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SMALL PROMISES CHANGE WORLDS

WELCOME TO PURE LIFE EXPERIENCES 2016

It's an increasingly incomprehensible world that we seem to be living in. Problems keep stacking up all around us; institutions we previously took for granted are being rocked; and against the apparently insurmountable tide of bad news and bad vibes, we can feel powerless to effect change. We become spectators on our own planet: sometimes aghast, often passive, always small.

However, as natural as this reaction is, it is not inevitable. We are not confined to stasis and stagnation in the face of the issues that scare us. We have a choice to be hopeful – to take ownership of the decisions we make, however small, and doggedly keep moving. As essayist Rebecca Solnit commented in a recent article for The Guardian UK, "Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists adopt the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. Hope is the belief that what we do matters".

This emphasis on doing, rather than denying, is what inspired our mantra for PURE 2016: Small Promises Change Worlds. The PURE community is made up of individuals who have all committed their lives to changing the world and our perspectives of it through the transformative power of travel. This week, we want you to recognise and use that power to commit to one of several small promises we've created (see opposite) to alleviate the strain we are putting on our planet.

When taken individually, these promises are indeed small – but their potential lies in the possibility for the PURE community to take them and use them as a springboard for greater change. Five hundred promises alone can make a difference, but by taking their spirit back to your companies, communities and customers and encouraging them to make similar small promises of their own, we really can Change Worlds.

This spirit of emotional transformation inspired by travel is indeed contagious.

Everyone here is a traveller at heart, dedicating to uprooting expectations and confronting the unknown. We thought it was about time to recognise this by infusing PURE with the same bohemian, unpredictable and adventurous attitude. 2016 is the year that we transform from an event to a festival: cast off the shackles of convention and join us in embracing a new adventure.

Among the many creative tweaks we've made to this year's look and format, we're probably most excited about our replacement of the PURE Conference with our first collaborative 'un-conference', called MATTER, brought to you by Tourism Australia. Here your contribution really does matter, because you ARE the content – head to p40 to hear our Founder Serge Dive explains exactly what this means and why we've made the switch.

The most eagle-eyed of you may have noticed that our magazine is no longer called LIST, but JOURNAL. This is to better reflect the fact that we are telling the story of experiential travel, as well as to complement our online content arm. This issue is therefore focused on demonstrating how the industry is transforming businesses, individuals and the planet.

For this latter, Emmanuel de Merode, the director of Virunga National Park, explains to Olivia Squire how tourism is his great hope for conservation (p17); meanwhile, designer and humanitarian worker Maryam Montague tells Jen Murphy how tourism is funding education to guide girls to a better future in Morocco (p26). Katie Palmer visits a boarding house in Asni run by PURE's chosen charity, Education for All, to see how your donations are changing the lives of girls there (p58).

When it comes to the personal epiphanies sparked by travel, Docastaway Founder Alvaro Cerezo talks to Jen Murphy about how time alone is the new luxury for today's over-stimulated clients (p8). Will Hide discovers how the process of getting somewhere can be as impactful


as the destination itself (p12); Marcella Echavarría looks into the artisanal essence of culturally responsible tourism (p30); and Costas Voyatzis illuminates the true meaning of mindful design that moves us (p34). For Stanley Stewart, roaming the nomadic terrain of Mongolia yields more intimate revelations than he ever imagined (p47).

For those looking to upgrade their business, Sandra Dee Hoffman explains how you can tailor your offering for tricky family travellers (p23). Colin Nagy has some top marketing tips for smaller luxury brands without access to huge PR machines (p55), and the world's leading travel editors reveal what it takes to grab their attention (p61). Meanwhile, throughout this issue you can get inspired by this year's Awards shortlist, chosen by a press panel of experiential experts – find out how they made their decisions on p64.

Somewhat appropriately, for our eighth edition you could say that we've come back around to the principle that PURE was founded on in the first place: that of transformation. Whether it's how Small Promises can transform the planet; how collaborative 'un-thinking' can transform the industry; or how embracing the freewheeling spirit of travel can transform perspectives, consider PURE 2016 your invitation to step into another way of thinking, feeling and being – in short, to Change Worlds.

 **SERGE DIVE**
CEO & Founder

 **SARAH BALL**
COO & Co-Founder

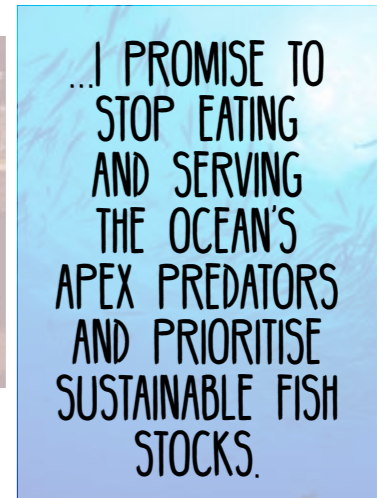
 **EMMA SQUIRE**
Event Manager



Greenhouse emissions from engines contribute to climate change and air pollution...

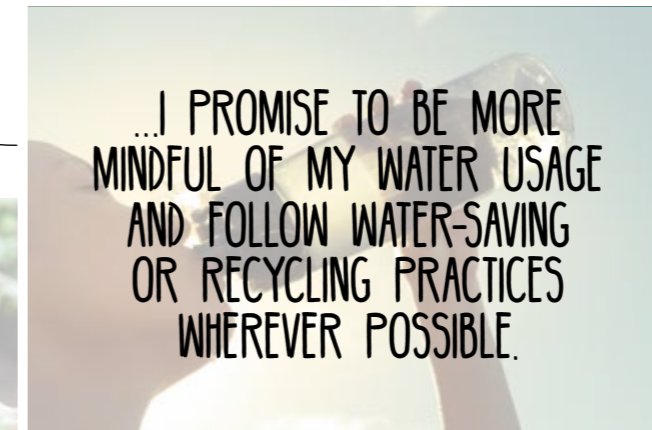


Global food waste and mass farming methods are contributing to the acidification of the seas...



The biodiversity of our oceans is under threat...

There is a worldwide water shortage...



The world's rainforests are depleting, threatening the wildlife that thrives there and contributing to climate change...

Livestock farming is one of the biggest global producers of CO2...



Human contact with wild animals that changes their natural behavior cannot be called conservation...



In an increasingly globalised world, it is more important than ever to engage with and understand people from different cultures...

WELCOME TO PURE

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 seven 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 allure 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, São Paulo, Doha and Milan, either by direct flight or via Casablanca – and it has, without doubt, become the city of luxury and experiential travel. Additionally and following PURE, Marrakech will capture the world's attention by organising the Climate Change Conference from 7-12 November.

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 eighth 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

MEET THE TEAM



SERGE DIVE
CEO & Founder



SARAH BALL
COO & Co-Founder



EMMA SQUIRE
Event Manager



EVE BROWNING
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EMMA LADKIN
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SOPHIE JONES
Senior Sales Executive



JENNY MYATT
Sales And Marketing Coordinator



JEMMA UGLOW
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Senior Travel Relations Executive



DOMINIQUE DASHWOOD-EVANS
Travel Relations Executive



CJ HOLDEN
Group Marketing Director



KATIE SHARPLES
Interim Marketing Manager



ELIZA BAILEY
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LAKIS JUZWA
CRM Manager



NICOLE TRILIVAS
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OLIVIA SQUIRE
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TIM SNELL
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Operations Executive



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ANNABEL SIMPSON
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SABRINA CORELLI
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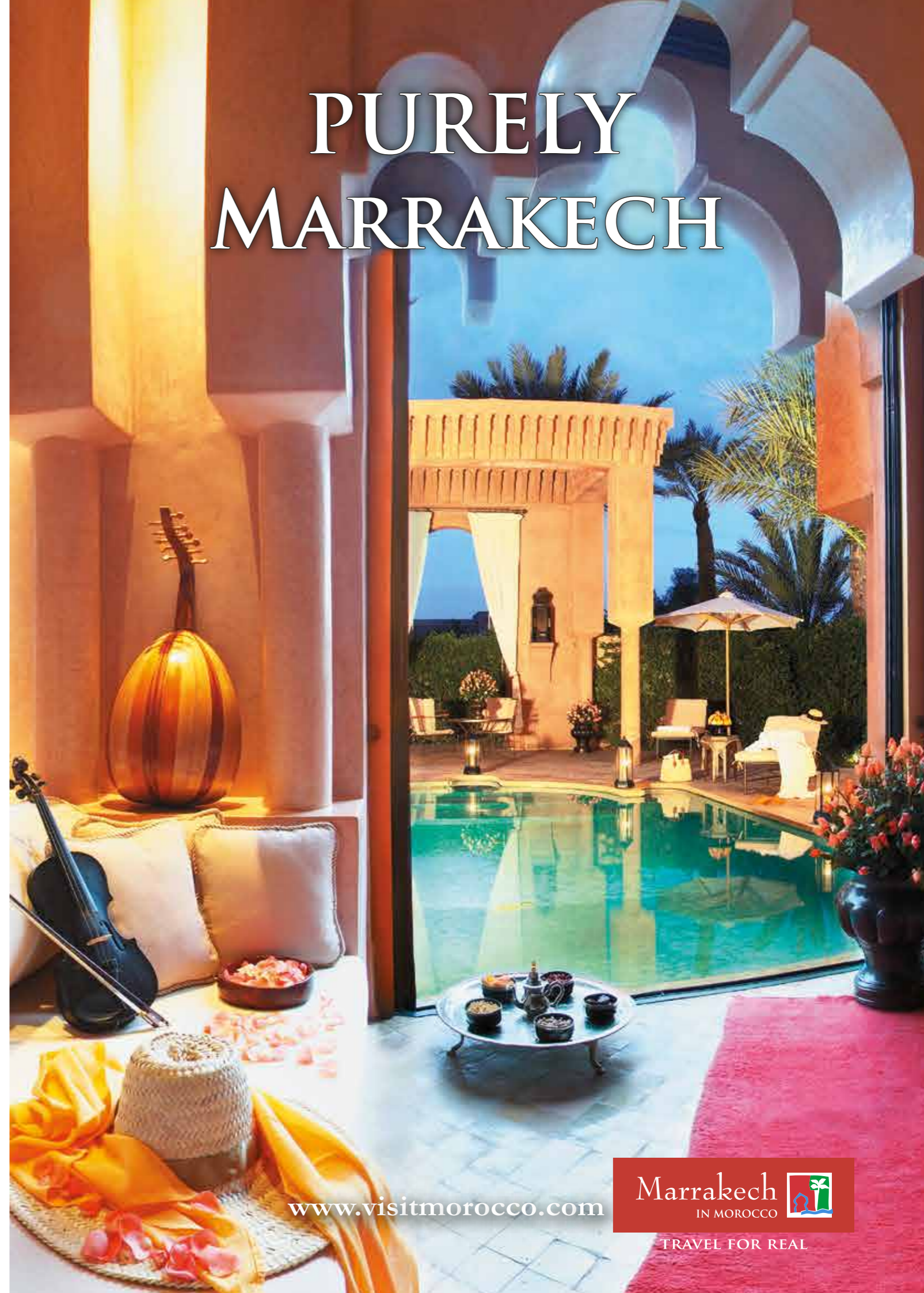
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TRAVEL FOR REAL

CASTAWAY

WORDS BY JENNIFER MURPHY // PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAVIER SANCHEZ

FROM DREAMING OF BEING A CASTAWAY AS A YOUNG BOY, TO SHIPWRECKING CLIENTS FOR A LIVING – ALVARO CEREZO EXPLAINS WHY TODAY'S HYPER-CONNECTIVITY IS MAKING TIME ALONE THE NEW LUXURY



Some kids dream of becoming pro football players or rock stars... Alvaro Cerezo fantasised about being a castaway. As a boy growing up in Málaga, an ancient trading port on the southern coast of Spain, Cerezo would holiday with his family along the horseshoe-shaped bay of La Herradura. When he was eight, he discovered his first 'desert island', Calaiza. "It was a secret cove quite far from the beach," he recalls. "I built a raft and would play pirate for hours. I still remember the thrill I felt being alone and exploring." Those early adventures, coupled with an obsessive appetite for stories of real life castaways like sailor Pedro Serrano and Marguerite de la Roque, fuelled Cerezo's quest to discover real desert islands years later.

Every few months during his studies at the University of Granada, Cerezo would take a leave of absence, find an island, strand himself, and see if he could survive off the land and sea. "I spent an entire month on an island off the coast of India. That's when I realised maybe other people are as crazy as I am. Maybe other people would enjoy the simplicity of island life."

For three years, Cerezo, 36, travelled to remote reaches of the globe – the Nicobar Islands, Melanesia, Siroktabe – building a portfolio of truly isolated islands. In a world of Google Earth and GPS it's rare to recapture the sense of discovery

early explorers like Magellan and Columbus felt when they stumbled upon new destinations. In a way, Cerezo turned out to be more like a modern-day explorer than a castaway. "Finding a new desert island feels like uncovering buried treasure," he says.

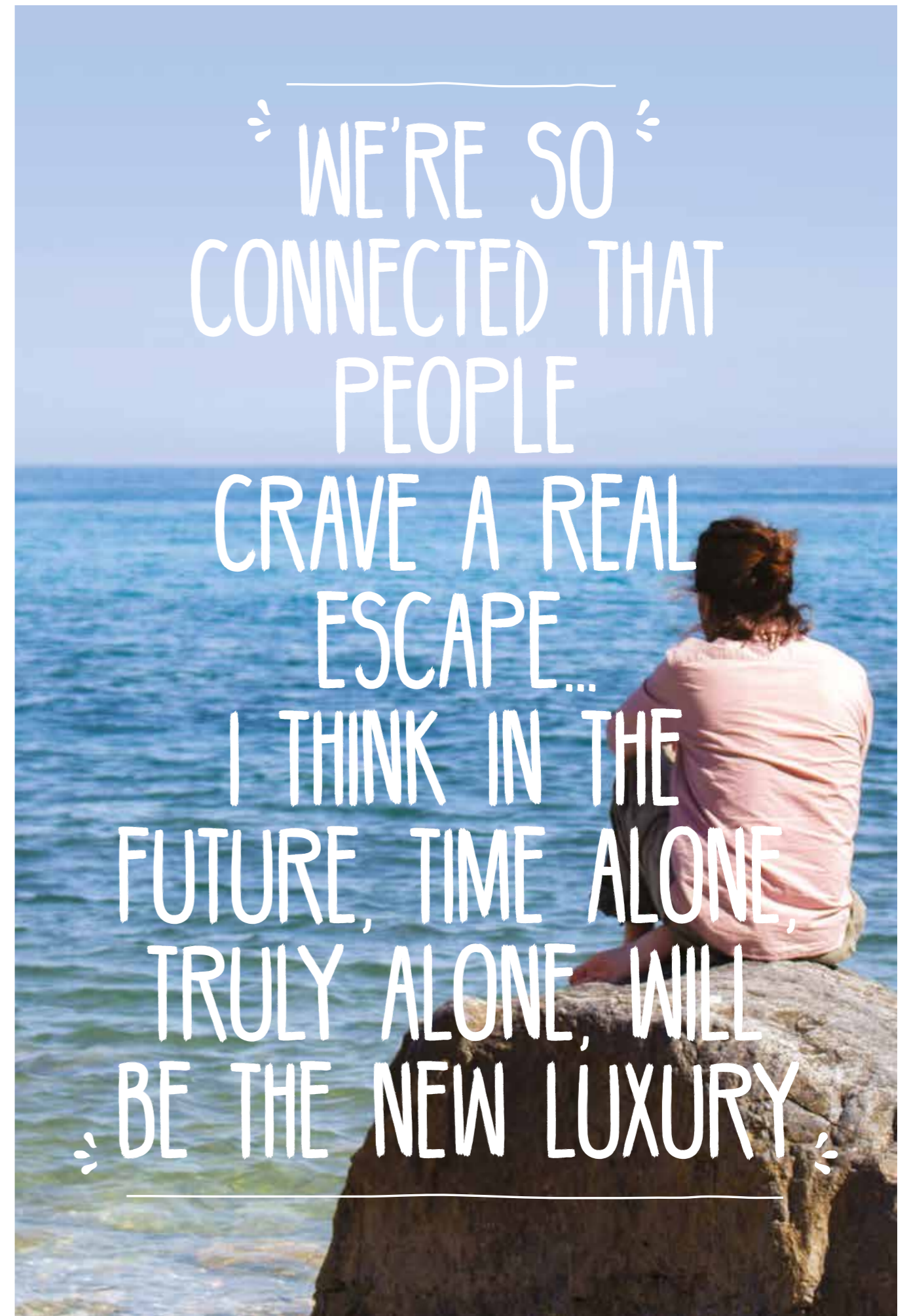
In 2010, he launched Docastaway (which stands for "do a castaway experience") and began sending paying clients to his off-the-grid hideaways. What makes the perfect desert island? Coconut palms and white sand beaches are alluring, but isolation was what Cerezo believed people craved – and would be willing to pay for. Rather than buy the islands, he works with local or nearby communities to use the land for periods of time and strikes deals that prevent any encounters with civilization – a passing ship, fishermen. "It's hard to explain the idea of self-exile to people," he says. "When I would strand myself on an island, I'd be thrilled when

fishermen passed by because they would bring me fish. But my clients stay for one week, not one month. They are paying to be completely alone. Even a fire on a distant shore ruins the feeling of isolation."

Most private islands are priced well beyond the average person's annual salary, but Cerezo wanted Docastaway to help people of all ages and incomes escape civilisation. "I wanted to stay true to the past, when castaways weren't castaways by choice. Whether you are rich or poor, you could still end up shipwrecked." Docastaway offers varying levels of castaway life, which appeal to clients ranging from adventurous honeymooners to retired executives looking to test their survival skills.

'Comfort mode' features minimalist bungalows, often nestled in the far reaches of bare bones eco-resorts that provide meals and bug spray. 'Adventure mode' is aimed at anyone who has ever dreamed of being on Survivor.

