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Source: The Daily Telegraph (Travel)
Date: 29 December 2018
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20 FOR 2019

Where in the world will you go next year? We're here to help...

I. LOS CABOS, MEXICO

'San José del Cabo is a convivial place, with a European feel'

BY CHRIS MOSS



Los Cabos, at the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula, is a tale of two cities, two resorts, two vibes. With its big, bold beach hotels, all-night clubs and buzzing bar scene, Cabo San Lucas is the party town, appealing, loudly, to Americans, who hop down for spring breaks and to play the golf clubs – the Ocean Course was designed by Jack Nicklaus. Gorgeous sunsets and dramatic arch-shaped rock formations on the beach make for honeymooner selfies and cocktail-quaffing cruises with on-board DJs.

San José del Cabo – just 20 miles (32km) to the north-east – is an altogether more convivial town, with a European feel, a market selling organic produce and crafts, and a handful of art galleries. A former mission founded in 1730 on the west bank of the San José river, it supplied fresh water to Spanish galleons returning from the Philippines. Luxury hotels line the coast, from the over-the-top glam of The Resort at Pedregal and the newly opened art-themed Solaz, to quaint, long-established 18-room Casa Natalia in downtown San José. Dining runs the gamut, too, from lavish beachside buffets to oyster bars to taquerias specialising in seafood. Behind the

hotel strip rise the arid Sierra de la Laguna, a Unesco-listed biosphere reserve. Offshore is also wild, with humpback and grey whales migrating down to the warm waters off Baja California between December and April and, in May, the spectacle of mobula rays performing a mysterious leaping ritual, jumping as high as 9ft to slap down into the Sea of Cortez. Year round, Cabos visitors can take boats to look for bottlenose and common dolphins, sea lions, turtles and birds. Looking north, Highway 1 offers a world-class road trip into Baja proper and the Guadalupe wine region.

How to go: From November 2019, a new direct flight to Los Cabos from Gatwick with TUI (tui.co.uk) will remove the need to stop in Mexico City. Alternatively, Journey Latin America (020 8747 8315; journeylatinamerica.co.uk) combines overland sightseeing around Los Cabos with an expedition cruise on the Sea of Cortez; 12 days from £4,375, plus flights.

Chris Moss, *The Telegraph's* Latin America specialist, has visited every country in the Americas at least once – and visits Mexico as often as he can.



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2. MADAGASCAR

'Salary Bay in the south west is beginning to open up to tourism'

BY HILARY BRADT



Madagascar has a reputation for being only for the adventurous. I may have contributed to this, suggesting that unless you have a serious interest in wildlife it may not be worth the hassle. I'll come clean: Madagascar has not only been established as an utterly amazing place for years, but these days you can enjoy it in considerable comfort.

Yes, there's a new *Madagascar* film in the works, but that's not the reason to visit. Head to the idyllic Salary Bay in the south-west, which is beginning to open up to tourism. Here you have that ideal combination of soft white sand and easy access to deep sea for a swim. Somewhat bizarrely, a luxury lodge has been built while the road there is still little more than a cart track, necessitating a four-wheel-drive vehicle for the three-hour journey. But that's what makes it such a treat – it sees few tourists. If they improve the road, as they surely will, Salary will be

discovered, as will be the newly opened Mikea National Park showcasing the fattest, most other-worldly baobabs you will ever see. "Nature's lunatic asylum" is what the writer Dervla Murphy called the spiny forest. A visit to this bedlam of unique flora proves her point.

Ankarafantsika National Park, 800 miles (1,300km) or so to the north, has for the past few years been too rustic for most visitors. The accommodation has now improved. You'll see more species there than almost anywhere else, including the handsome and languid Coquerel's sifaka. If you want to push the boat out, the fly-in resort of Anjajavy is just down the coast with the same wildlife in a private reserve, which has recently tripled in size.

How to go: Rainbow Tours (020 7666 1250; rainbowtours.co.uk) offers a range of group and private holidays.

Hilary Bradt is author and co-author of 12 editions of the Bradt guide to Madagascar. She was recently awarded the country's equivalent of the OBE for services to tourism.



