's no grape in the world that would function better in this crazy, sunny, stony, windy terroir," Ivana said. "It's Dalmatia in a bottle."

Saints Hills also wins praise with its restaurant, which requires an advance

reservation. Still, at lunch I was somewhat surprised to learn that a few diners had made the day trip from Split in central Dalmatia, which would have been unimaginable before the bridge opened. The seasonal three-course, wine-paired menu rotates weekly between "the Land" and "the Sea." Two highlights from my sea-focused lunch that riffed on traditional dishes: brudet, a Croatian fish stew, reimagined with squid and handcrafted paccheri pasta in a slow-cooked tomato and red wine sauce, and an orange-shaped dessert made with candied orange peel and

white chocolate mousse that celebrated traditional Dalmatian *arancini* (candied orange peels).

Travelers looking to spend more than a day exploring Peljesac can do no better than a suite at Villa Korta Katarina & Winery, located near the peninsula's tip in the town of Orebic – the passion project of Americans Lee and Penny Anderson, who traveled to postwar Croatia in 2001 to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and fell in love with Dalmatia and its wines. Situated near the shore on sprawling grounds, which include a swimming

Dining

pool and a hot tub with a cascading waterfall, the villa is fit for royalty.

Korta Katarina can arrange a guided tour of its Dingac or Postup vineyards – some of the area's steepest and rockiest – or the estate-grown zinfandel next to the villa and winery. As I toured the Dingac vineyard, the car stuttered on the steep uphill and I caught my

breath a few times. But the views really took my breath away: Surveying the determined vines clinging to precarious slopes, I understood why plavac mali reaches its potential here. "If the grapes suffer, it's much better quality," enologist Ante Cibilic told me.

Later, in Korta Katarina's lavish tasting room, the five-course menu

featured a refreshing asparagus and spring onion gazpacho with scampi topped with potato chips. A sampling of the winery's portfolio included Reuben's Private Reserve, named after Lee Anderson's father. It was a standout expression of plavac mali – as full-bodied, complex, and bold as Peljesac's wild and rugged terroir.

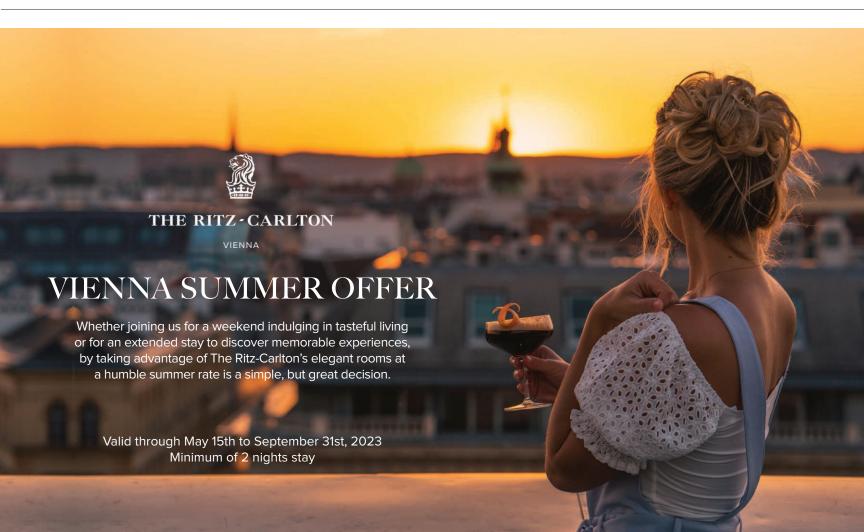
Prime Time Peljesac

STAY Antiques collected during the Andersons' travels fill **Villa Korta Katarina & Winery**, lending distinct personalities to each of its eight suites overlooking the Adriatic and the nearby island of Korcula. Doubles from \$2,075, including breakfast daily and private, one-way airport transfers to or from Dubrovnik or Split.

<u>60</u> Virtuoso travel advisors can work with **Leonidas Travel** to craft custom itineraries throughout Croatia and its Peljesac Peninsula. Active day-trip options from Dubrovnik include a day of cycling around Peljesac, with a stop in Ston and a visit to the family-run Milos Winery. After working up an appetite, take a boat to visit oyster and

mussel beds, then sample oysters directly from the sea and indulge in mussels *buzara*, a traditional preparation with olive oil, garlic, wine, fresh herbs, and breadcrumbs. *Departures: Any day through 2023; from \$950 for two.*

Calvados Club's full-day culinary Peljesac excursion from Dubrovnik features a tour and winetasting at Milos Winery, which produces some of Croatia's best organic wines; a private winetasting and lunch at Korta Katarina; and a stop at Skaramuca Winery, one of the peninsula's top producers. The day concludes with a tour of Ston's salt pans and city walls. *Departures: Any day through 2023; from \$1,885 for two.* ♥









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HERE MIGHT NOT be a more enduring European skyline than Edinburgh's. Gray-brick, ageworn buildings evoke a certain heritage, with some structures - such as the Hub at the foot of the city's castle shooting into the sky in pointy defiance of modernity. Edinburgh's architectural language is fiercely medieval, and that's part of its allure; travelers flock to the Scottish capital to soak in this atmosphere, visit castles, take ghost tours, and drink Scotch. However, the 2021 completion of the glistening and controversial Saint James Quarter - a swirling, bronze-colored, mixed-use pile by London firm Jestico + Whiles shook up the city's visual identity.

It's been a widely debated upheaval, with many locals nicknaming the building "the Turd" due to its form and color. Thankfully, that hot take has been changing. Hugo Macdonald, an Edinburgh native who, along with his partner, James Stevens, recently opened Bard, a design and craft shop in the creative enclave of Leith, notes that much of the initial uproar has since morphed into something resembling pride. "It says much about the Scots' defiance, however, that although people still like to hate it, they already speak quite fondly about it," he says.

This questionably shaped building aside, across the country there's a dynamic movement to reinvigorate the Scottish design scene. Scots have always been steadfastly patriotic, and Macdonald suggests that this push to reestablish a national creative identity that goes beyond overused ideas around tartan, kilts, and heavy tweeds could be tied to timely conversations about independence. "Naturally, that sharpens the focus of questioning who we are," he says. "What is our unique cultural identity?"

When buying for Bard, Macdonald tells me as I browse a table of ceramics, he and Stevens look for products that speak to the question of "What is Scottishness?" Their answer displays breadth and depth over two floors of wares from 40 different makers,



Bard's ode to Scottish design and (inset) weaver Araminta Campbell in her farmhouse studio.





"On a nice day, plan time to walk the Portobello Beach promenade and stop for brunch at Miro's or The Beach House."

- Alison Garven, Virtuoso travel advisor, Glasgow

designers, and manufacturers spanning the country.

There's plenty of the expected here: cozy wool sweaters in bright primary colors created by one of the last remaining knitwear makers on Shetland, and handmade leather place mats by McRostie Leather, a Scottish brand that dates to 1887. Some of the shop's most striking works, though, don't come with quite that pedigree. I'm immediately drawn to the shiny purple vessels by Wobbly Digital, a Glasgow-based studio founded by Korean artist and Scottish resident Soorin Shin. Fashioned out of recycled plastic, her 3D-printed pieces come in a variety of whimsical forms. In addition to voluptuous vases, Bard also sells Shin's mirrors, made to look like the sun with rays shooting out of it, and an all-yellow objet d'art of a toad gazing up at the moon. Looking at and touching these joyous pieces, it's hard to understand how they might address the idea of Scottishness - but according to Shin, they reflect the country's relationship to its natural surroundings. "Scottishness is knowing how to face and treat nature," she says.

ONE OF THE BEST spots to see how "the Turd" fits into the Edinburgh skyline (or not) is Calton Hill, the mini mountain in the middle of the city. And there it is, a shimmering brown swirl surrounded by spires, columns, oxidized domes, and timeworn brick buildings. It's a shock, to be sure. The hill, however, is also home to the City

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Observatory, a former astronomical building that's been occupied by the art gallery Collective since 2013. In addition to staging avant-garde and interactive exhibitions, Collective also curates a great shop with made-in-Scotland merch. Two of its most creative products: fragrances by Glasgow-based artist Clara Ursitti, inspired by the East of Scotland Car Club's prized vehicles, and Katy West's cork-topped, bone-china import jars inspired by the trade that historically pulled into the Port of Leith, which is visible from the hill.

To delve deeper into Scottish design, I meet up with Christopher Sleigh, creative director of Sleigh's, which works with Virtuoso advisors to create custom itineraries for travelers throughout the UK and Ireland. "Through the recent resurgence, there are some wonderful opportunities to gain a glimpse into the creative heart of the Scottish people," he says, as we make our way to self-taught textile designer Araminta Campbell, who recently relocated her atelier to an 1822 farmhouse 20 minutes northwest of the city center. In truth, the place looks more like a small castle. What farmhouse needs watchtowers?

Its imposing exterior gives way to warmth when we step inside, and I hear the click-clack of what I later learn is a vintage loom weaving someone's family-heirloom-to-be. By-appointment visits include a brief introduction to handweaving and how Campbell and her team source materials. The price tags give me pause, but then again, an elegant, one-of-a-kind scarf handwoven from 100 percent British alpaca (\$1,445) is a genuine extension of ageold Scottish craft you'll never find in High Street shops.

Campbell knows her niche craft is slowly disappearing and is planning to launch an apprenticeship program for young creatives with an aptitude for weaving. "We're not only focused on producing beautiful products," she says, "but on keeping traditional skills alive and relevant."



On the other end of the spectrum, contemporary menswear designer Kestin Hare is building a reputation with his brand, Kestin. Hare's new shop in the trendy Stockbridge neighborhood is a showcase for stylish gansey-knit fisherman sweaters, wool-fleece jackets, and wear-with-everything pleated corduroy chinos. A quick scan of the space reveals looks I might find in Paris or Brooklyn boutiques. But when I join Hare later in his Leith studio, he explains that his Scottish references are subtle but intentional. For instance, a collection he's working on is built around family trips to the east coast fishing town of Port Seton and Cockenzie and the artist John Bellany's paintings of it.

Hare has produced shirts and shirt jackets in the same shades – oranges, yellows, and terra-cottas – as the buildings in Bellany's works, while the pastel mints and pale blues used for the sky and the sea's royal blue and deep navy show up in chore jackets and widewale corduroy shirts. Textiles are also rope-dyed before being turned into shirts, to give them unique patterns and reinforce the collection's nautical theme. "We like to pull out references from art, music, culture, architecture," Hare says. "Some of them are more well known than others, but it always comes back to our roots in Scotland."

After my visit to the Kestin HQ, I make my way back to its Stockbridge storefront. The shop also carries a handful of giftable items by third-party creatives, such as rough-hewn ceramic espresso cups by Cara Guthrie, who's based just south of the city, as well as candles made in collaboration with Jorum Studio, a perfumery around the corner. But my pick is a warm, cozy Shetland sweater in classic charcoal – a comforting piece to bring home the best of old and new Scotland.



Inside I hear the clickclack of what I later learn is a vintage loom weaving someone's family-heirloom-to-be.

