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ISSUE 1

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

Comfort zones are a funny thing. In theory, they're a perfectly good place to be. In so much of life, the ultimate aim is to be comfortable: whether it's the career you embark upon; the home you make your own; the trips you take; or even the clothes you wear. Indeed, 'luxury' is defined as "a state of great comfort or elegance."

But, like 'nice', 'safe' and 'sensible', 'comfortable' implies complacency – a trait few would wish to identify with. We are constantly encouraged to step outside, push past, or think beyond our comfort zones in order to grow. So the question is: if luxury is little more than an expensive comfort zone, how do we challenge its confines – and encourage travellers to do the same?

Recently I was lucky enough to visit the Canadian Arctic. I travelled to Somerset Island, on the shores of the Northwest Passage, aboard a private charter flight; the food surpassed many of the good restaurants I've eaten in; the service was attentive and thorough without being stifling; and in my room were telltale high-end amenities. The price point, too, suggested that this was a luxury trip.

Yet I couldn't have been further outside my comfort zone. As a city girl with a fashion habit, I almost didn't recognise my reflection, obscured by muck boots and several layers of fleece. I began the week trying to maintain my makeup routine, only for the freezing wind to whip the mascara off my lashes and down my cheeks. I struggled against the waves in a sea kayak; hurtled face-first off a stand-up paddleboard; lurched along on a quad bike; and tried, to the amusement of my fellow travellers, to use binoculars the wrong way round.

I loved every single minute. I discovered a sort of freedom in my own vulnerability – I could ask questions, unconcerned about sounding silly; I could throw myself into activities, (eventually) without worrying about how I looked; I could eat as much as I liked, since I was burning off the calories (or so I imagined, anyway). Above all, I learnt how to play again.

This elevated state of 'being', rather than 'having', is the new luxury – and the ethos upon which Beyond Luxury is founded. Beyond borders, our community challenges people to discover new corners, causes and connections across the world. Beyond boundaries, we question the status quo, encourage curiosity and cultivate debate. Beyond luxury, we try to harness the power of experimental travel to optimise the world and ourselves.

As well as PURE Life Experiences, where experiential travel's mavericks come together to create life-enriching experiences, our portfolio also includes LE Miami, which connects rebellious contemporary travel brands with the creative class; We Are Africa, rebranding African travel to celebrate the vibrant diversity of the continent; Conservation Lab, uniting a diverse cross-section of expertise to save the future of

our planet; and PURE Pursuits, bringing together the leading minds in travel and related industries for truly perspective-altering adventures.

Despite the distinct aims of these collectives, they are united by their refusal to accept the status quo, an insatiable appetite for pushing the boundaries and, ultimately, a shared outrageous ambition to positively impact the world through the medium of travel. With this in mind, and to complement our burgeoning programme of inclusive un-conferences, it is in the spirit of togetherness that we'll be uniting our collectives and combining our content on a brand new platform.

Welcome to Beyond.

In this, our first print issue under our new title, we explore the notion of outrageous ambition in its many facets. We meet the mavericks challenging physical and mental limits in creating a new breed of experiential travel experiences, such as cover star and MATTER speaker Wim Hof, a.k.a. The Iceman, who Katie Palmer interviews on page 88; weaver of dreams, Thierry Teyssier, who enlightens Cynthia Rosenfeld on his bold vision for elevating the high-end experiences on page 40; the adventure travel junkies in search of a different kind of release, investigated by Kate Hamilton on page 22; and the new escapists craving fantastical narratives ungrounded in reality, as told by James Davidson on page 76.

But in our mission to push the travel industry forward, it's just as important to look outside our immediate remit for inspiration. Trendwatching's David Mattin explains how big-picture thinking will enable us to spot the travel trends of the future on page 14; Emma Tucker uncovers the five pieces of tech changing the way we travel on page 32; Lisa Davidson takes us on a guide through the world's most extreme architecture on page 58; and James Davidson throws up a wild card worth watching out for with his study of the co-living and -working revolution on page 102.

Back in travel, Juliet Kinsman shines a light on the operators whose outrageous ambition is already creating change, as she discusses guerrilla humanitarianism on page 50 – and in doing so proves that anyone really can make a difference. Meanwhile, James Wilkinson tracks Australia's journey to becoming a gourmet powerhouse and tourism example to follow on page 120; and we absorb the eclectic history and culture of PURE's spiritual home, Morocco, on page 134.

This magazine represents the first small milestone in achieving our outrageous ambition for the high-end travel industry; but stay tuned in the coming months for further advancements. As we step outside our comfort zone, we invite you to take the leap beyond with us – because together, who knows what we can achieve?

Words by Katie Palmer



Wim Hof photographed by Enahm Hof



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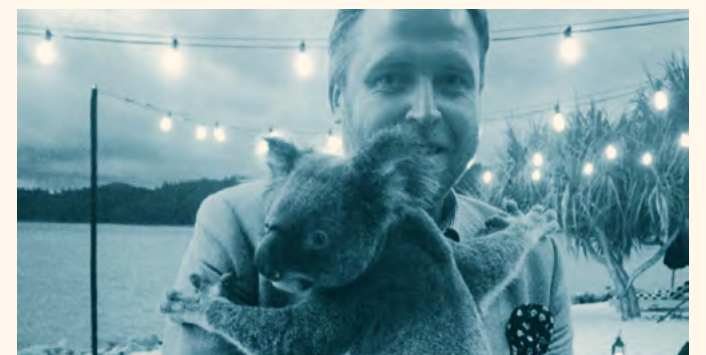
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“Since its inception in 2009, PURE Life Experiences has become the must-attend event for the experiential travel industry and the city of Marrakech looks forward to hosting this revolutionary event yet again. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the organisers of PURE and to wish them every success.

Over the last eight editions of PURE, Marrakech has established worldwide recognition for its experiential offerings. These range from its spirit of design, art, authenticity and culture; to delicious Moroccan and international cuisine; to its many hidden and magnificent Riads, all found in the middle of the desert, yet surrounded by the spectacular snow-capped Atlas Mountains – nature’s unforgettable adventure. In addition, we have the spectacular coastal city of Essaouira, where thousands of world music fans head each summer for the Gnaoua World Music Festival.

Marrakech’s wealth of cultural influences is second to none, making it a place of charm and allurement for the modern traveller. This fascinating city is now connected with some of the largest in the world, such as London, New York, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Dubai, Moscow, Sao Paulo, Doha and Milan, either by direct flight or via Casablanca – and it has, without doubt, become the city of luxury and experiential travel.

Welcome, PUREists, and enjoy your stay in Marrakech.”

**Hamid Bentahar, President of Regional Council of Tourism Marrakech**

“Morocco and Marrakech are proud and honoured to host the ninth edition of PURE Life Experiences. Hosting such a prestigious and constantly evolving event is a strong signal to holidaymakers looking for PURE inspiration. And it is no coincidence, as the city of Marrakech has so much in store.

Morocco’s key tourist destination is home to many marvels and provides a wide range of travel experiences to satisfy the most eclectic tastes; it’s no wonder that visitors come back to rediscover the aspects of Marrakech they haven’t experienced yet. They long for genuine immersion in a world that is both fascinating and mesmerising, and each time they come back they undoubtedly discover something new.

Marrakech overflows with authenticity and history. It has been shaped by thousands of years of history, witnessing major dynasties that made it what it is today. This unique spirit enriches travellers’ experiences by making them most memorable. Craftsmen have also been inspired through the years by the magic of Marrakech, which helps them release their creative talent and lets them put their passion to every piece of wood, copper or leather. This is what makes Marrakech the most exotic gateway to enter the kingdom of enchantment: Morocco.

Morocco is a soul-nurturing experience because of its nature, culture and magic! It blows visitors away and welcomes them in the tradition that the Kingdom of Morocco has come to master. The art of hospitality in Morocco is well-acknowledged alongside its glowingly rewarded art-de-vivre.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to Morocco and Marrakech. I sincerely hope that this year’s show will be the bearer of new experiences and excellent business opportunities for you all.”

**Abderrafia Zouitene, CEO of the Moroccan National Tourist Office**

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# TRENDS IN



# THE WILD

“While ‘trend watching’ may conjure up images of near-mystical gurus and what’s #trending online, the truth is far from that. Spotting powerful emerging consumer trends is easy, once you get in the habit.”

Can’t see the wood for the trees? Luxury travel brands need to step outside their own industry and start thinking big picture in order to spot the travel trends of the future, explains TrendWatching’s David Mattin.



Back in May, the car retailer Autobahn Motors opened the world's first 'supercar vending machine' in Singapore. The futuristic 15-storey glass tower displays a range of cars including Ferraris, Lamborghinis and Bentleys in 60 slots; customers on the ground floor use a touchscreen to select the car they want to see. Meanwhile, April saw on-demand helicopter service Blade partner with Delta Air Lines to launch a new helicopter pick-up service for Delta passengers at New York City's JFK airport. The service will fly travellers from JFK to Manhattan in less than ten minutes. The same month saw the Four Seasons Milan partner with Nike to offer guests their own dedicated personal trainer, available to take them on a bespoke run through the iconic city, ending in the hotel's gym.

Three glimpses of the unceasing merry-go-round that is consumerism in 2017. And today, we're all used to the accelerated pace of innovation that sees new products and services appear (and disappear) at lightspeed. Along with that goes the sense that consumer behaviours and mindsets change faster, more unpredictably – chaotically, even – than ever. Put together, it's an avalanche that can't help but feel overwhelming. How are you supposed to make sense of it all – let alone devise your own winning response in the form of your next product, service, campaign, or something else entirely?

But what if you could turn this picture on its head? What if you could turn this avalanche of information into a tool that will help you get a handle on the future of the luxury travel industry? The (not so secret) secret is that you can: by watching consumer trends.

They are reshaping the expectations, behaviours and mindsets of customers around the world, including luxury travellers. And while 'trend watching' may conjure up images of near-mystical gurus and what's #trending online, the truth is far from that. Spotting powerful emerging consumer trends is easy, once you get in the habit. But it's also a deeply powerful – and empowering – activity, because it will put you where every professional wants to be: ahead of the curve when it comes to the emerging desires of your customers.

The heart of trend spotting is simple: it's about looking across industries, markets and demographics for the new innovations that are changing what customers expect, how they behave, and how they think. These game-changing products, services and campaigns rewire consumers to think and act differently. And once those new expectations have been created, they spread. They'll eventually spread all the way to the luxury travel industry, and all the way to your door: that's a trend in action.

So let's look at some trends in the wild. In particular, let's look at three big trends transforming the expectations of luxury travellers right now. The first is one we call

# "LUXURY CONSUMPTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT THE QUEST FOR STATUS. SO HOW CAN YOU



# CREATE AN EXPERIENCE THAT COMBINES STATUS-FUELLING SELF-IMPROVEMENT WITH ULTIMATE LUXURY?"





the **Quintessential Self**: it's all about consumers combining their endless search for self-improvement with accelerating expectations of premium and luxury experiences.

Our radar started blipping way back in February 2016 when we saw the Mandarin Oriental Barcelona launch a package aimed specifically at people running the Barcelona Marathon: three nights' accommodation, personalised coaching, a running t-shirt and two spa treatments, from €2,025 for two people sharing.

Since then, we've seen plenty more examples of the Quintessential Self, as consumers search for the perfect combination of self-improvement and luxury – and highly shareable – experiences. January saw Maverick Helicopters launch a \$3,499 yoga package that sees travellers flown from Las Vegas to the highest peak in the Valley of Fire State Park for a 75-minute yoga class. Participants wear wireless headphones during the experience, with a playlist and instructions from a yoga teacher being transmitted throughout the class. How's that for 'my self-improvement is more luxurious than yours'?

Physical wellness, of course, isn't the only domain that consumers are competing to outdo each other in: think knowledge and skills, too. Tour company Abercrombie & Kent recently partnered with the New York Times to launch Around the World by Private Jet, a global tour led by expert reporters from the

newspaper that takes in nine destinations including Cuba, Colombia, Myanmar, Iran, Morocco and Iceland. Travelling in groups of 50, the trip is scheduled for February 2018 and costs from \$135,000 per person, based on double occupancy.

Want to apply this trend? Remember, luxury consumption has always been about the quest for status. So how can you create an experience that combines status-fuelling self-improvement with ultimate luxury? The kind of experience that says, 'I'm smarter, more connected, more creative than the rest' – and also allows for a great Instagram post.

Another quest that's always been at the heart of luxury consumption? The search for totally bespoke, personalised products and services. So what's the future of personalisation when it comes to luxury travel? One trend we're currently tracking, called **True Self**, points towards the answer.

This trend is all about brands putting new forms of personal information to work to tap into the deepest selves of consumers and deliver a perfect fit that they didn't even know they wanted. One example? London-based travel company TÜ Elite, through their flagship product DNA Unwrapped, offers travel itineraries inspired by the traveller's DNA: customers take a DNA swab and a unique itinerary is built for them based on the results.





Meanwhile, Cathay Pacific is using the personal travel data of its loyalty programme members to create unique artworks for them – and the Singapore tourism board is pushing this trend one step further. They are currently experimenting with measuring the brainwaves of travellers in order to deliver personalised travel recommendations.

Consumers now live in a world of data-driven, algorithmically generated recommendations and services that seem to know them better than they know themselves – think the Spotify Weekly Playlist. So ask yourself: how can you tap into this deep emerging expectation of True Self personalisation by using new forms of information to offer your customers services and experiences that they might never have asked for, but are a perfect fit?

Finally, we come to a trend that is massively disrupting the meaning of the word ‘luxury’, with huge implications for luxury travel. We live in a highly connected world, in which billions around the globe have access to the same ideas and information. Meanwhile, the machine that is 21<sup>st</sup> century techno-consumerism offers us endless choice. And in most international markets around, there is increasing celebration of difference and diversity. Combined, these changes are weakening the forces of social expectation, habit and fixed mindset that helped shape consumer behaviour in the past and made it predictable along lines of age, gender, income bracket and other demographic determinants. It’s a trend we call **Post-Demographic Consumerism**, and it’s playing out in the luxury travel industry in some deeply interesting ways.

Take the Grand Ferdinand hotel in Vienna and their introduction of a new category of rooms. The five-star hotel – where a suite can cost €3,000 a night –

unveiled a six-bedroom dormitory that could only be booked via Airbnb, with beds costing €30 per night. Because in a post-demographic world, even student backpackers sometimes want a taste of luxury...

Meanwhile, November 2016 saw Guatemala-based tourism company Pata de Chucho offering a dining experience at the top of the volcano Acatenango. People who booked the excursion were cooked gourmet meals prepared by chefs, before spending the night at the top of the volcano. The ultimate luxury trip is a night camping on top of a volcano? In a post-demographic world of disrupted consumer expectations, for rising numbers the answer is yes! So, in this post-demographic world, ask yourself: which demographic do you typically serve? Older people? Families? Solo travellers? How can you surprise them with unexpected offerings that reflect the new complexities in their tastes and freedoms in their lifestyles?

We’ve looked at three powerful trends when it comes to the future of luxury travel. However, remember: trends are nothing if you don’t act on them. Use these trends as fuel for your next offering; and even more importantly, get into the habit of looking at the new products and services that you see flooding into the consumer arena – from any industry – in a structured way. Ask yourself: what new consumer expectations is this innovation tapping into and helping to create? How can we serve those expectations? Do that, and you’ll become your own trend-watcher, empowered to spot the next wave of trends and stay permanently ahead of the curve when it comes to the expectations of luxury travellers.



Grand Ferdinand Hotel Vienna



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# ON THE EDGE OF REASON

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“Embarking on an adventure is a form of release. When your most immediate concerns are to keep warm, save fuel and pack enough food, there is little space for extraneous thoughts.”

Adventure travel used to mean flirting with danger to get your adrenaline pumping – but for today’s travellers, the most extreme journeys take place as much in the mind as they do on the tundra, up a mountain or in a conflict zone. Kate Hamilton investigates adventure travel’s shift from purely physical to psychological.



Intrepid travellers have long pushed the boundaries of human endurance. Polar explorers traverse the world's most unforgiving landscapes to chart new territory; freedivers plunge darkened depths to surrender their bodies to the sea. Why? Because there's something about thriving in the planet's most unforgiving environments that can make you feel singularly alive.