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3. TURKEY

Turkey was always going to regain its hot spot status sooner rather than later'

BY TERRY RICHARDSON



With its winning combination of atmospheric ancient sites, stunning beaches, towering mountains, hospitable people, fabulous cuisine

and excellent value for money, Turkey was always going to regain its "hot spot" status sooner rather than later.

In 2014, visitor numbers reached an all-time high of 42million, but after a number of terrorist incidents in 2016 it fell precipitously to 25million. However, the latest figures show that more than 35million have visited this most welcoming of countries since January this year, and Turkey's powerful culture and tourism ministry is predicting – based on bookings – that some 48million will visit the country next year.

In other words, with the country largely safe and secure, confidence has been well and truly restored – not least among Britons, some 35 per cent more of whom are forecast to visit in 2019 than came in 2018.

The gateway airports to Turkey's Aegean and Mediterranean resorts, Izmir, Bodrum, Dalaman and Antalya, will all be served by scheduled as well as charter flights from April. Istanbul's new international mega-airport, which opened in October this year, will be

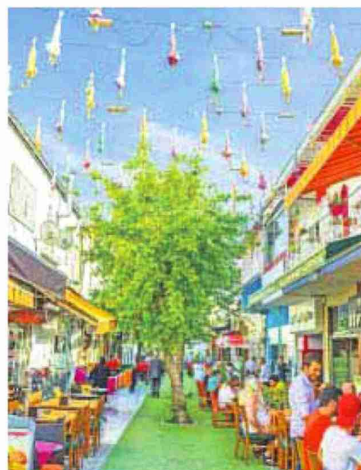
one of the world's largest when fully operational, making access to a city justly famed for its location astride Europe and Asia, its wealth of historical sights and vibrant cultural life even easier.

Lured by extremely competitive prices, sparked in part by government fuel subsidies for airlines and a depreciating Turkish lira (inflation in Turkey hit 25 per cent in October, and the pound currently buys 6.80 lira, as opposed to around 5lira back in 2017) visitors are finding Turkey great value for money, with Antalya being the most popular Mediterranean destination for Thomas Cook this year.

Despite the increase in visitor numbers in 2018, prices remain temptingly low for 2019, making it the obvious year to sample the even more obvious delights of Turkey.

How to go: Thomas Cook (01733 224808; thomascook.com) offers week-long packages near Dalaman in spring 2019 for less than £400.

Terry Richardson is the main author of *Rough Guide Turkey* and *Rough Guide Istanbul*, and leads archaeological and history tours in the country for a specialist travel company. He lived in Antalya for many years, and he currently divides his time between the UK and Turkey.



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4. ANDERMATT, SWITZERLAND

'Andermatt mark 2.0 is under way, with swanky apartment blocks and six planned hotels'

BY CAT WEAKLEY



Over the past few seasons, Andermatt has been enjoying a £1.2billion redevelopment backed by billionaire Samih Sawiris. This includes linking

Andermatt's smaller sector, Nätschen-Gütsch, with that of Sedrun, nine miles (15km) away to the east, via a series of lifts and red and blue pistes on virgin slopes. Two new six-seater chairs were in place for 2016-17 and there's a 10-person gondola for 2018-19, fully linking the two resorts by piste and lift in both directions.

The link takes the total pistes on

offer in Andermatt from a modest 86km to much more generous 120km. The original Andermatt is a small, sleepy town, almost unchanged for 30 years. However, Andermatt mark 2.0 is well under way on the outskirts, with an estate of swanky apartment blocks and six planned hotels. The first and most central, the five-star Chedi (below), with a spectacular spa and a Michelin-starred Japanese restaurant, opened for the 2013-14 season; the four-star Radisson Blu has opened for 2018-19.

Andermatt sits in a good position for gathering snow, at a meeting of valleys close to the northern side of the Alps. The altitude is helpful, too – on the main mountain, steep and shady Gemsstock, most of the slopes are between 2,000m and 3,000m.

How to go: Ski Solutions (020 7471 7700; skisolutions.com) offers seven nights B&B at the five-star Chedi hotel (left) from £2,445 per person based on two sharing a twin or double room, including flights and transfers.

Cat Weakley is *The Telegraph's* deputy ski editor. Sainte Foy in France is one of her favourite resorts for its trees and off piste, but she's yet to find a ski area she doesn't like.