WE GIVE YOU A WALKIE-TALKIE, A MACHETE, AND WISH YOU LUCK



"We give you a walkie-talkie, a machete, and wish you luck," says Cerezo. Guests must build their own shelters, forage and hunt for food, and crack open coconuts for water.

"Most people don't want to suffer on holiday, they want the comforts of modern life," he says. "But then there are a few special people who want to test themselves. Yes, they can survive and be hugely successful in a big city; but can they survive in nature with nothing?" Cerezo says 80 per cent of his 'adventure mode' clients get nervous as their departure approaches; but he assures them that their biggest threat is having a coconut fall on their head. "It's really hard to starve," reassures Cerezo. "The islands are full of coconuts and crabs."

Many adventure castaways go into their trips hoping simply to return with bragging rights, but he says the majority

come home truly transformed. His most successful transformation was Reikko Hori, a 22-year-old from Japan who spent 19 days stranded on the Indonesian island of Amparo, 4,200 miles northwest of Australia, with nothing more than a few items of clothing, a spear gun, a torch, a magnifying glass, and a snorkel and goggles.

"She was the only client I have ever had reservations about stranding," he says. "I wasn't sure she could be self-sufficient, but this trip changed her life. She went from being an introvert to returning home and being very social and even meeting her first boyfriend. I think being alone in nature allows people to be more comfortable in civilisation. You appreciate the small things – a nice bed, food, friends."

Social media posts and TripAdvisor reviews have ruined the "secret" of nearly 30 per cent of Cerezo's portfolio; but he

says his favorite part of his job is the constant search for the next deserted paradise. "When people think of paradise they think of Thailand and then they get there and it feels like California or Spain. I think people are tired of mass tourism. They want something fresh, something that challenges them. We're so connected that people crave a real escape; they forget how to be alone. I think in the future, time alone, truly alone, will be the new luxury."

Jen Murphy is a Colorado-based writer whose work has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Outside, Men's Journal and DEPARTURES.



CHANGE WORLDS: TRANSFORMATION

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



OUR SHORTLIST FOR THE PURE AWARD FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL TRAVEL ALL SHARE CEREZO'S COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH UNIQUE EXPERIENTIAL JOURNEYS...

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WHEN THE JOURNEY BECOMES THE DESTINATION

WORDS BY WILL HIDE

WILL HIDE INVESTIGATES THE ROLE TRANSPORT PLAYS IN OUR TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Photo provided by Ryokan Kurashiki

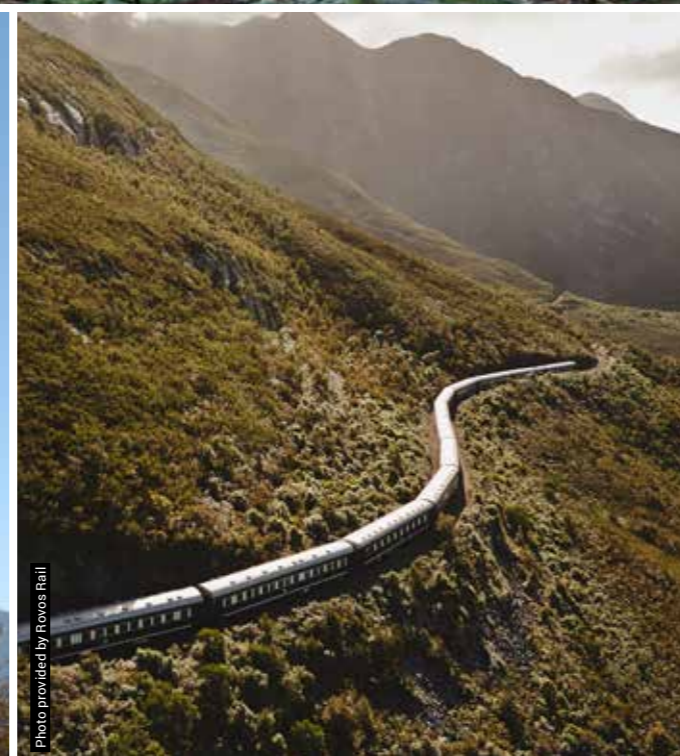


Photo provided by Rovos Rail

The look was sceptical. “You’re going cycling in Rwanda? You know it’s called ‘Land of a Thousand Hills’ don’t you?” I certainly did after day one. Long, grinding slogs uphill, followed by the dashed promises of a descent. Seeing Rwanda by bicycle, though, turned out to be a fantastic way of experiencing the country at ground level, not to mention a fantastic thigh workout. In over a week I got to know the local people as I pedalled from Kigali towards Lake Ruhondo and its background of cloud-dappled volcanoes that straddle the borders of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“Amakuru?” – how are you? – I’d call out to slightly bemused villagers in my basic Kinyarwanda. “Ni Mese” – we’re fine – would come the reply.



Photo provided by Dolomite Mountains

The way we actually get from A to B when we travel is often overlooked in the mad dash to reach what we perceive to be the destination. But shouldn’t the journey actually be part of the destination and the experience?

“Yes, for sure,” agrees Agustina Lagos Marmol from active outdoor company Dolomite Mountains in Northern Italy. Her favourite trip with clients? Ski touring with guests from lodge to lodge on cloudless early spring days, carrying hunks of local cheese, bread and prosciutto, at some points strapping skis onto backpacks and rappelling down rock faces to get access to otherwise unreachable powder runs.

“It makes my soul soar. You’re close to the angels. You know”, she says laughing like a naughty child, “there’s a saying in Italian but it’s quite rude, it basically means something is even better than great sex but for me that sums up a perfect day in the mountains.”

Experiential modes of transport create lasting memories, says Ross Phillips of Tropicsurf, which seeks out amazing surf spots for clients from Mozambique to Costa Rica.

“I surfed all my life looking for one special ride. I finally caught it in remote Indonesia: a big, growling tube that threatened to pulverise me into a shallow reef.

“But it’s amazing how much pleasure a single memory can occupy in the mind. Today, that short ten-second rush inhabits an overwhelming portion of my memory bank...Peak experiences do that. ...If you see value in owning more powerful, ten-second memories, my company’s mission is to help them materialise.”

It’s a statement that Veronika Blomgren, co-founder of Indonesia-based Alexa Private Cruises agrees with. Her clients sail within the islands of Komodo National Park and the Raja Ampat archipelago on their own private, 28m-long, crewed pihniis, a traditional local two-masted ship.

“I once heard it said that ‘ships are the nearest thing to dreams that hands ever made.’ I grew up in Russia in a very grey and visually unstimulating time. My visits to museums and forests were the only way to satisfy my thirst for beauty...and to appreciate beauty in all its forms... all styles, all possible expressions, to be inspired by almost anything our huge planet has to offer.”

The importance of experiential travel is one that is echoed by Rohan Vos, CEO of Pretoria-based Rovos Rail, which provides luxury train travel across Southern Africa. “Travelling with us isn’t about the destination,” he says candidly. “In fact that doesn’t really matter. Our trips are about the journey. It was important to us from the very beginning that this wasn’t just a train ride. We wanted our guests to learn about this country, its history, its culture, its people and of course experience the magnificent wildlife.”

Life-changing experiences don’t just come on land. Who’s to say they can’t happen at 40,000ft over the Himalaya while dreaming of world-class culinary discoveries?



Photo provided by Beyond Dracula



Photo provided by Alexa Private Cruises

Next year, Four Seasons Private Jet will launch three food-themed itineraries with guests travelling aboard its 52-seat Boeing 757 jet in partnership with Rene Redzepi, head chef of Noma in Copenhagen. Clients will visit some of the world’s best restaurants and private kitchens en route from Seoul to Paris, from Dubai to Bogota.

As well as fine dining there’ll be the opportunity to go hot air ballooning over the Serengeti, enjoy a private tour of the Hermitage in St Petersburg and go night snorkelling in the Maldives. Fantastic destinations all, but getting to them is half the fun.

Voyages that stay in the mind forever don’t have to be wallet-draining. “For guests we can choose a horse-pulled cart because in past times this was the only means of transport in Romania and it is still used today,” says Andreea Dobre of Beyond Dracula, which offers bespoke itineraries in Transylvania and beyond.

“By travelling in this way you can connect with the peasants’ way of life, and step back in time. You can better understand the connection and respect people here still have for nature and animals. Of course it also means you can ride off the beaten track and truly get back to nature.”



EXPERIENTIAL MODES OF TRANSPORT
CREATE LASTING MEMORIES

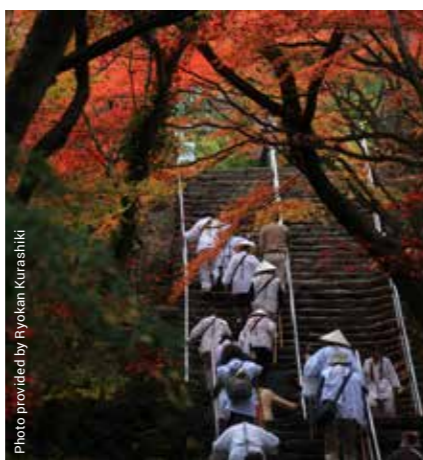
And sometimes we can connect with a destination and its people by really slowing down and using the most traditional of methods to make the journey.

"To me, one of the most incredible approaches to a hotel is getting to 360 Shakti in the foothills of the Himalaya," says Mary-Anne Denison-Pender, managing director of India hotel specialist Mahout. "After a train from Delhi, you have a five-hour drive up into the hills, hugging bright blue rivers, passing through gorgeous little villages, slowly climbing, climbing, climbing. From there the final stretch is an hour-long walk on a gentle undulating path to the lodge... A stay here forces you to slow down and simply become part of mountain life."

It's a similarly-unhurried attitude that appeals to Lauren Scharf, who works with Ryokan Kurashiki on the Japanese island of Shikoku. The inn is a popular start or end point for an 88 temple-pilgrimage that became popular thanks to 8th-Century Buddhist monk, Kobo Daishi.

"I spent five days on the route recently" says Scharf, "and was blown away. It effectively combines Japanese traditional culture and cuisine, religion, architecture, hiking through gorgeous nature and great opportunities to interact with locals."

SOMETIMES WE CAN
CONNECT WITH A
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Whether we're panting up hills on a bike in Rwanda, hanging ten on a surfboard in Bali or watching the clouds go by from a train heading towards Victoria Falls, we can all connect with our world on a deeper level. As American writer Henry Miller once said: "One's destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things". Something to think about as we travel and change worlds.

Will Hide spent 12 years on the travel desk of *The Times* in London, but now writes for a number of national newspapers and magazines in the UK, Asia and US. His favourite kind of travel is when he's got dirt under his fingernails, but with the chance to scrub up somewhere five-star afterwards. Catch up with him at WillHide.com or find him on Twitter @willhide.



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Photo by Adam Keeler provided for Virunga National Park

GORILLA WARRIOR

WORDS BY OLIVIA SQUIRE

TWO YEARS AFTER THE WORLD WAS CAPTIVATED BY OSCAR-NOMINATED FILM VIRUNGA, PARK DIRECTOR EMMANUEL DE MERODE EXPLAINS WHY TOURISM IS THE KEY TO BRINGING CHANGE TO THE PARK'S WILDLIFE AND COMMUNITIES

Perhaps I shouldn't have been surprised, but it turns out that tracking down the man responsible for securing the future of one of Africa's national parks is trickier than I had anticipated – even more so since he became a bona fide movie star, thanks to the 2014 release of Academy Award-nominated documentary *Virunga*. Emmanuel de Merode is very much in demand these days, both at home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he has been the Director of Virunga National Park since 2008, and by an international crowd keen to hear more about the Park's ongoing, fascinating story. Thus commenced a five-month chase from our London HQ during which I became online BFFs with his assistant; learned to respect the temperamental nature of DRC phone lines; and wondered if I'd ever manage to defeat his intimidating schedule.

However, when I eventually connected with de Merode, it became immediately evident that this is someone who is used to negotiating conflicts that go well beyond a diary clash. A Belgian prince born in Tunisia and raised in Kenya, his background matches that of the terrain he oversees: diverse, complicated and unconventional.

Virunga is one of three national parks sharing 3000 square miles of land at Africa's geographical heart. This position on the juncture between territories has engendered a difficult and bloody history, beginning in 1994 when refugees from the Rwandan genocide overflowed into the DRC, ultimately leading to the First Congo War in 1996 and Second Congo War, which ended in 2003.

During this time rebel militias flourished, surviving through the trafficking of natural resources, including gorilla poaching. This latter gained global attention in 2007, when militias slaughtered five gorillas in the Park.

In 2008 the situation became even more fragile with the start of the CNDP War, whereby M23 rebels captured the Mikeno sector of the Park where the gorillas live, alongside the headquarters. All of the above took place in a context of four million people living in extreme poverty on the outskirts of the Park.

FOR US,
TOURISM IS
FUNDAMENTAL.
WE'RE ABSOLUTELY
NOT GOING TO
SUCCEED IN
VIRUNGA
WITHOUT IT.

This is the Gordian knot of issues that de Merode inherited when he came to the post. "The two big hurdles that we had to overcome were to set up an effective reform of the Park service, and to work out a way to operate under armed conflict and behind enemy lines," he says. "We had to negotiate with our own government to discuss our ability to open a dialogue with the rebels...if we didn't secure that agreement, then the Park would probably have collapsed and we may have lost the mountain gorillas. Alongside that," he laughs, "we didn't have any money, because we'd run out of funding. We were in survival mode." A difficult first day by anyone's standards, then.

However, defending the Park is a battle against not only internal, but also external influences. Virunga's untapped oil reserves have attracted attention from global firms including SOCO International, a London-based oil and gas company whose prospecting activities accidentally became the subject of the eponymous documentary.

"The film didn't really start as a film: it came at a time when we were having real difficulty investigating [SOCO] and Orlando, the director, came on a different project. It became clear that he had a very valuable skill set with respect to investigative journalism, so initially we were just working together to produce material. However, it very quickly became so compelling, beyond what we expected, that it became obvious that it wasn't going to be a small ripple of a film."

This prediction was certainly accurate: Virunga ended up with Leonardo di Caprio as executive producer and an Oscars nod for Best Documentary Feature. The film captured the heart-wrenching fight of de Merode and his rangers to combat the cycle of violence, war and corruption, as well as the sacrifice entailed; since 1996, 154 of 400 rangers employed in the Park have lost their lives and de Merode himself was the subject of an assassination attempt just a few weeks before the premiere. According to de Merode, "when you choose to become a ranger in Virunga, your chances of suffering a violent death are between 30-40%. There is no military on earth that suffers that level of fatality."

Awards and acclaim aside, the real impact of Virunga lies elsewhere. Crucially, SOCO has withdrawn its activities within the Park. But perhaps more unexpectedly, it has become the best advertisement possible for de Merode's great hope for the Park's future: tourism.

"For us, tourism is fundamental. We're absolutely not going to succeed in Virunga without it. It's a funny situation, because it's a film that everyone said would deter people from coming, but in reality it's had the opposite effect. There is that segment of people who want to do

something completely different that can truly be defined as an experience, where any apprehension is overruled by the level of interest." The film's real legacy, then, is its ability to combat "the sense of fear and violence that people have. It doesn't have a place when you come here and experience it for yourself. We have had over 5000 tourists come to Virunga without a single incident."

In the two years since the film's release, Virunga has enjoyed its first large-scale tourism successes with the re-opening of Mikeno Lodge and the launch of several camps. Just as collaboration has got the Park to the point where it can embark on tourism as a serious industry, it is collaboration that underlines the experience on offer. Guests are invited to wholeheartedly participate in the Park's daily activities, patrolling with rangers and undertaking ecological monitoring. It's this inclusivity that de Merode believes is pivotal to Virunga's tourism success. "It's a bit rougher and more rustic than the equivalent you find in Rwanda or Uganda, but you don't feel like a visitor – it's the people who make it really interesting."

In return, locals are beginning to see the tangible benefits of tourism revenue, 30% of which goes directly to community development. Nine new schools have been built; over 30km of water pipeline laid; and rural electrification programmes are underway, all contributing to the bank of trust required in the peacemaking process. "They also enjoy having people come because it's a very poignant sign that things are getting better – that we're moving beyond the war", he adds. Meanwhile, travellers gain an understanding that "travel to remote, difficult places like Virunga can be done in a way that can transform the lives of some of the most impoverished and vulnerable people on earth."



Photo provided by Virunga National Park



Photo provided by Virunga National Park



Photo by Fernanda Navilli

Speaking at the We Are Africa Conference 2016

Tourism is one of three strategies being adopted in the Virunga Alliance, an overarching \$200m project aiming to position the Park as the main driver behind the economy in North Kivu. For de Merode, it represents an opportunity to overcome the interlinked political and economic problems surrounding the Park that conservationists cannot eradicate alone.

"We're living with this idea of environmental injustice. We have about 2 million acres of some of the most fertile land in Africa, and around that you have 4 million people. It's a catastrophe, because that land within the Park's boundaries represents around \$600 of revenue for a farming family in Eastern Congo per year. At the same time, you have a National Park that is also a World Heritage site. It has huge value at that level, but it also has a cost: and that cost is being borne almost entirely by the local population, among the poorest on Earth. \$1bn of revenue is being forfeited so that the rest of us can enjoy Virunga's amazing wildlife."

He continues, "As conservationists, we just don't have the strength to tackle these enormous issues. This is where the Virunga Alliance comes in: by building alliances with public institutions, civil society and the private sector."

Alongside rural electrification and agriculture, de Merode's hope is that tourism will enable a new kind of industry "based on certain values to do with peace-building and positively affecting the lives of the poor and most vulnerable, without destroying the environment". An important tenet of this is to replace the shortsighted extraction of natural resources with sustainable agriculture, enabling the Congolese ownership of their own raw materials and "a return on their own future".

This emphasis on both inviting the world in and encouraging locals to look outwards summarises de Merode's vision. He never uses 'I' when talking about the Park's

future, only 'we', recognising that the project is bigger than any one person: it involves the rangers, the tourists, the four million people living around the Park and the world beyond, all working in tandem. "It's an understanding that it really isn't just about tourism: it's about a complete landscape of activities of which tourism is one, and when you engage in that you can get involved in everything else, including conservation, social development and peace-building. It all feeds into itself."