This sentiment is no longer the reserve of explorers. Today anyone with enough nerve (and let's be honest, enough cash) has access to the adrenaline that comes with a voyage to the extremities of the earth. According to a 2016 survey of the travel industry, 95 per cent of agents and suppliers said that they have seen sales in the adventure sector surge in the past year. There's an increased interest in travel that pushes boundaries, but the reasons behind it are shifting. Back in 2005, The Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) found that travellers

mentioned words including 'risk', 'hardcore' and 'danger' when talking about the reasons for their trips. But when the survey was repeated ten years later, the vocabulary of the extreme didn't feature.

Today the top three drives towards adventure travel are to do with transformation, an expanded worldview and an opportunity to learn. The triumvirate falls in line with the overarching trend across travel for increasingly authentic experiences, and is tied up with the human desire for self-actualisation. Dr Michael Brein, a psychologist specialising in travel, makes reference to Abraham Maslow's five-tier pyramid to explain the theory behind human motivation: "Self-actualisation lies at the top, which is another way of saying 'being all you can be'". Increasingly, travellers are looking for a fulfilling form of inner journey that reflects geographical movements across perilous lands and seas.



There have already been a number of examples of tour operators tailoring itineraries to the desire for transformation. The Extraordinary Adventure Club (EAC), for example, is an organisation that looks at the psychological makeup of clients before curating wilderness experiences alongside tailored programmes led by a team of therapists, coaches and mentors. The founder, a former Royal Marines officer called Calum Morrison, says, "These expeditions are designed to build on coaching work in order to further a journey of personal growth and create sustainable change".

The want for transformative experiences is accompanied by a longing for an expanded worldview. Extreme travel companies often place onus on the importance of clients proving themselves capable in challenging natural environments (Callum Morrison notes: "There is increasing evidence that nature has a positive

impact on the brain"). But the fact that people are choosing to travel in order to broaden their horizons also denotes a drive towards interaction with people and culture. Volcanoes Safaris is a good example of this. Operating four eco-lodges in central Africa, the project's main draw is its nearby population of endangered mountain gorillas. With nature as a platform for change, the company played a key role in introducing tourism after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, which in turn stimulated the economy and provided jobs for local people. The success of the programme helped to change perceptions – to broaden international horizons – of a previously war-torn country. "Consumer mindsets have changed dramatically", reports founder Praveen Moman.

It is perhaps this shift towards extreme travel as a form of education that denotes the most marked move in the sector. Rather than systematically



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TO LEARN."**



Image by Extreme Adventure Club



ticking destinations off an adrenaline-filled list, travellers today want to come home having learned something new – that might mean an insight into a different culture or a specific set of skills. Tessum Weber is a polar guide with his family's expedition company, Weber Arctic, and he sees clients thrive off learning how to be proficient in extreme environments. "It's problem solving – and self-reliance", he says. "It's thinking, 'I'm going to sit down, I'm going to figure out the problem and I'm going to keep moving.' Today we're very connected – pull out that smartphone

Callum Morrison says, "we see a direct correlation with overuse of technology and consequent disconnection – from self, from others and from environment."

Some people might embark on an extreme expedition in order to escape from their dependency on technology, but the digital world is, as ever, a double-edged sword. Geordie Mackay-Lewis, the COO of Henry Cookson Adventure Travel (HCA), is of the opinion that social media has propelled the



and find the nearest solution – but these extreme worlds don't have that; you have to figure it out on your own."

He's right, of course. You can't Google an answer when you run out of food on the tundra. And this shift that extreme worlds enact – from reliance on technology to reliance on the capabilities that you find within yourself – has a certain allure. Clients of operators such as EAC and Weber Arctic are often high-achieving individuals in the corporate world, looking to engage their minds in a different way than they do in front of a screen at work.

adventure industry forward, as everyday explorers share incredible experiences and stories from around the world. He says, "This has helped fuel adventure travel and challenges us to keep discovering more exciting and interesting corners of the planet."

Transformational experiences; an expanded worldview; the opportunity for learning – combined with the chance to both escape from technology and engage on social media: these are the pillars of extreme travel today. Yet while risk might no longer be a key motivation for

people, that's not to say that these expeditions are risk-free. Just last year, explorer Henry Worsley abandoned a history-making Antarctic trek after suffering exhaustion and dehydration and later died. To cite more recent headlines, this year three Britons perished when they were swept away by a waterfall under the supervision of a tour operator in Vietnam.

A well-planned expedition, however, should involve very little danger. "The food is weighed down to the gram, the equipment has been

armed forces (there are three ex-military in the HCA team alone).

Embarking on an adventure – led by expert tour operators and with clients who are keen to unlock capabilities within themselves – is a form of release. When your most immediate concerns are to keep warm, save fuel and pack enough food, there is little space for extraneous thoughts. Evangelists of extreme travel find they switch off from the pressures of modern life in a much more profound way while on expedition than



Images by Extreme Adventure Club

meticulously planned. It's not: 'Oh, there may be a risk and I almost died and it was amazing.' It's: 'I planned, anticipated and executed'", says Weber. And while clients might feel as though they are living on the edge, chances are they are in fact experiencing carefully managed risk. Mackay-Lewis says: "We are able to allow our clients to feel perceived but not actual danger; this might include watching polar bears from the safety of a yacht or flying over a volcano in the safety of a helicopter." It's hardly surprising that a number of the fixers at the top of the adventure travel game have spent time in the

they do when they are lying on the beach. Rather than slowing you down, extreme travel wakes you up – to a natural world that offers scope for transformative experiences that expand your worldview. In short, extreme travel today is about so much more than just coming back alive.







# FIVE PIECES OF TECH THAT ARE



# CHANGING THE WAY WE TRAVEL

From drones to digital doctors, new technology is changing both how travel brands create ever more rich and in-depth experiences, and how consumers engage in them.

Emma Tucker delves into five devices that are affecting everything from how companies create travel content to the ways brands are overcoming communication barriers.



## 1. CHANGING THE WAY WE... COMMUNICATE

### Waverly Labs Pilot translation earpiece

Travellers finding themselves lost in translation could soon be a thing of the past, as startup companies vie to create devices that remove the language barrier altogether. One of the most promising pieces of tech to emerge so far is Waverly Labs' Pilot – a babel fish-style earpiece that promises to interpret conversations almost instantaneously, provided you're chatting with someone wearing a partner device.

It's a tall order, but one that potential buyers are keen to invest in, with over \$4million of support raised by the company's crowdfunding launch campaign. Costing less than an iPhone at \$299, Pilot covers more than 15 languages and promises enough battery to get the wearer through an entire day. While the device does threaten to remove some of the charm of learning a language, it also offers an alternative to uncomfortable moments and allows owners to fully immerse themselves in local culture. For travel brands it also has enormous potential – from easing hotel check-in, to elevating the tour experience.

Pilot is still in pre-order stage, but early videos suggest that if you're looking for a sci-fi-style universal translator, this could be the real deal. Hotels and tour operators take note: one day you might have your very own library of Pilots on hand.

## 2. CHANGING THE WAY WE... FILM

### DJI Spark drone

Forget holiday snapshots: these days, it's all about the video. More specifically, it's about how drones are completely changing travel campaigns, offering glorious new perspectives and ways of capturing amazing vistas in moving image.

Chinese brand DJI is fast conquering the market in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), particularly when it comes to easy-to-use devices that take care of all your film and photography needs. For the modest price of \$499, its newly released Spark model fits the palm of a hand and doesn't even require a controller – hand movements are enough to direct it.

Although drones might initially feel like a more impersonal approach to filmmaking, they're also an opportunity to capture beautiful video with a minimal amount of equipment and take aerial shots that, in the past, might have been impossible to achieve. Their promise is such that travel company Black Tomato has even hired its own exclusive drone photographer and launched a series of Drone the World trips in locations that permit UAV filming.

Beyond polished campaigns, the Spark drone would work just as well for social media – an increasingly important way for travel brands to show off – thanks to its ability to connect directly to a smartphone to create quick, Instagram-ready edits.





## 3. CHANGING THE WAY WE... HEAL

### Babylon digital doctor app

Illness when you're far from home is a scary prospect – especially when it comes to navigating local doctors, hospitals and pharmacies. There's also the whole language barrier, which can make trying to explain symptoms and decipher packaging particularly daunting. With payment plans from just £5 per month, Babylon sidesteps this, giving users instant access to UK doctors through text and video messaging via a monthly subscription that works around the world. Prescriptions can be sent directly to a local pharmacy or delivered to a hotel or apartment, and there's even a doctor-accredited AI chatbot ready to dispense advice out-of-hours.

Although it may lack something of the human touch, Babylon is the next best thing for health-conscious travellers and an obvious recommendation for hotels and travel companies to be making. The brand has also recently announced a partnership with Columbus Direct, which will be integrating the app into its travel insurance – suggesting there's potential for other travel brands to incorporate the app into their own offerings.

## 4. CHANGING THE WAY WE... EXPLORE

### Google Lens

Not just a search giant, Google is doing its best to become indispensable in all other areas of our lives, too. Google Assistant is a perfect example of this: available on Pixel smartphones, Android Wear smartwatches and a range of handsets running the Marshmallow or Nougat OS, it's able to summon information, convey reminders and send messages all with a simple "OK Google" voice command.

Its new feature, Google Lens – due to launch later this year – goes a step further, acting as an all-knowing eyeball that functions through

the medium of the phone camera. By pointing the lens at the surrounding environment, Google Lens can do everything from finding out what a nearby building is – perfect for architecture enthusiasts on vacation – to reading reviews for restaurants. While it might be removing some of the enjoyable mystery of travelling, it also carries huge potential – particularly for brands wanting to create better experiences for curious consumers. What better way for hotels and travel companies to give visitors insider knowledge (or even entice them towards their offering to begin with) than by embedding extra info into the augmented reality landscape?

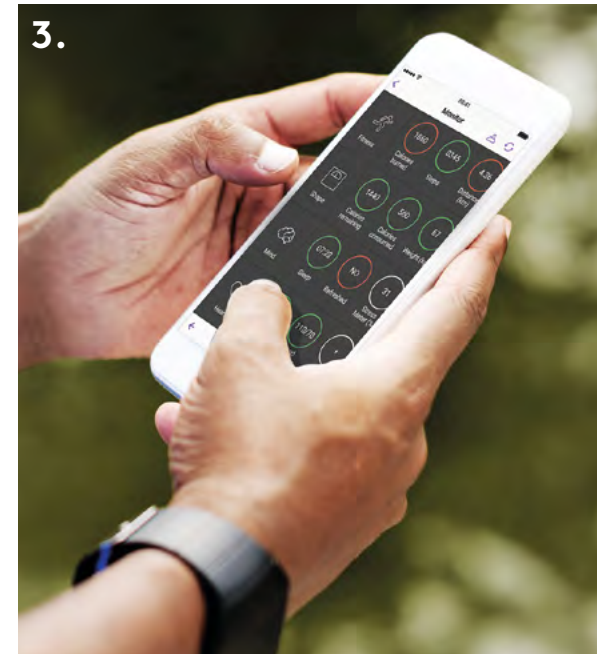
## 5. CHANGING THE WAY WE... SNAP

### Garmin VIRB 360 camera

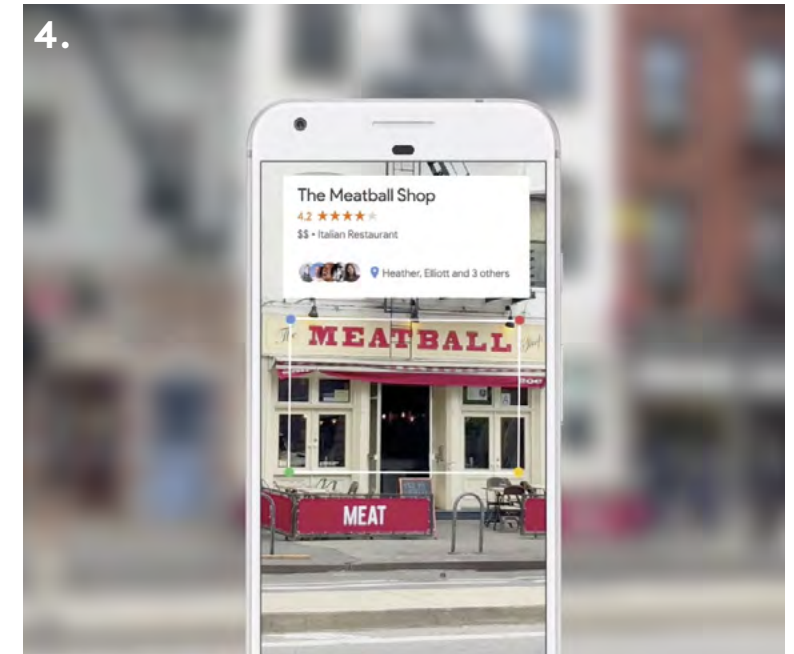
There's no question that brands have to step up their moving image content, as video continues to play a vital role for those considering trips. Travel films alone are responsible for some 100 million unique visits to YouTube each month, meaning that if companies want to impress they need to stand out from their competitors. That's where Garmin's VIRB 360 camera steps in: retailing at \$799, it's one of a number of new devices that take video capture into entirely new dimensions. Video and images can be spherically recorded at some of the highest resolutions available to the consumer, while four microphones store 360-degree audio to really increase the immersive experience. The device can also be taken underwater, for those keen to take prospective travellers that little bit further.

The VIRB 360 has particular potential for brands with particularly adventurous offerings, with the opportunity to overlay extra stats, such as speed and distance travelled, and link to your other Garmin accessories to monitor heart rate. Due for release at the end of 2017, the VIRB 360 lets travel brands take their bragging rights up an extra notch.

3.



4.



5.







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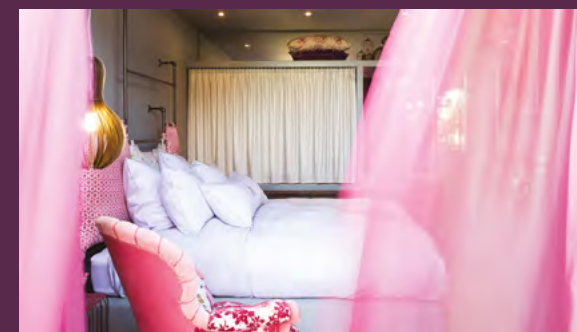
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# ARCHITECT



# OF DREAMS

Maison des Arganiers, Morocco

“I do not put any limits when I dream for my guests, because these are the most important moments of their lives.”

Driven by a philosophy of putting clients first, creator of Maison des Rêves, Thierry Teyssier, is truly an architect of dreams. He talks to Cynthia Rosenfeld about his latest fantasy-worthy ventures and how he is reconstructing conventions on guest experience.





Maison des Arganiers, Morocco

## ARCHITECT OF DREAMS: THIERRY TEYSSIER

Go ahead and call him crazy. Thierry Teyssier – the Paris-based visionary behind Dar Ahlam, a 200-year-old kasbah turned 14-room hideaway within a traditional Berber village in the wadis (valleys), four hours’ drive southeast from Marrakech – has heard it before. “Totally insane”, the Frenchman gleefully admits, was the initial reaction to his company Maison des Rêves’ latest Moroccan venture. A 200-kilometre real-life flip-book of a five-day journey, La Route du Sud brings one booking at a time by well-appointed Toyota TX past argan bushes and wizened fig trees, along jagged red-earth Atlantic coastline, among the sculptural contours of Anti-Atlas Mountains and through Saharan lunar landscapes, before arriving at Teyssier’s ultra-chic dune camp in a seemingly endless sandbox. If not with Teyssier’s meticulously trained team, one is highly unlikely to travel across this ever-changing landscape – one of North Africa’s most evocative.

Unsurprisingly, the path that led him to take others so far off-piste was circuitous. Having starting out in the theatre world, Teyssier launched an events company in 1991. “I found my talent is for *mis en scène*”, says the former producer of his evolution from the stage to real life. “People were willing to pay me to create exceptional moments for them.” So satisfied were his clients with these inimitable, one-night-only spectacles that they began asking Teyssier to plan their holidays, too. Soon he was booking

after-hours museum tours and organising for customs officers to handle formalities aboard private planes. Only one person was left feeling disappointed. “Even at the highest-rated hotels and everywhere in the world, I found staff focused solely on their brand.” After hearing ‘no’ too many times, Teyssier set out to create his own hotel, “where I could practise my philosophy of thinking about my clients first.”