Designs on Edinburgh

STAY One of the city's most anticipated openings, the 33-room **Gleneagles Townhouse** (sister property of the iconic Gleneagles hotel in the Ochil Hills countryside) occupies a nineteenth-century former bank. At its restaurant, The Spence, towering marble columns and chairs cloaked in pink velvet provide the backdrop for a see-and-be-seen breakfast, lunch, or dinner of global favorites. Work off all that indulgence in the stylish fitness club, where both locals and hotel guests turn up for the daily schedule of HIIT and yoga classes. *Doubles from \$705, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

Designer Olga Polizzi has created an ode to Scotland at Rocco Forte's 187-room baronial-meets-Victorian property, **The Balmoral**. Doormen don kilts with subtle nods to local motifs, while shades of blue evoke the country's many lochs and floral wallpaper channels its bucolic countryside. *Doubles from \$645, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

Located near the new Saint James Quarter, **Cheval The Edinburgh Grand** greets guests with 50 contemporary apartments in the former headquarters of the National Bank of Scotland. Studios and one- to three-bedroom units come with spacious living rooms, midcentury furniture, and stand-alone soaking tubs. *Doubles from \$370, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

60 Virtuoso on-site connection **Sleigh** works with travel advisors to give travelers an insider's take on Edinburgh. One example: a custom itinerary that includes visits with a jeweler who holds a Royal Warrant of Appointment and with a cashmere designer before a tour of the world's first vertical whisky distillery. The day wraps up with an exclusive appointment with Araminta Campbell in her atelier just outside the city. *Departures: Any day through 2023; from \$1,745.* **9**





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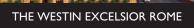


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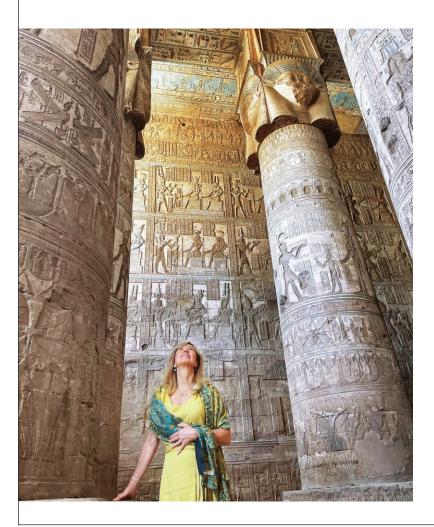
Fit for the Gods

Pharaohs and pyramids, temples and tombs – Egypt has endured as a bucket-list destination for millennia. In 2021, AmaWaterways introduced **Nile River** sailings on the 72-passenger *AmaDahlia*; a sister ship, the *AmaLilia*, joins the fleet in 2024. On an 11-night round-trip-from-Cairo journey, travelers spend three days in the capital (including a day trip to the Pyramids of Giza) before flying to Luxor to set off on the Nile. On board, cruisers can expect fine dining, cocktail parties, massages,

sundeck pool sessions, and local entertainment – think belly dancers and whirling dervishes. Guided shore excursions hit all the ancient highlights, from King Tut's treasures and the Luxor Temple to the Valleys of the Kings and Queens. Passengers also enjoy exclusive access to a Nubian village and the Tomb of Queen Nefertari. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 5, 2023, through December 30, 2024; from \$5,049.*

Into the Valley

Flanked on either side by castle-dotted and vineyard-lined hillsides, the **Rhine River** is one of the world's most picturesque cruising destinations. AmaWaterways introduces travelers to the region on seven-night sailings between Amsterdam and Basel. Port calls include Rhine Valley favorites and under-the-radar gems, and cruisers are spoiled for choice with multiple complimentary shore excursions in every port. In Germany, for example, cruisers can hike through vineyards in Rüdesheim or join a





wine country pedal in Breisach; in Riquewihr, France, they can learn about the town's history on a guided stroll. Days are capped off back on board with a gracious pour of a local varietal. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 11, 2023, through November 21, 2024; from \$2,399.*

Cultural Exchange

Another era awaits on the **Mekong River**, which flows for more than 3,000 miles past Southeast Asia's fishing villages. On seven-night sailings between My Tho, Vietnam, and Kampong Cham, Cambodia, on the 124-passenger *AmaDara*, cruisers visit craftspeople, ride in tuk-tuks, and roam centuries-old palaces. On board, cultural immersion continues with regional cuisine at The Chef's Table and entertainment such as Khmer folk dancing in the Saigon Lounge. Bonus: Pre- or post-cruise add-ons in Saigon and Siem Reap give travelers the opportunity to linger. *Departures: Multiple dates, August 21, 2023, through April 14, 2025; from \$2,399.*

Viva la Vida

With two new itineraries and ships launching in 2024, AmaWaterways is set to become the first major river-cruise line to sail Colombia's **Magdalena River**. The country's vivid art, savory cuisine, and lush natural surroundings come to life on two seven-night voyages between Cartagena and Barranquilla on the 60-passenger *AmaMagdalena* or the 64-passenger *AmaMelodia*. Cruisers explore Cartagena's colorful streets, the UNESCO World Heritage port of Mompox, the "floating village" of Nueva Venecia, and more, while being treated to exclusive street jazz shows, folkloric *cumbia* performances, and Carnavalinspired celebrations. *Departures: Multiple dates, March 30 through December 21, 2024; from \$3,599.*

From far left: AmaWaterways cofounder Kristin Karst at Egypt's Temple of Hathor, sundeck views in the Rhine Gorge, the *AmaDara* on the Mekong, and Cartagena.





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ALOHA, WAIKIKI

The Royal Hawaiian was made for romance.

HE ROYAL HAWAIIAN, a Luxury Collection Resort, Waikiki, has held court over Oahu's Waikiki Beach for nearly 100 years, earning the iconic nickname the "Pink Palace." Whether you're on your honeymoon, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or just retreating for a little Old Hawaii-inspired magic, here's how to make the most of a stay at the dreamy resort.

Indulge Together

Guests choose between two distinct sets of accommodations: the Historic Wing's elegant rooms, surrounded by gardens, or the Mailani Tower's contemporary spaces, all with **Pacific Ocean views**. After settling in, head downstairs for a couple's lomi lomi massage at the Abhasa Spa before a history-themed tour of the property – the resort hosts an array of complimentary activities daily. Later, it's cocktail time at the Mai Tai Bar, followed by dinner at Azure, where a beachside table offers a prime sunset perch. Candlelit surroundings set the mood for enjoying upscale seasonal dishes.

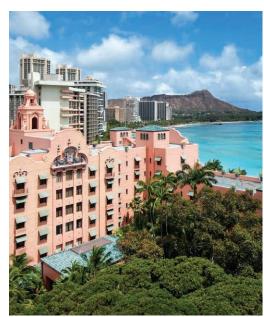
Bonding Experiences

Nothing brings you closer together than teaming up to conquer Waikiki's breaks: The Royal Hawaiian's water-sports center arranges an array of ocean-centric activities, including canoe outings, stand-up paddleboard sessions, and private surf lessons. Understanding Hawaiian culture is an essential part of a stay at the resort: The Royal Hawaiian's director of cultural services, Kehaulani Kam, has been introducing guests to the islands' mo'omeheu (culture) for more than 50 years. Sign up for a lei-making class, take a hula lesson, attend the twice-weekly Aha'aina luau, or join Kam for a Hiuwai, a sacred **pre-sunrise blessing ceremony** on the beach.

Destination I Do's

Its photogenic rosy hue and elegant Spanish-Moorish architecture make The Royal Hawaiian a fairy-tale setting for weddings. Couples can exchange vows on the Ocean Lawn with its unobstructed views of Waikiki Beach or share their first married kiss in the palm-lined Coconut Grove courtyard, which offers a more intimate, **royal-inspired atmosphere**. (Fun fact: The courtyard sits over the former site of Queen Kaahumanu's Summer Palace.) After a memorable day, newlyweds can retreat to one of the resort's four Prestige Suites – featuring private balconies, spacious living rooms, and soaking tubs – to toast to their next chapter.







From left: The Royal Hawaiian's "Pink Palace"-inspired facade, Diamond Head views, and a palatial breezeway.

WHERE TO CRUISE NEXT

To find some of Europe's most popular and under-the-radar ports, sail north. Here, three cities – and Oceania Cruises voyages – we've got our eyes on.

An Irish Intro

Georgian architecture, literary clout, and a boisterous pub scene characterize **Dublin**, Ireland's capital city, which the 1,250passenger Marina visits during a 13-night Reykjavík-to-London sailing. Cruisers can choose from an array of excursions: Take a walking tour through the city, past Merrion Square, into a pub for a pint of Guinness, and around Trinity College's 400-year-old campus. Or hop from cruise ship to riverboat to see dozens of the city's most historic spots from the water, including the Ha'penny Bridge and Saint Patrick's Cathedral. For a dose of bucolic Irish countryside, join a tour to County Wicklow to explore the ancient site of Glendalough and the immaculate Powerscourt House & Gardens. Departure: August 22; from \$3,899.



Arctic Encounters

With fewer than 20,000

residents, **Nuuk**, **Greenland**, remains a remote milieu of Inuit, Viking, and Danish cultures, set 150 miles below the Arctic Circle. The *Marina* calls on Nuuk after sailing the Arctic Passage during a 14-night Tromsø, Norway-to-Reykjavík voyage. One of the best ways to see Greenland's largest city is through the eyes of a local family — Oceania Cruises connects passengers to one on a half-day excursion that includes a visit to a Nuuk residence for a chat over coffee and cake. The discovery continues on a drive through Old Nuuk and past the quaint, harborfront National Museum. *Departure: August 7; from \$4,399.*

Nordic Cool

The **Faroe Islands**, marooned between Scotland and Iceland in the northeast Atlantic, feel like Iceland 15 years ago: an otherworldly destination quickly shooting up everyone's wish lists. Untamed nature reigns in the archipelago, where the 1,250-passenger *Riviera* makes a stop on a 17-night Oslo-to-London sailing. During a visit to the fishing village of Torshavn, the islands' capital, cruisers can catch a boat to the windswept Vestmanna sea cliffs, a rookery teeming with puffins, fulmars, and kittiwakes, or they can head to Eysturoy Island to see the village of Gjogv and glimpse its massive offshore sea stacks. *Departure: August 5; from \$6,099*.

IT'S YOUR HEART THAT TAKES YOU PLACES

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A SLICE OF PARADISE

From Aruba to Atlantis, Pleasant Holidays takes Caribbean getaways to the next level.

HIS SUMMER, we're craving turquoise waters, sugar-sand beaches, and afternoons spent on island time. Virtuoso travel advisors work with **Pleasant Holidays** to create complete vacation packages across the Caribbean (and worldwide) that include airfare, travel protection, and plenty of perks at some of the region's best resorts, including these three standouts.

Home Away from Home

Invite everyone to the Dominican Republic and the 247-room **Casa de Campo Resort & Villas** – there's plenty of room to spread out in one of the three- to ten-bedroom villas, each with its own pool, private chef, and golf cart. An abundance of activities keeps everyone happy: Snorkel offshore, play a round of golf (Virtuoso travelers receive a \$200 credit for tee times or spa treatments), laze on Minitas Beach, or saddle up for a horseback trail ride. Photo ops abound in Altos de Chavón, Casa de Campo's re-creation of a sixteenth-century Mediterranean village – it's especially magical after dark when live music reverberates over the cobblestoned streets.

Endless Summer

On an island that receives an average of 300 annual days of sun, chances for a great beach day are high at **The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba**. Mornings at the 320-room resort begin with breakfast at Solanio (complimentary for Virtuoso travelers), before guests take their pick of water-sports pursuits — diving, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, sailing, snorkeling, and more — on Palm Beach. Adults can slip away to the spa or casino while kids keep busy with games, crafts, and educational programs at the seasonal Ritz Kids club, then the entire crew can reconvene for a field trip to Aruba's butterfly farm or donkey sanctuary.

Privacy, Please

In the Bahamas, Paradise Island's famously pink mega-resort Atlantis holds a dizzying array of attractions, from aquariums and a Mandara Spa to a championship golf course and a 141-acre water park. Guests of **The Cove at Atlantis** have access to it all while cloistering in their own 600-room ultraluxe hotel-within-a-hotel, complete with refined ocean-view suites, private beachfront cabanas, and an adults-only pool. Virtuoso travelers receive room upgrades and complimentary breakfast for two daily at Mosaic, one of 21 restaurants across Atlantis.







From top: One of Casa de Campo's three golf courses, sunset at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba, and The Cove at Atlantis' adults-only oasis.



THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY IN MADRID & SEVILLE







Inspired by the work of the famous Spanish painter Velázquez, featuring a rooftop terrace with a pool and hot tub, **Palacio de los Duques Gran Meliá** is nestled in the cultural heart of Madrid. Next to the Royal Palace, Royal Theater and the Almudena Cathedral, it offers exclusivity and a personalized experience. Offering the RedLevel Lounge, á la carte breakfast and more, it is the ultimate hideaway. Standard room category guests receive FREE access to the RedLevel Lounge and RedLevel room categories receive \$100 hotel credit for their stay.¹

Hotel Colón Gran Meliá is one of Seville's city monuments. With a neoclassical façade and domed roof blended with a contrasting modern interior, it has been a part of the cityscape of Seville since its inauguration in 1929 for the Universal Exhibition. It can be found close to both the Alcazar Palace, the Cathedral and Giralda as well as the city's main tourist attractions. Once per stay, two guests receive a complimentary lunch or dinner.²



Virtuoso Amenities at both hotels include room upgrades, daily breakfast, early/late check-in/out and complimentary Wi-Fi³.

Ask about complete vacation packages including hotel and resort accommodations, convenient flights, exciting activities, travel protection coverage with cancel-for-any-reason options and more.

CONTACT YOUR TRAVEL ADVISOR TODAY

¹Hotel credit not combinable, not valid on room rate and no cash value if not redeemed in full.

²Excludes alcohol, taxes and gratuities. Minimum 3-courses and value of \$100 USD.

³Virtuoso Amenities: Applies to new bookings only. Minimum 3-night stay required. Amenities are subject to change and availability. Certain restrictions apply. Select room categories, rate codes, age restrictions, minimum length of stay and advance reservations may apply for certain amenities. Please ask for details. Blackout dates may apply. Not responsible for errors or omissions. Pleasant Holidays acts only as an agent for cruise & tour providers listed. CST# 1007939-10. Pleasant Holidays is registered with the State of Florida as a Seller Of Travel ST#37983. Copyright⊚2023 Pleasant Holidays, LLC. All Rights Reserved.



INTO THE LAST FRONTIER

Don't decide between seeing Alaska by land or by sea – do both.

LASKA CAPTIVATES WITH ITS GLACIER-LINED FJORDS and wildlife-rich coastline, but travelers who venture farther inland find even more unfettered wilderness, historic gold rush towns, and fascinating local culture. **Holland America Line** helps cruisers see it all on an array of cruisetours that seamlessly combine Inside Passage sailings with stays in Denali National Park and the Yukon Territory.

From Sea to Sky

Holland America's cruisetours range from 8 to 17 nights – and can begin either on land or at sea. On a nine-night, Vancouver, British Columbia-to-Anchorage journey, six days on the 2,106-passenger *Nieuw Amsterdam* allow for Indigenous village visits in Ketchikan and iceberg-spotting in Glacier Bay National Park. After disembarking in Whittier, travelers board the line's own glass-domed railway, the McKinley Explorer, for an **epic train ride** through land unseen by most. After arriving at Holland America Line's private wilderness lodge, the McKinley Chalet Resort, guests spend two nights keeping watch for Denali National Park's "big five" (bears, moose, caribou, Dall sheep, and gray wolves) before heading home via another ride on the McKinley Explorer to Anchorage. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 21 through September 10; from \$1,309.*

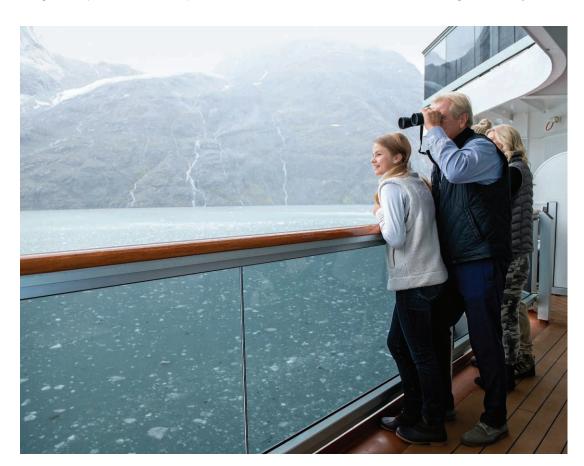
Uncharted Territory

Spanning 186,000 square miles across Canada's northwestern corner, the Yukon is about the size of California, with just a sliver of the population. Holland America Line is the only cruise line that brings guests into this **untamed region**: Travelers can venture there on a 12-night, Vancouver, British Columbia-to-Anchorage cruisetour that pairs a three-night Inside Passage sailing on the 1,432-passenger *Volendam* with an overnight in Skagway, three nights in the Yukon, and three nights in Denali National Park. After disembarking the *Volendam*, guests have the option to saloon-hop in Dawson City (the epicenter of the 1890s Klondike gold rush), take an authentic paddle-wheel cruise on the Yukon River, or hike through Miles Canyon.

Departures: Multiple dates, May 24 through August 30; from \$2,204.

No Worries, Only Adventure

Holland America Line has been showing guests Alaska for more than 75 years. A dedicated tour director accompanies travelers on every cruisetour, joining excursions, keeping transfers on schedule, and sharing thoughtful destination-based perspectives. The cruisetours are excellent choices for multigenerational families as well, thanks to adjoining accommodations, an enlightening **Junior Ranger program** for kids, and accessible excursion options for guests with disabilities or limited mobility.



Alaska adventure: Cruising through Glacier Bay National Park.



Have It all. WITH THE WORLD'S BEST





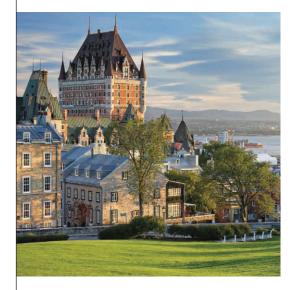




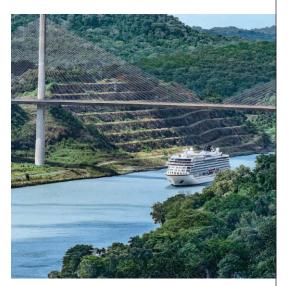
*Have It All Early Booking Bonus Offer ("Early Booking Bonus Offer" (Tarly Booking Bonus Offer") fare and its parts are neither transferable nor refundable and have no cash value. Early Booking Bonus Offer fares available only on select departures and exclude Grand Voyages and any cruise lasting 5 days or less. Any advertised fare may be changed or revoked at any time. Fares are subject to full terms and conditions, available on the Holland America Line website. Elite Beverage Package has a daily limit of 15 beverages. Available only for beverages priced at US\$15 or less. Must be 21+ for alcoholic beverages. Management reserves the right to revoke the package and may refuse service for any reason. The package excludes beverages purchased in The Shops, from the mini-bar, through 24-hour room service or on Half Moon Cay. Specialty Dining based on cruise duration and ship type. Dining options are determined by ship and exclude all events in Pinnacle Grill. Shore Excursion offer is based on cruise duration and is per person, not per stategroom. For Alaska cruisetours and 6- to 9-day cruises, eligible quests will receive US\$100 credit per person to apply toward their shore excursion purchase(s), For 10- to 20-day cruises, eligible quests will receive US\$200 credit per person to apply toward their shore excursion purchase(s). For 10- to 20-day cruises, eligible quests will receive US\$100 credit per person. to apply toward their shore excursion purchase(s). Shore Excursion credit must be used or cruise when applied toward an Alaska Cruisebour Land Excursion purchase. Shore Excursion credit must be used on corresponding cruise and is non-retundable. Wi-Fi Premium Package: All onboard Internet usage is subject to Holland America Line's standard policies, which may limit or block browsing/use of some sites or applications due to network security and bandwidth usage. Offerings are subject to change without notice. Plan can be used on any device, but only one device can be actively connected at a time. Upgrades are available once on board. Offer applies to 1st/2nd quests in a stateroom only. Crew. Appreciation: Receive prepaid stateroom gratuities on board. Gratuities for other services, including, but not limited to, bar, dining room, wine accounts and spa/salon services, are not included. Low Price Guarantee: If a guest books a Holland America Line ("HAL") cruise with the Early Booking Bonus Offer (the "original booking") and such guest finds a cheaper price for an identical booking within the duration of the Early Booking Bonus Offer (the "Comparison Fare"), the difference may be compensated in the form of Onboard Credit, a staterroom upgrade or another method. HAL reserves the sole right to determine the method of compensation made to guests. A fare will be considered a Comparison Fare only if its booking consists of details that are identical to those of the original booking (including, but not limited to, the same ship, sail dates, stateroom category and number of guests as the original booking). A determination as to whether the located fare is identical to the original booking will be at HAL's sole discretion. HAL reserves the right to apply this price protection and offer at its discretion. Other restrictions and exclusions may apply, HAL is neither responsible nor liable for any printing errors. Promotion is based on promotion code(s) N2 and based on double occupancy, Ships' Registry. The Netherlands.

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OU DON'T NEED TO TRAVEL FAR to experience storybook cities, natural wonders, vibrant islands, and iconic landmarks. **Viking**'s elegant small ships offer superlative service to destinations as close as the U.S., Canada, and Central America. With thoughtfully curated onboard libraries, enlightening guest lecture series, and cultural performances, passengers can expect an enriching onboard experience to complement their time ashore – all while unpacking once in some of the largest all-veranda suites at sea.

New England and Canada's Scenic Shores

Admire the natural beauty and **colorful fall hues** of Canada and New England. Explore Old Montréal's cobblestoned plazas, Québec City's historic châteaus, and the glacier-carved mountains and magnificent coastlines of Maine's Acadia National Park. Viking's 14-night Montréal-to-Fort Lauderdale sailing calls on those locales, plus other charming locations such as Prince Edward Island and Newport, Rhode Island. Shore excursions include time for whale-watching, sailing an America's Cup racing yacht in Newport, and touring renowned American artist Winslow Homer's studio during an exclusive experience. *Departures: Multiple dates, September 26, 2023, through October 9, 2025.*

The Paradise of the Pacific

From Oahu's iconic Pearl Harbor to Maui's majestic Haleakala Crater, **Hawaii's natural beauty** and cultural heritage shine on Viking's 16-night round-trip-from-Los Angeles voyage, which includes stops on all four main islands. Passengers travel by boat, helicopter, kayak, and more on excursions to lush rain forests, volcanic peaks, and incredible beaches. Multiple at-sea days allow time to explore Viking's serene Scandinavian spaces, experience locally inspired cuisine in The Restaurant, or attend lectures on themes such as island history and navigation. *Departures: Multiple dates, December 12, 2023, through March 20, 2025.*

The Path Between the Seas

Traversing the **Panama Canal** is an experience worthy of the hype. Viking's ten-night Fort Lauderdale-to-Panama City sailing immerses travelers in Central America's natural splendors and colonial gems, along with navigating through the 48-mile-long canal passage. Stops in Cozumel and Belize City provide opportunities to roam Mayan ruins and snorkel the world's second-largest barrier reef, while jaunts in Honduras and Costa Rica showcase the area's lush botanical gardens and rain forests. Spend days at sea learning about pre-Columbian civilizations or take a cooking class with a world-class chef at the Kitchen Table. *Departures: Multiple dates, October 10, 2023, through February 17, 2025.*

Above, from left: Québec City, an alfresco moment in a Viking Explorer Suite, and a Viking ocean ship transits the Panama Canal.



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MADRID, SPAIN

Four Seasons Hotel Madrid



Seven historic buildings have been transformed into one dynamic destination in the heart of Madrid.

Try rooftop dining from chef Dani García or Asian-Mediterranean cuisine in Isa. Experience the four-level wellness center with its sun-splashed pool terrace. Receive a complimentary fourth night when you stay by December 20, 2023. Book a suite and enjoy a complimentary tapas experience for two.

VIRTUOSO AMENITY: \$100 hotel credit per stay.

HUDSON VALLEY, NEW YORK

Wildflower Farms, Auberge Resorts Collection



Nestled on 140 secluded acres in New York's Hudson Valley, this verdant escape is rooted in nature.

The expansive grounds include orchards, wildlife, a namesake farm, and fields of wildflowers throughout. Relax in a nature-framed bespoke cabin, cottage, or suite. Savor top-tier, source-origin cuisine. A seasonally inspired spa and unique outdoor experiences offer an oasis for urban visitors.