As travel professionals, de Merode is keen for PUREists to acknowledge their potential to Change Worlds in destinations like Virunga, asserting "There are probably few places on earth where the work you do can play such an important role in bringing about change". The survival of the mountain gorillas is one such example: over recent decades, a species that de Merode's parents once told him he would never see when he grew up has actually doubled in size.

It's perhaps this kind of success that leads him to remark that despite the risks, he has every reason to be optimistic about Virunga's future. "I wake up every morning and feel really good about getting on with it. My day-to-day life is the best job in the world". As I thank him for taking the time out from this manic, wonderful job to talk to me, he apologises: "I'm sorry it's been so frustrating for you – I often cause that for people". I'm sure Emmanuel de Merode is causing frustration for all the right people through his uncompromising determination to forge the right future for Virunga – but after hearing about the scale of his ambitions, I'm definitely not one of them.

Olivia Squire is Senior Creative Executive for Beyond Luxury Media Ltd.



CHANGE WORLDS: CONSERVATION

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A FAMILY AFFAIR

WORDS BY SANDRA DEE HOFFMAN

CHILDREN'S CONCIERGE LLC'S SANDRA DEE HOFFMAN ON NAVIGATING THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF FAMILY TRAVEL

Families are searching for more ways to be together, for more ways to make up for the shrinking time they have together on a daily basis. This search for being and spending time together is how it usually starts: the wonderful art of exploring the world together as a family.

Enter technology. Technology has allowed people living almost anywhere to be introduced to different places and different people. 'Different' does not seem so strange and foreboding anymore; experiencing something 'different' no longer seems like it would be an overwhelming thing to do with children. Rather, 'different' now seems inviting and interesting!

Combining the desire for more time together with the realization of how varied and rich the world can be results in more families who want to explore – not just travel, but really explore the world. And as more families explore the world, more families *must* explore the world. Bring on families!

BRING ON FAMILIES!

It's a great time to be exploring as a family – providers around the world are incredibly creative and offer some wonderful, really meaningful experiences for kids as well as for adults. In fact, exploring with kids along has much in common with exploring with only adults; but it's true that adding kids to the mix does add some interesting hurdles to overcome... So, here are a few of the challenges we've come across, along with some ways to get around them.



WHO LIKES TO DO WHAT?

With families you suddenly have to play to the interests of parents and their children – and these interests can often be totally different. Then add grandparents... Now there are three generations, all in need of care and attention – yikes! Why in the world did we ever think this would be fun...?

TRY THIS:

Find out what a family's interests really are. This means asking what interests each member of the family who will be exploring together. We promise you that with a little investigation you will discover a trove of wonderfully different interests among parents and especially among kids – you just need to ask! And often the interests uncovered will inspire you to be even more creative than usual.

Ask the unexpected. You can often uncover true interests by asking unexpected questions that result in really wonderful, unexpected responses. It's much more fun to have kids and parents respond to "What do you hate doing?", rather than to "What do you love to do?"; and it's much more informative to ask them to imagine the topic they would choose if they were writing a book, than it is to just ask for a list of sights they would like to see. Recently we had three kids in a family all tell us that when they're their parents' age they'd like to be "flipping houses". Wow, what great information to have! No-one else had mentioned anything

related to this. As a result, our provider arranged for the family to explore several neighborhoods with a young architect to discuss the many possible uses of the local buildings being built or being torn down. It was a chance for the family to really get to know, in a more intimate way, the city they were visiting. We're told the kids are still talking about this experience.

Guy Rubin with Imperial China does a most impressive job of understanding the interests of his guests. With this information he pairs guests with destinations and experiences at these destinations that are most likely to excite them and get them truly involved with China. He has moved way past suggesting experiences he and his staff "think" their guest families should have. This need to really understand his guests' interests has led Guy to search for, arrange and create experiences all over the country that are deeper and more authentic.

ASK THE UNEXPECTED

GEE, WHO'S REALLY TIRED?

When working with families you might suddenly discover that the energy levels of the different generations on a trip vary quite a lot and present themselves in unexpected ways – kids and grandparents might be raring to go, while parents are totally pooped!

TRY THIS:

Don't discount jet lag. This could be the root of many troubles! Lauren Scharf and Kim Keefe with Art of Travel recently worked with us to plan a family's arrival in Japan so that they would be wowed by the country's many treasures. There was so much to explore and we didn't want anyone to miss anything! But we soon discovered that nothing was going to wow the parents until after they'd had some rest and a massage... They were so tired that they initially hated everything (and I mean everything)! When we finally addressed their jet lag head-on the parents enjoyed their spa time, the kids put their energy into exploring with a guide and being the first to make some pretty cool discoveries, and the rest of the trip was totally delightful for everyone.

Go with the flow, with creativity! For one of our families, Butterfield and Robinson was most gracious and creative, modifying their usual arrangements to allow a grandmother to travel comfortably in a van beside her husband and their grandson as the two of them biked a bit of Normandy. The parents? They didn't leave the hotel!



BRING ON THE UNEXPECTED!

Sometimes when we approach providers about working with families they worry that all they could possibly offer the kids would be parks, hikes and visits to programmes created especially for kids. Of course, there's nothing wrong with nature and themed programmes created especially for kids! But you'll find that kids are interested in and open to much more, if you give them a chance.

TRY THIS:

Create the unexpected. Kids love the unexpected! We once had a wonderful artist help a teen boy look closely at the different sculptures encountered on what he thought would be a boring art tour with an eye towards deciding which of them might have potential as members of his fantasy basketball team. After some consideration, he actually selected quite a few!

Ask kids how they would rearrange things.

Things like the people in a work of art, or the furniture in a room, or the buildings on a street. Put kids in charge and ask them to change things – nothing could be more fun! In the hands of a good guide, this is a very useful tool.

Annie O'Donoghue with Original Travel has created a delightful, much enjoyed scavenger hunt for the British Museum. One recent Children's Concierge family who explored using Annie's scavenger



Photo provided by Children's Concierge LLC

hunt discovered the Rosetta Stone right there at the British Museum in London. They were thrilled! Interestingly, it was actually the mother in this family who reported this experience as one of her all time favourites.

But perhaps the best advice we can offer anyone, anywhere working with kids and their parents is a very simple one: **it really helps to like kids!**

Having been a teacher and a school psychologist for over 30 years, Sandra Dee Hoffman now runs Children's Concierge LLC – an education company based near Washington DC that helps families explore destinations around the world with their kids for the purpose of embellishing their education.



⇒ PUT KIDS IN CHARGE AND ASK THEM TO CHANGE THINGS – NOTHING COULD BE MORE FUN! ⇐

Photo provided by Children's Concierge LLC

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GIRL GUIDE

WORDS BY JENNIFER MURPHY

DESIGNER AND LONG-TIME HUMANITARIAN WORKER, MARYAM MONTAGUE, EXPLAINS HOW HER TOURISM-FUNDED COMMUNITY PROJECT USES EDUCATION AND SPORTS TO GUIDE GIRLS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION



building and creating a home compelled us to invest in the community, because we knew we'd be staying." Once Redecke built their dream home, he set about building Peacock Pavilions, a boutique hotel that hosts creative retreats focused on painting, yoga and photography.

Having worked for 25 years in humanitarian need, Montague was quick to notice the gender disparities in her local community. "I'd drive through the village and see boys playing soccer and boys walking to school. Where were all the girls?" she wondered. Montague had recently given birth to a daughter

and couldn't help but think of her when she caught rare glimpses of the local village girls.

Montague began asking questions and received alarming answers. In Morocco, 79 per cent of boys in urban areas attend school, compared with 26 per cent of girls in rural areas; and in some areas up to 83 per cent of women are married before the age of 18. "Girls weren't getting a chance at a future," she says. "Girls are extremely vulnerable to a cycle where they drop out of school, marry early and become a young mother."

In 2012, Montague and her husband created Project Soar, a non-profit aimed at breaking that cycle of girl marriages and early motherhood by keeping girls in school and providing them with options so they can have a productive future. "People don't talk about the real situation of girls in Morocco," she says. "I decided I wanted to embrace a different model for hospitality. Rather than hide the problem from our guests, we wanted to share the gritty underbelly of the city and try to be part of the solution."

↳ GIRLS WEREN'T GETTING A CHANCE AT A FUTURE ↻

Montague had worked with humanitarian projects on a much larger scale, but for something so intimate, she knew she had to work closely with the community. Douar Ladaam is a conservative village and she intervened cautiously, setting up meetings with the village leaders to earn their trust and support. When she realised that the majority of girls drop out of school when they get their periods, she took action. Project Soar is now the pilot partner organisation in the Muslim world for Be Girl, a programme that provides period kits, with instructions in Arabic.

More than 60 per cent of Moroccan children fail their high school entry exams – girls at a much higher rate than boys, says Montague. Project Soar works with the Peace Corps to provide tutors in the core subjects: French, Arabic, physics,

Designer Maryam Montague was born in Egypt, grew up in the United States and travelled throughout West Africa, South East Asia, Nepal and Namibia doing human rights work. By 2001, this nomadic-lifestyle had led her and her husband, American architect Chris Redecke, to Morocco. "We'd just had our son, Tristan, and we both wanted to put down roots as we started a family," she says. They considered buying a riad in the medina of Marrakech, but ultimately decided they'd prefer a quiet life in the countryside.

The couple found an idyllic 8.5-acre olive grove in the village of Douar Ladaam, just 20 minutes outside of the city. "It was the first time I'd really had a home. I'd always rented places," she says. "The act of



↳ RATHER THAN HIDE THE PROBLEM, WE WANTED TO SHARE THE CITY'S GRITTY UNDERBELLY AND TRY TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION ↻





Photo by Natalie Opocensky

maths, natural sciences. This year, Montague and her husband created the Skylar Scholarship. Named after their daughter, the programme will take two of Project Soar's most gifted girls and give them the opportunity to attend a private high school.

Traditionally, women have been excluded from sports in Morocco. "I believe sports are an incredibly important aspect of youth, both for physical health and developing leadership skills," she says.

≡ I ALWAYS WANTED A THIRD CHILD, BUT NOW I HAVE 238 GIRLS WHO I INTERACT WITH ON A VERY INTIMATE LEVEL ≡

Montague's 14 year-old daughter coaches the running club and leads the 12-member group on runs beyond the village. "On Field Day she told the girls, 'only one of you can be a winner today, but in my mind you're all winners.' When I heard that I knew my work here was done." Once the girls started

participating in sports, the mothers of the village approached Montague about exercise programmes. "They were inspired to be healthier role models for their daughters," she says. Project Soar now also offers fitness classes for the women of the village.

"I read a statistic that said 15 out of the 20 female U.S. senators were in the Girl Scouts," says Montague. "We don't have uniforms or fancy badges, but I think we have a similar mission of helping girls realise and reach their potential. I always wanted a third child, but now I have 238 girls who I interact with on a very intimate level. My job has always been in policy so this interaction has profoundly changed me." To date, the organisation has provided over 500 hours of activities and training to 238 adolescent girls.

Many guests arrive expecting to meet quiet, meek Arab girls. "Then they watch a basketball clinic and their attitudes quickly change," says Montague. "These girls are competitive. I think guests feel closer to their experience at the hotel when they get to interact with the girls and see the impact we have on the local community." The hotel gives 10 per cent of its profits annually to Project Soar and guests can contribute through donations that support specific programmes, like sports or the arts. "You quickly realise that it doesn't require very much to keep a girl in school," she says. It's quite humbling. Now I keep asking, why can't I help 500 girls or 10,000 girls? I'm dreaming big because I think this is an achievable solution to a problem that should not be very complicated."



Photo by VIK M

Montague hopes her model of community work inspires others in the hospitality industry. "I'd like to see more hotels adopting causes rather than just making contributions here and there," she says. "The Band-Aid approach to aid is not a good one. As social entrepreneurs, we all have a role to play in helping contribute to the countries we are benefiting from."

Jen Murphy is a Colorado-based writer whose work has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Outside, Men's Journal and DEPARTURES.



CHANGE WORLDS: COMMUNITY

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DWARIKA'S RESORT



Building Camp Hope and Our Dream Village to provide temporary shelter and rebuild homes for those affected by the 2015 Sindhupalchowk earthquake.

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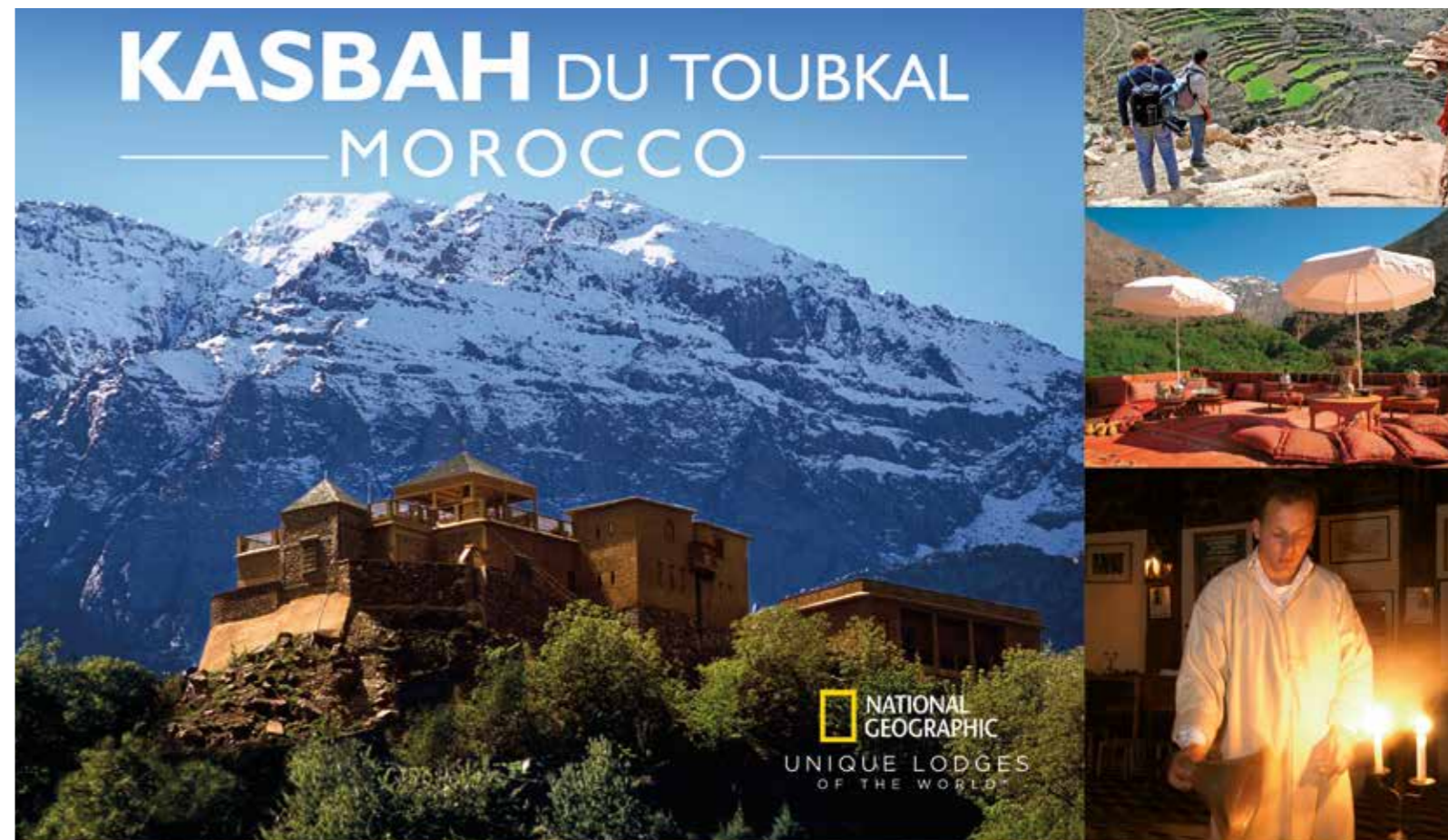


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Tibet - Norlha Textiles

#IWEARCULTURE

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCELLA ECHAVARRIA

PURPOSEFUL TRAVEL WITH A FOCUS ON FINDING TRUE TREASURES IS NOT ONLY A TREND, BUT A MOVEMENT TOWARDS CULTURALLY RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AND PHILANTHROPY



Beijing - Wuyong

Bolivia - Sucre



Tibet

Tibet



Travelling to remote places has many advantages, like running away from tourist traps, escaping the step-by-step guidebook style of travel, enjoying pristine nature sites and, especially, discovering best-kept secrets. Remote travel in search of the unique is a trend that is gaining momentum at the same speed as globalisation aims to invade every corner of the earth. And it is precisely that open invitation to surprise and the unexpected that is the very secret of a fabulous trip.

MY COUNTRY IS UNDERGOING A HEARTBREAKING LOSS OF TRADITION FOR THE SAKE OF AN IRRESPONSIBLE PURSUIT OF THE FUTURE

- Ma Ke -

Tiffany Smith, a philanthropist from California, says, "I love discovering the work of new artisans, finding ways to support their work and helping them realise their value". One of her recent discoveries while travelling in Beijing was Wuyong, the living museum started by Chinese designer Ma Ke in an industrial area of Beijing. Ma Ke explains, "Cultural variety and regional diversity are being assimilated through economic globalisation.

Traditional craftsmanship is disappearing from our daily life, and can now only be found in museum exhibits. Through these tremendous social changes, my country is undergoing a heartbreaking loss of tradition for the sake of an irresponsible pursuit of the future".

Ma Ke created Wuyong as an answer to her concerns and a lifetime of work as a designer of Exception, the first Chinese designer brand. Wuyong is one of these secret places that only operate by word of mouth and by appointment. The main area is an open lobby where different exhibitions of "useless" concepts take place, such as Chinese baskets, puppets and umbrellas. The real mystery awaits after a very small door asks guests to kneel and enter a humble rural house that is exactly the opposite of the buzzing outside world. One of Wuyong's hosts, wearing a traditional Chinese apron, leads the way through wooden furniture, accessories, and fashion and lifestyle items such as tea tree powder and handmade soaps.