Even today, 15 years after it opened, Dar Ahlam – Teyssier’s first hospitality venture, based on the edge of the Moroccan desert near Ouarzazate – remains irrefutably radical. The dusty rose-hued fortress has been sensitively modernised and extends to resort requisites like a candlelit spa and palm-fringed swimming pool; yet Dar Ahlam is not so much a hotel as a team of unreservedly dedicated people – from its hundreds of gourmet recipes courtesy of the likes of Thierry Alix, Philippe Conticini and Pierre Hermé, all the way to Teyssier’s own storytelling book. Of the 100-plus staff members, most come from the surrounding village. All have been schooled and empowered to sense, then exceed, the expectations of no more than 30 guests at a time. There are no keys, no bar, nor restaurant. “But also no limits”, Teyssier points out. “Everything is just for you. You can change your mind in the moment, because my team revolves around you. To all of this we add elements of surprise.”



Dar Ahlam may be a Berber fortress, but it is no ivory tower. Activities, which are always private, dive deep into environs rarely visited by other tourists and so authentic that it is not unusual for a guide to introduce passing family members as he leads the way through a nearby palm oasis. Treks across the Valley of Roses, picnics along hidden rivers and hilltop tea ceremonies are orchestrated with military precision and delivered with genuine flexibility. "I wanted to bring people to places as I had discovered them", recounts the charming Frenchman. "Equally important is that we do so with the care I would show my own loved ones."

Typically, guests do not reach out to him immediately upon returning home. They do so after their next holiday, when they better grasp the extent of Teyssier's out-of-the-box approach. "I am not interested in travel just for pleasure or entertainment. These are addictive but fleeting", he observes. "We are about helping our guests to find their own happiness."

This mission drives Teyssier's seemingly inexhaustible determination to make the inaccessible accessible, both physically and metaphorically. Around ten years after Dar Ahlam opened, a Moroccan friend's invitation to explore the country's southern reaches unexpectedly sparked an enthusiasm to share

this journey of sun-dried valleys and palm dense oases – impossible at the time, since there was nowhere suitable for Dar Ahlam guests to stay.

"Maybe it was outrageous thinking to extend our dreams like this", he concedes, "but I did not get discouraged." Instead, he got out maps and methodically built an itinerary. "I would need somewhere for my guests to sleep near Agadir, which is halfway between Marrakech and Guelmim, then another stop halfway to Akka and a third en route to our dune camp." What would have seemed like fantasy fodder to most was very linear to Teyssier.

Local craftspeople erected La Route du Sud's three photogenic houses, all of which fit contextually into their respective environments, yet stand out for their thoughtful comforts. After a good knead in the bijou spa and equally commendable Volubilis rosé at Maison des Arganiers, which is tucked away in an authentic hillside Berber village, guests cross sun-scorched scenery until palm trees suddenly shoot up around Tighmert's lush palm grove near the Mauritania border. Here they come across La Maison de l'Oasis: an air-conditioned, canvas-clad explorer's camp complete with clawed bathtub and organic bath oils. Next, the custom caravan heads off towards the stone-clad La Maison Rouge, designed by French architectural

**"Maybe it was outrageous thinking to extend our dreams like this, but I did not get discouraged."**



La Maison Rouge, Morocco





La Maison de l'Oasis, Morocco

“I AM NOT INTERESTED IN TRAVEL JUST FOR PLEASURE OR ENTERTAINMENT. THESE ARE ADDICTIVE BUT FLEETING. WE ARE ABOUT HELPING OUR GUESTS TO FIND THEIR OWN HAPPINESS.”



firm Studio KO and perched within a scarlet-streaked desert canyon. "This journey is about the thrill of movement and discovery", says the peripatetic explorer. Subtly choreographed, yet completely spontaneous, Teyssier's masterful staging culminates among the light and shadows of Iriki, an ancient salt lake turned larger-than-life sandbox sure to evoke pure awe from anyone's inner child.

Teyssier saw his guests along La Route tap into something even deeper than he has witnessed at Dar Ahlam. "So I began to imagine again." Having upturned notions of customer service and stripped away the four walls of a traditional guest experience, for his third act Teyssier has been eyeing national borders. Starting next year, 700,000 Heures ('Sept Cent Mille Heures') will operate as an ephemeral version of La Route, based in a different country every six months or so, decamping from one continent or hemisphere to another according to weather conditions. Leading his guests to previously unseen yet magnificent corners of our planet and inviting them to stay at breathtaking pop-up properties that are otherwise off-limits, Teyssier envisions this as something of a travelling dinner party,

based on the notion that we remember and are enriched by the people we encounter, long after the names of each Angkorian temple or Icelandic fjord visited are forgotten. The curious name refers to the average human lifespan in hours; it reflects his genuine concern for how we spend that finite time. "You can choose to spend it with us and I promise we will lead you to shared moments of happiness."

Teyssier is still very much in start-up mode, reaching out to past guests in search of new ideas and directions. "I like to collaborate when I create, and I am seeing that guests want to deepen this relationship from just being served. Not all, of course, but some." This listening tour has already inspired some game-changing ideas. While all prospective guests must apply for membership prior to joining their first ephemeral journey, those who upgrade to his highest category, le Circle des Amazigh, may come scouting upcoming destinations with Teyssier. "Guests will help to define the guest experience", he declares, excited to erase more conventions. "I suppose that's a bit audacious, but it's also the natural progression of what lured me into this business."





# WE CAN



# BE HEROES

Jon Rose, the founder of Waves For Water, in Bosnia

“Sometimes it's best to take matters into your own hands, bringing a solution directly to a problem, under the radar and around the red tape.”

With many CSR policies a smokescreen and much sustainability chatter merely greenwashing, it's time to go guerilla on humanitarianism. **Juliet Kinsman** spotlights the direct-action disruptors and forward-looking travel brands eschewing a softly-softly approach and asking travellers to get their hands dirty.



In this mixed-up, muddled-up, shook-up world, our problems are escalating at an unprecedented rate: from climate change to population growth to challenges to sustainability legislation. With our faith in traditional authorities and governments to do the right thing waning, maybe it's time to take matters into our own hands.

The smallest steps in the right direction can make a big difference – especially when 1.2 billion people are travelling every year. As a result of the context above, today's luxury travellers crave guilt-free consumption, hold brands accountable for their actions and want to contribute to and be immersed by a destination – and they're more likely to put their money where your mouth is if you're talking about the greater good. Tourism has a lot to answer for regarding its impact on the environment and local economies, with hotels and travel brands holding the power to spark far-reaching improvements for many communities. However, scrutinise many so-called 'sustainable brands' and you'll discover their policies are far from inspiring: so how can we truly be heroes?

Enter Jon Rose and his 'guerilla humanitarianism' concept. "Guerrilla humanitarianism is about taking a no-nonsense, stripped-down approach to determining the essentials needed to complete a task," explains Rose, whose Waves For Water programme focuses on affecting global change by providing access to clean water for millions, while sidestepping the challenges faced by traditional philanthropic initiatives. "Sometimes it's best to take matters into your own hands, bringing a solution directly to a problem, under the radar and around the red tape."

It all began with a trip to Indonesia, where the former professional surfer thought to pack a few water filtration systems. While he was aboard a boat off the coast of Sumatra, an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale destroyed the nearby city of Padang, resulting in 1,000 lives lost and 100,000 made homeless. "I managed to get water filters into the hands of rescue workers to help those who were most in need of clean water – that was really the start of Waves For Water", says Rose.

Since then, Waves For Water has expanded into a specialised clean water task force known as the Clean Water Corps, which combines a "no-nonsense guerilla humanitarianism attitude"



Waves For Water, in Bosnia (top) and Nepal (bottom)





Waves For Water projects in the Philippines (top) and Afghanistan (bottom)

with the expertise of military veterans to apply and implement strategic humanitarian initiatives to the major global issue of water-borne disease. Headed up by former US Army Captain Robert McQueen, the idea is to take the training and skill sets acquired through many years of military service and redirect it towards a new purpose.

Although this military mindset might not apply to all destinations or brands, its philosophy of strategic, targeted initiatives that make innovative use of the resources available does resonate on a global scale. Gone are the days when tourists simply took a few sweets and pencils to hand out to begging kids in the developing world: Pack for a Purpose is a not-for-profit based in the US that reminds us that travellers can help by alerting them to who needs what and where, with hotels playing a key role in implementation. Since 2010, Pack for a Purpose has enabled travellers to take more than 77,000 kilograms of supplies to 60 countries, thanks to their website flagging up participating hotels and the goods they distribute. Song Saa in Cambodia invites guests to bring stationery supplies or dictionaries for a local school in Koh Rong; and Ulusaba Private Game Reserve in South Africa asks guests to leave paperbacks and holiday reads for their adult literacy programme.

However, tourism and activism don't always cosy up so compatibly. 'Voluntourism' may seem like a smart idea, but these 'working holiday' attempts to eliminate poverty, conserve wildlife or provide aid after a humanitarian disaster can be fraught with complications. It's necessary to examine whether situations are being exploited for commercial reasons and to wonder:

is parachuting foreigners in to tell locals how to do things the best way to manage progress? There's also the question of whether having tourists getting stuck into a project for a short burst represents a meaningful contribution in a context where it might be better for money to go towards empowering and supporting locals in the long term. Don't be fazed by the complexity of using tourism as a force for good, however: deploying even the smallest number of genuine activists in the right way can have a huge positive impact.

Hands-on holiday activism worth saluting includes easy-to-action waste management schemes, such as beach cleans. Every year, a staggering eight-million tonnes of plastic enters our seas – 80 per cent of which comes from the land. Plastic waste filling our oceans has become such an issue it's even led to a full-length feature film, 'A Plastic Ocean'. Many luxury hotels task their staff with litter pick-ups, the obvious incentive being cleaner, more photogenic stretches of sand. In Germany, Beachcleaner is a movement turning the tide on plastic waste with educational resources for kids, beach cleans and plastic alternatives; while Make Holidays Greener, run by Travelife and The Travel Foundation, has hosted 'Make Holidays Greener' weeks – in 2016, they inspired over 100 beach cleans in 20 different countries.

In Banyan Tree properties across Asia, close to 5,000 associates, community members and guests picked up kilos and kilos of trash from riverbeds and beaches. Angsana Tengchong Hot Springs Village, situated in China's Yunnan province, accounted for over half of that total



with their weekly river pick-ups and twice-monthly road cleans. John Hardy, founder of the Green School in Indonesia, invites anyone to pitch up for a 'trash walk' leaving at 7am daily from his boutique hotel, Bambu Indah, near Ubud. Participants can talk rubbish with him as they spear garbage mostly washed up from the river, while hearing his energetic, emphatic and eccentric vision during a purposeful stroll through Sayan in Bali's forest-covered inland. Over in Belize, there's an initiative to control lionfish populations that are damaging the coral reefs. Francis Ford Coppola's Turtle Inn invites tourists to help safely and strategically cull the native species through hunting; co-operatives of local women then make jewellery from hunted lionfish to sell. Although these initiatives may be specific to their destination, their spirit of hands-on humanitarianism can be transplanted around the world.

Citizen science, when the public takes part in valuable field research, is another way of helping. Data collection can be the most time-consuming part of conservation, so this can be a great low-impact contribution from travellers. Steve Newman, Director of Conservation for Banyan Tree, explains how citizen science works for them: "As a global business with management or ownership interest in 40 resorts in 13 countries, we have the chance to gather informative data on multiple ecosystems: coral reef, rainforest, mangrove, desert. We can provide valuable

insight on status, change, and biological processes, and how it varies across large spatial and temporal scales. This data is collected at various levels of expertise, involving guests as citizen scientists, and the findings are accessible and beneficial to all." The Banyan Tree Maldives Marine Lab has recorded historical shark distributions through interviews of 34 former shark fishers, in addition to tracking current shark distributions through underwater video surveillance and guests' citizen science observations during recreational snorkelling and diving excursions – guest observations have currently accounted for 436 sightings.

Divers and snorkellers can also get involved in conservation efforts by working with Earthdive. Through this organisation, which works in cahoots with the United Nations Environment Programme and WWF, marine scientists have figured out that key indicators in different marine eco-regions can tell a lot about the health of the world's oceans. By recording these indicators, any scuba diver or snorkeller can contribute to Earthdive's global snapshot of the state of our oceans. The world's largest monitoring programme happens because of Ecocean's study with WildMe in the US, which helps to develop The Wildbook for Whale Sharks visual database. Information architect Jason Holmberg and NASA astrophysicist Zaven

Arzoumanian created software that monitors the population and movement of the world's largest fish through photos of their skin patterns. Anyone around the world can access and report any whale-shark sightings, and the library now holds tens-of-thousands of images. Meanwhile, Surfers Against Sewage is a campaign group that rallies their community to clear our oceans, asking surfers to report on water conditions and take action where needed.

Greenwashing won't cut it in today's world. Instead, hotels and travel brands will do well to have a philosophy of doing things more directly. TOMS, the oft-cited creator of shoes, bags and glasses, has won hearts for its 'one-for-one' initiatives; but dig more deeply, and you wonder how much good they're actually doing. The brand allows the consumer to

indulge their retail craving and get a feel-good boost of oxytocin from the sense they're giving back. But are they really?

TOMS has been criticised for putting profits first and using their do-gooding for maximum spin while nurturing a culture of aid dependency. In an article for Vox, journalist Amanda Taub comments, "Buying TOMS shoes is a terrible way to help poor people." In her opinion, the consumer purchases the product feeling that they have made a positive impact and helped the world's impoverished many, while the real impact is negligible. Since sustainability is so complex, rather than allowing brands to gain a halo from their supposed initiatives, creating purposeful campaigns and turning travellers into activists may be our best foot forward.



A 'trash walk' organised by John Hardy of Indonesia's Green School



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# ALIEN



# AMBITION

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Fordypningsrommet, Fleinvær by TYIN tegnestue Architects

Photo © pasiaalto.com

“Fuelled by the wave of modernism and the rise of fantasy in popular culture, the mid-century space race would backdrop a new breed of innovative design talent, who took extraterrestrial inspiration as a cue to push preconceived boundaries.”

From underwater art installations to mountaintop museums; creative communities in the Arctic Circle to high rises bursting with greenery in Milan: today’s most audacious architects are taking a space age approach to design. Lisa Davidson takes us on a guide through the world’s most extreme architecture.



1.





In a much-quoted muse on faith, turn-of-the-century poet Gilbert K. Chesterton scribed the words, “There are no rules of architecture for a castle in the clouds.” The buildings of Chesterton’s times were grandiose and stately; but even in the limitless fantasies and mythology he pondered, the writer could surely never have contemplated the space-age architecture we’ve grown accustomed to today.

It’s true that architects and visionaries had pushed the envelope of design long before the dawn of the 1900s, but as art and architecture continued to collide under the guidance of modernist pioneers like Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright, in the decades that followed the manmade landscape was changed forever. Fuelled by the wave of modernism and the rise of fantasy in popular culture, the mid-century space race would backdrop a new breed of innovative design talent, who took extraterrestrial inspiration as a cue to push preconceived boundaries. And, by the mid-1970s, nothing in design was out of bounds.

Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, along with Gianfranco Franchini, saw their extravagant Centre Georges Pompidou completed in 1977 – Rogers later defined its inside-out style with the Lloyd’s building, completed in 1986. By the 1990s, boundaries would be shifted again with the advent of a movement called deconstructivism, architects like Frank Gehry and Daniel Libeskind taking the art to new, distorted heights.

Dramatic, otherworldly, unconventional to a new extreme – only one thing can now be supposed: in 2017, ‘there are no rules of architecture’. To castles in clouds and beyond...

## MMM (Messner Mountain Museum) Corones by Zaha Hadid

“There are 360 degrees”, proclaimed Iraqi-British ‘starchitect’ Zaha Hadid in a 2003 interview, “so why stick to one?” Indeed. Hadid’s aesthetic was, and continues through her practice to be, the manifestation of extreme architecture. An architect that embraced artistic ideals, unafraid to defy convention for fear of not ticking boxes, there are plentiful Hadid buildings that could be called upon to represent bold movements in construction and design. However, this museum, perched 2,275 metres up on the edge of a plateau in Italy’s South Tyrol range, takes the biscuit for sheer spectacle.