VIRTUOSO AMENITY: \$100 resort credit per stay.

FRANKFURT, GERMANY

Steigenberger Icon Frankfurter Hof



Experience the treasures of this luxurious escape tucked within the financial district of the historic city center.

Enjoy mouthwatering international cuisine along with regional fare at the Brasserie OSCAR's. Sip cocktails in the welcoming atmosphere of the Authors' Bar. Pamper mind, body, and soul with wellness treatments in THE SPA. Receive a complimentary third night when you stay two nights between now and August 31, 2023.

VIRTUOSO AMENITY: \$100 food and beverage credit per stay.









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Culture







From left: La Ciotat's Old Town, the birthplace of pétanque, and players in Sainte-Maxime's boulodrome.

NA RECTANGLE of packed dirt fringed by leafy plane trees, an older gentleman in faded red shorts crouches over his feet, which are firmly planted inside a circle he's just sketched in the dust with his shoe. Behind his back, the fingers of his right hand spin a metal boule (ball) about the size of an orange as he studies a much smaller apricot-sized ball (called a *cochonnet*, or often a *bouchon* in Provence) about 25 feet away. Then, in one frictionless pendulum swing and

flick of arm and wrist, the sphere is airborne and hurtling toward its intended target: his opponent's boule. The metal-on-metal clack of its direct hit elicits whoops from spectators as the rival orb rolls out of play.

Round after round, and with the élan of a skilled marksman, he quickly racks up his winning 13 points and swaggers off to collect back pats and toasts. There's no question this guy's been around the pétanque pitch a few times.

For nearly two decades of summers,

my family and I have watched (and sometimes played) pétanque in Sainte-Maxime, an unpretentious village on France's Mediterranean coast between Cannes and Saint-Tropez. Nary an *apéro* hour passes that we don't meander to town to sip rosé and admire a game whose short history traces its roots to the port village of La Ciotat, just 80 miles away.

It's there one afternoon that I meet Martine Pilate, the granddaughter of Joseph Pitiot, who, along with his brother

Culture

Ernest, created what has grown into France's most popular boules sport, a memory that fills Pilate with pride.

"I do believe that my family has contributed to a harmony between men," she says. "It's a game synonymous with conviviality and friendship and is as much an emblem of Provence as lavender fields and the chirping of the *cigales*."

Over a cup of tea at Café de l'Horloge, once owned by the Pitiot brothers, Pilate's soft voice pulls me into her memories. Pétanque, she tells me, is one word smooshed together from two – *pieds tanqués* – and derives from the Provençal expression à *ped tanca*, meaning "on planted feet."

On what is now La Ciotat's main pitch, Joseph and Ernest had an annex to their in-town café, which put them front and center to *la longue*, a popular boules game of the time that saw players taking long run-ups before throwing. But on a spring day in

1910, they noticed one of their friends couldn't participate due to debilitating rheumatism. So they retooled the game: They shortened the length of the pitch and declared balls were to be thrown while standing stationary, pieds tanqués, in a circle. That same year, they hosted their first tournament, which would award the winning team ten francs. Et voilà! Pétanque was born.

AS A CHILD, Pilate listened to her grandfather's stories – many of which were about pétanque – with joy. "It was a game played to aid digestion after a good meal or bouillabaisse," she says. "When families and friends gathered at their stone *cabanons* [small sheds or shelters typical of Provence] to escape the city and enjoy each other."

The game spread rapidly around France and the world. Today it's estimated that pétanque, along with other similar boules games, is played in more than 160 countries by hundreds of millions of people. Casual games and recreational clubs flourish, and professional leagues vie for hefty prize money. There are even bids to include boules sports in the Olympic Games (the bid for the 2024 summer games in Paris failed).

Carving out our part of the tradition, my family and I bought a cheap set of boules one summer and taught ourselves the most basic rules: Get your ball closer to the *bouchon* than your opponent. The first to 13 points wins. My husband also built a mini pitch in the backyard of our California home, just to keep the swoon of our Provençal summers alive all year long.

While pétanque is simple at its core, there's always a competitive edge. It's not uncommon to see players, even friends, produce tiny tape measures from their pockets to decide a winner. And beware the shouted phrase "Faire Fanny!" According to lore, Fanny was





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a young woman in Lyon. These days, however, she's a puppet, picture, sculpture, or some other likeness of a barebummed woman found on or around the pitch who awaits a smooch on her "cheeks" by any team not pétanquesavvy enough to garner a single point.

For my final Sainte-Maxime sundowner of the summer, I wander, as usual, to the barrel-shaped bar adjacent to the pétanque pitch, order a glass of rosé, and grab a seat at an open table. A din of laughter rises over the dwindling chant of the *cigales*, and four teens draw their first circle in the dirt, not an iPhone in sight. I'm reminded of something Pilate said when I asked about her favorite recollections of playing pétanque: "Always with friends, in the summer in the shade of the trees, with a glass of pastis on a small nearby table."

I recognize that sentiment. Though times have changed since 1910, her grandfather's game has not. It remains now as it was then: a template for living in the moment, for bringing friends, family, and even strangers like me together to make memories in the Provençal dirt as deep as the dents left by boules.

"It's as much an emblem of Provence as lavender fields and the chirping of the *cigales*."

Play a Round in Provence

<u>60</u> Seabourn's ten-night cruise from Monte Carlo to Barcelona calls at Amalfi, Malta's capital of Valletta, Saint-Tropez, and more. During a day in La Ciotat, the *Seabourn Sojourn*'s 458 passengers can disembark for day trips to Marseille's Old Port and walking tours of Aix-en-Provence, or head to the town center for a glass of rosé at an outdoor café and to watch locals play pétanque in the sport's birthplace. *Departure: October 4; from \$5,899.*

STAY Guests at Oetker Collection's 46-room Château Saint-Martin & Spa can explore the estate's 32 acres, indulge at its La Prairie spa, and discover nearby villages such as picturesque Saint-Paul-de-Vence, whose place de Gaulle pitch is well loved by pétanque players. The town's tourist office also offers lessons in French and English. Doubles from \$566, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

Two renowned golf courses and one of Provence's top spas (35,000 square feet, complete with a garden and terrace) await at the 115-room **Terre Blanche** in Tourrettes. The resort offers pétanque lessons to guests and can organize a visit to a nearby vineyard for rounds of

pétanque with sides of wine and olive oil tastings. Doubles from \$645, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

You can almost hear the daily clack of boules on nearby place des Lices from the unassuming entrance of Airelles Saint-Tropez, Pan Deï Palais. Originally a private residence built for Indian princess Bannu Pan Deï, the 12-room hideaway has a walled garden with a pool for evening apéros and alfresco dinners. Don't miss the hotel's private Jardin Tropézina for lunch on the sands of famed Pampelonne Beach. Doubles from \$1,015, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

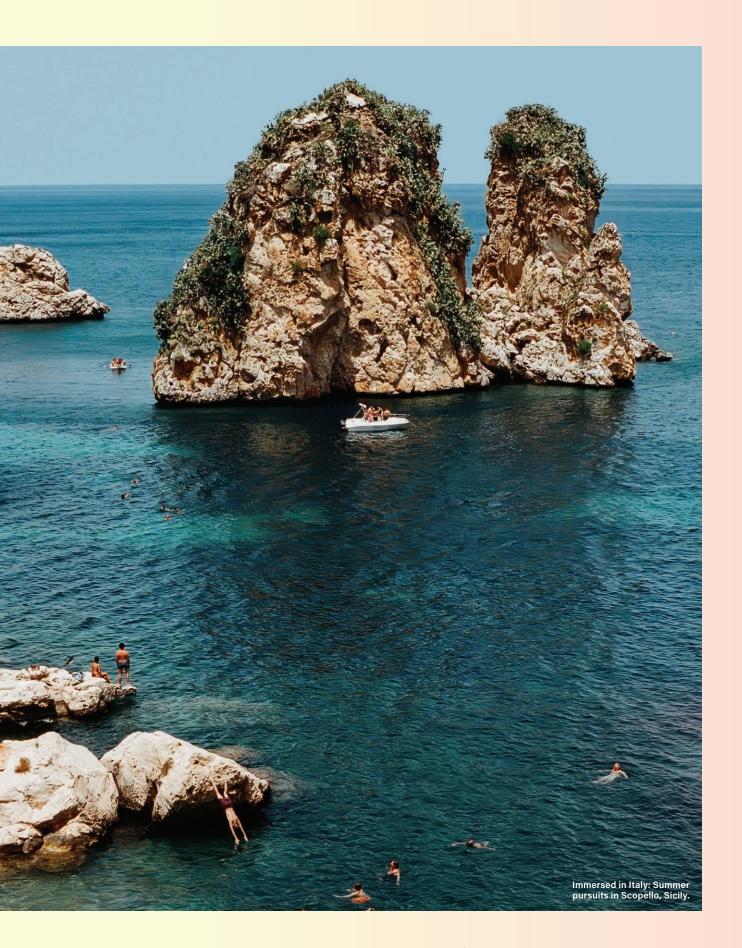
The 37-room Château de Berne in Lorgues is home to more than 60 miles of hiking trails that weave through its 1,272 acres of Provençal farmland, forests, and vineyards. Reserve a table at the Michelinstarred Le Jardin de Berne or a tasting in the wine room for a sampling of the estate's red, rosé, and white Côtes de Provence vintages, then try your hand at pétanque on its private pitches. Doubles from \$586, including breakfast daily and a vineyard tour and vertical winetasting. •



La Dolce Vita

There's Italy, and then there's Italy the Virtuoso way.

By Emma Franke



VENICE

After the gondola ride, turn to gardens, museums, and elegant boutiques.

Sara Maestrelli thinks Venice is the most beautiful city in the world.

After the work she's put in renovating the soon-to-open Violino d'Oro, the 32-year-old hotelier (who also owns Tuscan retreat Villa Roma Imperiale) knows a thing or two about La Serenissima's creative corners.

"In a city of sumptuous palazzos where streets are made of water, hidden gardens are the real magic," Maestrelli says. Her favorite retreat is Giardini Reali - just behind Piazza San Marco – especially with a *tramezzino* sandwich in hand on a sunny day. For cicchetti (classic Venetian small-plate snacks), look to low-key go-tos Cantina Do Spade and Bar All'Arco. Just down the street from both bars, Piedàterre sells classic friulane - jewel-toned velvet slippers beloved by Venetians for nonslip navigation of canalside cobblestones. Slide them on before a meal at see-and-be-seen Harry's Bar (Maestrelli is a die-hard fan of its scampi curry) to telegraph understated style.

At La Scuola Grande di San Rocco, ornate salons display paintings by Titian, Tiepolo, and Tintoretto, in a space originally dedicated to Saint Roch, protector against plagues. "It's a place that blows my mind," Maestrelli says. "But my favorite museum ever is the Peggy Guggenheim Collection." Travel advisors can work with Virtuoso on-site tour connection Onirikos to arrange a private rooftop dinner at the museum, following a guided tour of its cubist, futurist, and abstract expressionist works.

Violino d'Oro opens this summer with 32 rooms and its own impressive art collection, including its titular golden violin, sculpted by Arman.

Nearby, the 52-room Londra Palace
Venezia, 82-room Gritti Palace, 91-room Baglioni Hotel Luna, and 169-room St. Regis Venice also pack classic Venetian allure.

hen it comes to
Italy, no one has
stronger, better-informed opinions on

what to do and how to do it than Virtuoso's network of chic hoteliers, on-site tour connections, and travel advisors. As summer approaches and the piazzas again fill with sight-seers, insider advice makes all the difference. From picnicking in a secret garden to sourcing artisanal silks, these experts dished on the meals, souvenirs, and underrated attractions that take an Italian get-away from expected to *molto bello*.