In Ma Ke's words, "I became more and more attracted by Chinese traditional craftsmanship; the peasants live their lives the way our ancestors did, they get up when the sun rises and they rest when the sun sets. The intimacy and harmony they have with nature; the clarity and frugality they treat everything with; and the reverence they have for nature has moved me profoundly".

In another Beijing street, hidden in an alleyway, is Kathrin von Rechenberg's studio. She is a German designer who came to China 15 years ago looking for tea silk, a traditional southern Chinese fabric made from hand-woven silk treated

with yam juice and mud. Kathrin explains, "I was instantly taken with the lustrous black shades and subtle texture of the dark, paper-like fabric, with its interesting ecological characteristics. Tea silk has existed since the Ming Dynasty. To this day it is produced manually in southern China, using traditional techniques that have not changed in more than 500 years."

TO THIS DAY TEA SILK IS PRODUCED MANUALLY USING TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES THAT HAVE NOT CHANGED IN MORE THAN 500 YEARS

- Kathrin von Rechenberg -

She continues, "The plant used to dye tea silk has long been associated with traditional Chinese medicine for its wound-healing properties. Centuries ago fishermen noted that their nets, treated with yam juice from a fibrous native tuber to prevent them from rotting, turned black from being in contact with river mud." A similar labour-intensive process today transforms the neutral silk fabric to give it its rich, coppery and caramel tones. The best quality fabric is stored for up to 5 years and properly aged tea silk is as rare as fine wine. Rechenberg applies her knowledge of haute couture to the love of this fabric, making true works of art.

In Ritoma, a remote Tibetan Autonomous Region in Gansu province in China, glamorous textile junkies and chic Beijingers travel hours in search of fine yak textiles at Norlha Atelier, a social

enterprise run by 120 nomads. With retail stores only in Tibet, Norlha is a true destination for textile connoisseurs who know that this short fiber requires great skill to be handspun. Norlha has been working for a few years with high-end European fashions that appreciate the quality and craftsmanship of its textiles.

At literally the end of the world in Puerto Natales, Patagonia, Paulina Escobar is the creator behind Le Mouton Vert (the green sheep), a small enterprise that uses the whitest merino wool in the world to make handmade pieces that are now in the hands of collectors and textile aficionados. The process is entirely handmade, transparent and responsible, using merino wool, which is the world's whitest - "The immense pastures and the high wind factor helps the sheep be very clean".

Two years ago, Paulina moved from Switzerland back to Puerto Natales in search of a place where she could weave in peace and good light. "I found a place with a view to the glaciers and the ocean at the end of the world...my next step was to reconnect with the women I remember from my childhood who were innate weavers; strong Chilean women who simply loved weaving". Paulina is a firm advocate of responsible wool and high quality heirloom pieces that carry with them the history of their land, which in this case happens to be uniquely white. She campaigns against overconsumption and in favour of a frugal and responsible lifestyle.



Patagonia

Tibet - Norlha Textiles



Bolivia - Jalq'a and Tarabuco Textiles

Patagonia



I FOUND A PLACE WITH A VIEW TO THE GLACIERS AND THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE WORLD... MY NEXT STEP WAS TO RECONNECT WITH THE WOMEN I REMEMBER FROM MY CHILDHOOD

- Paulina Escobar -

Bolivia is one of South America's best-kept secrets. Its history is told mainly through a very rich textile culture that is alive today thanks to its mostly indigenous population (80%). Near the beautiful city of Sucre are two villages known for their textiles: Jalq'a and Tarabuco. The red and black textiles of Jalq'a represent the underworld and the chaos of the dark realms where strange creatures abound. These Quechua artists represent a primal world of darkness and confusion, one that depicts the very core of the earth. Their world is one of fantasy and their textiles are true museum pieces, very much appreciated by collectors of modern art.



Tibet - Norlha Textiles

The village of Tarabuco produces very different textiles. Their world is one of order, colour, clarity and symmetry. They tell stories of their daily life marked by the cycles of nature and cultural events. They love water and represent it through zigzags in most of their textiles. The horse is one of their main figures as well as the condor, llamas and rabbits.



Beijing - Rechenberg

#Iwearculture can be more than a hashtag; it can redefine the very essence of culturally responsible tourism. And as Ralph Waldo Emerson says: "Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not".



Beijing - Rechenberg



Tibet

THOUGH WE TRAVEL THE WORLD OVER TO FIND THE BEAUTIFUL, WE MUST CARRY IT WITH US OR WE FIND IT NOT

- Ralph Waldo Emerson -

Marcella Echavarría is a Colombian-born, New York-based entrepreneur contributing regularly about cultural and adventure travel, design and food to magazines in South America and the US. Her work has been featured in *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Departures*, *Centurion*, *W*, *Indagare*, *Daily Candy* and *Elle Decoration*. Alongside her work as a travel and lifestyle photojournalist and travel designer, Echavarría covers artisans around the world and works with them to preserve their craft by developing links between these vanishing communities and developed markets.



Bolivia - Jalq'a and Tarabuco Textiles



Beijing - Rechenberg

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MINDFUL DESIGN

WORDS BY COSTAS VOYATZIS

DESIGN IS JUST A STATE OF MIND ACCORDING TO YATZER'S COSTAS VOYATZIS, AS HE TAKES US THROUGH THE TRUE MEANING OF MINDFULNESS WHEN APPLIED TO TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Picture it. Taking a barefoot walk through a lush, serene garden with a view overlooking the deep, blue sea; the delicate fragrance of aromatic flowers wafts through the warm breeze and a bevy of cicadas are singing their rhythmic, swaying

song. Your day's to-do list is blank—not a single quickly scribbled note to read, telephone number to dial, or address to be at. All you have to think about is being present. Present with your thoughts. Present with your body. Here. Now.

ALL YOU HAVE
TO THINK ABOUT IS
BEING PRESENT.

Ask anybody leading a fast-paced, over-caffeinated, anxiety-ridden, must-accomplish-now, 9-to-9 lifestyle, and their idea of paradise will probably sound something like the aforementioned description. Today, our overabundance of “modern conveniences” has conspired to make our lives so complicated that we can’t tell what truly living is any more. But beyond the conference calls, countless text messages and multitasking overdosing, we all recognise that we’re filled with suppressed desires and dreams of a “real” simple life that demands nothing more than our freedom. But the act of suppression and the constant inner struggle this creates within us can often take over our daily lives, pulling us even further away from the present and exhausting our energy. We know what we want: to truly be a part of the world we were created to be in, to take a moment to just be and allow our senses to savor the experience. The question is: how can that aspiration ever be anything but a beautiful, diverting daydream?

Wondering that is to overcome the biggest obstacle—the realisation that something needs to change. This change can begin “at home.” We can try to incorporate small alterations in our lives that help us become more focused and present. But sometimes, a drastic change is needed, one that

presses our reboot button and is strong enough to reposition our entire way of being. Sometimes...we just need a break.

Travel is ingrained in our DNA. Daily we travel through our thoughts, ideas, dreams, through the memories of everything we’ve lived through and the hopes of all we wish to accomplish in the future. But physical travel, getting from point A to point B, is what is often yearned for, the kind that involves expanding our physical sight, our thoughts, knowledge and experiences.

Thankfully, some have devoted their lives to delivering our yearnings on a silver platter... or rather, a mindful platter. Designers the world over constantly harness their creativity and distil it down to its most simplistic, and yet most impactful, essence in order to create covetable products and destinations that aim to revitalise and transform.

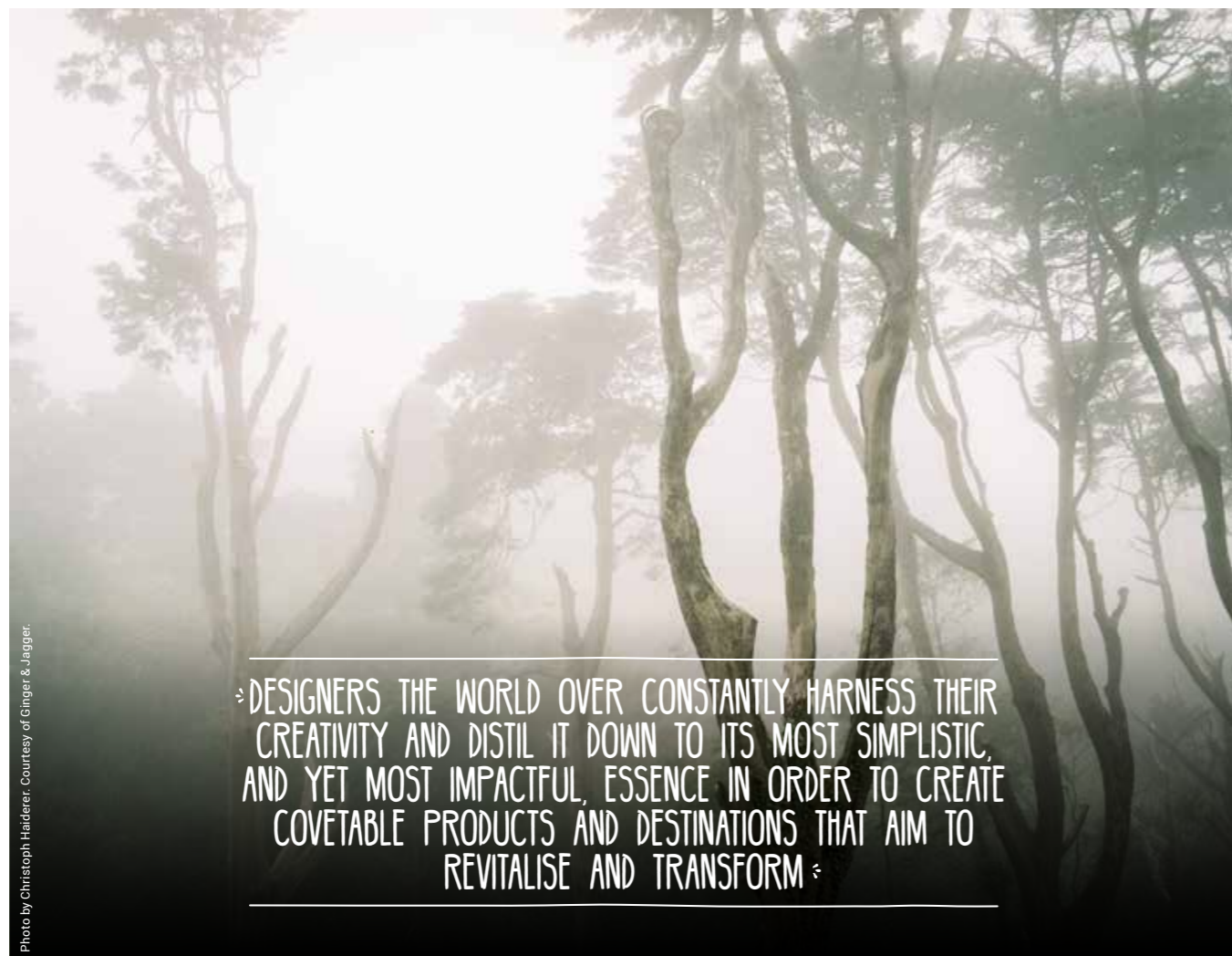
Fancy trappings aren’t needed because the personal thought, care and devotion the designers have put into the projects are all encompassing. After all, great design knows exactly what to leave out and is all about the beauty of essentials. These designers consider all the aspects of design as a single co-dependent system that looks to be natural, pure and spontaneous but is, ingeniously,



utterly orchestrated. Conservation and sustainable design are a seamless part of this package throughout all its facets. Portuguese design company, Ginger & Jagger, comes to mind as a personification of all these elements. Each of their handcrafted items requires the skills of a single artisan for weeks and is a brass casted masterpiece constructed not just with respect to nature but based on nature. Fittingly, Ginger & Jagger’s iconic items can be found gracing some of the finest destinations worldwide.



The Fig Tree Console is a tribute to Nature’s graciousness. The legs are made from fig tree branches in brass casting mold. The lacquered top has two drawers with purpleheart wood veneer lined with a subtle metal rim. Photo © Ginger & Jagger.



DESIGNERS THE WORLD OVER CONSTANTLY HARNESS THEIR CREATIVITY AND DISTIL IT DOWN TO ITS MOST SIMPLISTIC, AND YET MOST IMPACTFUL, ESSENCE IN ORDER TO CREATE COVETABLE PRODUCTS AND DESTINATIONS THAT AIM TO REVITALISE AND TRANSFORM.

Photo by Christoph Haiderer. Courtesy of Ginger & Jagger.

PROTECT YOUR CLIENTS PROTECT YOUR BRAND



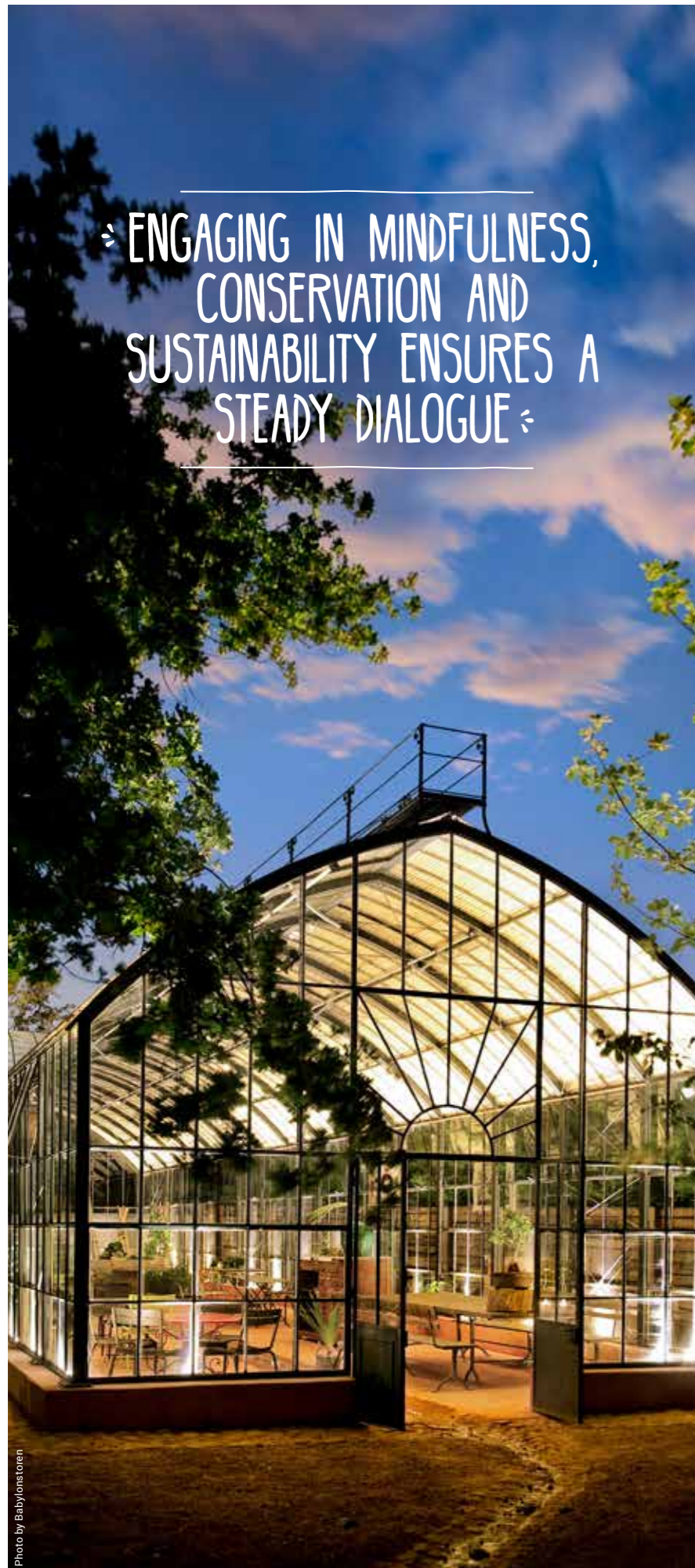
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ENGAGING IN MINDFULNESS,
CONSERVATION AND
SUSTAINABILITY ENSURES A
STEADY DIALOGUE

In travel, engaging in mindfulness, conservation and sustainability ensures a steady dialogue—from the original design inspiration of the destination, to the interaction of all its construction elements, and then upon its completion to the interaction its guests have with the environment as well as with each other. It is a constant evolution. In fact, these talented designers keep in mind that their work will affect a guest for much longer than that guest's actual physical stay in a place. What each guest "takes away" from their travel is often much more than what they have the time to physically experience during their stay.

All that being said, the common element that is present in all mindful designs is basic: nature and the encouragement of guest's communion with nature. Aja Malibu is one such place that envelops its guests in eco-friendly sustainability and affords them a balanced experience of mind, body and soul, which is more than able to live up to the beauty of its designed surroundings. Across the globe, Babylonstoren in South Africa's Cape Winelands is another covetable destination that comes to mind. Their guests experience an "authentic" version of a working farm's country getaway reality which—although commonplace 320 years ago when it was established—is now a dream many yearn to experience.

Encouraging guests to literally touch nature through gardening and cooking what they harvest, inquisitively yet unobtrusively observing local animals, or simply sitting in the middle of a lush garden in Lotus Pose, is experiential travel at its best. It makes guests a part of the action and allows them to experience a unique sense of place promoting total peace and encouraging them to "let go" of all baggage, distresses and limitations that are weighing them down and causing them to compromise. It puts life into perspective.

Therefore, mindful design is much more than merely the act of designing a physical location that renews visitor's minds and bodies. Rather, it is paying attention and understanding what people's latent needs are and then the emphatic attempt to meet those needs in the most simple, pure and relevant way possible. After all, that serene, seaside garden daydream is even sweeter when one knows that it can be made a reality, if only for a long weekend escape.

Costas Voyatzis is the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Yatzer, a global online destination for fine and applied arts.