The last of six mountaintop museums curated by the Italian mountaineer Reinhold Messner, MMM Corones embodies Hadid’s renowned space-age appeal, but does so amid rugged terrain. It juts from an unforgiving landscape with drama and theatrical whimsy, a breathtaking viewing platform cantilevered over a valley at 2,275 metres above sea level. Extreme in aesthetic, extreme in setting.

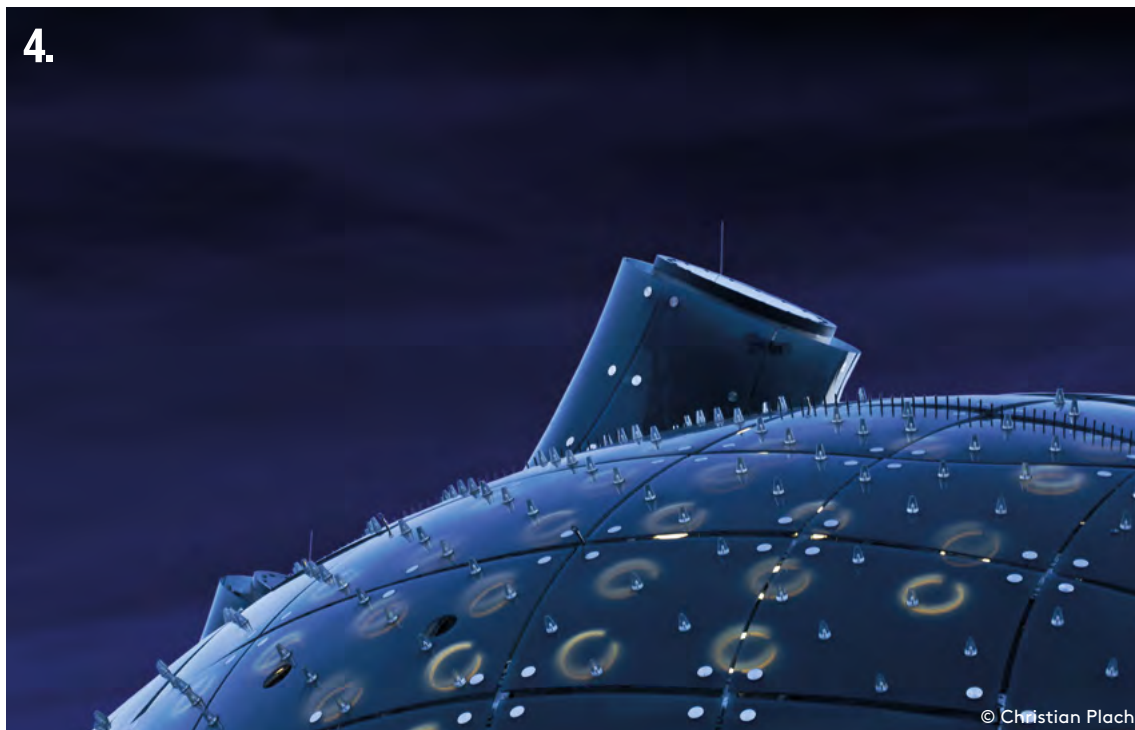
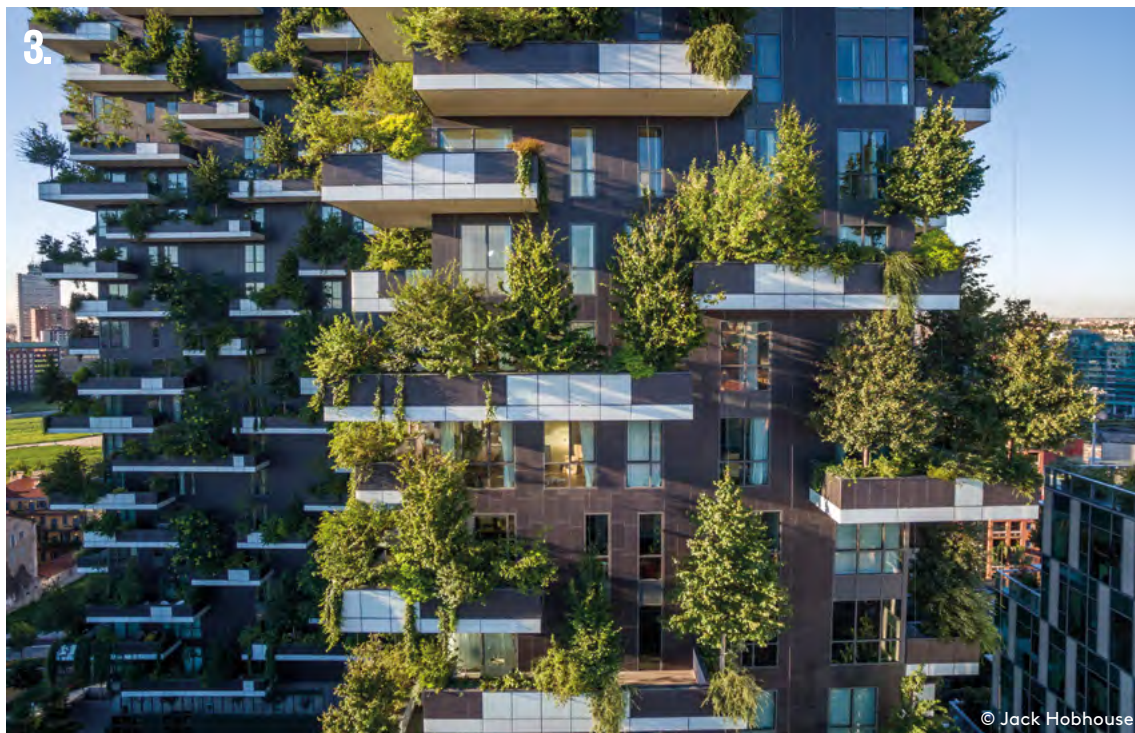
The architect divided opinion during her lifetime, and the blueprint she set continues to do so today. One thing is for sure: her sci-fi approach to architecture has taken the art to an entirely new level. Whether the naysayers like it or not, Hadid’s bold ability to defy convention has been copied around the world, and the landscape of extreme architecture is all the more sensational for it.











## Fordypningsrommet, Fleinvær by TYIN tegnestue Architects

Put together by TYIN tegnestue Architects, a young practice whose work is entwined with notions of sustainability and hyper-locality, Fordypningsrommet – north of the Arctic Circle on the Norwegian archipelago of Fleinvær – is a small series of houses-cum-shelters fuelled by creativity. Their founder, Norwegian composer and musician Håvard Lund, forms part of a culturally-aware committee who vet potential talent as to whether they qualify for a complimentary stay.

Hugging the island's topography, the huts – built using Kebony (a sustainable alternative to tropical hardwood) – are minimal but contemporary, offering a mindful retreat for truly getting away from it all. No cars; no shops; plentiful chance to catch natural wonders like the Aurora Borealis; infinite peace. "This place is not about business, but health", says Lund: words that will resonate as you walk down a private pier to a sauna in complete seclusion.

A world away from Hadid's bold declarations, this artists' retreat is a back-to-basics beauty where an unforgettable landscape encircles guests who attempt to reconnect with nature in its rawest capacity.

## Bosco Verticale by Stefano Boeri

Noting the importance of the natural world in urban situations, Milan's Bosco Verticale (Vertical Forest) is one of a rising number of architectural projects that encompass biodiversity, vegetation, and an urban ecosystem – architects and designers seeking to right the wrongs that urban settings have had on the environment at large.

Architect Stefano Boeri's vertical integration of nature into the Milanese skyline operates in relation to policies for reforestation and naturalisation of large urban and metropolitan borders – two residential towers, of 110 and 76 metres in height, host 900 trees and over 20,000 plants, a wide range of shrubs and floral plants distributed according to the sun exposure of the façade. Extreme and beautiful, Boeri's garden skyscraper not only beguiles in the form of spectacle, but also provides valid inspiration for others to bring nature into the urban environment.

Boeri recently announced plans for a similar project in the Chinese city of Nanjing: two neighbouring multipurpose towers that expand on his Milan concept. Boeri, though, is not stopping there. Oh no. "We have been asked to design an entire city", the architect told The Guardian in February, "where you don't only have one tall building but you have 100 or 200 buildings of different sizes, all with trees and plants on the façades. We are working very seriously on designing all the different buildings. I think they will start to build at the end of this year. By 2020 we could imagine having the first forest city in China." Now that is extreme architecture.

## Kunsthhaus Graz by Sir Peter Cook and Colin Fournier

A founding member of Archigram – an avant-garde, neo-futurist architecture collective from the 1960s – British architect, professor and writer Sir Peter Cook has been a significant figure within the international architectural world for more than half a century. In collaboration with architect Colin Fournier, Cook's biomorphic behemoth on the bank of the river Mur, in the southern Austrian city of Graz, is one of the planet's most fascinating museums. Kunsthhaus Graz is a bulbous brute of unrefined beauty.



5.





Referred to locally as the ‘friendly alien’, the multi-disciplinary cultural venue is most definitely otherworldly – a quirky reminder of the personality that can be injected into architecture. “It’s rather amusing going up this very ordinary thing and disappearing into the unknown”, Cook says of ascending the travelator that whisks you from street level to the floating alien. “The exhibit area is completely immersed in the unknown; it’s a mysterious space”. Higher still is the Needle, a walkout section that offers stunning views over Graz. “So the city is, in a sense”, Cook continues, “the museum’s primary exhibit” – reminding us of the importance of context in building design.

## House for Essex by Grayson Perry and FAT Architecture

Following on from Cook’s unabashed objection to convention, artist Grayson Perry’s collaboration with architectural practice FAT is an embodiment of the sort of thing that happens when art meets architecture. The national treasure was unrelenting in his flow of imagination, with the architects able to comply with every fanciful whim. A House for Essex, located in Wrabness near the banks of the River Stour, is a modern take on the traditional wayside pilgrimage chapel, conceived as a tribute to a fictional ‘secular saint’.

Commissioned as part of Alain de Botton’s Living Architecture programme, the eccentric abode is available for rentals – making the critically and popularly acclaimed artist’s outrageous ode to Essex one of the most singular stopovers in the world. Dedicated to the life of fictional working class hero Julie Cope, the idea dates back decades to Perry and his daughter imagining characters and sketching the houses they might live in. Finally brought to fruition, A House for Essex imbibes the notions of people from Essex; Perry’s long studies of class and character transposed to real-life architecture that screams extreme.

## Museo Atlantico, Lanzarote, by Jason deCaires Taylor

Located just off the island of Lanzarote, Jason deCaires Taylor’s Atlantic Museum covers 2,500 square-metres of ocean bed, accessible only to those willing to dive the 12 metres necessary to enter. Inside they are rewarded with a series of installations that challenge our wasteful, technological and selfish existence. More than an attraction for tourists, the underwater museum – Europe’s first – is a call to action.

Three years in the making, Museo Atlantico opened at the beginning of this year with a series of installations that focus on humanity and its uneasy connection to both nature and itself. There are those that address capitalism: ‘Deregulated’ sees the corporate world’s arrogance toward nature typified by suited men in a children’s playground; a see-saw represents a petroleum extraction pump; and a dolphin ride speaks of the burden we place on marine species. Those that address the refugee crisis: The Raft of Lampedusa, a contemporary take on Géricault’s 1818 painting, is an eerie, motionless dinghy that pays tribute to those abandoned by society. Those that help us readdress our self-obsessed addiction to technology: ‘Disconnected’ positions a selfie-taking couple next to the former work of human tragedy. And those that remind us of the absurdity of it all: ‘Crossing The Rubicón’ consists of a large group of hopeless figures heading for a doorway in a 30-metre-long, four-metre-high wall, nature flooding around this pitiable barrier.

DeCaires Taylor’s sculptures will attract corals, increase marine biomass and fish species, and divert tourists from fragile natural reefs – but for all the damage we do on land, it’s the futility of humanity examined here that is most intriguing. “We forget we are all an integral part of a living system at our peril”, states the artist. And let that be a reminder that the most extreme, most incredible and august architect is nature itself.





6.







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# THE NEW



# ESCAPISM

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Image by Based On A True Story

"To travel is to feel, and in a world where social media has ushered in a new level of international homogenisation, travellers looking to reconnect with the world within are seeking more fanciful experiences."

For the longest time the travel industry has been obsessed with authenticity, but what happens when the real world just isn't that appealing? **James Davidson** charts the emergence of New Escapism, where travellers are immersed in highly choreographed, complete and utter fantasy.



“What is most truly human about man”, wrote Jerome Singer, “what is perhaps his greatest gift derived from evolution and perhaps his greatest resource in his mastery of the environment and of himself, is his capacity for fantasy.”

The renowned American psychologist was deep into the study of daydreaming and its impact upon countless levels of our psyche. In the 1960s, long before the soul-draining avalanche of communication that engulfs us today, Singer concluded that the only problem with the much-maligned act of spacing-out was not doing it enough. If only I’d been familiar with his work when I was repeatedly and rudely jolted from my school-time reveries by snarling teachers in plaid and tweed.

Studies through the years that followed Singer’s have all found similar conclusions: fantasy fuels an inner freedom that is good for the soul. From the Brontë sisters’ imaginary lands to the groundbreaking moments of clarity Einstein and Newton enjoyed whilst gathering their thoughts – creativity to life-changing science – the mind’s meanderings have kindled plenty of the many memorable junctures in time.

And what a time for fantasy. Donald Trump’s unfathomable march to the Oval Office has been a moment of bleakness that to many of us remains fixed in the realms of Ballardian dystopia. Sheer fantasy – yet blurred into a reality we increasingly look to escape. In 2017, though, escapism needn’t remain solely in our minds. The eventual dawn of an authentic virtual reality at last seems tangible, technology having finally caught up with the quixotic minds of sci-fi writers; immersive gaming continues its

ascendancy; and the sort of all-engulfing real-world experiences run by pioneers like Secret Cinema have permeated parallel scenes and cultures.

So much so, that a clutch of high-end ‘travel designers’ are now transforming the escapades of those who can afford it – innovators like Niel Fox, founder of Based on a True Story (BOATS), taking clients who are more familiar with superyachts than easyJet on indulgent adventures that fuse itinerary-led travel with the sort of unimaginable fantasy that Jerome Singer could only have daydreamed of.

Think feeling all Bruce Willis as helicopters speed you from the roofs of skyscrapers; think dancing the night away with tribespeople on an uncharted tropical island; navigating snowmobiles across frozen Arctic lakes; or duelling mythical creatures in Ancient Greece. Really. Think the unthinkable – absurd reveries made real by hundreds of actors and months of meticulous planning. Think, as Fox calls it: ‘the antithesis of conventional travel’.

Fox’s outlandish escapism is the Secret Cinema experience on steroids; it is video gaming turned reality, attended by the sort of people who invest in video games as part of an extensive portfolio. It is the tip of an escapism iceberg. And as we know, some 90 per cent of an iceberg’s mass goes unseen. Choreographed to obscene detail, an experience like BOATS is months in planning and a logistical work of art; it also represents the lengths the human race is going to in order to escape itself. Is there something wrong with us?



Image by Based On A True Story



Image by Gingerline





Image by Based On A True Story





Images by based On A True Story

Quite. We are in undeniably difficult times – Trump and Farage cackling at us through the lens of social media; prejudices we thought long-forgotten resurfacing with a vengeance; the natural world choking with humanity’s hands around its neck – and the vulnerability we feel from these types of experiences is a youthfully naïve one, as if a kind of inward regression makes these harsh realities go away, for a moment in time at least. “I think the mindset you get into taps into something from our childhood psyche”, admits Suz Mountfort, co-creator of London’s immersive dining experience Gingerline, in an interview with *The Guardian*. “Everyone wants to find Narnia – this is sort of the closest you can get as an adult.”

“Excitement and adventure – balanced against the fear of the unknown – is probably the fundamental travel dynamic”, asserts travel psychologist Michael Brein, who cites discomfort, romance, adventure, excitement, shock and fear as key protagonists in what we crave from travelling. From immersive dining, theatre or cinema, to the grand extravaganzas of the high-end travel designers, one thing remains constant: the host’s ability to balance those feelings. Entering into any one of these experiences involves relinquishing control. We want to be pushed – as Brein confirms, it is this notion we crave – but just enough.