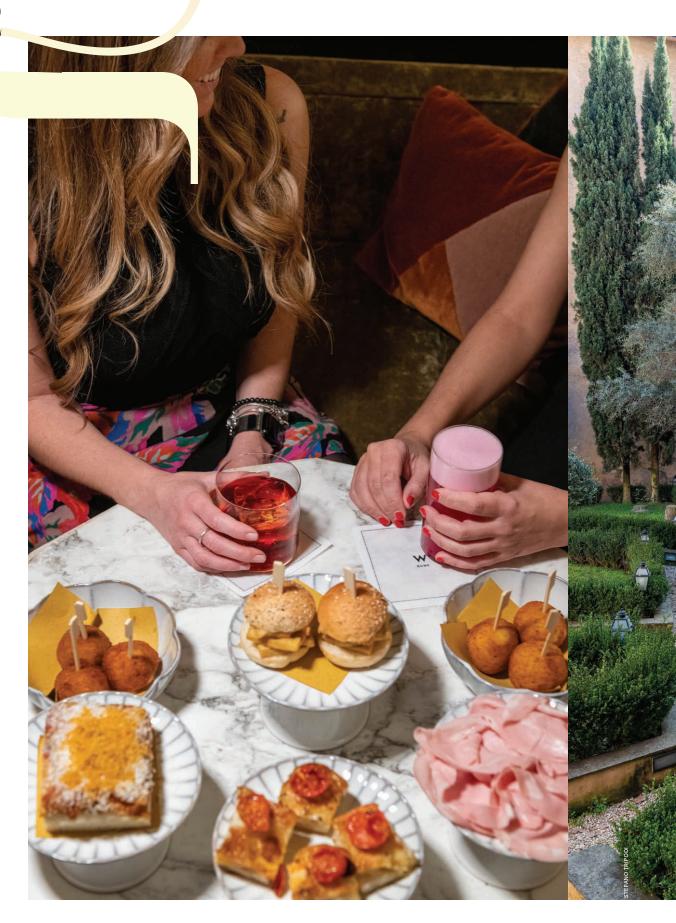
Venice vignettes (from left): A commute on the Grand Canal and ruby slippers from Piedàterre.

BUON APPETITO

"Antiche Carampane is a small restaurant that's tucked away in San Polo – you may have to ask how to find it, but the old-school menu delivers. If you go with a group, order several antipasti, followed by pasta, clam, and fish specials. The fish is sourced fresh from the neighboring Rialto Market."

- Camille Holubar, Virtuoso travel agency co-owner, Andover, New Jersey

ROME



From left: Aperitivo hour at W Rome and a quiet moment at the Sanctuary of San Salvatore in Lauro.



Private sightseeing (and plenty of pasta) in the Eternal City.

Deciding where to eat on a trip to Rome can feel overwhelming, but there's no need to venture blindly into the sea of *cacio e pepe*: "It doesn't get more Roman than fried *baccalà* (salt cod) at Dar Filettaro, on a small piazza near the Campo de' Fiori," says Rome-based Virtuoso travel advisor Quetta Locchi. "And some of the city's most exciting dining is happening right now in the gritty-chic outer enclave of Centocelle. Menabò Vino e Cucina is great."

"One of my favorite casual spots is Da Francesco," says Simone Amorico, co-owner of on-site tour company Access Italy. "They have some of the best pizzas." Amorico and his family have been forging connections in the city for 25 years, which means he doesn't blink at snagging travelers a table at the always-in-demand Taverna Trilussa (the owner's a family friend), and a cooking class at Pierluigi is a call away. Travelers can even cook with Simone's mother during a lesson at her spacious apartment inside a former monastery near the Piazza Navona the private courtyard is Amorico's goto for extra-special dining experiences.

After a VIP tour of the Sistine Chapel, fuel more sightseeing with two of Rome's sweet and savory faves: maritozzi, brioche rolls filled with fresh whipped cream, and supplì, fried risotto balls with mozzarella centers. Aperitivo hour is best enjoyed from above the fray, and per city ordinances, only hotels can operate rooftop bars: Grab a perch on a terrace at the 30-room Singer Palace Hotel, 87-room Hassler Roma, or 162-room W Rome. From there, the carbs continue to beckon, but do as the Italians do, the pros advise, and never ask for cheese on your spaghetti alle vongole.

– Amy Cassell

PACKING NOTE

"Rome is an elegant city, but casually so. If you want to blend in, opt for smart-casual looks, heavy on the classics. You won't find Romans dining in shorts and tank tops unless they're on the beach."

- Quetta Locchi, Virtuoso travel advisor, Rome

LAKE COMO

A revered hotelier's favorite spots to while away a summer on the lake.

Anyone planning a trip to the cypressstudded, Aperol-spritz-soaked shores of Lake Como would do well to consult with Valentina De Santis. As owner of Lake Como mainstay Grand Hotel Tremezzo and newcomer Passalacqua, the third-generation hotelier knows her way around local borgos (villages) and boutiques. "I tell any friend visiting the area to start with a boat ride, whether on a private water limousine or a public battello," De Santis says. "It's the best way to enjoy the essence of the lake." Virtuoso travel advisors can also work with on-site tour connection IC Bellagio to arrange a floating concert by contemporary pianist Alessandro Martire, which guests can watch from their own Riva yacht before disembarking for an evening meal of riso in cagnone con pesce persico - rice and lake perch.

Most visitors start in Bellagio, where De Santis recommends aperitivi and people-watching from the terrace at Bar Sanremo, which looks out on the ferry landing. On a trip to Como, pick up a scarf (or three) from Mantero - a family-owned shop that's been draping the lake's sophisticates in silks since 1902. In Lezzeno and Moltrasio, De Santis enjoys the laid-back atmosphere, though her favorite village is Varenna for its brightly colored houses and the view from majestic Villa Monastero. "For hiking lovers, I always recommend a morning spent climbing to San Martino, a little church that looks like it's just been dropped on the rocks above the lake."

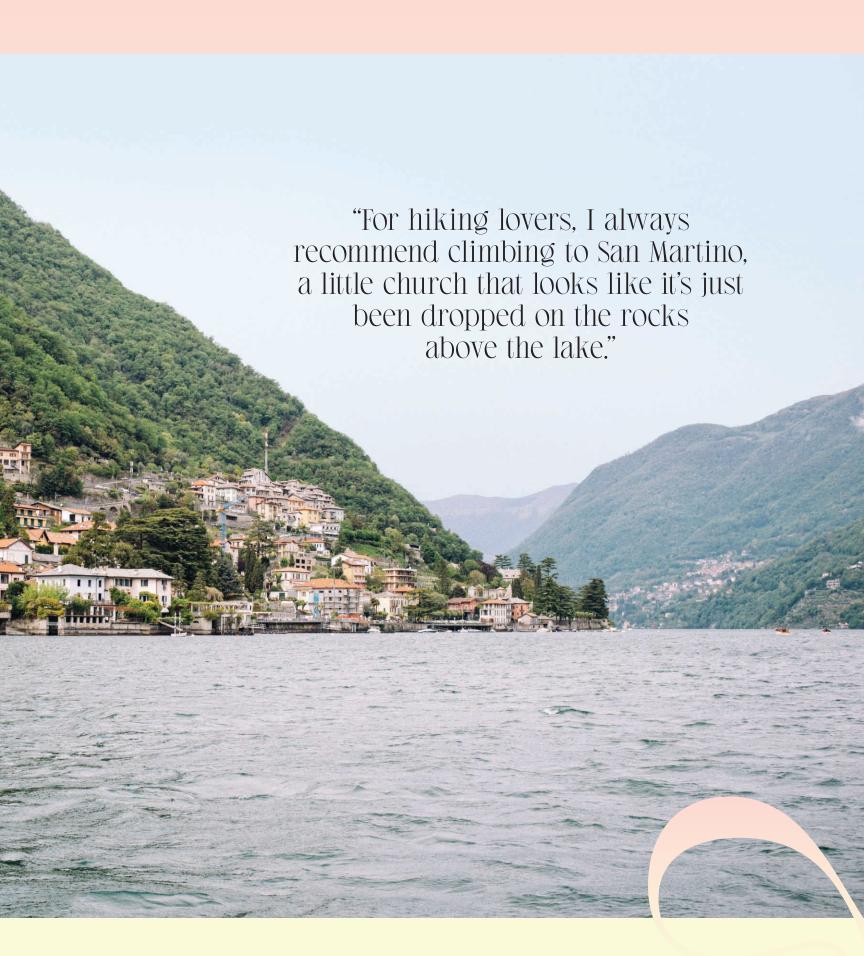
In addition to De Santis' 84-room belle epoque Grand Hotel Tremezzo and 24-room retreat Passalacqua, lakefront hotel options include the 75-room Mandarin Oriental, Lago di Como, and 81-room Grand Hotel Victoria.

HIGH REWARD

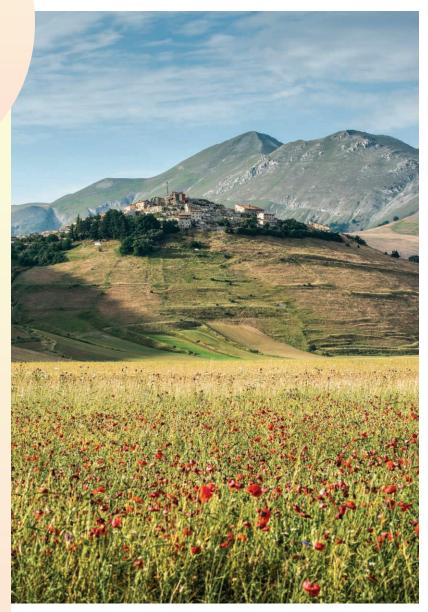
"From San Primo, take the easy 30-minute walk up Mount San Primo to Rifugio Martina for some of the best polenta you will ever taste."

 Andrea Grisdale, founder and CEO, IC Bellagio, Bellagio, Italy





UMBRIA



Fioritura, or flowering, in Umbria's Great Plain near Castelluccio.

TREASURE HUNT

"Perugia has great local shopping – uniquely trendy and upscale, without the usual mass-market stores found in larger Italian towns. Try Castagner for Italian-made shoes."

- Patricia Accuosti, Virtuoso travel advisor, Fairfield, New Jersey

Italy's green heart calls for mindful exploration.

"Understated Umbria rivals the hills of Tuscany as a destination for slow travel and connecting with the Italian countryside," says Silvia Paolucci of Abercrombie & Kent, Italy & Croatia, a Virtuoso on-site tour connection that specializes in the region. The local forests' bounty supports Umbrian culinary traditions, which come alive when explored with local experts. Paolucci recommends an autumn truffle-hunting excursion near Orvieto, followed by a farmhouse cooking class, where dishes are dusted with the freshly foraged black gold. Back home, serve up that new truffle pasta recipe in majolica ceramic dishes from Deruta -Virtuoso advisors can arrange tours of the Grazia family's factory, where some design motifs date back to the Renaissance. Travelers can also head to the hills near the Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi to visit an olive grove-cumart installation, then taste fine oils at a nearby family-owned press.

Italians turn to Umbria for quiet getaways in friendly villages – a cappuccino at Norcia's Pasticceria Dolcezze easily stretches into an hour spent chatting with locals (just remember to switch to espresso without milk after noon, or risk revealing your outsider status). Home to the 24-room Palazzo Seneca, Norcia is also a prime jumping-off point for hiking the Sibillini Mountains; Paolucci likes The Silence of the Hermitages, a challenging trail that culminates at the bright-blue Lago di Fiastra.

Just outside Perugia, travelers can unwind at the 36-room Castello di Reschio, where the spa evokes ancient Roman baths and on-site stables house purebred Spanish horses. In the city center, guests at the 94-room Sina Brufani can access private tours of the Arnaldo Caprai winery – an ideal spot to taste vintages made with Umbria's signature sagrantino grape.



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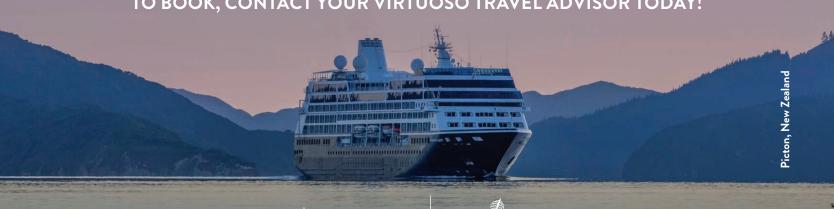
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SICILY

A local's guide to the island's historic sites and hidden gems.