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5. SINGAPORE

'2019 promises a raft of events that will make Singapore a destination in its own right'

BY MARY LUSSIANA



Those who watched this year's hit film *Crazy Rich Asians* will have noticed the backdrop against which the feel-good love story played out; from the somewhat alien-like, illuminated Supertree Grove in Gardens by the Bay to the Ce La Vi Bar (the spot to watch the city don its evening lights) at the Marina Bay Sands, whose 187ft towers, topped by what looks like a surfboard, dominate the city's skyline. There were wedding scenes in the 19th-century chapel in Chijmes and an inevitable stop in a Hawker centre to feast on Singapore's famed street food.

However, it is not just its presence on the silver screen that has catapulted Singapore into the limelight. Next year promises a raft of events that aim to

make it a destination in its own right rather than a mere stopover. Clean, green and safe have long applied to this metropolis, but now a shot of glamour and glitz has been injected on to the streets, not least owing to the sprinkling of 39 Michelin stars and the crown of Asia's Best Bar won by the deeply seductive Manhattan and followed closely by Atlas, The Tippling Club and Native revealing the extraordinary diversity in this melting pot of cultures, which will next year host the World's 50 Best Restaurants awards ceremony.

This coming year, culture will be at the forefront too, as Singapore celebrates the 200th anniversary of the arrival of British statesman Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles, considered the founder of modern Singapore. "Raffles in Southeast Asia" (Feb 1 to April 28), at Singapore's Asian Civilisations Museum, is part of the



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Bicentennial celebrations and the only museum in the region that explores the artistic heritage of Asia and the ancestral cultures of Singaporeans.

Appropriately, 2019 also see the reopening of the 19th-century Raffles hotel, birthplace of the island country's most famous export, the Singapore Sling.

How to go: Scott Dunn (scottdunn.com; 020 8682 5060) organises tailor-made tours through Asia, including three nights in Singapore, from £3,800 per person. This is based on two people staying on a B&B basis on an 11-night trip and includes luxury accommodation throughout, a selection of experiences, international and domestic flights and private transfers.

Mary Lussiana is a freelance travel writer who has a particular passion for Asia.



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6. CHARLESTON, UNITED STATES

'Rolling out the red carpet to travellers is the new 179-room Hotel Bennett'

BY EMMA THOMSON



"Walking the streets of Charleston in the late afternoons of August was like walking through gauze or inhaling damaged silk," wrote American novelist Pat Conroy. But this South Carolina belle – known for palmettos, peaches, and a state dance called "The Shag" – is stirring from her soupy-heat slumber to welcome British Airways's new twice-weekly (Sundays and Thursdays) direct flights from London Heathrow on April 4.

Rolling out the red carpet to travellers is the new 179-room Hotel Bennett overlooking the city's Marion Square. Opening next month, its rooftop bar is slated to become the best sundowner spot in town. Order the Pain Killer – the city's signature cocktail made with rum, coconut cream, pineapple juice and nutmeg – and then snack on "softies", the moreish seasonal soft crabs.

Frequently billed as America's most friendly city, Charleston's residents are forged from a mishmash of British colonialism, West African culture, French Huguenots, Sephardic Jews

and Antebellum aristocracy. So you're as likely to hear Gullah (a creole spoken by the descendants of African slaves), as English on the broad boulevards. And you'll be hard pushed to find prettier streets: cobblestones lined with gleaming Greek revival and Georgian mansions and their broad porches. Further out are the sprawling plantations, their driveways lined with gnarled oaks festooned with Spanish moss.

Charleston has her dark side, too. A 30-minute ferry ride off shore is Fort Sumter, the site of the first full battle of the American Civil War in 1861 and, in town, the marketplaces where slaves were traded until 1865 – a dark chapter explained at the Old Slave Mart Museum. Her honesty embracing both bad and good will swiftly have you falling for her southern charm.

How to go: Hayes & Jarvis (01293 762456, hayesandjarvis.co.uk) offers a 10-night holiday to Charleston from £2,369 per person staying at four and five-star hotels on a room-only basis, including car rental and return international flights from London Heathrow with American Airlines.

Emma Thomson is an award-winning freelance travel journalist.



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7. NAMIBIA

'A liberating sense of isolation has put Namibia on the intrepid travel map'

BY CAROLINE SHEARING



Some of the planet's wildest locations are about to become more accessible with the opening of a clutch of wilderness retreats in Namibia.