Following its inaugural run in April, a new horror film festival in Oregon recently redressed that balance by pushing a little more than some may consider enough. Taking place at Timberline Lodge in Mount Hood, a lodge better known as the Overlook Hotel from Stanley Kubrick’s *The Shining*, The

Overlook Film Festival (an immersive, four-day celebration of the genre) curdled the blood of its visitors to rave reviews. With live action performances written and performed by leading lights in theatre, festival goers found themselves led alone into foggy rooms, stripped of control in an overwhelming psychological experience – the very definition of Brein’s fear of the unknown.

“We want people to play at their comfort level”, explains Bottleneck Immersive’s Dylan Reiff, the designer of an immersive horror game that ran throughout Overlook. “If people want to give us their room keys and let the game seep into their experience at the festival in really invasive ways, that’s an option.” A hellish notion indeed, but one tempered with the knowledge that horror fans are likely to have a different comfort level to most.

What is your comfort level? Provoking feelings of adventure and a romance of the unknown, a new wave of tour operators are jolting their clients with a new take on the Magical Mystery Tour: companies like Jubel deal in the ‘surprise travel’ experience – the unknown acting as muse to those who’ve seen it all. Complete a questionnaire, pay your dues and turn up at the airport with an envelope that dictates your journey. A leap of faith that confirms an increasing desire to lose control. Are you comfortable stepping into the unknown?

“I soon realised”, wrote *Strange Fruit* author Lillian Smith, “that no journey carries one far unless, as it extends into the world around us, it goes an equal distance into the world within.” To travel is to feel, and in a world where social media has ushered in a new level





Images by Based On A True Story



of international homogenisation, travellers looking to reconnect with the world within are seeking more fanciful experiences.

MMOs (massively multiplayer online games) like World of Warcraft are allowing their users to explore assets of their personalities that have previously lay dormant, their intense escapism having even been cited as life-changing in the real world. "You're in this world where it's life and death", explained a user to Ethan Gilsdorf in his book, *Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks*. "Adrenaline rush. You kill. It's changed the way I interact with people in the real world. I am less patient. I am more forthright. It's like breathing for the first time." Are these immersive experiences

allowing us to feel like we're travelling for the first time?

Whether it's dining amid a theatrical recreation of Twin Peaks, taking a ride into the unknown, or fending off zombies: one unifying theme here is that fantasy has been reengaged. It might be that years of craving authenticity and living-like-a-local have worn thin – that contemporary travel means the lines between traveller and local have been irrevocably blurred. It might be that every selfie backdrop has been exhausted. It may well be that repulsed reaction to the horror that plays out on rolling news. But, whatever it is, one thing is for sure: travel will never look the same again.

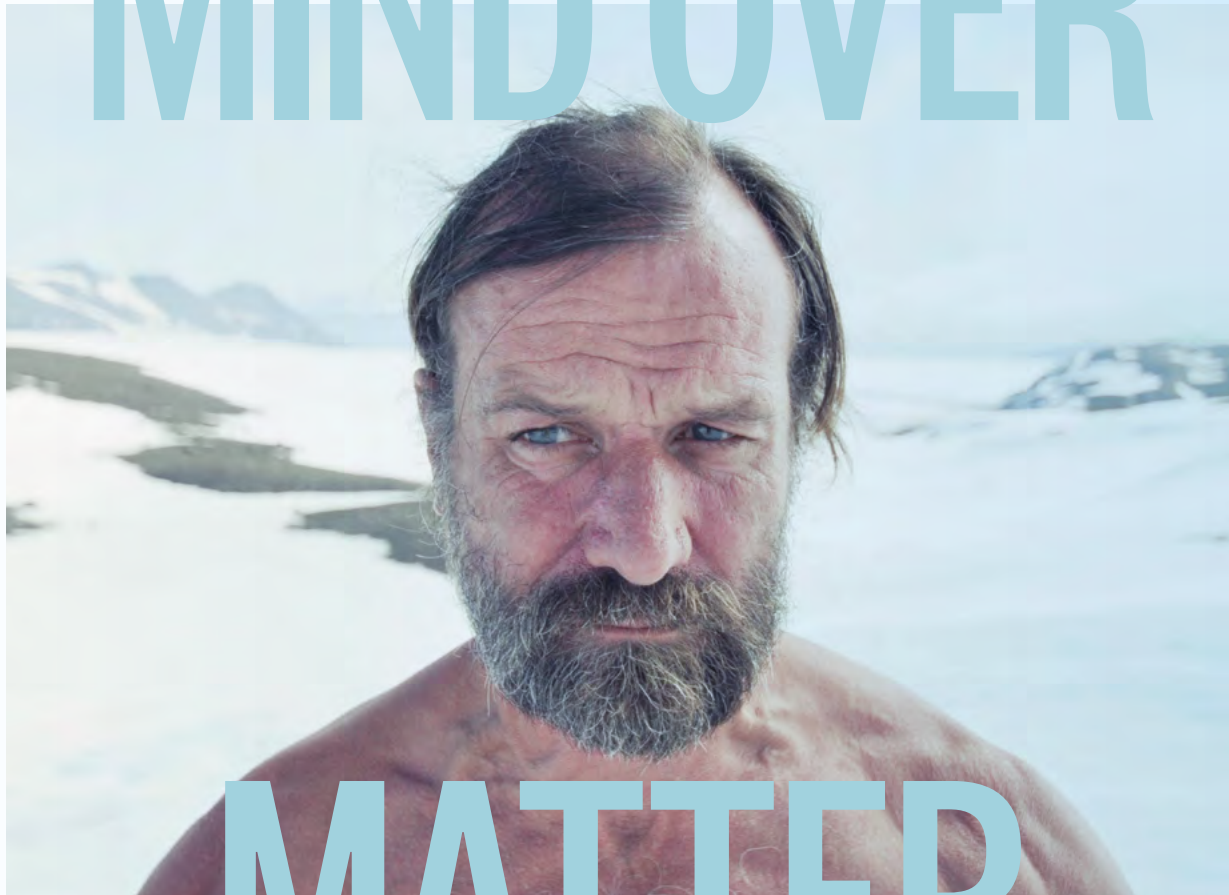
**“Excitement and adventure – balanced against the fear of the unknown – is probably the fundamental travel dynamic”**





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# MIND OVER



# MATTER

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“Mindset is a real neurological activity that is able to control our body so much more than we thought, and now I'm showing that in scientific studies”

Travel can be transformational, but can it be medicinal?

‘The Iceman’, Wim Hof, tells Katie Palmer how we can learn to harness the power of the cold for the good of our health.



Wim Hof is a man who understands what it means to be cold. The Dutch daredevil has made a name for himself running a marathon in the Arctic Circle and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro wearing only shorts; swimming in glacial lakes in the Spanish Pyrenees; and repeatedly smashing the world record for the longest ice bath, among other teeth-chattering stunts. It doesn't take much imagination to understand why he's earned the nickname 'The Iceman'.

Contrary to the popular saying, Hof does all this for the good of his health. He attributes his ability to withstand extreme cold to rigorous training, claiming that his self-developed 'Wim Hof Method' not only allows him to regulate his body temperature while, say, taking a naked nap in the snow, but also to consciously modulate his autonomic nervous system and immune system – a feat that's not only impressive, but humanly impossible... Or so scientists thought.

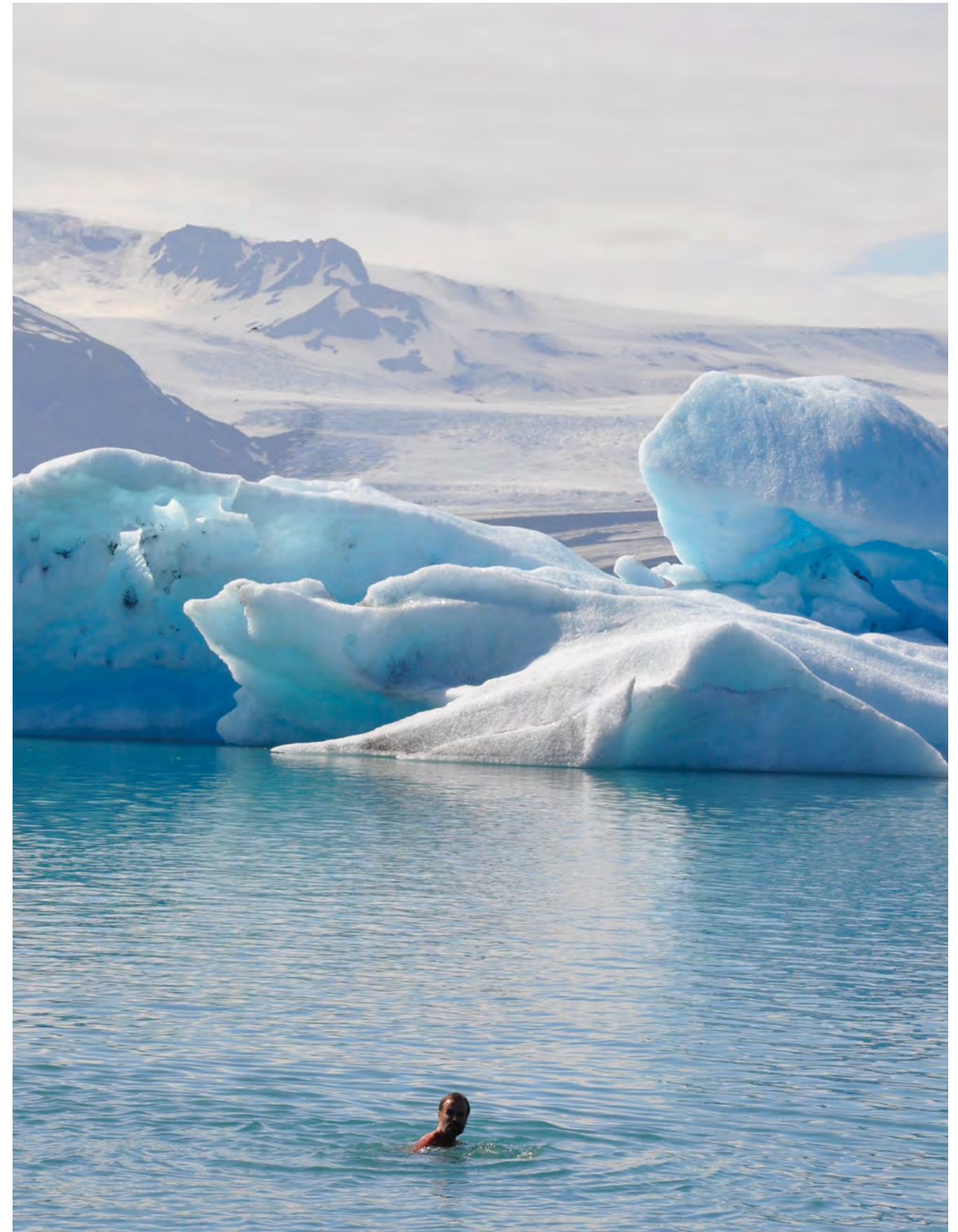
"Hitherto, both the autonomic nervous system and innate immune system were regarded as systems that cannot be voluntarily influenced", says a report by Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. "However", the report continues, "results from a recently performed case study on a Dutch individual, who holds several world records with regard to withstanding extreme cold, suggest otherwise."

The report refers to a study by Radboud University professor Peter Pickkers and PhD student Matthijs Kox, who (despite being initially sceptical) decided to give Hof a chance to prove his claims. Adhering strictly to the

principles of scientific process, they took Hof's blood and tested its reaction to harmful bacteria before and after an 80-minute full-body ice bath, during which he practised his Wim Hof Method. Sure enough, they found very low levels of proteins associated with activation of the immune system and, in a subsequent experiment, increased levels of cortisol, adrenaline and other hormones associated with the 'fight or flight' phenomenon – the latter thought to influence the former.

Interest piqued, they took their study a step further by injecting Hof with the bacteria directly. Where healthy volunteers in previous experiments had experienced fever, headaches and shivering, along with an increased immune response, Hof suffered almost no symptoms. In fact, tests showed that he did indeed appear to have voluntarily suppressed his immune response – while this may seem counterintuitive, an over-active immune system is associated with autoimmune diseases (whereby the body mistakenly attacks itself, such as with inflammatory bowel disease and rheumatoid arthritis), so being able to voluntarily suppress it could have positive implications.

Regardless, the real revelation was that Hof was able to voluntarily alter his immune response in either direction. Of course, medical science has developed drugs that can do this; but never before has there been evidence that humans can consciously activate and utilise our nervous systems to similar effect. And while the psychological benefits of meditative techniques are widely acknowledged, the potential physical advantages have thus far attracted less attention. In short, The Iceman is living proof of 'mind over matter'.











But, far from being superhuman, Hof believes that anyone is capable of achieving such feats. He set out to prove this by training 18 healthy volunteers in the Wim Hof Method over the course of just four days (with no prior experience), of which 12 were selected at random to be tested in the same way Hof had been previously. Much to the surprise of Pickkers and Kox, the trainees showed higher adrenaline levels than the control participants and a lower immune response – just like Hof, they appeared to have voluntarily controlled both their nervous and immune systems.

So, just what is the Wim Hof Method?

Based on three pillars, the first element in Hof's training is cold therapy – "The cold is your warm friend", claims his website. "The vascular system is 125,000 kilometres of blood vessels, channelling inside each and every one of us", he tells me by way of explanation, "and they have little muscles and little reflexes – with gradual cold exposure you train those little muscles and reflexes to be optimised; thus your heart is going on average 20 beats-per-minute less than a normal, untrained person" (average resting heart rate for an adult is between 60 and 100 BPM, while a well-trained athlete would likely sit in the region of 40 to 60 BPM). "The better the working transportation system of the blood flow, of the fluids bringing the nutrients, vitamins, oxygen immune cells, the fatter the immune cells get and disease has a lesser chance."

Next up is breathing, which, Hof explains, triggers the release of the 'fight or flight' hormones, "making the body achieve its utmost functionality". "Heightened oxygen levels hold a treasure trove of benefits", hails his homepage, "and the specialised breathing technique of the Wim Hof Method unearths them all: more energy, reduced stress levels, and an augmented immune response to swiftly deal with pathogens."

Finally, and possibly most challenging: commitment. "The third pillar is the foundation of the other two: both cold exposure and conscious breathing require patience and dedication in order to be fully mastered. Armed with focus and determination you are ready to explore and eventually master your own body and mind", explains Hof's website. According to the man himself, mentally willing your body temperature to stay high is enough for it to cooperate. "Mindset is a real neurological activity that is able to control our body so much more than we thought, and now I'm showing that in scientific studies", he tells me.

As Hof explains, each of his method's pillars offer great benefits; but together he believes they are "a key from nature". "We are pure beings originally – only we are alienated therefrom; we have to go back to our pure selves, which is a deep understanding of the feeling and connection between the brain and the body", he says emphatically. "It's the belief that we are so much more capable of directing our lives, our mood, our health, and our strength; together with the right amount of energy, it's all there. That is the way nature built us to be."







I have to admit that, like Pickkers and Kox, my inner sceptic almost rolls her eyes at this; but Hof anticipates my reaction: “If I say, ‘Yes, I found the key, it was in nature and now it is here for you all’, and they say, ‘That man is crazy’, I can understand that, because many people promise things or say things for their own benefit; but this is based in science. It is rooted and backed up by science – by pure, non-speculative data.” Touché. I’m no scientist (in fact, I have to ask a doctor friend whose brain is more scientifically inclined than my own to explain much of the material I come across while researching Wim Hof and his Method), but I find myself swayed by the persuasive power of cold, hard evidence (excuse the pun).

Now on a mission to spread the word, Hof runs a programme of workshops and expeditions for those who want to master the three pillars of the Wim Hof Method and be reacquainted with their “pure selves” – from morning sessions with an official WHM instructor for €99, to a week-long journey to the Spanish Pyrenees with The Hof coming in at just under €2,000. But who, I wonder, is his average customer?