"Sicily can be very seductive," Tom Hollander's Quentin observed in season two of The White Lotus - and the island's surge in visitors over recent years attests to that truth. Peppe Mendola, who co-owns Virtuoso on-site tour connection Essence of Sicily, grew up near Agrigento and now works with travel advisors to arrange custom trips all over the island. Mendola recommends setting up a home base in Taormina at Belmond's 70-room Grand Hotel Timeo or the Four Seasons' 111-room San Domenico Palace, Taormina, or in Palermo at Rocco Forte's 100-room Villa Igiea. From either town, it's a short trip to three of his favorite attractions.

Close to Palermo (incidentally, a great place to pick up traditional Sicilian embroidery from sustainable atelier Manima World), the Cathedral of Monreale is a testament to the influence of the Byzantine and Norman empires on Sicily's architecture. To get a sense of the church's grandeur, take a private after-hours tour of the chapel's gold and marble mosaics while an organist accompanies the experience.

The island's southwest coast calls for an afternoon picnic among orange trees and the ancient Greek temples of Agrigento. In a private garden owned by Essence of Sicily, local wine flows as the gods intended in a valley dotted with bronze statues and limestone temples dating to the fifth century. Elsewhere in his hometown, Mendola advises stopping by Agorà or Caffè Concordia di Saito Andrea for authentic Sicilian cannoli.

As for the best way to climb Mount Etna: a sunrise Jeep tour, naturally. Trundling up the north side of the active volcano, travelers take in lava fields and chestnut groves before an afternoon sipping the landscape's fruits at wineries such as Cottanera, Planeta, Tasca d'Almerita, and Santa Maria La Nave. •



A private picnic near Agrigento's Valley of the Temples.

HANDS-ON

"Set aside an evening in Agrigento to practice a classic recipe for *cuddiruni* – pizzas made with hard wheat flour. Try your hand at kneading dough, learn to bake in a traditional stone oven, and sip Sicilian wines with a local cook."

- Myriam Guyon, Virtuoso travel agency CEO, Paris



Luxury-Bound: Experience the Wonders of Tenerife, Spain

The Largest of the Canary Islands is a haven of adventure, natural beauty, and culture.

Tenerife, known for its volcanic landscapes, year-round sunshine, and beautiful beaches, is a destination that offers an unmatched mixture of luxurious accommodations and adventure. Tenerife has something for everyone, from world-class golf courses to stunning 5-star hotels and Michelin-star restaurants.

Already an established luxury getaway destination for discerning European travelers, Tenerife is known as the "Hawaii of the East." Bolstered by its biodiversity, cultural vibrance, and unique wine industry, the destination is a gem that receives millions of travelers with an abundance of premium experiences and amenities.

Tenerife's selection of five-star hotels and resorts will enamor visitors with a taste for the good life. With unmatched morning views overlooking cliffs and open seas with the sunrise on the horizon, Tenerife offers beauty enveloped in luxury and service. The elegant hotels and villas that await in this Atlantic paradise are perfect for luxury family travel and romantic getaways alike.

Tenerife is also an idyllic destination for golf enthusiasts. The Island has several world-class golf courses that offer unique challenges for players of all skill levels. Known for its stunning views of the ocean and the neighboring Island of La Gomera, courses in Tenerife are impeccably designed to leverage the island's features and unique attributes.

A favorite for thrill seekers, Tenerife is a center point for wildlife watching, aquatic sports, and unbeatable outdoor experiences. From trekking volcanos and forests above the clouds to watching pilot whales dance in the wild from a premium catamaran, excitement awaits those who flock to Tenerife throughout the year. The Island has no shortage of panoramic views, and something about kayaking or paddleboarding alongside the more than 400-meter-tall volcanic cliff formations called Los Gigantes awakens emotions within any adventurer.

Beloved by travelers worldwide, UNESCO recognizes Tenerife for its cultural and natural heritage. In 2007, Teide National Park, home to Spain's highest peak, Mount Teide, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in honor of its unique volcanic landscapes and geological formations. Additionally, in 2019, the Canary Islands' Marine Reserve was recognized by UNESCO as a Biosphere Reserve, protecting the Island's marine ecosystems and biodiversity. These accolades celebrate Tenerife's cultural and environmental attributes and represent the Island's incredible responsibility to preserve its wonders for visitors and locals alike.

For more information on Tenerife's luxury lodging, dining, and experiences, please visit www.webtenerife.com.

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IT WASN'T

THE ROLLING

HILLS OF

GREEN

that sent a dose of motivation up my spine at eight in the morning. Nor was it our chipper guides, who busied themselves toweling off the dew that had collected on the saddles and handlebars of our bikes.

It was a speaker sitting on a folding picnic table, next to containers brimming with gummi bears, nuts, and bananas. From it swelled the dulcet call of Julie Andrews – *Doe, a deer, a female deer | Ray, a drop of golden sun* – reminding me exactly where I was.

The hills above Linz, Austria, were alive with the sound of music, and I was there for it, mounting my trusty steed for a zippy ride over hill and dale. Farmland and forested knolls flanked quiet roads that roller-coastered downhill toward the city, my tires offering the only sound – the static of rubber peeling off wet asphalt. Our squirrelly route was easy to follow, thanks to a GPS navigator mounted on the handlebars, preprogrammed with a map of the day's itinerary, chirping if I missed a turn or got off track by even just a few feet.

My destination: the *AmaSonata*, a river ship moored 14 miles away on the Danube in the heart of Linz. My ride: an e-bike, custom-designed for active-travel tour company Backroads. My companions: 60 fellow pedalers ranging in age from 23 to 77, with widely varying levels of cycling ability, including my husband, Chris – and to be honest, I hadn't been sure he'd come along for the ride.

At home in California, I ride a traditional bike. My brawn doesn't quite match my enthusiasm, but biking is more than a pastime, and I've greatly enjoyed a few previous cycling trips abroad. The husband, a reluctant cyclist at home, had his first e-bike encounter earlier in the year. He jumped in the saddle, rode down a hill, and circled back up the block with ease, coming to a swift halt wearing an ear-to-ear grin. "This is *great*," he gushed.

A few months later I convinced Chris to take off for a guided multiday cycling trip. To ensure the vacation's appeal – and really, to give him an out on days he didn't want to ride – we chose an itinerary with active-touring company Backroads, which chartered an AmaWaterways ship for a seven-night cruise through the Czech Republic, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary.

WE MET OUR BIKES in the tiny German village of Fürsteneck, where I saw that some cyclists had reserved traditional road bikes for the trip, including a group of seven retirement-age men from California. All Backroads regulars, they called

0

Day one: The *AmaSonata* greets Backroads' riders in Vilshofen, Germany.



themselves the Beach Boys. But most of us had opted for e-bikes, and some were new to them.

"You did not rent a scooter; you're still riding a bike," guide Danny Meyer said as he explained the four power-assist modes. We could ride without assistance from its silent battery-powered motor, click the button once to turn on eco mode for a bit of a boost, or go up one more for about 25 percent assistance. "For those with no shame, the third level is when people without e-bikes will start to notice, because you'll be riding sidesaddle, with a martini in your hand," he joked. Turbo mode, the highest setting, provided a 50 percent charge. My ego couldn't conceive of being caught using that.

Shortly afterward, we set out into the Bavarian Forest for Vilshofen, where the 162-passenger *AmaSonata* awaited. The ride began with a mile-long ascent to a ridgeline. I downshifted, forgoing any electric assist, and proudly muscled onward maintaining a slow but steady pace. Then, from behind, came the *ding-ding* of a bicycle bell. Chris cruised past me with a barely suppressed grin, not even breaking a sweat on his way to the summit. I slipped into eco mode, and there my bike stayed for most of the next 32 miles.

Traveling with a boatload of fellow pedal-pushers had long appealed to me. Five guides stayed with us on the ship, while six more provided support on the road and staffed rest stops. The *AmaSonata* proved a relaxing base, with a sundeck and heated pool, bars, and restaurants serving healthy salads and soups at lunch and dinners that highlighted local dishes such as mustard-crusted lamb and Wiener schnitzel. But most appreciated of all, our balcony stateroom obviated the need to unpack and pack every couple of days at a new hotel as we cycled through Europe.

Each day featured a choice of short or long, flat or hilly routes, sometimes following the gentle incline of former railroad trails and passing through villages for



The Vltava River bisects picturesque Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic.



Whether you are looking for an exciting urban escape or an invigorating recreational experience, you will find it in Zurich. Located on Lake Zurich, Switzerland's most cosmopolitan city is surrounded by stunning mountains and natural beauty. The urban landscape offers myriad cultural gems 2,000 years in the making. As you discover the vibrant neighborhoods abounding in art, culture, and gastronomy, you'll find Zurich to be a lively, modern trendsetter.

Active recreation seekers and sports enthusiasts will enjoy exploring on foot, on wheels, and on water. Secluded hiking paths, thrilling bike trails, and picturesque promenades provide spectacular mountain and lake views. Whether you prefer mountain biking, city biking, or in-line skating, you will find no shortage of ways to explore and stay active. And water lovers will find numerous swimming opportunities, from designated areas along the lake and rivers to indoor and outdoor pools at exclusive fitness and wellness facilities.

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impromptu stops for espressos or to sample local vintages at a Heuriger (wine tavern). With breath to spare and little traffic to navigate, we inhaled hidden meadows, burbling creeks, and fields carpeted in vivid yellow rapeseed blooms - details easily overlooked when you're speeding past in a car.

Backroads builds in time for a few noncycling activities. After arriving in Passau, set at the confluence of three rivers, we went for an afternoon walking tour. In Linz, we had the option of coach transfers to explore either Salzburg or Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic. With a fairy-tale castle towering above, the latter is a kind of Prague in miniature - minus the Burger Kings and Starbucks. Our walking-tour guide recounted how fast life was evolving in Czechia, as her country adapts to capitalism and democracy after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

"I grew up here, just 30 minutes from the Austrian border," she said. "I didn't know there were people living on the other side of the fence, only that there were guards who would shoot you if you tried to cross."

At the morning "route rap" shortly after docking in Melk, Austria, a guide shared that the day ahead was her favorite of the entire tour. Following a visit to Melk Abbey, perhaps Austria's most prominent monastery, we'd cycle along

> the Danube through the Wachau Valley, a 25-mile passage lined with apricot orchards and vineyards that produce its famous grüner veltliners and rieslings.

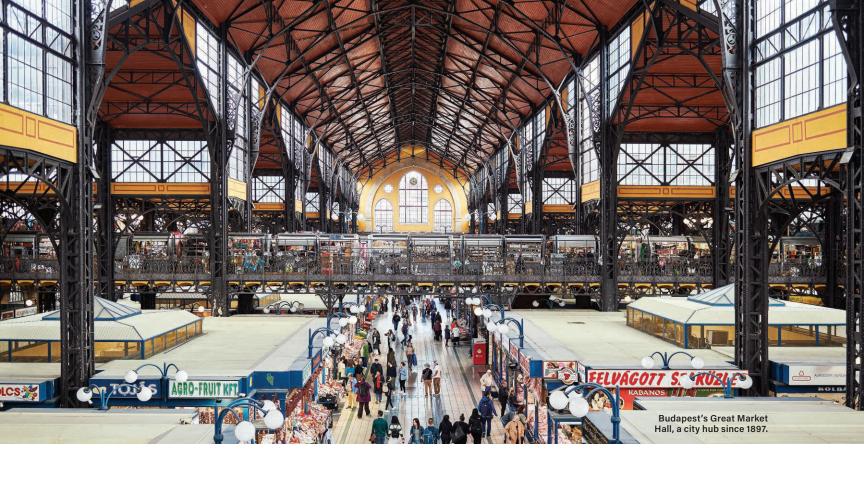
> The Wachau delivered, its gentle bike path alongside the Danube almost exactly what I'd imagined when planning the trip. As we waited at a ferry landing to cross the river, an older gentleman rode up, his bike's basket loaded with grapes. "Grüner veltliner," he said, pulling away a stem tightly bound with hundreds of the tiny gems and handing











An absurd flying-saucer-shaped structure perched 300 feet above the Danube expressed the country's embrace of both UFO lore and daring architecture.

it to me. The grapes burst in my mouth with sweet-tart juice, the skins thick and leathery, the seeds fat. A few miles later, we arrived in Krems to find our guides had set out a spread of the Wachau's bounty: walnuts, berries, apricots, chocolate, cheeses, sausages, pretzels, wine, and more.