Photo by Babylonstoren



CHANGE WORLDS:
DESIGN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



OUR SHORTLIST FOR THE PURE AWARD FOR MINDFUL DESIGN ALL REFLECT THIS EMPHASIS ON DESIGN THAT MAKES US FEEL BETTER IN ADDITION TO LOOKING GOOD...

ANNANDALE



New build villa Seascape was built and decorated with locally sourced materials and capitalises on outstanding views of the bay.

ELEWANA COLLECTION



Loisaba Tented Camp was created to maximise the view of the Laikipia landscape after a fire destroyed the previous Loisaba Lodge.

HOMOKI LODGE



Homoki Yurts started from scratch and was completely built by locals, taking luxury glamping to the next level to mediate mindful interaction.

SUBLIME COMPORTA



This extension was designed to fit in with Comporta, bring guests more privacy and increase the intimacy of the hotel.

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INTO THE UNKNOWN

WORDS BY OLIVIA SQUIRE

UNEXPECTED, UNCONVENTIONAL AND UNFAMILIAR: BEYOND LUXURY MEDIA'S FOUNDER & CEO, SERGE DIVE, ON WHY HE'S BETTING ON THE 'UN-CONFERENCE' BEING THE FORMAT OF THE FUTURE

What does it take to be successful in the modern world?

It might be the subject of a million Google searches and clickbait articles – but according to Serge Dive, Beyond Luxury Media's Founder and CEO, the secret to doing good business today could mean climbing a glacier, dressing up as a lion or staging a festival on top of a swimming pool (all things he has done in the last year in the name of 'non-linear' networking).



On stage at STREAM 2016

The rationale behind these actions (or perhaps the genius behind the insanity) is rooted in the fact that according to Dive, the world has changed dramatically in the last decade – and as a result, so has the way we do business. "From the mid-fifties to the 2000s, the only media was television and print advertising, so only the big boys could afford to compete. It created a world that was extremely corporate, monochrome and based on economies of scale," Dive explains. "I think the internet has made everything explode and has rehumanised the relationship between people."

He continues, "The digitisation of the world has created a premium on face-to-face. The more communication is digitised via social media, email and so on, the more we are rediscovering the ancestral quality of trust. Trust is what allows you to take risks, and trust is what allows you to create long-term partnerships." In other words, being a leader in the 21st century means acting like "a small shopkeeper, but in a global village."

Modern alienation, a longing for personal connection and the surfacing of a multitude of conflicting voices are all old news: cornerstones of our contemporary crises. What isn't, however, is how Dive is using these shifts to turn the traditional conference model upside down.

Anyone who's been watching Beyond Luxury Media's events over the past few months may have noticed that something's afoot. Something of a decidedly unconventional, unexpected nature. Something that goes by the name of 'un-conference'.

Recent forays into the format have included PURE Pursuits, an intrepid trek across Iceland with a select group of industry leaders; the Conservation Lab, a forum to unite the worlds of travel and conservation; and the revamped Ministry of Ideas, sister show LE's annual meeting of minds. Whilst their size, audience and subject matter might be different, their common thread is the handing over of control to the participants, doing away with the 'sage on a stage' model in favour of crowd-sourced innovation that unfolds like a conversation: spontaneous, unpredictable and collaborative.

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY IN THE LAST DECADE – AND AS A RESULT, SO HAS THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS.



Debates underway at the Conservation Lab 2016



On stage at The Ministry of Ideas 2016



Networking PURE Pursuits style



Peninsula Villa

Laucala Island is a Fijian archipelago in the South Pacific, accessible only by its own airport. This private island paradise boasts 25 luxurious villas, each individually designed with an eye to traditional Fijian style and all with private pools, which are set amidst the swaying palms of coconut plantations, powdery white sand beaches, turquoise lagoons, lush green mountains and breathtaking natural beauty.

True luxury comes in the complete privacy of the villas, and in the freedom to enjoy watersports, golf on the island's 18-hole, 72-par championship course, horseback riding, spa or simply doing nothing.

Laucala Island features five exclusive restaurants and bars, overseen by international chefs, and complemented by an impressive cellar of fine wines.

Laucala Island



"...Laucala is just the ticket for a true break from reality" (Vogue)

LI
THE LEADING HOTELS
OF THE WORLD

So why the switch?

After years of organising traditional conferences, Dive came to the conclusion that it was time to adapt to "a world where the concept of 'radical transparency' – whereby everything becomes ubiquitous via the internet – is prevalent. By the time professional speakers have observed a phenomenon, prepared a presentation and got on stage, they've missed the moment". Since social media arrived on the market about a decade ago, we've realised that "we can learn as much (or more) from each other than from so-called consultants who don't live and breathe our industry – there is great value and talent in the people around us". He compares this process to good humour – "when the recipient of the joke gets it at exactly the same moment as the person who is making it. Good insight is the same thing" – and improvisational theatre – "You see art being realised in front of your eyes, not a practiced display. It should help you see life through a different prism".

Quoting consumer psychologist Adam Ferrier, Dive remarks, "I like the idea of 'separating the visionaries from the vision-impaired'. The 21st century is about collaboration, immersion and non-linear thinking, and the un-conference wholly embraces this new mode of communication. This will totally terrify most corporate companies, which means that the smaller people who dare to be creative and take risks will be the great winners of the next century of business".

Indeed, it's his firm belief that businesspeople are the new rockstars (this may go some way to explaining his frequent habit of accidentally coming into the office dressed like Steve Jobs). "25 years ago, business was uncool – but today, it's very cool. The people who are really changing the world – the Elon Musks and Mark Zuckerbergs – have become our superstars," he says.

WE CAN LEARN AS MUCH (OR MORE) FROM EACH OTHER THAN FROM SO-CALLED CONSULTANTS WHO DON'T LIVE AND BREATHE OUR INDUSTRY – THERE IS GREAT VALUE AND TALENT IN THE PEOPLE AROUND US

Inspired by this insight and the self-confessed "best conference I ever went to" many years ago – when he skipped out on the actual conference bit to shoot the breeze with his new-found friends on a cruise through the Bahamas – Dive set about transforming Beyond Luxury's conferences into collaborative 'un-conferences' where the audience are the stars (most recently with the expansion of MATTER into a full day of talks, workshops and, crucially, free-form discussions.

He admits that the format might not be for everyone, but those prepared to be open and generous will benefit hugely. "What you put in, you'll get out – if you're passive, you'll never process your thoughts and you'll never have insight. But the more you engage and generate content, the more you'll discover for yourself. We want smart people who can leave their ego at home and be inquisitive, creative and totally collaborative. I'd say two-thirds of participants will get something out of it – what that is, is down to them".

As for what's next in this experimental evolution, Dive has grand plans. "Our eventual goal is to launch the ultimate creative event for the global high-end travel market," he divulges. "This will be a 500-person un-conference lasting three days, with the aim of fostering more creativity and collaboration between its leaders. It will focus on provoking in-depth conversations about the future of travel, the impact of the digital world, and travel on a broader scale – I'll even say hospitality on a broader scale." With this revelation in mind, only one question remains –

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE STAGE?



Photo by Philippe Stenier

YOUR UN-CONFERENCE NEEDS YOU!

THE PURE CONFERENCE HAS UNDERGONE AN EXCITING TRANSFORMATION AND EMERGED AS AN UN-CONFERENCE GOING BY THE NAME OF 'MATTER'. FIND OUT HOW IT WORKS AND WHY YOUR PARTICIPATION IS CRUCIAL...

Tired of attending conferences and silently listening to your third lecture on connecting with the millennial market this year, wondering when the bar will be opening? Us too...

That's why for 2016, the PURE Conference is no more. Instead, we're replacing it PURE's first collaborative 'un-conference', MATTER brought to you by Tourism Australia, where your contribution really does matter: because you ARE the content.

According to Serge Dive, Beyond Luxury Media's Founder & CEO, we consistently underestimate the talent of those around us, preferring to place our trust in the outdated idea of the 'sage on a stage'. However with the advent of social media and the shared economy, we think it's time

to inject a little energy into this faded formula by putting our community centre stage.

PURE is a festival for experiential travel's mavericks, so for MATTER we've designed several elements to provoke creative collisions, unearth real insight and get the quality conversations rolling right away. And in the spirit of choosing your own adventure, PUREists will be free to decide which elements and which talks they want to attend – so if you're pitching an idea, make sure it's interesting enough to grab their attention!

MATTER runs from 9am until 4pm on Monday 12 September at the Palais des Congrès, and is brought to you by Tourism Australia, who comment: "Tourism

Australia is excited to bring the PURE community MATTER 2016. In the same way that the un-conference format is disrupting expectations, we are disrupting people's perceptions of Australia's tourism offering when we give visitors first-hand experience of our world-class tourism experiences, such as our stunning aquatic and coastal attributes. We look forward to hearing other innovative ideas being pioneered by the experiential travel industry."

HERE'S WHAT IT ALL MEANS AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED...

Deciding which discussion to join at the Conservation Lab 2016



Photo by Giada Peri



Attendees at the Ministry of Ideas 2016

Photo by Fernanda Navill

PURE Event Manager Emma Squire and CEO Serge Dive at PURE Pursuits 2016



Photo by Philippe Stenier

YOUR GUIDE TO MATTER 2016

WHAT IS IT?

PURE's transformation of the Conference into an all-day un-conference; a creative forum focused on collaboration and the exchange of ideas with the power to Change Worlds. There are four elements to explore: SPARK, LEARN, DISCUSS and ACHIEVE.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

MATTER is open to all PURE delegates. Just arrive at the Palais des Congrès at 9am on Monday 12 September, registered and ready to contribute your best thinking to one of the sessions below.

SPARK

WHAT IS IT?

An opportunity for the most innovative among you to get on the main stage and tell the PURE community how Small Promises Change Worlds. The catch? Speakers have just three minutes 45 seconds to impress, with timed slides ready to move on even if they don't.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

The most innovative and interesting ideas will have been pre-selected in advance after applying through the PURE website. If you missed out this time, look out for next year's call for entries in 2017!

LEARN

WHAT IS IT?

Forty-minute talks from individuals within the PURE ecosystem, containing insights that look at the experiential industry from a different perspective.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

The talks will run concurrently in each of our Australia-titled rooms to an audience of 100 people – simply turn up, pull up a seat and learn something that might just transform your business.

DISCUSS

WHAT IS IT?

Got a burning idea around the theme of 'overcoming the challenges of experiential travel'? This is your chance to share it with the world by leading an informal discussion with a group of up to 40 PUREists. The instigator

will spend five minutes introducing their topic before handing over to the crowd to challenge, question and deliberate further. The aim is to inspire collaboration rather than find a concrete solution (although if you manage that too, good work!).

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Start thinking about your angle now and on the morning of 12 September, there will be a board where you can write the name of your conversation. Be creative – PUREists will choose where they want to go based on how you sell it!

ACHIEVE

WHAT IS IT?

Intimate 90-minute workshops hosted by individuals outside of the PURE community who will challenge you to make changes to your business – before showing you how these can be implemented.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Each workshop operates on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited to 10 people, so make sure to turn up on time and ready to participate – no spectators allowed!

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Mongolia



ARCADIAN AMBITION

WORDS BY STANLEY STEWART

STANLEY STEWART TRAVERSES MONGOLIA IN SEARCH OF ITS NOMADIC SOUL -
BUT DISCOVERS A JOURNEY OF A DIFFERENT KIND

When I first saw Mongolia from the windows of the Trans-Siberian Express, I felt I had been waiting for it, not for the five days it had taken rattling across the train lines of an apparently endless Russia, but for a lifetime. Between the claustrophobic forests of Siberia and the dense paddy fields of China, the steppes were a revelation.

From the train Mongolia looked like God's preliminary sketch for Earth, not so much

a landscape as the ingredients out of which landscapes are made – grass, rock, water, wind. The horizons, tipping away into grassy infinities, were as simple as drawn lines. The emptiness was thrilling. Mongolia made the sky, with its baroque clouds, seem crowded and fussy.

For miles, I saw no towns, no roads, no fences. Through the carriage window, I would glimpse clusters of tents, the round white tents of Central Asia, known in

Mongolia as gers, which seemed to sprout in these virginal grasslands as suddenly and mysteriously as mushrooms. One evening, towards dusk, I saw three horsemen. Silhouetted on a skyline, they seemed to gaze down at the train with disinterest, before wheeling their mounts and galloping away into their limitless world. For me, Mongolia was love at first sight, and glimpsing it from a train was never going to be enough.



FOR ME, MONGOLIA WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, AND GLIMPING IT FROM A TRAIN WAS NEVER GOING TO BE ENOUGH

It was some years before I got back to her. Other destinations intervened. But when I did finally return to Mongolia, it was to cross the country by horse, a thousand-mile journey from Bayan Olgii in the west to Dadal, the birthplace of Genghis Khan in the east. I travelled alone with only a translator as companion, using local guides and relays of local horses, like the messengers of the Great Khan eight centuries before at the height of the Mongol Empire.

The descendants of the Mongol Hordes – a people who had once been a byword for ferocious attack as they created an empire that stretched from the Pacific to the Mediterranean – proved to be shy, gentle, hospitable shepherds. From one end of Mongolia to the other I was welcomed, warmed, and fed by complete strangers who saw nothing remarkable in their own generosity.

It was the best of journeys. On those first days, riding across thyme-scented pastures, I realised this was the kind of journey that I had dreamt about as a child – a journey by horse, in an unfettered world of nomads and tents and vast spaces. It carried the sweet illusion of freedom. This was a landscape whose open spaces were wedded to movement, to migration. It felt restless and marvellous. I loved the idea that when the nomads struck their tents and gathered their flocks, there was nothing to record their passage bar the pale circles on the grass where their gers had stood, and which in a month would have vanished.

But Mongolia taught me more complex truths. The romance of movement, the idea of unfettered journeys, was my own. I remember a young man in the central steppes asking why I had come to Mongolia. I tried to explain my pleasure in the landscape, the joy of travelling. I said that I was fascinated by nomadic life.

"What is interesting about nomads?" he asked. His questions were polite but pointed. I replied that I enjoyed their preference for fresh geography over stale history, that lives lived as a series of journeys was exciting to anyone who was a traveller.

"But the movement," the young man said, "it is only physical." He looked towards a bare slope where sheep were grazing. "Nothing changes here."

He was right, of course. It is the irony of nomads, people whose lives are wedded to movement, that their world is so static. There is a society that lacks diversity and ferment. They adhere to a way of life that has hardly changed in a millennia or more. The restless notions of change and rebellion, the shifting perspectives so central to the creative energies of cities, were absent here.



Riding between Chulutt and Tsetserleg, I fell in with an elderly gentleman. His name was Balginnyam, and he was over seventy years of age. With his ruddy face and his bowlegged gait and his shy country accent, he reminded me of my own Irish uncles. His hat seemed to belong to another era. It was a battered trilby with an upturned brim as if he hoped to catch the rain. He had eyes the colour of tea, pale tufts of hair on his upper cheeks, and traditional Mongolian boots with curved elfin toes.

By late afternoon we had reached a long autumnal valley where a small group of gers trailed long vertical lines of smoke into an ash-coloured sky. We camped next to a narrow stream beneath a slope of pine trees, made a fire and cooked a meal of mutton. From the deepening gloom of the woods above us tumbled the hollow notes of cuckoos.

Over dinner Balginnyam talked gently about the infirmities of age, his weakening eyesight, his stiff knees, his cold feet at night. They were not complaints, merely observations. "I am loosening my hold on the world" he said, smiling slightly and unclenching his hand in a gesture of release. "I do not worry about dying," he said. "My grandchildren are my eternity."

Night was falling and the features of the old man's face retreated in the firelight. In the thickening dark he looked insubstantial, almost spectral. The cuckoos in the woods had been succeeded by owls hooting, like watchmen marking the passage of the night.

"There is a liberation in age," he said. "I look at the world as if I am no longer a part of it. I have become a spectator." He looked at me across the fire. His eyes were pools of shadow. "Like you," he said.

"Like me?" I said.

"You are the badachir," the old man said, using a word that meant a lone itinerant. "You are a wanderer. You are searching for things. That's why you have come to Mongolia. To be a wanderer, an outsider, in your own country is difficult. To be a wanderer in someone else's land is more comfortable."

And of course he was right. It was the final irony of Mongolia. I had been lulled by the romance of a fluid Arcadia located among migrating herdsmen, of a freewheeling nomadic consciousness, unfettered by walls and the unyielding demands of the soil. But these ideals belonged not to Mongolia but to my own aspirations. Camped in this high valley of tents and horses, the old man could see that, whatever I had been looking for in Mongolia, was really only a reflection of my own desires, my own dreams.

In five months crossing the steppes by horse, I learnt a great deal about Mongolia. But the real revelations of the journey – as about any journey – were about myself.

☺ I HAD BEEN LULLED BY THE ROMANCE OF A FLUID ARCADIA LOCATED AMONG MIGRATING HERDSMEN, OF A FREEWHEELING NOMADIC CONSCIOUSNESS, UNFETTERED BY WALLS AND THE UNYIELDING DEMANDS OF THE SOIL ☺

Stanley Stewart is the author of three highly acclaimed travel books and several hundred articles based on journeys across five continents. As well as being a contributing editor of Condé Nast Traveller, he writes for The Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Independent and The Times in the UK; National Geographic Traveler in the US; The Sunday Times in South Africa; and The Australian.