Home to the Namib, the world's oldest desert, this largely untouched African country is one of the least densely populated on earth, with just 2.5 million people scattered across an area the size of the UK and France combined.

This liberating sense of isolation, coupled with unremitting natural beauty, has put this ancient landscape on the intrepid travel map. From the rust-coloured dunes of Sossusvlei to the hauntingly beautiful Skeleton Coast, Namibia is blessed with seemingly endless vistas of sand and sky – and silence. New ways to see its remotest corners include Sonop (spring 2019), a tented camp within reach of Fish River Canyon, as well as Omaanda, a collection of huts on a private reserve near the capital Windhoek (zannier.com).

Andersson's at Ongava (April 2019; ongava.com), near Etosha National Park, will offer opportunities to spot the Big Five, while Serra Cafema (wilderness-safaris.com), which has just emerged from a rebuild, is

operated in partnership with the local Himba tribe. Shipwreck Lodge on the Skeleton Coast and Hoanib Valley Camp (naturalselection.travel), are both operating their first full season.

There's no direct flight from the UK, but those who make the effort will find a crowd-free country committed to protecting its environment for long-term sustainability. Go now.

How to go: Abercrombie & Kent (01242 547702; abercrombiekent.co.uk) offers 12 nights' full-board from £7,460pp, including flights, private transfers and excursions.



Caroline Shearing is The Telegraph's assistant head of travel, and specialises in hotels and sustainability. She's happiest when observing wildlife in the planet's last great wildernesses.



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8. ARLES, FRANCE

'The linchpin of the project is a nine-storey tower by Frank Gehry'

BY ANTHONY PEREGRINE



Arles is the most Provençal of all towns, fierce of sun, temper and festivity. Tight old streets struggle to contain the pulse of Mediterranean excess. Cowboys

from the Camargue gallop through whenever the occasion demands; the women's traditional dress is so fetching that one almost forgives folk-dancing. The place hasn't had a quiet moment since serving as Roman regional HQ, and that won't change in 2019. Key development concerns the Luma Foundation, the brainchild of Swiss pharmaceutical heiress Maja Hoffmann. She is spending £134million to transform a vast former French rail workshop site into a world class cultural-cum-ecolo centre. (It's already hosting a Gilbert and George retrospective, until Jan 6.)

The linchpin of the project is a nine-storey tower by Frank Gehry (he of Bilbao's Guggenheim), which opens this summer, furnishing Arles with studios, exhibition rooms and much besides. As expected of Gehry, it looks like a regular shiny tower that's been grabbed and twisted. It's going to fit right in by not fitting in at all.

It's not as if Arles was short of culture before. The Romans left a magnificent arena, baths and a theatre. Van Gogh left memories of his 15 furious months here, as did Nobel Prize-winning writer Frédéric Mistral. The Arlesian Folk Museum he founded reopens in 2019, after vast renovation (museonarlaten.fr). The Musée Arles



Antique has the only known bust of Julius Caesar (www.arles-antique.cg13.fr) – and the Musée Réattu has great sketches by Picasso and local lad Christian Lacroix (museereattu.arles.fr). In July, Provence's most appealing music festival, Les Suds à Arles, assembles artists from the Med and beyond and spreads them all over town (suds-arles.com). Simultaneously, Europe's main festival of photography, Rencontres-d'Arles, kicks off for three months (rencontres-arles.com).

Should that pall, Provence's number one market stretches out over a mile on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

How to go: Kirker Holidays (020 7593 1899; kirkerholidays.com) offers three nights B&B in the Grand Hotel Nord Pinus – where Picasso, Hemingway and matadors stayed – from £849, flights and transfers included.

Anthony Peregrine left Lancashire for southern France 30 years ago to get out of the rain. He's still there.

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9. MONGOLIA

'How better to appreciate this itinerant lifestyle than by joining in?'

BY MIKE UNWIN



"Give me land, lots of land..." History doesn't record whether this was Genghis Khan's signature tune as he set about forging the largest empire in human

history (admittedly, there may be an issue with the date), but if you're one of those who doesn't want fencing in, Mongolia could be the answer. With barely three million people in an area six times bigger than Britain, this wild slice of central Asia offers exciting new ways in 2019 to explore its dramatically desolate terrain.