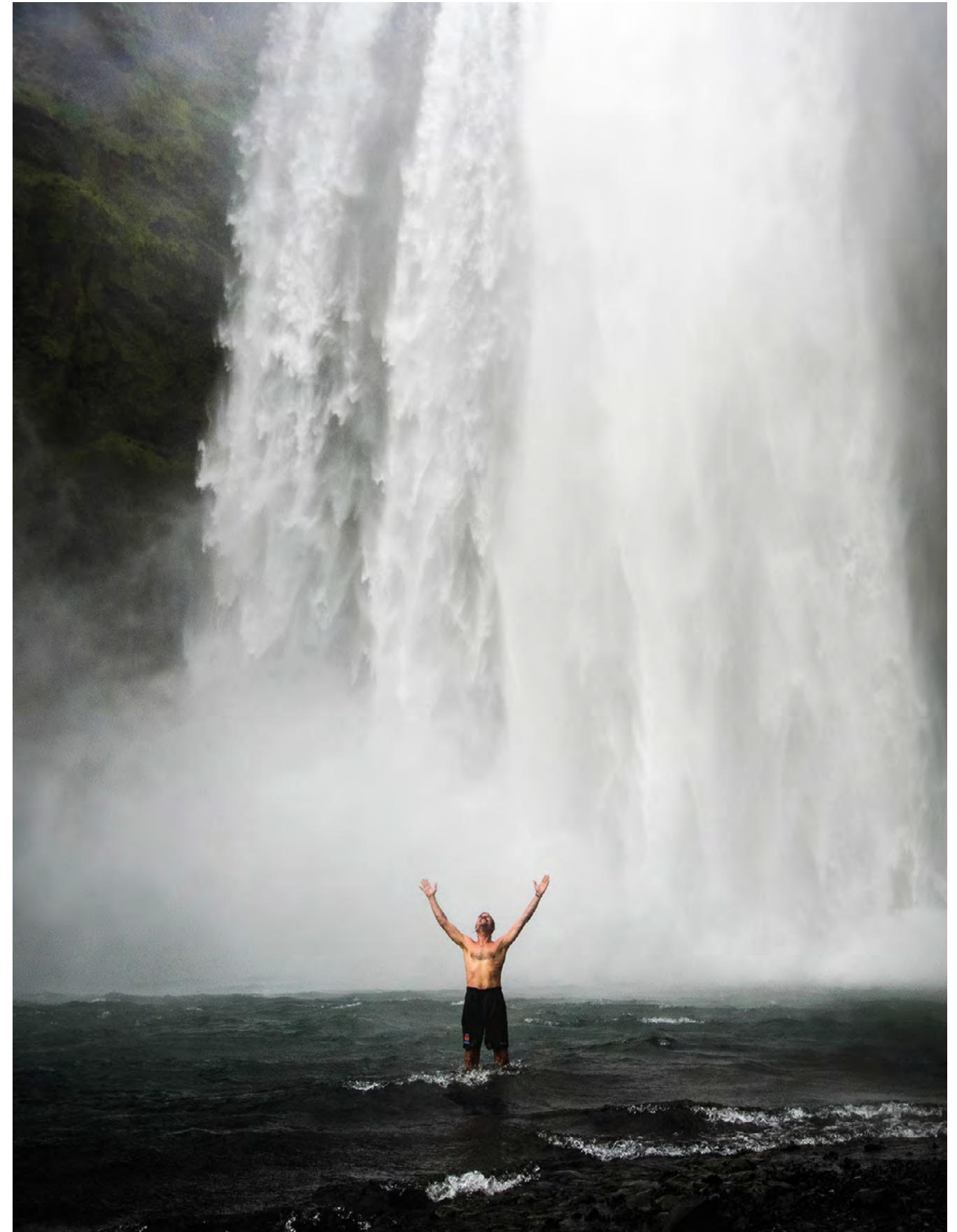
“People who are open to new things”, he tells me. “It can be anybody; it can be from doctors and professors, to carpenters – anybody. It is not just for a secluded clientele or people who are into New Age things, or fitness – it is everybody. The range is as colourful as humanity itself... And you know what? They find themselves

like a family. It makes people strong – not only personally, but also in the togetherness: there is no border anymore, there is no individualism anymore. We share, we take care of each other, and we go and blow our minds.”

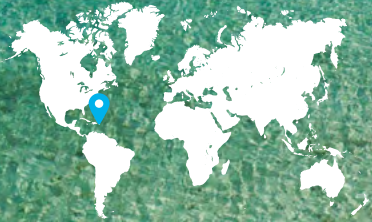
I’m reminded once again that travel has an unparalleled ability to create connections and change people for the better; only now, this Dutchman is proving that its potential to transform could far surpass anything we previously thought possible. While scientists’ understanding of the Wim Hof Method – indeed, even of the link between the nervous and immune systems – is a long way from being fully developed, Hof is determined to prove its credibility: “I want more science to back this all up, but overall we are convinced that you are able to become a whole lot better [in your physical and mental health] in a very short period of time”.

Travel as medicine? Watch this space: if Wim Hof has his way, a trip to the Spanish Pyrenees for a glacial dip could be just what the doctor ordered.

See Wim Hof onstage at MATTER, PURE Life Experiences’ un-conference, brought to you by Tourism Australia, or learn more at [www.wimhofmethod.com](http://www.wimhofmethod.com).







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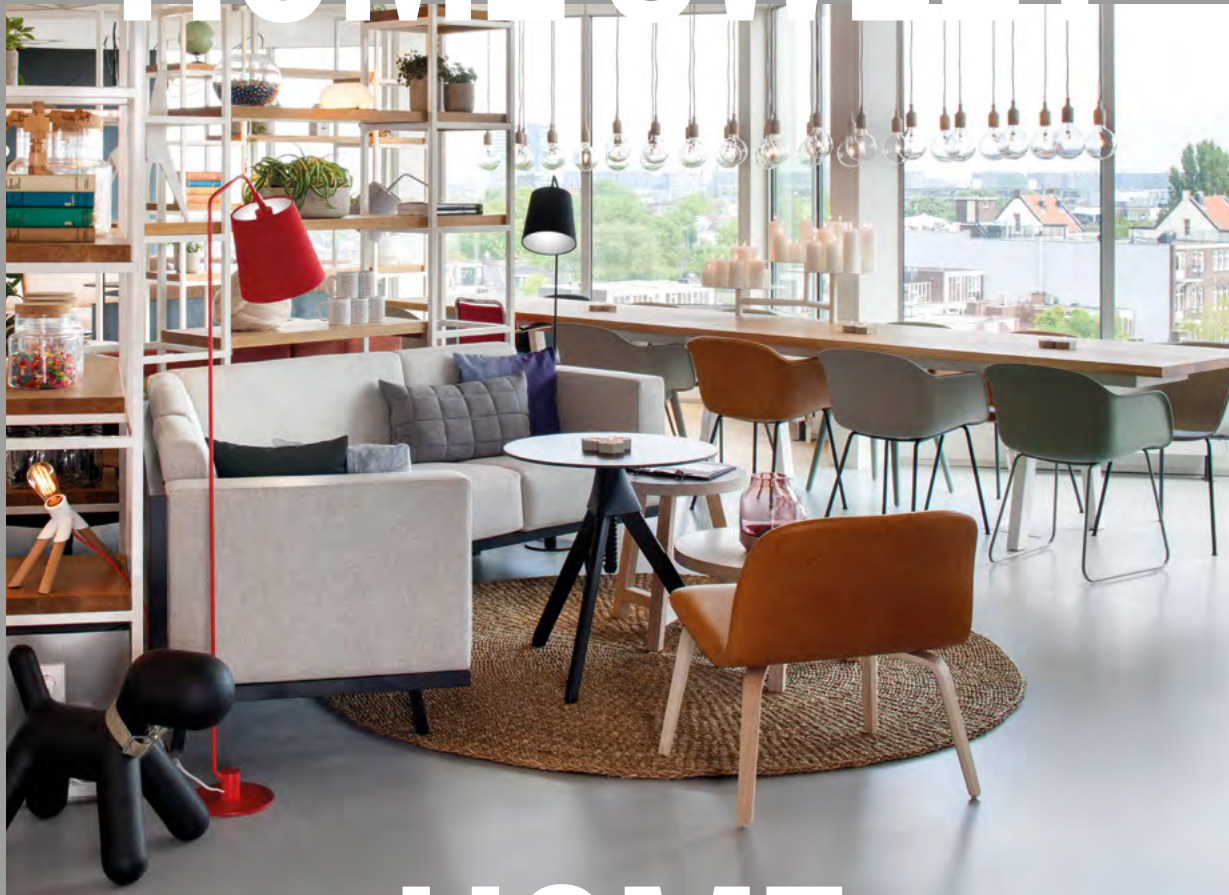
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# HOME SWEET



# HOME

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“They dreamt of freedom from the cubicle. They got it. They dreamt of freedom from the coffee shop. They got it. Now they dream of freedom from roots.”

Whether it’s in a New York warehouse or a Balinese village, a new crop of start-ups are questioning the boundaries between work, play and, well, life.

James Davidson explores how the co-working (and co-living) revolution is redefining what a hotel can be, as well as taking its nomads back home.



They dreamt of their freedom. Long days, watching the clock on the grey wall above the grey cubicle; long, hard days, punctuated by tea-, toilet- and fag-breaks. Their freedom was an intangible pipe dream drenched in the dank reality of watching that clock tick away for the next 40 or 50 years. Then, like a Holy Grail, that backlit Apple icon shone like an ethereal searchlight rescuing them from being lost at a dull, grey sea. Flat whites and smashed avocado; Fjällräven backpacks and reclaimed wooden benches; filament light bulbs and the sweet taste of liberation.

No more quiet words in the manager's office, no more meetings about a meeting that could've been an email. They had dreamt of their freedom, and now they had it. But, like a lifer on parole who no longer recognises civilisation, the effects of institutionalism creep in. There are only so many coffees you can drink. You have exhausted all episodes of Homes Under the Hammer. The cube calls, and now you're paying to be there. It's a funny old world.

In the last decade, the co-working phenomenon has spiralled (some reports suggest that the number of spaces has doubled each year since 2006) in tandem with the nomadic freelancer revolution; startups and sturdier WiFi having fuelled a workforce that was uniquely 21<sup>st</sup> century. The coffee shops had filled with those incandescent Apple icons; meetings had

become Skype calls or Google Hangouts; but a need for order signalled an opportunity for owners of industrial properties in places like Brooklyn or San Francisco. The indignity of answering the door in your pyjamas at 3pm was washed away – welcome back to the office.

Of course, this office couldn't be a soulless replication of the one you'd spent £10,000 on coffee to flee. This office looks like the bars you go to and has yoga sessions on the rooftop. It has a third-wave coffee counter where your water-cooler used to be, and a hammock in the meeting room. If you have to pay to come to work, you don't want it to look like a paper company on Slough Trading Estate, hey? Co-working is the new working, and digital nomads aren't looking back. From Antwerp (where Fosbury & Sons takes its design cues from New York's High Line) to Singapore's vast colonial-era premises, The Working Capitol: spots that harness the liberation of freelancing and inject an overdose of millennial amenities have transformed the working lives of the creative class.

Such is co-working's dramatic ascendancy, that these places are quickly becoming destinations in their own right. They are rapidly becoming the coffee shops of the aughts, and naturally the coffee shops are now aping them. If I am to spend a week in Berlin, I am safe in the knowledge that there will be somewhere with exposed brick walls



Fosbury & Sons, Antwerp, Belgium





Above & opposite: Roam, Bali





Zoku Lofts, Amsterdam

where I can plant myself for a prolonged session of tippity-tap. Whether it's at any number of design-minded independent venues, or a veritable Goliath like U.S. company WeWork – currently the eighth most valuable private company at \$17.2 billion – co-working is not going anywhere, which means hoteliers are already casting a keen eye in its direction.

‘Amazing things can happen when people come together.’ That’s the manifesto of Amsterdam’s Zoku, a concept co-founded by Hans Meyer, the initial creator of citizenM. He’s right: 17-billion amazing things can happen – which is surely a major consideration behind the Dutch entrepreneur’s latest venture. Zoku is a hotel concept founded upon the principles of the co-working boom; it promises to “mark the end of the hotel room as we know it” and delivers modular lofts for short- and long-stay rentals, with 500m<sup>2</sup> of social space used as a breeding ground for interaction between its residents.

Of course, Meyer’s previous concern is no stranger to the new breed of worker – citizenM’s societyM is a bridge between the traditional hotel meeting room and the co-working environment, and you can take advantage of all they offer at six of their European properties. Are we in danger, though, of the ‘business centre’ simply being rebranded ‘co-working space’?

Billing itself as, brace yourself, a ‘first of its kind work, rest and play initiative’, Ovolo Hotels’ Mojo Nomad concept is a simple one: you pay them from \$239 a day, and you get to “live and work” at selected Ovolo hotels. Which sounds a bit like staying in a hotel. And herein lies the problem posed to the hotel industry: it is that they already exist, somewhat, as co-working spaces. From Ace to Hoxton, Generator to The Standard, the open-lobby concept is one of the principles that co-working as we know it today was founded upon. So how can culturally minded hoteliers truly assimilate this metamorphosis in our working lives?

Perhaps we should start at the beginning: what is a hotel? At its crux, a hotel is an establishment that deals in the business of paid lodging. Is Roam, then, a hotel? Is it the future of what a hotel can be? What the hell is it?

Roam currently boasts properties in London, Tokyo, Bali, Miami, and soon San Francisco. Its rooms look every bit the boutique hotel: there’s the sort of communal kitchen that the hip ho(s)tel crowd have made familiar in recent years; there are cafés; (in some cases) pools; yoga decks; and lounges. Most importantly, there is ‘true’ co-working space and the sense of community that fosters. A real community, in fact. That chap you met in London the other week who runs that online thing that’s looking for a digital contractor to finish off that booking thing?





Top: The Working Capitol, Singapore  
 Bottom: WeWork, Berlin

Top: The Working Capitol, Singapore  
 Bottom: Roam, Miami



He's sat next to you by the pool in Bali. The lady who runs that networking thing who's looking for a digital nomad to co-present her next podcast you met in Tokyo? She's just nicked the last of your milk in Miami.

This is not co-working, but co-living. Dish out \$1,800 per room, per month, and you can rock up to any Roam property pretty much whenever you like. Stay a few weeks, a few months, pack up your MacBook and move on. It might be an extortionate amount of money to live in Bali, but London... San Francisco... here's a concept that has legs. Christoph Fahle, the founder of Betahaus (a co-working platform with properties in Berlin, Barcelona, Hamburg, and Sofia), bedded down in Bali last year, musing over the concept of 'living' as he went.

"I started to realise how broken and static the way we live in global metropolises is. We are used to owning or renting flats in apartment complexes without any connection or sense of community in our direct surroundings. Well, we sometimes know people, but who lives together in one building is basically a coincidence. In most places I've lived so far, I barely knew my neighbours; and very rarely would we have social events in our building. The more I think about this, I cannot believe anybody would actually live like that."