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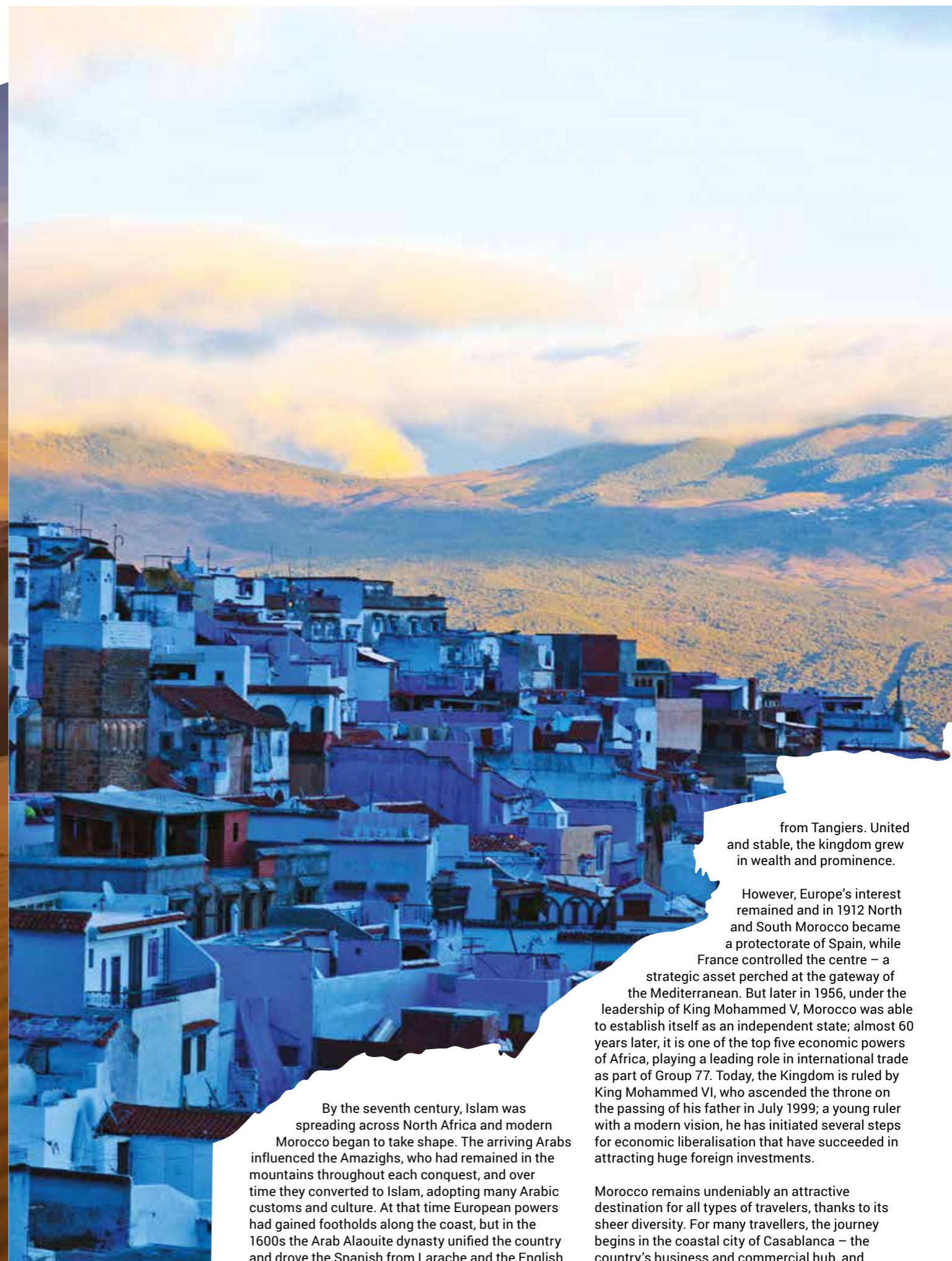
A COUNTRY OF CONTRASTS

BEYOND BEING PURE'S SPIRITUAL HOME, MOROCCO IS A COUNTRY RICH WITH HISTORY, CULTURE AND POSSIBILITIES...

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 travelers, 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 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 war time 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 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.

As a whole, Morocco is a traveller's 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

⋮ THAT IT HAS SURVIVED
UNTIL OUR OWN TIMES,
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TO ASTONISH ⋮

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...

HOW TO FIGHT ABOVE YOUR WEIGHT

WORDS BY COLIN NAGY

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR MARKETING SMALLER LUXURY AND EXPERIENCE-BASED BRANDS



The mass proliferation of media channels and platforms has caused a lot of distraction and confusion for marketers.

But, at the same time, more choice and more personalisation has allowed smaller, focused businesses – particularly in the travel and hospitality realms – the ability to fight well above their weight in terms of articulating their message, value, and attracting an audience. But you have to approach things in a smart, balanced way.

HERE ARE A FEW KEY TIPS TO MAXIMISE YOUR RETURN:

1. BE A PLATFORM THINKER

Sometimes it's important to place yourself where the audience is, rather than asking them (or paying for traffic) for the audience to reach you.

One great example is the Drift in Cabo San Lucas. The small hotel occupies an

interesting space between Airbnb and a boutique. It has amazingly-designed rooms, but minimal fuss and frills for those that want to spend their days in the surf and not on the property. The owner, Stu Waddell, ditched a complicated reservation back-end system for Airbnb. The owner doesn't need to handle the pain of reservations, payments, cancellations, etc. Also, it is built in sales and marketing for the property. By placing himself on a platform where people are already ravenously looking for a cool place to stay,

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Waddell eliminated the need to play the old-school SEO game, and pay for qualified traffic to convert. He simply operated as a platform-based thinker and is reaping the awards.

As more and more audiences migrate and spend time on platforms — think Airbnb or Facebook or other communities — going to where your audiences are rather than hoping they visit a website is an important insight.

2. DON'T IGNORE THE TOP OF THE MARKETING FUNNEL

Many businesses are very much focused on conversion and the lower parts of the funnel. But don't ignore mediums that are amazing for efficient brand building, such as Instagram. For travel and luxury, hiring a photographer that understands the nuances of the medium, as well as aggregating photos from people who have experienced your offering with simple hashtags, can be an important part of building perception and offering discovery without spending a lot of money. Instagram can be powerful for visually communicating your brand. Simply look at some of your favorite properties on their search functionality to see why.

3. ADD DEPTH AND TEXTURE THROUGH LONG-FORM WRITING

True, we do live in a highly visual world and that is incredibly important. But there's new places that celebrate and elevate longer form, smart writing. Medium.com is a perfect example. Bigger brands have experimented on the platform, notably Marriott underwriting travel reportage in key markets, but there's a huge opportunity to do some old school travel writing and present it in a new context. Think of how many great stories that have come out of Abercrombie and Kent expeditions that should live on in perpetuity on the web from a great writer's pen. For people doing serious research on where they are going to stay, or what operator to go with, this detail from previous trips can be much more valuable than boilerplate content on a central website. Let experiences tell the story.

4. DON'T IGNORE THE OLD SCHOOL

Facebook is a moving target. Many brands have rushed to have presences on there, but the fact is it is a "borrowed" property. They can change the rules on how your posts show up, or what you need to spend to reach an audience. And it can be very unpredictable. First, it was amass likes as much as possible. Then, it was you need to spend to reach this audience. Then, it was tweaks to the algorithm to show what actually appeared in the newsfeed. This

can be difficult for brands with limited marketing budgets. Sometimes it is worth doubling down on channels you can control. For example, email marketing and old-school CRM can still be very effective if written and approached with the right nuance and care. And no one can take that audience away from you once you've built it over time.

5. TRANSPARENCY IS KEY

The internet has made everything much more transparent. You can't get away with perfectly crafted photos that don't tell the entire tale. Taking a more authentic approach to your photos, elevating great reviews and feedback from your audience, and generally keeping a very good eye on online comments is vitally important. People aren't just looking at your website; they are trawling reviews, looking under the figurative rocks and getting really deep in terms of sussing out what an experience will be like. Thus, it is vital to understand all of these touch points and figure out how to make them work for you.

Colin Nagy is a New York-based communicator, public speaker and customer experience columnist. A regular columnist for Skift, The Guardian and Quartz, he has also contributed opinion pieces for publications including AdAge, AdWeek, PSFK and Forbes.



CHANGE WORLDS: MARKETING

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OUR SHORTLIST FOR THE PURE AWARD FOR INNOVATIVE AND ENGAGING MARKETING ARE ALL DOING THEIR BIT TO PROMOTE THEIR PRODUCTS IMAGINATIVELY TO THE WORLD...

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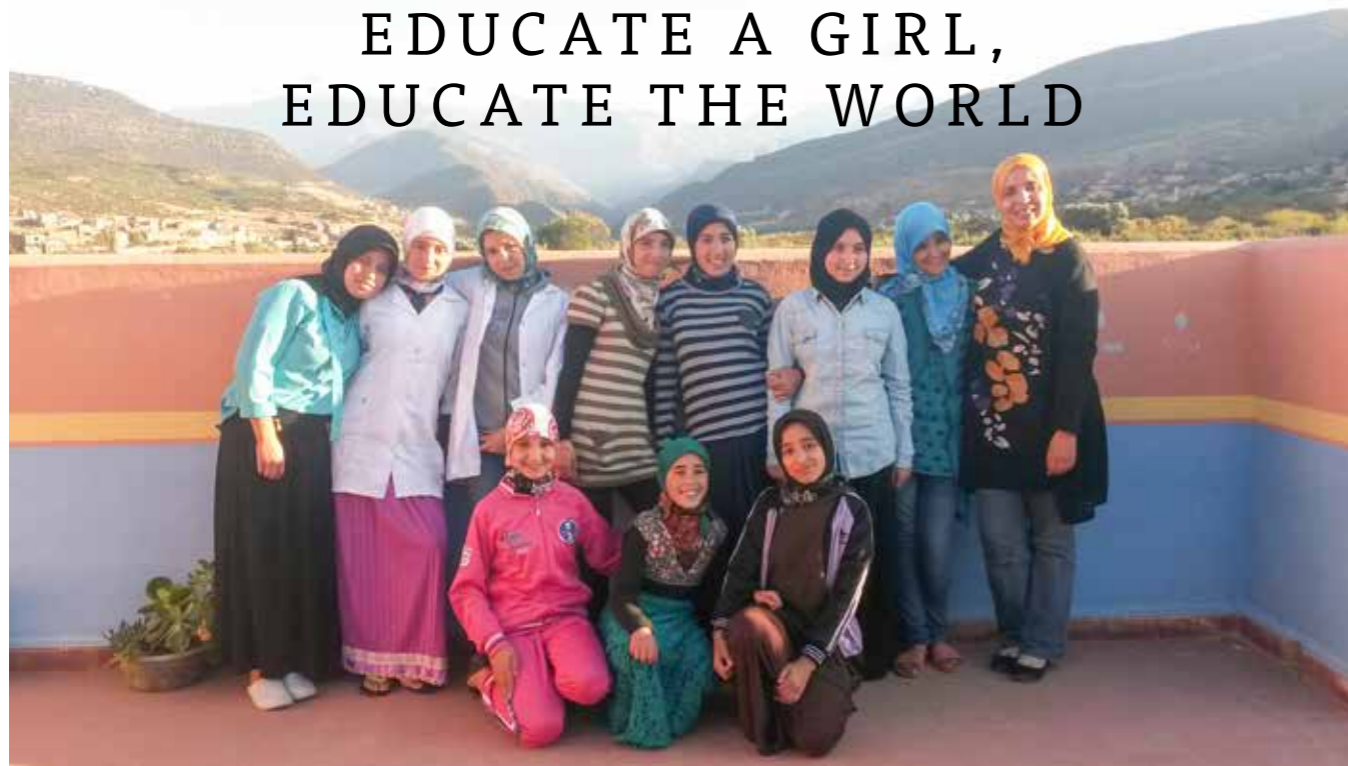
GoPro were invited to document a live rhino relocation with the Rhinos Without Borders team, resulting in 1.6m views and assisting future fundraising.

TROPICSURF



A surfing competition saw six former world champions get pampered at Four Seasons Resort Maldives whilst competing for \$25k, reaching over 3m viewers.

EDUCATE A GIRL, EDUCATE THE WORLD



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATIE PALMER

KATIE PALMER DISCOVERS THE TRUE VALUE OF EDUCATION AT EFA'S BOARDING HOUSE IN ASNI

No matter where or under what circumstances they're brought up, it seems bunk beds hold the same allure for children all over the world. And the girls at the Education For All boarding house in Asni don't mess around with your standard dual-level sleeping quarters; oh no, we're talking three-tier.

Apparently the pecking order is arranged by age, with the youngest housemates (from 11 years old) occupying the lower bunks, while the older girls (anywhere up to the age of 16) earn the right to the elevated status, both literally and figuratively speaking, that the higher beds afford.

But from wherever you're perched, you'd never guess this was a room shared by six excitable young girls – the beds are so immaculately made and the space is entirely devoid of clutter, with each girl's meagre belongings stowed neatly away in a cupboard no bigger than a school locker. The reason they're so tidy, explains House Mother Latifa, is that they're used to communal living back in the rural villages they call home.

So why are they here, miles from their families? Hailing from all over the Atlas Mountains, these girls are the lucky few. Schools in the sticks cater only for primary education, and while boys are free to travel further afield to continue with secondary learning, cultural and financial barriers mean it's not so easy if you happen to be born to the fairer sex.

LEARNING, CULTURAL AND FINANCIAL BARRIERS MEAN IT'S NOT SO EASY IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE BORN TO THE FAIRER SEX

Enter Education For All, which facilitates access to education for girls by providing them with a free, safe place to live near to the colleges they attend. Opened in 2007, this house in Asni was EFA's first full-scale project; but now, less than ten years later, the charity funds five boarding houses and has 164 schoolgirls in its care, along with another 18 who have smashed the odds by making it to university.

Having originally relied on Berber ambassadors to build trust among locals unhappy at the thought of letting their daughters out of sight, the houses are now wildly oversubscribed, "which itself is evidence that the project is working and is valued by the local community", says committee member and fundraiser Mike McHugo.

But with success comes responsibility, and while EFA has the support of several passionate individuals, schools and major donors – along with the profits from the Marrakech Atlas Étape cycling event, which the charity organises – Mike admits he loses sleep thinking about what could happen if the money runs out. Although the only administrative expenses are modest salaries for a cook and house mother in each of the houses, accommodating each girl costs around €1,000 a year – so the annual bill is certainly headache-worthy.



Members of the press visit the Education For All house in Asni

But Mike is not to be deterred. In fact, I get the feeling that he's trapped in a self-inflicted cycle of guilt, forever focussing on the girls that EFA has not yet reached, rather than the hundreds of lives they've positively impacted – including not only the girls they've given the opportunity of an education, but also their families and communities back home. "Our vision is to give as many girls as possible in rural Morocco the opportunity of a full secondary education and to continue running and building houses where they are needed."

"We believe that changing the world starts with educating girls and that by educating girls you educate a whole community. Not only is having an education a basic human right, but it also supports the flourishing of all of society – literate mothers can make better decisions about their health and the health of their families; and national economies thrive when women are contributing their skills to employment."

This fact is not lost on the girls I meet, who ignite in me feelings of pride and female solidarity by daring to dream big, but also a glimmer of shame that I've taken my own education for granted. Twelve-year-old Nora speaks four languages and wants to be a geography teacher; while Fatima, 16, says, "Without higher education, all there would be for me is marriage and children. I want to become a doctor so I can improve people's health and their lives."



As I leave the girls to their homework – which they apparently do without so much as a word of persuasion from Latifa – it occurs to me that while an appreciation of bunk beds might be shared by children everywhere, an appreciation of education certainly isn't. I begin to vow that I'll one day bring my own children back to Asni to make this point to them; but then I realise that if Mike has anything to do with it, education will be a given for all children in Morocco by then. Well, here's hoping.

THANK YOU to all those PUREists who donated to Education For All via the 2016 booking form – keep an eye on JOURNAL, the PURE blog, to hear how much we raised and what it means for the girls very soon. And if you'd still like to help, visit efamorocco.org, or visit Mike himself on the Kasbah du Toubkal/Mountain Voyage Morocco stand (K02), to find out more.

Katie Palmer is Senior Creative Executive for Beyond Luxury Media Ltd.



1 Joe and Gregg from AFAR; freelance writer Chris Caldicott; BLM Marketing Director CJ Holden; Elle Travel Editor Susan Ward Davies; EFA Fundraiser Mike McHugo; and Sara Magro from I Sole 24 Ore visit the Education For All house in Asni. 2 The girls who live at the house in Asni are between 11 and 16. 3 Members of the EFA Committee work on an entirely voluntary basis. 4 The cupboards where the girls keep all their belongings. 5 Strike a pose! 6 The girls never need encouraging to do their homework.



WORLD CHANGE STARTS WITH EDUCATION

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HOW TO GET YOUR STORY TOLD

WORDS BY KATIE PALMER // PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM SNELL

TIPS FROM THE WORLD'S TOP TRAVEL EDITORS

It's no secret that each year PURE hosts some of the world's most renowned travel press – in fact, you may well have seen them in meetings or around the show floor. But when they're not scouting out experiential travel's hidden gems and upcoming destinations, we put them to a different kind of work...

When it comes to press coverage, there's one question on every supplier and Private Travel Designer's lips: How, oh how, do you catch the attention of a great journalist... and get them to write about your offering?

To find the answer, naturally, we locked ten globally renowned travel editors in a room and recorded their conversation... This is what we learned.



TELL A STORY

The value of experiential travel lies in its ability to evoke emotion and create connections, so when you're talking to press or PRs make sure your pitch has a human element. A press release full of room measurements or details on the fitting in the bathroom isn't interesting – the way to catch a journalist's attention is to give them a great story that's unique to your product, your locality, or your people. Who started the business? What was their inspiration? Who is the most interesting person on your staff and why? What's the nicest thing a guest has ever said to you?

Before hitting send, ask yourself honestly: would you want to read this story about another brand? It's all too easy to get caught up and overexcited about a project that you've been living and breathing, but fail to realise that not everyone shares your enthusiasm.

THE ONES THAT I LOVE ARE THE ONES THAT LOOK AT THEIR PITCHES WITH THE LENS OF STORY, AS OPPOSED TO, 'LET ME TELL YOU HOW MANY ROOMS WE HAVE AND ALL ABOUT OUR MENU'

- Yaran Noti -

AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU'VE GOT TO REMEMBER WHO YOUR READERS ARE. YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW YOUR READERS AND REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PULL THE WOOL OVER THEIR EYES. THEY'RE WELL-TRAVELLED, THEY'RE SOPHISTICATED, THEY'RE INTELLIGENT

- Farhad Heydari -

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Don't send the same press release to all the press contacts you have – while this might seem like a time-saver, it's the fastest way to be marked as 'junk'. Understand that different newspapers and magazines have different target audiences (and different brands to uphold), so you should tailor the angle or details of your story to appeal to individual publications.