But for me, the most unmissable ride was the trip's longest – a 46-mile route from Vienna to Bratislava, Slovakia – which held the thrill of crossing the former Iron Curtain. The Morava River marks the border, where a footbridge makes the quiet traverse. Just beyond, an eerie monument sits almost out of sight: a remnant of the rusting barbed wire that once defined this infamous no-man's-land. Riding into Bratislava, worn roads symbolized the legacy of Soviet-era disrepair, while an absurd flying-saucer-shaped structure perched 300 feet above the Danube expressed the country's embrace of both UFO lore and daring architecture.

Throughout the week we'd witnessed many moments like this – visits to places inaccessible except for those traveling on a rail

trail. And there were surprises, like Bratislava, one of the continent's youngest, least-known capitals.

On our final day, as our taxi shuttled us from the dock in Budapest to a hotel for the night, Chris turned to me, still bubbling from the goodbyes. "I'm not ready to leave," he said. "I could have stayed for another week."

Looks like I might have a cycling-vacation convert yet.



"Backroads gives you ample opportunity to both cycle with the group and explore on your own. On a Danube cruise last summer, one of the most memorable stops my family made was at Alter Klosterkeller in Dürnstein, Austria, overlooking the river and Wachau Valley vineyards, where we took a break for a mammoth charcuterie plate and a bottle of grüner veltliner."

- Lisa Leavitt, Virtuoso travel advisor, Newton, Massachusetts

Cycle a European Waterway

STAY Ideally situated just steps from the iconic Charles Bridge, the 157-room Four Seasons Hotel Prague is a prime pre-cruise base for Backroads' Danube itineraries. A contemporary building ties together three historic structures from the baroque, neoclassical, and neo-Renaissance eras, with the best rooms overlooking the Vltava River. Doubles from \$688, including breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit.

60 From mid-May through mid-October, Backroads partners with AmaWaterways to offer small-group cycling tours on many Prague-to-Budapest sailings on the Danube (as well as on numerous other rivers throughout Europe). Group size is limited to roughly 20 cyclists among the 156 to 162 passengers on a traditional seven-night cruise. This year, its cyclist-only charter takes on Portugal's Douro Valley, with full-ship Danube charters returning again in 2024. Douro departure: September 5, 2023; from \$5,899. Danube departures: September 7 and 23, 2024; from \$5,699.

Sixteen cyclists will call **Uniworld**'s 150-passenger *Maria Theresa* home on a seven-night sailing along the Danube from Passau (via Munich) to Budapest. The ship features opulent accommodations done up in eighteenth-century style and stocked with Asprey bath products, while the bike tour promises castles and abbeys, plus Bavarian coffee and winetastings. *Departure: September 10; from \$10,595.*

For noncruisers seeking to bike Bohemia, **DuVine**'s five-night cycling tour from Prague to Vienna explores the Czech highlands and Austria's Wachau Valley, with gourmet meals and accommodations at boutique hotels en route. Off-bike highlights include a hike to castle ruins, cellar and vineyard tastings, and a visit to a crystal-glass-blowing studio. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 7 through September 17; from \$4,995.* •



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ANOTHER ROUND

In San Sebastián, evenings are made for pintxo hopping.

BY INGRID K. WILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD JAMES TAYLOR





WAS NEARLY 8 PM as I hurried along the wide seaside promenade in San Sebastián, zigzagging past strolling couples and surfboard-toting twenty-somethings still dripping from the chilly North Atlantic. Packs of tanned teens lounged on the golden sand of Zurriola beach in the dwindling daylight as I rushed toward the Parte Vieja, or Old Town, where the pedestrian alleyways were already swelling with cheerful chatter. The evening tradition of gathering at bars to socialize over glasses of theatrically poured txakoli, a Basque white wine, and pintxos, the region's characteristic small bites, was well underway.

On that spring evening, I was late to meet friends for a pintxo, which would invariably lead to a second and then a third, in the natural way that evenings typically unfold in this easygoing town.

Donostia, as the city is called in Basque, is part of the autonomous community of Basque Country, with its own distinct language and deeply rooted cultural traditions. Situated on the Atlantic coast of northern Spain, the city is surrounded by lush hills and an idyllic, crescent-shaped bay. Like Biarritz just across the border with France, this elegant seaside resort with beautiful belle epoque and neoclassical architecture, wide sandy beaches, and excellent surfing attracts everyone from wealthy Madrileños to backpacking Australians. But what sets it apart – and what has lured me back year after year for over a decade – is the food.

San Sebastián's culinary scene first rose to prominence on the strength of its haute cuisine. Despite its size – only about 180,000 residents – the city and its outskirts are home to eight Michelin-starred restaurants, three of which have earned the highest rating of three stars. (In contrast, Chicago, with its 2.7 million residents, has only one three-starred restaurant, while Los Angeles, population 3.8 million, claims none.) But a reservation at its venerated fine-dining rooms is not required to eat well in this food-obsessed city. Just ask Elena Arzak, the Basque chef who, together with her father, heads their three-Michelin-starred family restaurant, Arzak.

"The Basque people, from the time we can walk, we go to the pintxo bars," Arzak says. Often described as Basque tapas, pintxos are small snacks typically eaten while standing at a bar. This cultural mainstay began as simple bites to accompany a drink – think a piece of toast topped with *jamón* and Manchego or a skewer of grilled mushrooms – but slowly evolved as ideas and techniques trickled down from the fine-dining scene. Today, many bars serve culinary masterpieces in miniature.

"It's really incredible the imagination these chefs have and the quality that they can do in these small bars," Arzak says.

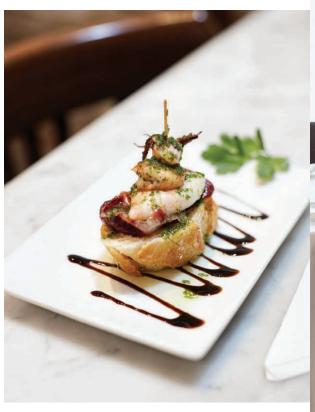
Basque people go out for pintxos as a family on Sunday afternoons, with friends after work, or anytime the opportunity arises to get some food and a drink at one bar before continuing on to the next. Everyone partakes in the tradition, from grandmas out with their well-groomed terriers to boisterous groups of friends and young families with toddlers in tow.

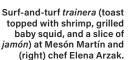
As for how the pandemic affected these beloved bars, where the quality of the food has long correlated to the size of the crowd jammed inside – worry not. "The locals really supported us," says Nagore Vallés, the fourth generation to helm Casa Vallés, a bar her great-grandfather opened more than 80 years ago. Although some spots didn't survive the pandemic, those that remain are thriving once again, including the many old-school establishments that take pride in *never* changing – not the secret family recipes and certainly not the dated fluorescent lighting or dark wood-paneled walls.

On a hop between bars, you'll notice that many offer the same types of pintxos: ham

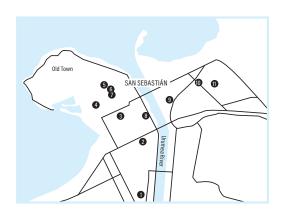












- 1. Casa Vallés
- 2. Bar Antonio
- 3. Mesón Martín
- 4. Paco Bueno
- La Viña
 Txepetxa
- 7. Borda Berri
- 8. Hotel Maria Cristina
- 9. Bodega Donostiarra
- 10. Bar Zabaleta
- 11. Bar Bergara

croquettes, grilled octopus, glistening links of chorizo on toast. But most bars have a particular specialty, so knowing what to order where is key. From the Parte Vieja's quintessential bars to lesser-known gems in the trendy Gros neighborhood and local favorites in Centro, consider this your primer on where to find some of the best pintxos across the city.

OLD-TOWN HOP

Begin a pintxo crawl in central Parte Vieja, the lively historic quarter where pintxo bars line narrow pedestrian lanes. **Paco Bueno** was named after a famous boxer who founded the bar in 1950, which also explains the decor: black-and-white boxing photos on the walls and trophies interspersed between bottles of wine. At this longtime local favorite, everyone orders the same thing: *gambas a la gabardina*, battered and fried shrimp skewered on a toothpick and served fresh (and mouth-searingly hot) from the fryer. These *gambas* are considered the superlative version of this popular pintxo and pair well with a *zurito*, a half pour of draft beer.

Another traditional bar with a standout house specialty is **Txepetxa**, a wood-beamed tavern famous for its *anchoas* (anchovies). Even the anchovy-averse might see the light after tasting the plump *boquerones*, vinegarcured white anchovies from the Bay of Biscay. Don't bother asking how they're prepared; the marinade recipe is a closely guarded family secret. But do order the *jardinera*, a made-to-order pintxo with a house-cured

Everyone partakes in the tradition, from grandmas out with their well-groomed terriers to boisterous groups of friends and young families with toddlers in tow.

anchovy fillet on lightly toasted bread topped with a salsa of diced bell peppers, chili peppers, and onion.

Next stop: Borda Berri, a standing-room-only bar around the corner with pistachio-colored walls and a chalkboard menu listing a dozen or so contemporary pintxos – miniature versions of traditional Basque dishes, with modern twists. Among the tastiest are *carrilleras al vino tinto*, meltingly tender veal cheeks slow-cooked in broth and red wine, and *risotto con Idiazábal*, a creamy "risotto" made with orzo and Basque sheep's-milk cheese.

Make the night's last stop timeless La Viña, one of several long-standing haunts on Calle 31 de Agosto, with a sweet, rather than savory, signature dish: *tarta de queso* (cheesecake). A distant cousin of the dense, graham-cracker-crusted American cheesecake, the Basque version served here is notably lighter, with a scorched – some call it burnt – exterior and a creamy, soufflélike center.

ACROSS THE RIVER

Another pintxo-hop destination is the eastern side of the Urumea, the river that flows through the center of the city. Here, the residential neighborhood of Gros backs Zurriola beach, a wide stretch of golden sand popular with surfers. Few visitors find their way to this laid-back area, where the tree-lined avenues and historic plazas are dotted with small boutiques, art galleries, surf shops, and excellent pintxo bars, such as **Bodega Donostiarra**. This bustling spot has been around since 1928 and remains a favorite for its superb *completo*, a small sandwich on a fresh baguette filled with the region's finest products: flaky white tuna in oil, Cantabrian anchovies, and *guindilla* peppers.

One pintxo on the counter of nearly every bar in the city is *tortilla de patatas*, a round omelet of egg and fried potatoes served in thick wedges. Every local has an opinion about which bar prepares the best one, but a top contender is always Bar Zabaleta. Take a seat at a metal sidewalk table outside this casual, no-frills corner bar and order a glass of txakoli, a lightly effervescent local white wine poured from a height that's perfect for pairing with a still-warm slice of creamy, eggy *tortilla*.

Nearby, Bar Bergara, a neighborhood landmark open since the 1950s, recently got an update with a modern, bright-white interior. Its long list of creative, high-quality pintxos can make ordering challenging, but one must-try is the *txalupa* (it means "small boat" in Basque), a puff-pastry shell filled with a mushroom-and-langoustine gratin. Another option is the pintxo tasting menu, which includes several innovative varieties that have earned Bergara awards at regional competitions.