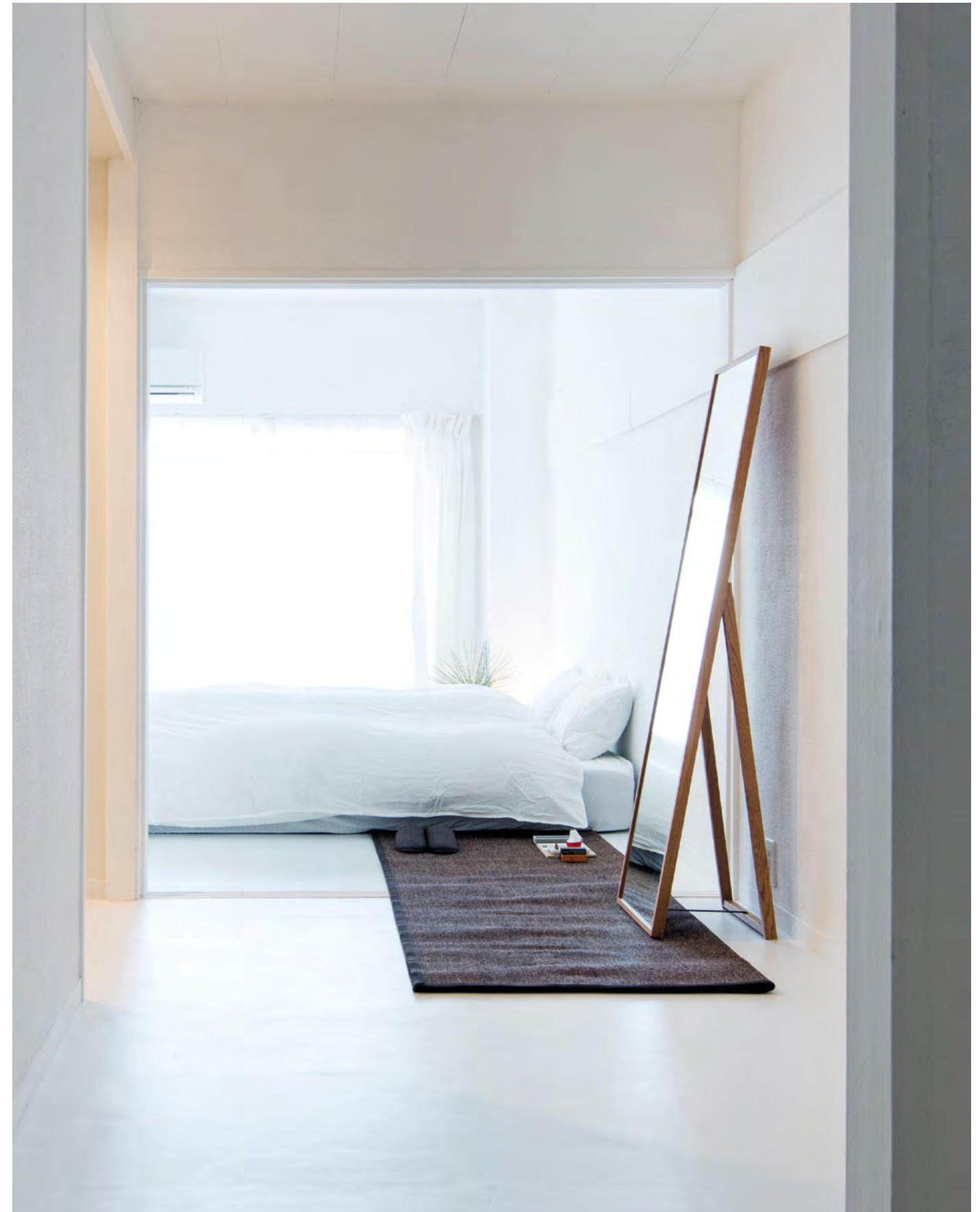
It's an interesting contemplation, surely fuelled by the hedonistic mood of the tropics

– but it's worth noting that, whilst we live like that, we also largely travel like it. Who we are put next to in a hotel? Coincidence. Who we sit down next to at breakfast? Coincidence. Heads down, phones in hand, the hotel experience is frequently as impersonal as a ride on the London Underground. The Betahaus founder's Bali experience can be paralleled like-for-like with that from which Brian Chesky founded Airbnb.

Chesky on the very first Airbnb experience: "You normally don't get to know people this quickly in the real world – in contrast, the time it takes to develop longstanding relationships is longer. One of the guests who stayed with us invited me to his wedding; one of the other ones changed his whole career trajectory because of that trip."

Fahle on his time at Roam: "I don't think I'll ever forget this feeling of belonging to such an easygoing, lovely, and spirited tribe. I also feel that during those five weeks, friendships for life were made; and I'm looking forward to seeing everybody again in other places of the world."

As co-working has fuelled collaboration between freelancers, entrepreneurs, and startups, co-living can enhance that experience by adding camaraderie, friendship, and lasting bonds. If the travel industry is to sincerely adopt the evolution of the workplace, it could begin







The Collective, London

WeWork, Chicago & Philadelphia





by transposing the ingredients that have made co-working the revolution it is into their operations. Zoku's Hans Meyer, it seems, has already woken up to this: "sharing bread, cheese and wine is always more fun than eating or drinking on your own", he says. "Everything within Zoku has been designed to create effortless connections, and our community managers play a crucial role in this by actively supporting our guests in building their local social and business network."

It might have been crammed with more jargon than Brian Chesky or Christoph Fahle's excitable accounts, but it's a recognition that it's not just our working habits that have shifted. In Hamburg, LINDENBERG stress that their two houses – LINDENBERG Rückertstrasse and LIBERTINE – are "neither hotels nor living communities", instead billing them as "both". Expect a leaning towards longer stays, enhanced communal facilities, and a sense of breaking bread with fellow creatives.

Tangible hospitality projects with an unfeigned adoption of the co-living ethos might currently be few and far between,

but the march itself is undoubtedly on its way. Co-working behemoth WeWork has grown horizontally into the urban housing market with WeLive; OpenDoor is a more holistic affair, quoting Vietnamese monk Thích Nhất Hạnh ("The next buddha will not be an individual. The next buddha will be a community."); and London's The Collective delivers a considerably less utopian approach – "in the future we will all be homeless", declares the project's COO, James Scott. Quite. If co-working has bred the new nomads, co-living will take them to their  $n^{\text{th}}$  degree.

They dreamt of freedom from the cubicle. They got it. They dreamt of freedom from the coffee shop. They got it. Now they dream of freedom from roots. "We all tend to have many homes these days", continues Fahle. "The place we were born, the place we went to university, the place we work for a while, or the place we like to stay for three months while it's winter in our regular home."

How to harness the co-working movement, how to embrace the next millennial march? Perhaps hoteliers should be looking a little closer to home.





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# GOURMET



# AUSTRALIA

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“With creativity and flair permeating the food and drink scene in Australia, the nation’s popularity amongst foodies is no doubt set to continue for decades to come.”

Far beyond ‘throwing a shrimp on the barbie’, Australia’s food and wine scene is blazing a trail by creating some of the most innovative chefs, restaurants and foodie concepts in the world. James Wilkinson dives into this exciting, fast-evolving movement.



## GOURMET AUSTRALIA

Australia's food and wine has been the toast of tables globally over the past 30 years, with its meat, seafood, reds and whites served in top restaurants and homes spanning Beijing to New York. But what's perhaps more remarkable is how fast the nation's restaurant and bar scene has come along over the last five years, and the talent that's being nurtured both in the Great Southern Land and across the world – Australia's chefs are now more in demand than ever before and its bartenders are winning trophy after trophy on the global stage.

The country is fortunate to have some of the world's best meat, seafood and vegetables in its backyard, which has led to an abundance of restaurants and bars firmly embracing the farm-to-table concept.

For example, the South Australian capital Adelaide was, for a long time, the trailblazer for farm-to-table, with many restaurants and markets sourcing produce from within a hundred-mile radius. The city benefits from being within an hour's drive of several of the nation's leading food and wine districts, including McLaren Vale, the Barossa Valley, the Adelaide Hills and the Clare Valley.

Then there's Kangaroo Island, where Southern Ocean Lodge is famously located. The lodge, and venues across 'KI', excels in procuring and presenting local seafood; island delicacies including honey from the oldest living Ligurian bee colony in the world; yogurts and cheeses from the sheep's milk dairy; and island-grown meat and vegetables, all washed down with excellent KI wines, gin and vodka, distilled locally with distinctive island flavours and wild herbs.

Melbourne, with its epic multicultural roots and international food-driven areas of town, where you can find some of the best Italian, Greek, Chinese and Vietnamese food in the world, has also been a standout thanks to its many regional feeder regions for produce and wine, including the Mornington Peninsula and the Yarra Valley.

The nation's largest city, Sydney, a sprawling metropolis that stretches around 60 kilometres to the west, previously found farm-to-table to be a challenge apart from the sea, where freshly caught fish and seafood has been a hallmark of the city's food scene for decades. In recent years, that's changed; and while seafood is still on top tables, produce from the surrounding regions – including Orange, Mudgee, Rylstone, the Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands – has become the flavour of the city.

Each week at markets across the city you can find pop-up stalls from regional producers offering small batch cheese, vegetables, pies and more from towns surrounding the city.

Across the other side of the country and past the Nullabor Plain, Western Australia's capital, Perth, has been procuring wine and produce from the epicurean town of Margaret River (and wine region of the same name), three hours south of the city, to great success over the past three decades.

Meanwhile, Australia's most tropical state, Queensland, is a veritable garden of abundance for some of the best beef, sugar cane, coffee and seafood in the nation. Its capital Brisbane's food and drink scene has been taking off in epic proportions over the past three years.







The state that has embraced the slow food movement and local procurement on exceptional levels has been Tasmania, where – no matter if you’re visiting the largest city, Hobart, or the majestic Freycinet Peninsula – high quality food, wine and spirits are guaranteed. In fact, while Tasmania’s drink scene is most famously known for wine (Pinot Noir) and beer (James Boag’s and Cascade lagers), it’s the local whisky industry that’s been a global sensation, with Hobart’s Sullivans Cove winning World’s Best Single Malt Whisky at the 2014 World Whiskies Awards.

There’s also no shortage of fine food and wine in Australia’s capital, Canberra, where local wines from Lake George and Murrumbateman have been rising through the charts – particularly the small, family-owned Clonakilla,

which produces Australia’s finest example of a Shiraz Viognier blend. With such a vibrant and diverse food and drink scene, it came as no surprise to foodies down under when Melbourne was announced as the host of the 2017 World’s 50 Best Restaurants awards, held in April. Fittingly, two restaurants from the state of Victoria were placed in the top 50: Ben Shewry’s Attica in Ripponlea, and Dan Hunter’s Brae in Birregurra, which came in at numbers 32 and 44 respectively. This was the fifth time Attica has been on the Top 50 list and its second year with Shewry as owner of the establishment he’s been with since 2005, and which has since become the toast of Australia. “We’re a small restaurant and we work really hard. It’s an incredible achievement for the team”, Shewry praised in his famously humble way.

Getting The World’s 50 Best Restaurants to Melbourne in the first place was a result of Tourism Australia’s push to become the world’s hottest food destination. Having launched its first ever major campaign targeting global foodies in December 2013 (called ‘Restaurant Australia’, putting the spotlight on Australia’s people, produce and places), the results have been phenomenal, with food and wine spend from inbound visitors growing over AUD\$1.05 billion since – double the original two-year target.

In inspired marketing as part of the Restaurant Australia campaign, Tourism Australia enticed one of the world’s best restaurants, Noma, to open in Sydney’s new urban renewal destination of Barangaroo for a ten-week residency in 2016 that quickly sold out. An Australian menu, created by star chef René Redzepi and his Noma team, featured native ingredients, local wines and cooking methods found on Redzepi’s journeys across the nation over the previous 12 months.

While Redzepi certainly helped draw the spotlight to the Restaurant Australia campaign, one of the most interesting insights to result from the campaign has been how international tourists view Australia when it comes to food and wine experiences. According to Tourism Australia, out of those who have never visited Australia before, only 26 per cent associate the destination with a good food and wine offering; yet for those who have visited, Australia ranks second across major markets (behind France and Italy), and first in the UK and China markets for food and wine experiences – and that was before the 2017 World’s 50 Best Restaurants event, which has surely enticed more foodies to head Down Under.

“It was a huge honour for Australia to host The World’s 50 Best Restaurants – testament to how much our culinary standing has risen globally in the last few years”, said Tourism Australia Managing Director, John O’Sullivan. “It’s great to see Attica, Brae and Quay make the ‘top 100’ list this year, but the benefits go much wider and will be longer lasting.

“Australia has enjoyed centre-stage [during the event], with some of the world’s most influential chefs, restaurateurs and food and wine media eating in our restaurants and cafés, drinking in our bars, and visiting our world-class wineries, breweries and distilleries. Through these first-hand, authentic experiences, they will share our Restaurant Australia story beyond these shores, helping to inspire new audiences of travellers and lovers of great food and wine to follow in their foodie footsteps”, he continued.

While Attica and Brae are some of the newer kids on the block, Australia’s standing on the global culinary scene over the past two decades is, in part, thanks to legendary chef and restaurateur, Tetsuya Wakuda. The Japanese-born Australian chef’s restaurant, Tetsuya’s, has been a culinary destination in the harbour city since 1989, and his French-Japanese cuisine is internationally acknowledged on a near-annual basis. Over the course of his career Wakuda has won acclaim not only in Australia, but also internationally. One of his protégés, Dave Pynt, has become one of the world’s fastest rising stars in the culinary scene and his restaurant, Burnt Ends, has quickly become one of Asia’s top tables, coming in at 53 on The World’s 50 Best Restaurants 2017 list. Pynt uses a four-tonne, two-oven brick kiln to grill and smoke some of



## GOURMET AUSTRALIA

Australia's finest produce, including marrons (langoustines) from his home state of Western Australia. From Paul Hogan throwing a shrimp on the barbie in the 1984 Australia advertising campaign, the great Australian culinary concept of barbecued seafood has flourished into one of the most successful restaurants the nation has ever seen.

Fresh Australian seafood grilled, barbecued and served raw is also found, along with a wealth of other local ingredients and produce, at the nation's best lodges – from Southern Ocean Lodge and The Louise in South Australia to Saffire on Tasmania's Freycinet Peninsula, qualia in Queensland's Great Barrier Reef, and Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley, west of Sydney in the Blue Mountains.

Off the coast of Adelaide in South Australia on Kangaroo Island, Southern Ocean Lodge is one of the nation's finest and a globally acknowledged luxury lodge – recently listed, along with The Louise Barossa Valley, in T+L's world top 100. Heading up the culinary team is Executive Chef Asher Blackford: he and his team put together a daily changing menu that showcases the riches of the Southern Ocean and the island. Asher is inspired by his surroundings and brings the landscape to the plate in its appearance, taste and emotion. A keen forager, Asher conceives dishes that recreate a precise natural location and the experience or memory attached to it. For example, he may combine King George Whiting caught fresh off the coast of American River with samphire or sea herbs foraged from the same location.

Asher's particular food belief is around sustainability – environmental and economic – and in the local and whole food philosophy

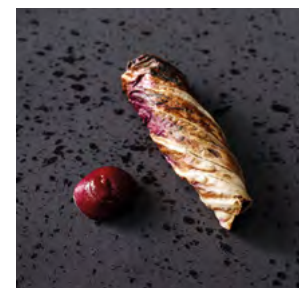
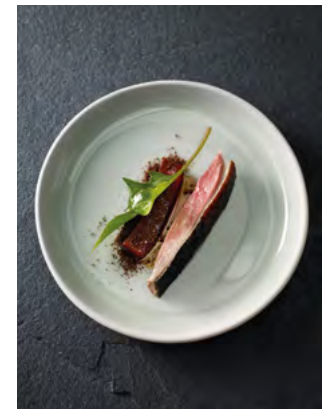
of American author Michael Pollan, with his "you are what you eat eats" view of the food chain. Having a close working relationship with Kangaroo Island's producers feeds neatly into this approach, as does a dedication to using the whole of each product, from "nose to tail" or "root to shoot".

Artisan, sustainably produced ingredients are regular culinary highlights at Southern Ocean Lodge menu – recently featured dishes include a petite king crab salad; house-made gnocchi accented by salty Kangaroo Island 'samphire'; local queen snapper; South Australian rolled pork shoulder; a cheese selection featuring Kangaroo Island sheep's milk manchego and halloumi; and desserts flavoured with Kangaroo Island lavender or Ligurian honey. "Our menus are designed to offer guests a dining experience that delivers an essential 'taste' of Kangaroo Island", says owner, James Baillie.

On the mainland, in arguably Australia's most prestigious wine region, is a culinary gem: The Louise Barossa Valley. Styled as a 'restaurant with rooms', since 2006 it has been cited as a game-changer for the Barossa – leading a significant renaissance in the region's food offering to equal its position as a wine leader.

Executive Chef Ryan Edward's kitchen is all about sourcing the freshest possible ingredients. This is reflected in the fact that 85 per cent of the menu comes from within the Barossa Valley and South Australia. Key to this is the kitchen garden and maintaining close relationships with dozens of local purveyors, farmers and growers.

"We bake all our bread onsite, starting with the sourdough culture, named 'Arnie', and an original member of the founding team.



Outside images by Brae Food  
© Colin Page  
Centre image by Tourism Australia  
© Adrian Brown



Embracing ancient food traditions, virtually nothing is wasted: whole beasts are broken down to provide our butcher meats, small goods, stocks and sauces...much to the delight of our sommelier, who shares cellar space with our copicollo, salami and sausages!”

To really connect with the people, produce and place of the Barossa, guests at this luxury vineyard retreat can join the chef at the Barossa Farmer’s Market on a Saturday morning – he’ll buy them a coffee and introduce them to the local food growers; plus they can help shop for the evening’s menu.