It sounds obvious, but the best way to understand a publication... is to read it! Journalists get hundreds of press releases every day, so one way to make your pitch stand out is to let them know you're familiar not only with their newspaper, magazine, website (whatever it may be), but also with their work. Taking interest in someone is a great basis for forming a relationship.

PAY ATTENTION TO TRENDS

Just because you work in the travel industry, that doesn't mean you automatically know what's going on in it. Keep track of what your competitors are doing and stay in the loop with industry news and trends by regularly reading both trade and consumer publications. The more context you have, the better you'll be able to think of creative new angles to pitch to journalists – for example, you might be able to offer an interesting twist on an emerging trend, which makes your product cover-page gold dust!

PEOPLE WOULD COME TO ME WITH FULLY FLEDGED STORIES - NOT JUST ABOUT THEIR CLIENT, BUT ABOUT TRENDS EMERGING SURROUNDING THEIR CLIENT, ABOUT NEW AREAS... THEY PUT THE THOUGHT IN, THEY UNDERSTOOD THE BRAND, THEY KNEW WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR, AND THEY REALLY, REALLY HELPED ME OUT

- Flora Stubbs -

KEEP IT PERSONAL

Remember that getting to know your industry peers on a personal level is the best way to form successful, long-term business relationships – and that includes journalists. Don't just anonymously fire press releases at someone; take the time to introduce yourself – heck, even go for a coffee. Building rapport will not only encourage them to take more notice of the stories you send them; it also means you'll be at the forefront of their mind when they're brainstorming their own ideas (plus, it makes work just that bit more fun!).

So far we've talked mainly about in-house writers, but it's worth bearing freelance journalists in mind, too – not least because they can put your story in several different publications. Many freelancers will have a reputation for writing about a specific region or niche of travel, and they all have their own style of reporting. Read around and find a couple of names whose ethos appears to be in line with that of your brand... Then introduce yourself.

But beware: even if you know a journalist (or anyone else, for that matter) personally, you should still respect their time – being friendly isn't a free pass to pester them daily. Sure, check in every now and again, but don't be the overly keen friend who no one wants to pick up the phone to.

⇒ WE WRITE ABOUT THINGS THAT WE CELEBRATE AND LOVE ⇐

- Yaran Noti -

WRITE A GOOD SUBJECT LINE

Even if a journalist isn't instantly interested in your story, that doesn't mean it won't be of relevance in the future – when they're writing a feature on your particular region or niche of travel, for example. So make it easy for them to search for your press release in their inbox: give your email a relevant subject line and pack it full of key words (without sounding like a robot, of course!).

⇒ MY INBOX IS JUST A GIGANTIC ARCHIVE OF PITCHES. I GET IN SITUATIONS WHERE I LITERALLY SEARCH MY INBOX FOR 'PATAGONIA' ⇐

- Darrell Hartman -

KEEP IT AUTHENTIC

A great way to get a journalist invested in your product is by inviting them to experience it for themselves. But steer clear of inviting multiple press members on the same trip – their aim is to write original content, so you're not helping anyone by offering them all the same experience at the same time. You should

also be aware that many journalists and publications are mistrusting of so-called press trips because they're wary of being given the 'hard sell'; they also want to be able to authentically report on the experience as the guest would have it, rather than a contrived version for press eyes only.

Instead, personalise itineraries for each individual journalist based on the publication they're writing for, their personal and professional interests, and the particular story they're writing (which you may even have pitched to them in the first place). And don't invite more than one journalist to stay at the same time – they want to at least feel as though they've got the scoop, which they won't if they spy the competition at dinner!

⇒ OUR READERS ARE VERY INTERESTED IN AUTHENTICITY, AND AUTHENTICITY IS SOMETHING THAT YOU JUST REFRAME AND SORT OF PUT OUT THERE ⇐

- Yaran Noti -

EXPERIENCE IT FOR YOURSELF

Offering journalists the opportunity to experience your product for themselves might seem obvious, but have you experienced it? Before you start pitching your story far and wide, make sure it's authentic – real excitement and enthusiasm is infectious, but second-hand anecdotes are immediately obvious and far less appealing. Looks like you'll have to endure that massage/tasting menu/scenic trek after all... It's a hard life working in travel.

⇒ MY FIRST QUESTION TO A PR IS, 'HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?' ⇐

- Rebecca Misner -

The Panel



- Darrell Hartman -
Freelance Writer



- Farhad Heydari -
International Managing Editor for American Express magazines, Centurion and Departures



- Flora Stubbs -
Articles Editor at Travel+Leisure



- Graham Boynton -
Freelance Journalist



- Hanya Yanagihara -
Deputy Editor at T Magazine, The New York Times



- Jen Flowers -
Deputy Editor for AFAR



- Rebecca Misner -
Features Editor for Condé Nast Traveller



- Kevin Doyle -
Digital Editor for the Wall Street Journal



- Yaran Noti -
Deputy Editor at SAVEUR



- Maria Shollenbarger -
Travel Editor at How To Spend It, Financial Times



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WORDS BY KATIE PALMER // PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILIPPE STENIER

UNCOVERING EXPERIENTIAL EXPERTISE WITH THIS YEAR'S PURE AWARDS PANEL OF TRAVEL PRESS

The PURE Awards, brought to you by Tourism Australia, were created to recognise the most maverick, mindful and inspirational achievements being crafted by our community of experiential heroes. Across the globe, PUREists are not only responsible for creating and bringing travellers' attention to some of the most awe-inspiring and luxurious experiential escapes out there; they are also working hard with communities and for the

environment to ensure that each experience they bring to life truly Changes Worlds.

In recognition of this boundary-breaking approach, for 2016 we've pulled together a panel of individuals with the real expertise required to decide the shortlist. These travel journalists spend their lives scouring the planet to uncover incredible experiences that meet the expectations of their

discerning readers – so who better to apply these standards to the PURE Awards 2016?

The winners, of course, were down to you, with our community voting for their favourites (to be revealed at the official Awards Party on Tuesday 13 September at Sofitel Marrakech). Nonetheless, to discover exactly what it takes to impress some of the world's most sophisticated travellers, we caught up with this year's press panel...



CATHERINE FAIRWEATHER

Catherine Fairweather is the Travel Director of global fashion magazine Porter. She was previously Travel Editor at Harpers & Queen (later Bazaar), travelling the globe for 16 years in search of remote places beyond the reach of a mobile phone.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM THIS YEAR'S PURE AWARDS ENTRIES?

This year I am looking to hear about and be inspired by some of the 'small fry' who haven't been over-branded or over-hyped in the media or through PR. I also think it is important to recognise how some of the larger hotel groups and consortiums can contribute hugely to their own communities and to a guest's appreciation of the culture of a place.

WHICH CATEGORY ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT JUDGING?

How do these people keep afloat when countries implode politically and can we

at PURE help them? The Judges' Choice is therefore the section I am most excited about contributing to - people who haven't made it to PURE through lack of funds or lack of marketing know-how, but who we should all know about. I am also interested in programmes that contribute to experiential travel and individuals who contribute to transformative travel.

WHERE DO YOU THINK THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY COULD STILL DO BETTER?

I think in this industry there is a very real problem in the 'small fry' finding platforms to help market and sell their projects and products to a global audience.



JEN MURPHY

Jen Murphy is a freelance journalist specialising in adventure and active travel. She was the Deputy Editor of AFAR Magazine and the Travel Editor of Food & Wine Magazine and now writes across a number of publications including the Wall Street Journal, Departures, Outside Magazine and Men's Journal.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM THIS YEAR'S PURE AWARDS ENTRIES?

Fresh, original ideas that truly show the power of travel. I want to feel a sense of discovery and see how our nominees impact both the traveller and their local community.

WHICH CATEGORY ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT JUDGING?

Community Engagement. All too often community engagement feels as if it's been added to a trip itinerary just so that it can be checked off the list. I think we need more people pioneering real community engagement programmes so that they can be a model for the industry and also something travellers come to demand/expect.

WHERE DO YOU THINK THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY COULD STILL DO BETTER?

The experiential travel industry has come a long way but I still feel we underestimate travellers...particularly those in the luxury travel market. There is still the desire to sugar-coat everything and create a cocoon of perfection. It's the responsibility of the experiential travel industry to push travellers outside of their comfort zone in ways they might never have imagined possible. Let them see the real and the raw as well as the polished and pretty.



LET THEM SEE THE REAL AND THE RAW

- Jen Murphy -



LUCIA VAN DER POST

Lucia Van Der Post is the founding editor of the Financial Times' How To Spend It magazine and a Times columnist.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE PURE AWARDS MEANS TO THE WIDER TEAMS INVOLVED IN MAKING THE ENTRIES HAPPEN?

It seems to me that it means a very great deal, because these people are the unsung heroes who actually make the things work and make a huge difference to everybody's experience, and I think to have this kind of recognition is hugely important for them. To slog away year in, year out doing quite humble jobs, and then to know that it's been recognised and that it's made a difference: I think it means a very great deal.

WHAT WERE THE MOST EXCITING THEMES OR TRENDS THAT YOU FELT CAME OUT OF THE AWARDS?

What seemed to me to be very interesting is that all these operators are realising that people don't just want soft beds and fancy food, they actually want a meaningful experience – they want something much more immersive, much more meaningful. They want to come back with memories and having had a serious experience.

DO YOU FEEL INSPIRED AND HOPEFUL FOR THE FUTURE WHEN YOU SEE THE ENTRIES?

Actually I do. Every year you see people thinking more imaginatively, thinking more deeply, trying to make the experience more interesting, more different, more special – I think it's very inspiring.



MARIA SHOLLENBARGER

Maria Shollenbarger worked at InStyle and Travel + Leisure, among others, before joining Condé Nast Traveler in October 2013. She is the Travel Editor for How To Spend It, the luxury supplement to the Financial Times.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM THIS YEAR'S PURE AWARDS ENTRIES?

What I was looking for is definitely the same thing that I think a lot of us in the industry look for when we go to PURE, which is to discover people that we might otherwise not have access to. Smaller people who are maybe operating in a part of the world that we're not familiar with, who are doing something that's really important on a small scale – they don't have an enormous marketing budget, they don't have an enormous PR machine behind them.

WHICH CATEGORY ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT JUDGING?

Design is always fun, but Community Engagement is always the most interesting because at the end of the day, everything that we do for the environment is important and we can create environmental awareness and be the people on the ground

to perpetuate that, but if you don't have the allegiance, faith and respect of the people in that place, eventually it will not be sustainable.

WHERE DO YOU THINK THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY COULD STILL DO BETTER?

I think people are extraordinarily sophisticated travellers these days and they really know a lot about a lot. The kind of people with the kind of resources that are working with a lot of the people on the ground at PURE have been a lot of places, and marketing rhetoric is something that they can see quite clearly. So I think speak to your highest common denominator: really go to the effort to explain to them what it is that you're doing in concrete terms. Don't greenwash.



≠ SPEAK TO YOUR HIGHEST COMMON DENOMINATOR – DON'T GREENWASH ≠

- Maria Shollenbarger -



GISELA WILLIAMS

Gisela Williams is the European correspondent for Food & Wine and Travel+Leisure and contributes to The New York Times, Elle Décor, and Vogue, among other publications.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM THIS YEAR'S PURE AWARDS ENTRIES?

Because many PURE exhibitors are small businesses, most of them without press or marketing departments (some even run by just two or three people), I'd like to see some more of the small, lesser-known one or two-person operations recognised for what they do.

WHICH CATEGORY ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT JUDGING?

I am very interested in the Sustainability and Community Engagement categories, but personally I am also a big believer in Transformational Travel. I think that travel is such an important way to learn about

and be engaged in other cultures. In such a rapidly globalising world, it's crucial to understand other viewpoints and beliefs, and intelligent travel can help do that so beautifully.

WHERE DO YOU THINK THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY COULD STILL DO BETTER?

Certainly sustainability is the area that needs much more focus and effort. It's where the owners have to accept a double bottom line. The travel industry needs to be more creative and innovative about sustainable design and products...and there is still a lot of education to do when it comes to potential, next-generation travellers.

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AUSTRALIA PURE CONNECTIONS...

Where else on earth can you swim with whale sharks or humpback whales off a world heritage reef in one of the remotest parts of the world, soak in an Outback spring pouring from grand scale, ancient red rock and stand thigh-deep in the purest of waters to slurp oysters straight from the shell? To create an Australian experience you'll never forget, just pack your sense of adventure and dive in.

Hardy Reef, Great Barrier Reef, Queensland

Imagine having the world's prettiest hot spring all to yourself for the afternoon, or coming eyeball to eyeball with a whale shark, the gentle giant of the sea. Learning to dive among sea turtles on the Great Barrier Reef. Trying to outwit the famously elusive barramundi. Bathing in the intensity of a big-sky sunset over the ocean while sipping your new favourite drink. The possibilities are endless in Australia.

You'll stay in lodgings that channel a particularly Australian vernacular, reflecting their surrounds, complementing the natural environment, minimising their eco-footprint and highlighting the beauty of local materials. These places aren't big and brash; rather, they're intimate escapes where guests are connected with the nature, the people, produce and landscape of the place.

With thousands of kilometres of sparkling coastline, countless beaches (many completely deserted) and quiet rivers and waterways, Australia offers every kind of aquatic getaway, wildlife encounter and gourmet experience, no matter what the season. Let us help you discover these experiences of a lifetime.

AUSTRALIA'S ERA OF HIGH END EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL

Over the last decade, Australia has seen the creation of a new breed of exceptional lodges and camps in some of its most beautiful and uniquely Australian regions. Regular PUREists will know, Luxury Lodges of Australia is a collective of like-minded entrepreneurs, each creating upscale but intimate lodging and bespoke experiences they know sophisticated global travellers seek.

Each lodge has signature experiences and activities to showcase the extraordinary aspects of its region – pristine natural landscapes, wildlife, indigenous heritage, nature, food and wine and more. It is these experiences that define the new Australian luxury and showcase Australia's extraordinary diversity. The lodges are all about delivering a sense of place and connecting guests to their region.

WILD, WILD LIFE

Ningaloo Reef, roughly halfway between the Kimberley gateway town of Broome and the West Australian capital of Perth, is considered to be Australia's other "great" reef. The 260-kilometre-long (162-mile-long) fringing reef is home to an extraordinary diversity of marine life, including whale sharks, gentle giants that migrate through the area (April to July), and humpback whales, who come to nurture their young (August to October).

Guests can have an up-close encounter with both when they stay at wilderness lodge Sal Salis (salsalis.com.au), where 16 safari-style tents sit unobtrusively on the coastline fronting the reef. Swimming with the whale sharks has been a long-term offering, but from this year, Sal Salis guests can also swim or dive with humpback whales (August 1 to October 31).

South Australia's Kangaroo Island is also a magnet for wildlife enthusiasts. Spend time on the island to see its eponymous kangaroos and Tammar wallabies grazing at dawn and dusk, as well



Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley, New South Wales

as koalas snoozing in eucalypt trees. Seal Bay, on the island's south coast, is home to a major colony of Australian sea lions. Watch them from the boardwalk or take a guided tour to stroll among the animals basking on the sand. Echidnas, Cape Barron Geese and a plethora of birds add great depth to the Kangaroo Island wildlife encounters.

On Kangaroo Island's windswept south-west coast is the exclusive Southern Ocean Lodge (southernoceanlodge.com.au). Guests enjoy panoramic floor-to-ceiling ocean views from the Great Room and 21 organic luxe suites, personalised service and itineraries, as well as dining that showcases Kangaroo Island's wonderful produce - perhaps locally caught seafood or organic honey from what's thought to be one of the world's last pure colonies of Ligurian bees. It's easy to spend four or five days exploring Kangaroo Island with the help of the lodge's knowledgeable and entertaining guides.

At the other end of the country in the 'Top End' of the Northern Territory, Bamurru Plains is an eco-sensitive wilderness lodge (bamurruplains.com) on the Mary River floodplain adjacent to Kakadu National Park, offering very different wildlife encounters. Cruise the river to see the area's resident crocodiles and the prolific birdlife - including broilgas and magpie geese - that frequent the mangrove-lined waterways. From May to November, Bamurru Plains operates as a Wild Bush Luxury lodge with 10 safari style bungalows, daily guided excursions to discover the floodplain, the bush, the birds and wildlife of this extraordinary and beautiful region.

Anglers will appreciate the offering at Crystalbrook Lodge (crystalbrooklodge.com.au), about 180 kilometres (110 miles) west of Cairns. The remote outback station, some 85,000 acres, with 2,000 head of Brangus cattle, invites guests to take a boat out on their own or with a guide, to fish or simply birdwatch on the property's 300-acre freshwater lake which is full of barramundi. Those who want to take their fishing adventures to a whole other level can go heli-fishing or head out with a guide.

Championing conservation-based luxury, Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley (oneandonlyresorts.com), beyond the World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains west of Sydney is sited within a 7,000-acre private conservation and wildlife reserve. Cycle around the property and see grazing wombats and wallabies. Guests are invited to participate in nocturnal wildlife spotting and stargazing, or help the resort's conservation team plant trees and survey wildlife during Conservation Hour. Each of the 40 standalone luxury villas feature enclosed private plunge pools and views of the majestic escarpment surrounding the resort.

WHERE TO GET WET

Another World Heritage site, Lord Howe Island, 600 kilometres (370 miles) off the New South Wales coast, is one of Australia's best-kept secrets and a bit of a world's last paradise. The island is home to the world's southernmost coral reef, many species of marine, land and birdlife that are endemic to the island, and Mount Gower, regarded as being one of the most challenging and rewarding, guided-only, day hikes in Australia. See the coral and prolific marine life on a glass-bottomed boat tour or jump into the lagoon with a snorkel to spot double header wrasse and perhaps a painted crayfish. Capella Lodge (lordhowe.com) is the contemporary luxe base from which to explore the island, reef and lagoon, with its nine beach house-style suites, infinity pool and uninterrupted, mesmerising views of the lagoon and Mounts Gower and Lidgbird.