CENTRAL STOPS

A neighborhood often overlooked when mapping out a pintxo crawl is Centro, San Sebastián's central business district. A neat grid of wide avenues south of the Parte Vieja, this area is filled with designer shops and international brands, but it's also home to one of the city's best pintxo bars. **Bar Antonio** may not look like much – a tiny space crowded with patrons leaning against the counter inside or lingering



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Boquerones (vinegar-cured anchovies) from the Bay of Biscay at Txepetxa and (right) pouring txakoli.

on the sidewalk, passing plates and drinks through an open window – but there's a reason it's always packed. Devoted regulars return day after day because, unlike most bars, which have a single must-order item, the menu here has nothing but hits from top to bottom. The house-cured salmon on freshly toasted bread? Fantastic. The *tortilla* flecked with bell pepper? One of the city's finest. The langoustine ravioli smothered in cream sauce? Sublime. The larger-than-a-pintxo *ración* of seared mushrooms mixed with egg yolk and foie gras? Perfection. Order whatever you see that looks good.

Centro is also home to a couple of classic spots worth a stop. Mosey over to **Mesón Martín**, a cavernous bar with wood-barrel tables where locals go for a *zurito* and the surf-and-turf *trainera*, a piece of toast topped with shrimp, grilled baby squid, and a slice of *jamón*. Then sidle up to the bar at **Casa Vallés**, a local institution dating to 1942 that claims to be the birthplace of one of the most well-known pintxos: the Gilda. "Somebody was drinking wine in our bar and started playing with a toothpick

F

"Find Spain's best food in the Basque Country, including at San Sebastián's Michelin-rated restaurants – and many other amazing spots as yet unstarred. Three of my favorites: Narru, across from the Buen Pastor Cathedral; Espazio Oteiza, with incredible views from its aperitivo terraces; and three-Michelinstarred Akelarre."

- Marcelo Rosen, Virtuoso travel advisor, Miami

Pintxo Party

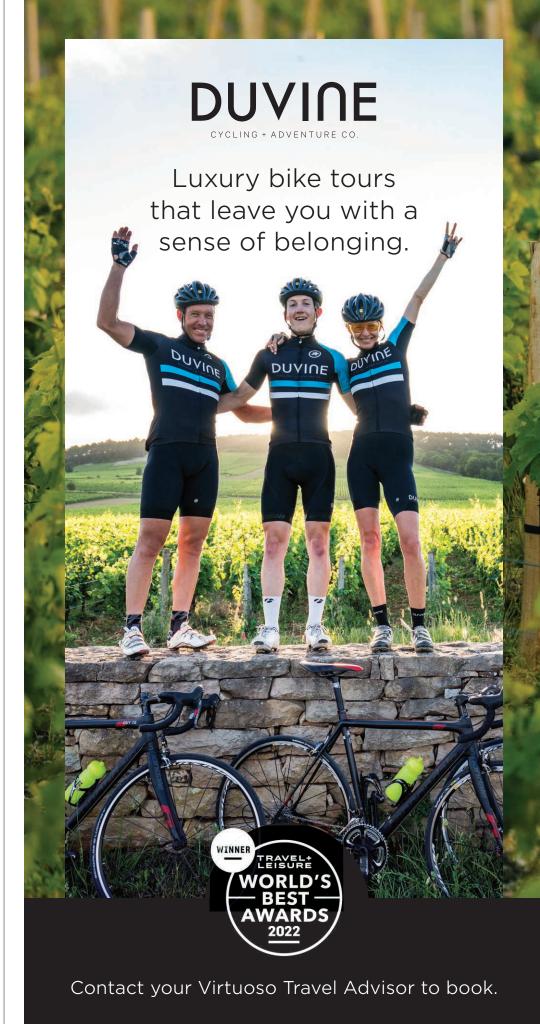
STAY A belle epoque palace overlooking the river and the Cantabrian Sea, the Hotel Maria Cristina opened in 1912 and has long been the preferred lodging for attendees of the city's star-studded annual film festival. Sparkling anew after a \$21 million renovation, this 139-room property is located mere steps from the pintxo bars of Centro, Gros, and Parte Vieja. Doubles from \$546, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

<u>60</u> Blue Parallel's customizable ten-day private tour of Barcelona, Basque Country, and Seville takes travelers north to San Sebastián for seaside adventures that include a deep dive into the pintxo scene with an expert local guide. *Departures: Any day through December 2023; from \$25,000.*

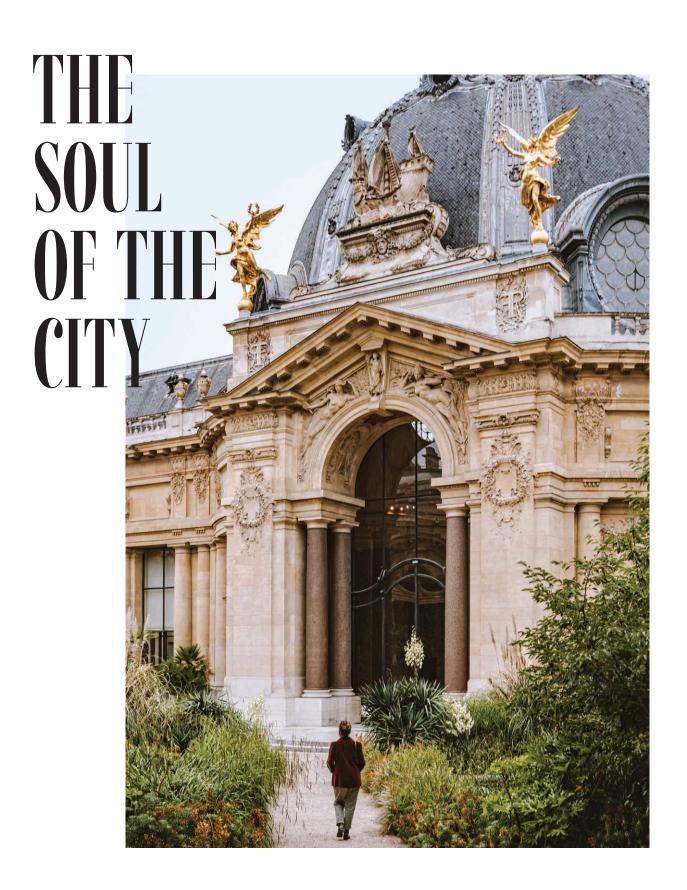
Culinary exploration is a focus on Artisans of Leisure's seven-day tour of Barcelona and Basque Country, from morning market visits and cooking lessons at one of San Sebastián's private gastronomic societies (traditional members-only eating clubs) to exclusive winetastings and a pintxo tour in the Parte Vieja. Departures: Any day through July 5, 2025; from \$12,600.

Follow the advice of Elena Arzak, who recommends a guided tour for first-time visitors unsure about what (and how) to order at San Sebastián's many pintxo bars. Your Virtuoso travel advisor can arrange a pintxo tour with Made for Spain & Portugal – a local expert will show you the ropes during a leisurely two-and-a-half-hour lunch or dinner pintxo crawl. Through March 5, 2024; from \$971 for two.

and the olives, anchovies, and pick-led peppers," says co-owner Nagore Vallés. "So they created the Gilda." This simple pintxo, just a skewered Manzanilla olive, Cantabrian anchovy, and *guindilla* pepper, was named after Rita Hayworth's character in the movie of the same name. Paired with a glass of vermouth at a table on the car-free street outside, where weekend shoppers and afternoon strollers saunter past, it's the ideal salty bite to conclude a pintxo hop. **9**







IN PARIS, WANDERING IS A RITE OF PASSAGE.

BY LINDSEY TRAMUTA PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOANN PAI



WE CAN TRACE A MYRIAD OF CULTURAL INNOVATIONS TO PARIS,

but perhaps one of the most uniquely French is the flaneur. From the verb *flâner* (to stroll), the term describes an aimless wanderer par excellence, a passionate observer of urban life. First identified and then popularized by Charles Baudelaire in his 1863 essay "The Painter of Modern Life," the flaneur is a figure (historically male, but complemented today by the flaneuse) of leisure and privilege, blessed with abundant free time and limited responsibilities.

I wouldn't say I'm a person of excess privilege or time, but when I moved to Paris 16 years ago, I instantly latched onto the concept as a means of understanding the city and how it functioned. I never leave home without my metro pass, yet nothing anchors me here quite like my own two feet. Perhaps that's because I grew up like most Americans, driving from one place to another – to get coffee, to buy groceries, and, perhaps most paradoxically, to exercise. The novelty of walking without direction, meditation in motion, amid the crowds and yet separate from them, lent me a sense of rootedness when I was a new resident.

Buoyed by the city's rhythm, I felt like I could become part of something – a well-choreographed ballet in some arrondissements, a more chaotic dance in others. After all these years, that hasn't changed. The city's natural rumbles make up the soundtrack to my forward movement. *Un pas après l'autre*. I'm a character in my own film, suspended somewhere between real life and fantasy, amid the tree-lined paths of the Palais Royal's garden in one moment, the winding, hilltop streets of Belleville in another.

The aimless wander, as one can only exercise with such life-affirming reverie in Paris and *maybe* a few other cities, is as much about connection to time and place as it is about the freedom of movement. A visitor, should they be able to free themselves from the tourist's checklist, will benefit amply: Paris reveals its gifts most to those who embrace the present.

So slow down as you cross the Pont Neuf, pausing at its perfect midpoint, standing in rapt observation as locals shuffle along the riverbanks. Amble nimbly through Saint-Germain, peering into shop windows, while keeping your phone tucked away. Make your way up the Canal Saint-Martin, catching snippets of conversation as you pass by diners on café terraces.

It's said that the best way to get to know a place is to wander, but doing so can be just as illuminating for your sense of self. If ever there was a place to give it a go, it's in Baudelaire's wonderland of *flânerie*, which lives on, 160 years later.





A visitor, should they be able to free themselves from the tourist's checklist, will benefit amply: Paris reveals its gifts most to those who embrace the present.



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WALK THIS WAY

60 Channeling your inner flaneur is an activity best done solo, but your travel advisor can work with one of Virtuoso's on-site tour connections in France if you'd like to get your bearings first. **Découvertes**, for example, leads guided walking tours through the City of Light. Stop to admire some of the same stretches that Baudelaire and the flaneurs who followed him encountered in the late nineteenth century.

STAY The 50 guest rooms at the **Grand Powers Paris**, inside a nineteenthcentury Haussmann building, feel like
chic pieds-à-terre, with playful design
touches such as pastel-pink walls and
art deco chandeliers. The hotel's location
off the Champs-Élysées means some of
the city's best shopping and most iconic
monuments – the Arc de Triomphe, the
Eiffel Tower – are short strolls away.

Doubles from \$813, including breakfast daily
and a \$100 dining credit.

A French 75 at a beloved haunt like **The Ritz Paris**' Bar Hemingway is a fitting finale after a day roaming the same boulevards and avenues that inspired literary greats. The 142-room Parisian legend has held court over place Vendôme since 1898, cossetting guests in tony salons, secret gardens, and sumptuous quarters. Doubles from \$2,260, including an upgrade (if available) at time of booking, round-trip private airport transfers, and breakfast daily.

For its first hotel outside Italy, J.K. Place chose a Left Bank maison in the city's Latin Quarter. The 29-room J.K. Place Paris is infused with Italian style, thanks to design from Florentine Michele Bönan and hearty house-made pastas at Casa Tua. It's worth putting flaneur ambitions on a brief pause to charter the hotel's 130-foot riverboat for a cruise down the Seine. Doubles from \$1,627, including breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit.



Picasso Celebración — 1973.2023









Water Worlds

Summer's fleeting moments, preserved.



Global Summer #36 Polaroid on fine-art archival paper

Athens-based artist Yiorgos Kordakis loves summer – "Let's not forget, I am Greek!" he says. Inspired by the ways other cultures celebrate the season and time spent by and in the water, Kordakis set out to create his *Global Summer* series, an eight-year-long project that yielded a collection of photographs taken around the world. "Using a large-format Polaroid camera requires patience," he says. "It's a romantic, poetic process. I adore the element of surprise that comes with capturing these moments." Original work available at voltzclarke.com. @ yiorgoskordakis





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