At the ultra-luxury qualia on Hamilton Island, surrounded by the waters of the Great Barrier Reef, Doug Innes-Will leads the culinary team. Innes-Will gained notoriety as chef de partie at the brilliant Biota dining, located in Bowral in the New South Wales Southern Highlands, around 90 minutes southwest from Sydney. He

was also executive chef from 2013 until 2016 at Spicers Peak Lodge at Maryvale in Queensland, where the restaurant was awarded two hats two years running by the Brisbane Times Good Food Guide 2016-2017 and in the 2015 Australian Good Food Guide.

Innes-Will’s food philosophy of “creating dining experiences with an inherent sense of place through a respect of produce, producer and environment” has been accentuated at qualia. The “honest, produce-driven Modern Australian cuisine served at Long Pavilion restaurant and the more relaxed Pebble Beach restaurant complements the tropical paradise setting surrounded by ocean”, along with his own cooking style, Innes-Will explains.

In the Northern Territory, one of Australia’s top dining experiences can be found with a backdrop of epic proportions. It’s called ‘Tali Wiru’ and is one of the luxury experiences put

on at Ayers Rock Resort (home to Longitude 131), whereby guests dine on top of a sand dune with Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) as a backdrop, all while eating top notch cuisine with local ingredients and fine Australian wine.

It starts with champagne and canapés to the sounds of the didgeridoo as the sun sets, then turns into a degustation – featuring the likes of wagyu beef fillet with salt-baked celeriac, paperbark smoked onion soubise, king brown mushroom and smoked bacon jus, or pan roasted toothfish with carrot and ginger puree, baby heirloom carrots, sea greens, spiced activated lentils and candied lemon aspen – alongside stargazing into the crystal-clear night sky before dessert is served and stories are told around the campfire.

Down on the Freycinet Peninsula in Tasmania, Saffire – another Luxury Lodges of Australia member, alongside Southern Ocean Lodge, The Louise and qualia – has a similar philosophy, with a mission to showcase the best Tasmania has to offer. The opening chef at the architecturally striking lodge was Hugh Whitehouse, a former HM Awards chef of the year winner who made his mark on the resort by shucking oysters while standing in the ocean in gumboots and overalls, and by sourcing the best local produce – including Tasmania’s succulent seafood, grass-fed beef and lamb, full-flavoured game meats, and seasonal fruit and vegetables.

West of Sydney, in the spectacular Blue Mountains, Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley is one of New South Wales’ leaders when it comes to sourcing farm-to-table cuisine and wine. The property, led by seasoned General Manager James Wyndham, serves up daily changing menus that highlight the produce

from surrounding towns within a 160-kilometre radius, including Mudgee, Orange, Rylstone and the Hunter Valley. Local producers on the menu include Mandagery Creek Venison, Oberon line trout, organic cheese from Jannei Goat Cheese Dairy and olive oil from Rylstone.

Arguably one of the best breakfasts in Australia, your start-to-the-day meal at the resort includes organic muesli, fruit compôtes, and local jams and honey, most of which are procured from nearby producers. Later on (or with breakfast, if you really want), you can also enjoy a number of local wines, including some top drops from a small, family-owned producer in the nearby town of Rylstone called De Beaurepaire – a great example of the hyper-local philosophy that has been sweeping Australia in action.

Alongside hyper-local, for many hotels and restaurants in Australia it’s all about boutique and single-vineyard wines, with small, family brands now replacing big commercial labels on wine lists and in minibars. De Beaurepaire’s range is highlighted by their Chardonnay, Rosé, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz Viognier releases, varietals that are all dominating wine lists across the nation.

While the company claims to focus on French-style wines because of the terroir and family history, these are also the styles currently en vogue. Rosé, for example, has been a huge star generally in Australia over recent years, with the category growing 20 per cent year-on-year consistently on the back of the wine’s significant popularity.

Also on the wine stage, but at the other end of the spectrum, beard-clad hipsters in the Adelaide Hills in South Australia have been at the forefront of the natural wine movement



Noma images by Tourism Australia © Jason Loucas



– especially winemakers Anton van Kloppe at Lucy Margaux and Jasper Button at Commune of Buttons. The centre of the natural wine universe, the Basket Range, has become one of the most in-demand wine hot-spots on the planet not just for drinkers, but also for sommeliers at the world’s best restaurants.

In April 2017, in association with The World’s 50 Best Restaurants, Wine Australia hosted 50 sommeliers from around the world in the wine regions, including the Basket Range, following significant demand for tipples coming from these groundbreaking winemakers.

Given the quality of wines Australia has produced over the past 50 years, it’s no surprise that the nation is blazing a trail for the styles and quality of natural wines – and for the talent behind them. But the bar scene across Australia has also graced global headlines over the past decade, as a cocktail culture continues to sweep the nation. Sydney bartender, Tim Philips – owner of popular haunts Bulletin Place and Dead Ringer – was the 2012 winner of the Diageo World Class

Competition; in the same year, he also won Bartender of the Year at the Australian Liquor Industry Awards. Both before and since, Philips has been a major influence in the Australian bartending scene that each year has seen several home-grown bartenders and venues named in the world’s top 10 at both the World Class Competition and at Tales of the Cocktail in New Orleans. Other Sydney standouts include Baxter Inn, Lobo Plantation, Hacienda, 121 BC and Bar Brose; while in Melbourne, top venues include The Everleigh, Black Pearl, Boilermaker House, Siglo and Embla.

Of course, helping to drive the craft cocktail scene are local spirits – including the worldwide sensation, Four Pillars Gin (which has its own blend just for the largest national airline, Qantas Airways) and Sullivans Cove’s whiskies. With creativity and flair permeating the food and drink scene in Australia, the nation’s popularity amongst foodies is no doubt set to continue for decades to come.

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# A COUNTRY



# OF CONTRASTS

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“As a whole, Morocco is a travellers’ paradise, supplying the senses with ever-changing vistas, mesmeric sounds and exotic aromas – a satisfying other worldliness just beyond Europe’s southernmost tip.”

From the European aristocrats who reclined in Casablanca in the 20s to the '70s counter-culturists who made Marrakech home, to this day Morocco’s melting pot of travellers are proof of the country’s diverse and colourful appeal.



## A COUNTRY OF CONTRASTS

Located at the doors of Europe, Morocco is an invitation to many delightful travel experiences. From the long, immaculate beaches of the Atlantic Ocean to the wild reliefs of the Atlas Mountains; from the dunes of the Sahara to the majestic Imperial Cities; the changing scenery is a source of everlasting wonder.

Morocco is the perfect link between the two worlds of Europe and Africa. With a coast on the Atlantic Ocean stretching past the Strait of Gibraltar and winding round into the Mediterranean Sea, its strategic location, coupled with the diversity of its terrain, has always made it desirable to outsiders. Morocco is a country built on contrasts and shaped by several successive civilisations.

The region has been inhabited since Neolithic times, while Amazighs – who are still an essential part of modern Morocco – have roamed North Africa since 8000 BCE. As with much of the Mediterranean basin, the territory was absorbed into the Roman Empire after the fall of Carthage in 40 CE. Later the Vandals, Visigoths and Byzantine Greeks all made their own indelible mark.

By the seventh century, Islam was spreading across North Africa and modern Morocco began to take shape. The arriving Arabs influenced the Amazighs, who had remained in the mountains throughout each conquest, and over time they converted to Islam, adopting many Arabic customs and culture. At that time European powers had gained footholds along the coast, but in the 1600s the Arab Alaouite dynasty unified the country and drove the Spanish from Larache and the English from Tangiers. United and stable, the kingdom grew in wealth and prominence.

However, Europe's interest remained and in 1912 North and South Morocco became a protectorate of Spain, while France controlled the centre – a strategic asset perched at the gateway of the Mediterranean. But later in 1956, under the leadership of King Mohammed V, Morocco was able to establish itself as an independent state; almost 60 years later, it is one of the top five economic powers of Africa, playing a leading role in international trade as part of Group 77. Today, the Kingdom is ruled by King Mohammed VI, who ascended the throne on the passing of his father in July 1999; a young ruler with a modern vision, he has initiated several steps for economic liberalisation that have succeeded in attracting huge foreign investments.

Morocco remains undeniably an attractive destination for all types of travellers, thanks to its sheer diversity. For many travellers, the journey begins in the coastal city of Casablanca – the country's business and commercial hub, and the biggest metropolis in Morocco. Immortalised by the 1942 movie starring Humphrey Bogart and





## A COUNTRY OF CONTRASTS

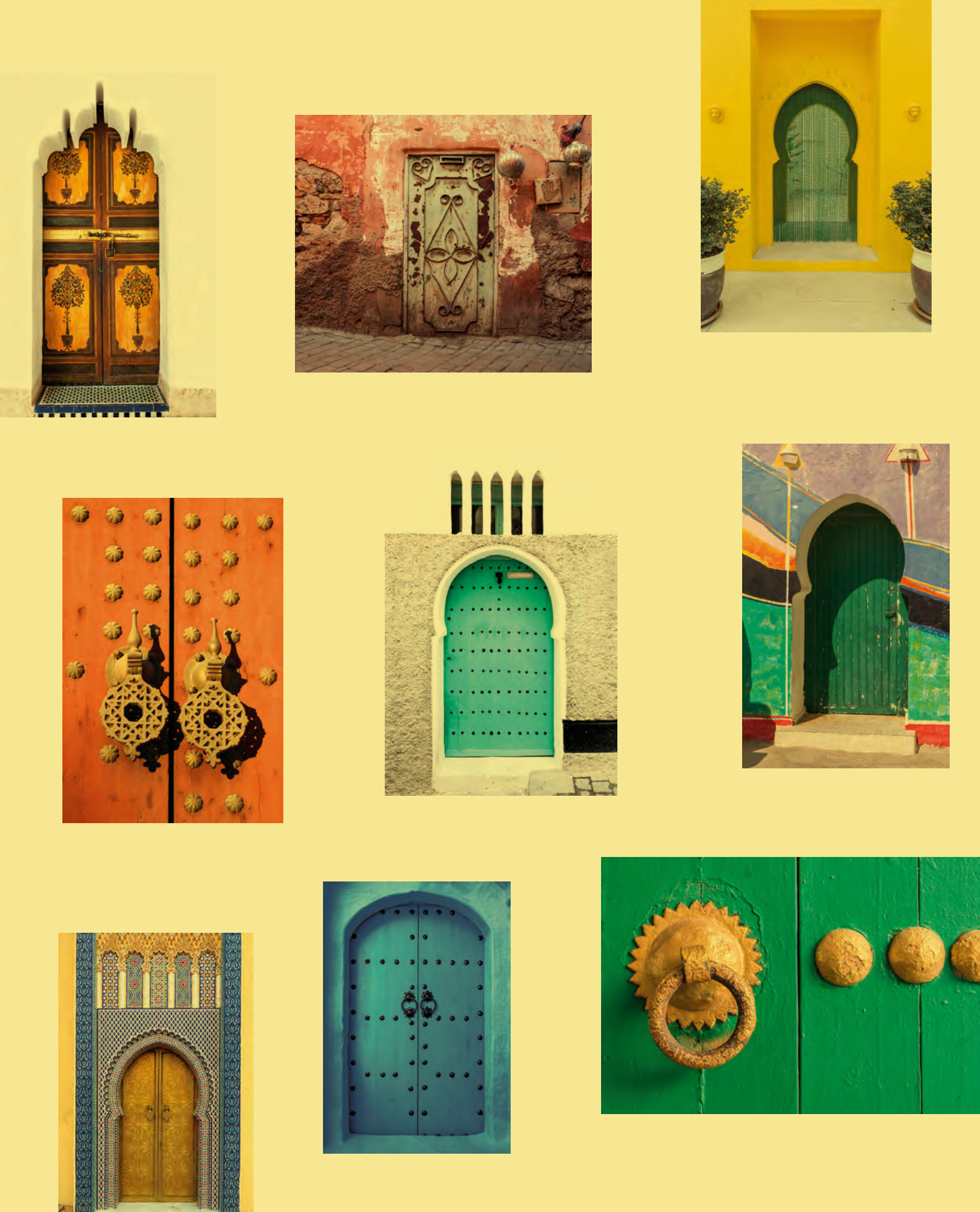
Ingrid Bergman, the White City is one of the most sophisticated cities in Morocco and continues to build on the global renown of the ever-quotable wartime drama. Although little remains of Rick Blain's city, Casablanca still has much to offer today's tourists: the old medina sits comfortably alongside the art deco houses, glass buildings and twin towers of the modern business zone, and both are complemented by five-star hotels, luxury shopping malls and spa sanctuaries. Access to the city is also being continuously developed – Casablanca International Airport is now an important hub connecting Africa to Europe, North America and the Middle East. The port, the marina, the new tram system, its roads and rail networks make it the beating heart of Morocco.

Rabat – the capital and seat of government – is perhaps less well known as a tourist or commercial destination, but it is set to gain ground on more illustrious neighbours. The city was designated as UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2012 and was awarded second place in 'Top Travel Destinations of 2013' by CNN. The historic old town overlooking the Atlantic is home to the magnificent twelfth century Hassan II Mosque and the picturesque medina, while the new city, built by the French, is home to boulevards, street cafés and a new tram system. It is also the home of all the embassies.

Yet the most famous of all Morocco's cities is Marrakech – the 'Red City'. It is the main tourism destination, attracting visitors from around the globe with its old city, markets and riads, all nestled beneath the magnificent Atlas Mountains. The city's focal point is the unique Jemaa El-Fna market square – another UNESCO World Heritage site – whose sights and sounds come alive at dusk. The biggest square on the African continent, it is much appreciated by locals and tourists.

With a total of 60,000 available beds, accommodation in Marrakech ranges from deluxe five-star resorts to traditional guesthouses, along with a new generation of eco-lodges located on the city's perimeter. Marrakech is constantly hosting prestigious international brands such as Mandarin Oriental, The Oberoi and the Baglioni, while other authentic riads rise from the earth – such as the opulent Riad El-Fenn and the Mosaic Palais Aziza & Spa, to name a few.

If you head north, you'll meet the vibrant resort of Tangiers that gazes out towards Spain and mainland Europe. Tangiers is another city going through a period of massive modernisation and regeneration – not least the gradual emergence of the multi-million-dollar Tangiers City Centre, a new business district with residential and retail clusters in the bay area. Although progress slowed during the financial crisis, work on the project has resumed and the first phases are already complete, with two new





## A COUNTRY OF CONTRASTS

Hiltons. The Tangier Med Port, which opened in 2007, has been undergoing expansion and development in order to achieve its 2015 target of eight-million containers and seven-million passengers.

Fez is Morocco's fourth largest city, boasting a population of almost one-million and known as a 'living museum' thanks to its 1,200 years of history. It has one of the best-preserved medieval cities in the Arab world and has long-since been heralded as a hub for Islamic civilisation. More pleasingly for visitors and perhaps residents is that the streets of the city's el-Bali medina are reputed to be the world's largest car-free zone. Ideally situated close to a number of important archaeological sites and the Middle Atlas Mountains, Fez has quite rightly become a popular tourism destination. The range of accommodation in Fez is not as large as in other main centres, but there are a number of excellent boutique-style riads in the old city offering comfort, authenticity and proximity to the main attractions. The current provision of 8,000 hotel rooms is set to climb to 10,000 by 2015.

As a whole, Morocco is a travellers' paradise, supplying the senses with ever-changing vistas, mesmeric sounds and exotic aromas – a satisfying other worldliness just beyond Europe's southernmost tip. In 1920, French writer Andre Chevrillon wrote that Morocco's rich civilisation was "a miracle that never ceases to astonish". His description remains just as potent 100 years later. With its blend of bustling cities, windswept coasts, vast deserts, ornate architecture and aromatic markets, modern Morocco is a natural magnet for travellers, providing an accessible slice of the exotic to tourists from around the world.

Over the years, Morocco's appeal has certainly evolved and broadened, shaped by new waves of adventurers seeking to claim a corner of the country as their own: in the 1920s the aristocrats of Paris and Berlin reclined in Casablanca; in the 1950s artists and writers flocked to Tangiers; a decade later counter culturists made for Marrakech; and in the 1970s the dawn of the package holiday brought a new generation of sun-seekers to the gleaming, purpose-built beach resorts of Agadir. Morocco, then, isn't a single tourist destination, but rather five or six (or possibly even more) rolled into one. Distinct regions have different physical, historical and cultural characteristics – whether influenced by the Atlas Mountains, the desert, the Atlantic Ocean to the west or the Mediterranean Sea to the north.

Morocco is a country that will travel within each of its visitors for as long as their memories can relive it.

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