Those who want to dive into the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef on the Queensland coast are spoilt for choice. Off Airlie Beach is Hamilton Island (serviced by direct flights from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Cairns). The island's most luxurious address is Qualia (qualia.com.au), tucked away on the island's secluded northern tip. Guests can survey the Coral Sea and surrounding islands from their private plunge pool or head out to explore highlights of the Great Barrier Reef, diving and snorkeling the nearby Hardy Reef from a



Freycinet Experience Walk, Tasmania



Cape to Cape Walk Margaret River, Western Australia

private qualia boat, or walk the sands of the completely uninhabited Whitehaven Beach, a stretch of dazzling silica that just might be the world's whitest sand.

On a more intimate scale is Orpheus Island (reached via helicopter from Cairns or Townsville; orpheus.com.au), which hosts no more than 28 guests at a time. One of the resort's signature experiences is Dining with the Tides – a six-course dinner for two served on the pier under a canopy of stars. To see the reef's world-famous marine creatures and corals, take a half-day or full-day trip to the fringing and outer reefs to snorkel and dive.

The only way to reach Lizard Island (lizardisland.com.au), an hour by air from Cairns, is by scheduled or private charter. This is the only resort on the island, surrounded by fringing reef, which houses only a marine research station and national park. Those staying in one of the 40 suites can picnic on the 24 sandy beaches, learn to dive, explore the giant clam gardens an easy snorkel from the beach or cruise the waters at sunset.

It might be a long way from the ocean, but El Questro Homestead (elquestro.com.au) is the luxe lodge option in a one-million-acre wilderness park 110 kilometres (70 miles) west of Kununurra in the East Kimberley of Western Australia. Offering a watery experience of a different kind, Zebedee Springs is one of the world's most exclusive natural hot springs. An outback oasis with clear, warm water bubbling up into a series of pools shaded by rare cabbage tree palms and backed by the magnificent backdrop of the red rocky escarpment.

The Kimberley is so vast and rugged that light planes and helicopters criss-cross its "aerial highway" of remote air strips to ferry travellers to lodges with no road access or to spectacular natural sights such as the multi-tiered Mitchell Falls in the central Kimberley. The falls are often an optional day trip for those who cruise the Kimberley coast.

Those cruises – which include gourmet wining and dining – are an ideal getaway and a relaxing way to explore the region. North Star Cruises' flagship 13-night or 7-night odyssey aboard the True North (northstarcruises.com.au) is an adventure cruise including heli-picnics, hikes, discovery of ancient rock art, scouting for black-lip oysters and time for keen anglers to try their luck. A crew of 22 guide just 36 guests through this remote and extraordinary coastline on the trip of a lifetime.

Those who are more pressed for time might join The Great Escape Charter Company (greatescape.net.au) on a five-day cruise from Broome that includes visiting ancient rock-art sites, fishing, swimming and witnessing Montgomery Reef's massive tidal movements.

You can immerse in one of Australia's great food and dining experiences, too, in the Victorian town of Daylesford, about 110 kilometres (70 miles) north-west of Melbourne, and the epicentre of Australia's "spa country". Browse art galleries, sample produce at farm-gates and walk the shores of the lake. Then settle into Lake House (lakehouse.com.au) exclusive boutique hotel, award-winning restaurant, cooking school and spa all set on acreage that rolls down to the edge of Lake Daylesford.

DISHING UP THE BEST

Located three hours' drive south of Perth, Margaret River is renowned for both wine and food, and is peppered with luxury accommodation, including Cape Lodge (capelodge.com.au), a boutique hotel on a private country estate. Sitting on its own vineyard, the 22-room retreat is surrounded by award-winning wineries and galleries and is just a short distance from the Indian Ocean, some great beaches and hiking trails, limestone caves, and artisan food producers.

Wine-lovers will also want to include South Australia on their itinerary: the famed Barossa Valley, about an hour north-east of Adelaide, produces more of Australia's world-acknowledged premium wines than any other region. Those staying at luxury vineyard retreat, The Louise (thelouise.com.au) shouldn't miss dining at its acclaimed restaurant, Appellation, where the nightly chef's tasting menu is paired with wines to showcase the region's best. The Louise makes an excellent base for visiting the cellar doors of some of Australia's most famous wineries, including the option for private tastings and hands-on winery experiences at major and artisan wineries.

In Tasmania, Saffire (saffire-freycinet.com.au) is a luxury coastal sanctuary – immersing guests in the essence of the pure air, light and waters of Tasmania. Here the food experiences range from donning a pair of waders to stand in the saltwater shallows at Freycinet Marine Oyster Farm and slurp Pacific oysters, to enjoying a gourmet picnic of local produce on the azure waters of South Hazards beach.

Australia's Red Centre also offers gourmet dining with a desert twist. The luxe pick of properties near Uluru – the striking monolith that provides one of the country's most compelling and ancient visitor experiences – is Longitude 131° (longitude131.com.au), where just 15 luxury tents top the sand dunes. These luxury lodgings have exclusive views reaching across to both Uluru and Kata-Tjuta. The lodge is lauded for its signature Baillie Lodges' service and itineraries designed to allow each guest a very personal connection with the spiritual and geographical heart of Australia. A highlight is Table 131 – dinner under the stars where guests indulge in four courses of superb outback inspired fare.

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL

Walking is the best way to fully immerse yourself in Australia's spectacular natural environment. From epic treks to short hikes through World Heritage-listed national parks, Australia has some of the best walking experiences in the world. Great Walks of Australia (greatwalksofaustralia.com.au) is a collection of the country's quintessential walking experiences.

On the mainland, one of the most fascinating bush experiences is the Arkaba Walk – a four-day trek that's a signature offering at Arkaba, a 60,000-acre private wildlife conservancy, (arkabastation.com), set amid the stark, grand scale, ancient beauty of South Australia's Flinders Ranges. You'll learn about the impressive amphitheatre-like crater that is Wilpena Pound, the Elder Ranges, the area's early pioneers and the bountiful wildlife, including emus and red and western grey kangaroos.



Southern Ocean Lodge, South Australia

Nature lovers can also explore Australia's southernmost state of Tasmania on foot. Hikers tackling the Cradle Mountain Huts Walk will find themselves on the world-famous Overland Track leading past one of Australia's most iconic peaks and scenic Dove Lake, a popular spot in summer for kayaking. The four-day Bay of Fires Lodge Walk combines the beach and bush of north-eastern Tasmania, while the Maria Island Walk, which explores the Maria Island National Park, is the most accessible walk from Hobart. This experience includes candlelit dinners and an overnight stay at a World Heritage-listed former penal colony.

The Freycinet Experience Walk is the original east coast guided walk – for good reason. The track leads to the world-famous sweep of white sand known as Wineglass Bay. Even though Tasmania's waters are cool most of the year, pack your bathers for a refreshing dip.

A vastly different landscape is on offer at Spicers Peak Lodge (spicersretreats.com), perched on a mountaintop west of Brisbane, the capital of Queensland. Australia's highest non-alpine lodge is located within the "green cauldron" of the state's Scenic Rim, a world heritage wilderness area on the Great Dividing Range. Take in views over endless distant peaks as you hike or mountain bike across the 7,000-acre private property. Explore this rugged country and discover its rare wildlife from the comfort of a four-wheel-drive or by hiking with an experienced guide.

Silky Oaks Lodge (silkyoakslodge.com.au), perched on the banks of the Mossman River and adjacent to the oldest living rainforest on the planet, the Daintree, is just 20 minutes from Port Douglas in Far North Queensland. Visit the nearby Mossman Gorge Visitor Centre to learn about indigenous culture through a guided Dreamtime walk. Take a day trip to explore nearby Daintree River and Cape Tribulation, including a barbecue lunch at the lodge's private bush camp and a wildlife-spotting foray along the river.

Close to Sydney you will find a quintessential and very luxe Australian guesthouse experience waiting. Pretty Beach House (prettybeachhouse.com), reached via road, or, a 20-minute seaplane flight north from Sydney Harbour. The lodge is set into the Bouddi National Park's gnarled and expressive eucalypt forests. Charter Pretty Beach's luxury cruiser to explore nearby inlets and coves, learn about ancient Aboriginal rock carvings on a guided walk through the national park. On the night of arrival Gavi, a local elder, visits the lodge to welcome guests with a traditional smoke ceremony - a genuine sharing of stories and welcome to place. And a hint of the 'unknown' discoveries and adventures to come...

HOW TO STYLE A GRAND TOUR

Want to stitch several Australian exclusive experiences into one extraordinary and time-efficient itinerary? Consider the value added by a bespoke destination management company that not only has connections with the expert guides, private operators and introductions to the unique characters of Australia, but can deal with details such as chartering flights and co-ordinating transfer arrangements to make your client's visit seamless. Southern Crossings Australia (southern-crossings.com) and Alquemie (alquemie.com.au) are two of Australia's best, working with travel planners and their guests to create truly memorable Australian journeys.

All products mentioned in the story are represented at PURE Life Experiences 2016.



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GREAT WALKS OF AUSTRALIA

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OTHER

- 16 Orpheus
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AQUATIC AND COASTAL AUSTRALIA

Tourism Australia has a comprehensive package of assets available for your use. These include a suite of new aquatic and coastal imagery (images.australia.com); a selection of aquatic and coastal experiences, with suggested itineraries; a new broadcast ad, voiced by Chris Hemsworth, available to download for use on websites (video.australia.com); and a set of 17 new 360° films that give an immersive taste of the country's aquatic and coastal landscapes (australia.com/360). On the Aussie Specialist program website (aussiespecialist.com) are new fact sheets and itineraries for sales teams.

AGENDA

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

ALL DAY _____ Arrivals
12:00 - 18:00 _____ Registration at the Palais des Congrès (no access to stands)

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

08:00 - 18:00 _____ Registration
08:45 - 12:50 _____ MATTER, brought to you by Tourism Australia
12:00 - 15:00 _____ Exhibitor access to stands
12:50 - 14:30 _____ Poolside BBQ lunch at the Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech
14:30 - 16:00 _____ MATTER, brought to you by Tourism Australia
16:00 - 17:30 _____ Poolside drinks at the Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech
20:00 - 23:00 _____ Welcome Party, hosted by La Mamounia

TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

08:45 _____ Doors open for PURE Life Experiences 2016
09:00 - 18:00 _____ Official opening hours
09:15 _____ Morning appointments start
10:50 - 11:25 _____ Networking break
12:35 - 13:45 _____ Lunch at the Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech
14:00 _____ Afternoon appointments start
15:35 - 16:15 _____ Networking break
17:25 _____ Last appointment of the day finishes
17:25 - 18:00 _____ Free networking
20:00 _____ PURE Awards, brought to you by Tourism Australia and hosted by Sofitel Marrakech Palais Impérial, followed by the Afterparty at SO Night Lounge

WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

08:45 _____ Doors open for PURE Life Experiences 2016
09:00 - 18:00 _____ Official opening hours
09:15 _____ Morning appointments start
10:50 - 11:25 _____ Networking break
12:35 - 13:45 _____ Lunch at the Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech
14:00 _____ Afternoon appointments start
15:35 - 16:15 _____ Networking break
17:25 _____ Last appointment of the day finishes
17:25 - 18:00 _____ Free networking
18:00 onwards _____ Free evening

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

08:45 _____ Doors open for PURE Life Experiences 2016
09:00 - 17:45 _____ Official opening hours
09:15 _____ Morning appointments start
10:50 - 11:25 _____ Networking break
12:35 - 13:45 _____ Lunch at the Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech
14:00 _____ Afternoon appointments start
15:35 - 16:15 _____ Networking break
17:25 _____ Last appointment of the day finishes
17:25 - 18:00 _____ Free networking
20:00 onwards _____ Farewell Party

FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

ALL DAY _____ Departures

PLEASE NOTE: This agenda is strictly for pre-registered PUREists wearing their registration badge and PURE wristband.

TRANSFERS

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

ALL DAY _____ Transfer shuttles from Marrakech Menara Airport to PURE allocated hotels*

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

ALL DAY _____ Transfer shuttles from Marrakech Menara Airport to PURE allocated hotels*
08:00 - 17:00 _____ Hourly transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to Palais des Congrès for MATTER, brought to you by Tourism Australia
17:30 onwards _____ Transfer shuttles from Palais des Congrès to PURE allocated hotels*
20:00 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to the Welcome Party, hosted by La Mamounia
22:00 - 00:00 _____ Return transfer shuttles to PURE allocated hotels*

TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

08:30 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to Palais des Congrès
18:00 onwards _____ Transfer shuttles from Palais des Congrès to PURE allocated hotels*
20:00 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to the PURE Awards, brought to you by Tourism Australia and hosted by Sofitel Marrakech Palais Impérial, followed by the Afterparty at SO Night Lounge
22:30 - 02:00 _____ Return transfer shuttles to PURE allocated hotels*

WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

08:30 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to Palais des Congrès
18:00 onwards _____ Transfer shuttles from Palais des Congrès to PURE allocated hotels*

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

08:30 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to Palais des Congrès
18:00 onwards _____ Transfer shuttles from Palais des Congrès to PURE allocated hotels*
20:00 _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to the Farewell Party
22:30 - 02:00 _____ Return transfer shuttles to PURE allocated hotels*

FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

ALL DAY _____ Transfer shuttles from PURE allocated hotels* to Marrakech Menara Airport

* Transfer shuttles will run from the following PURE allocated hotels only:

La Mamounia / La Sultana / Hôtel & Ryads Barrière Le Naoura / Selman Marrakech / Royal Mansour / Mandarin Oriental / Royal Palm Marrakech

PLEASE NOTE: The pick up point for the above hotels will be at the front of each hotel

Sofitel Marrakech Palais Impérial / Es Saadi Gardens & Resort / Hivernage Hotel & Spa

PLEASE NOTE: The pick up point for the above hotels will be at the front of Sofitel Palais Impérial

Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech / Ryad Mogador Menara / Atlas Medina & Spa Hotel

PLEASE NOTE: The pick up point for the above hotels will be at the front of the Palais des Congrès. These hotels are within walking distance of the Palais des Congrès, so only airport and party transfers will be provided.

For all airport transfers, you will be dropped off/picked up in front of your allocated hotel.

TAYLOR RIVER LODGE, COLORADO



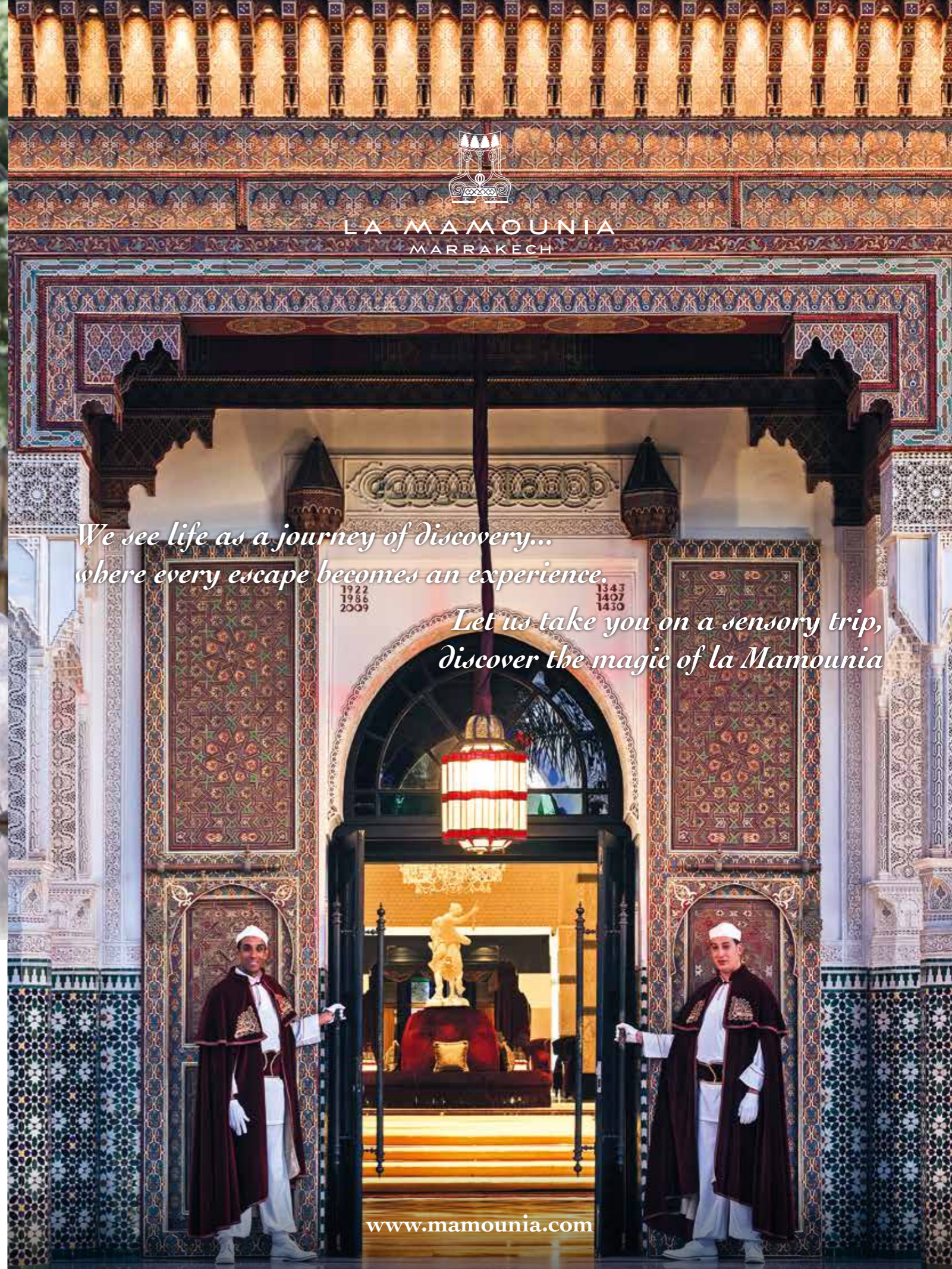
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