Mongolia is where nomadic pastoralism began, and 40 per cent of the population still up sticks with the seasons, loading their collapsible gers (yurts, to festival-goers) on to yak carts and herding their livestock over the horizon. How better to appreciate this itinerant lifestyle than by joining in? The "Mongolia 360" concept – so named because it uses temporary camps each surrounded by 360 degrees of wilderness – allows

adventurous travellers to stay in upmarket gers that shift location as conditions dictate. From these, you can discover the desert wildlife, shimmering salt lakes and ruined Buddhist monasteries of the Gobi, track the wild Przewalski's horses of the central steppes, or meet the Berkutchy eagle hunters of the Altai Mountains. And this November, for the first time anywhere, you can join a research team to collar and radio-track snow leopards – an opportunity to get hands-on with one of the world's most elusive creatures, in the world's least populous country. And all without a fence in sight. **How to go:** Steppes Travel (steppestravel.com; 01285 601050) offers a 13-day pioneering group tour to Mongolia. From £5,995, based on two sharing, including accommodation in "360" yurts, guided activities, transfers and most meals. International flights are extra.

Mike Unwin is a travel and nature writer who visited Mongolia in 2018, ending up with a golden eagle on his arm and panic on his face.



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10. LANZAROTE, CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN

Lanzarote's landscape provided the perfect palette for Manrique's creativity'

BY LINDA COOKSON



If you've dismissed Lanzarote as just another fly'n'flop destination, next year will be a revelation. The island is gearing up to say "Hail, César!" to celebrate the centenary of its most famous son, the painter, sculptor and architect, César Manrique. Born on April 24 1919, he had an astonishing influence on shaping his native island, protecting it from over-development in the Seventies and creating its signature style of low-rise sugar-cube houses. Lanzarote's unique volcanic landscape – a quarter of its surface was left encrusted with lava after eruptions in 1730 – provided the perfect palette for his creativity. The magical public buildings and spaces he masterminded between 1968 and his

death in 1992 have come to define the island, and are as vibrant and witty as ever. His giant wind chimes and mobiles are like huge, colourful toys amid the island's surreal rocky swirls of greys, browns and blood-reds. And rippling lava fields were moulded, following his designs, into a series of exuberant fantasy playgrounds for visitors. Don't miss his jaw-dropping



Jameos del Agua ("Water Caves"), a cavernous entertainment venue with lush gardens, palm-fringed tropical pool and dazzling underground lake. His former home – a super-cool sci-fi extravaganza fashioned from lava bubbles – is another must-see. It's now the base for the César Manrique Foundation (fcmmanrique.org). In late January, trustees will publish their year-long programme of events and exhibitions (beginning on Manrique's birthday). Meanwhile, Lanzarote's *cabildo* (government) is preparing to announce the results of its €300,000 (£270,000) competition for centenary projects (manrique100.org). No man is an island, but Manrique came close. **How to go:** Sovereign Luxury Travel (01293 832459, sovereign.com) offers seven nights half-board at the adults-only, five-star H10 Timanfaya Palace hotel from £760 based on two sharing, including return flights from London Gatwick and private resort transfers.

Linda Cookson is a freelance travel writer, specialising in Europe and North Africa. She loves islands, art and architecture.



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II. SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

'On a drive to a restaurant, the track was suddenly swarming with land crabs'

BY ANDREW PURVIS



Few people have heard of Sao Tome and Principe, let alone visited it – and that's why you should go in 2019 before mainstream operators and budget airlines alter

its unique character. Comprising two islands in the Gulf of Guinea, about 150 miles off Gabon in West Africa, STP (as aficionados call it) feels like a lost world of pristine rainforests, bizarre geological formations, breathtaking (and deserted) beaches and tepid, glassy-green ocean ideal for snorkelling and scuba diving.

It's a place where nature sneaks up on you, rather than you seeking it out. On Principe, where I spent most of my time, I twice took a speedboat to explore local beaches only to stumble across a humpback whale and her calf, born days ago in those plankton-rich waters. On a drive to a restaurant one night, the dirt track was suddenly swarming with land crabs the size of my fist, caught in the headlamp beam.



At one resort, Bom Bom, I lay on a sun lounger and watched yellow weaver birds at work in the palm fronds above my head, spotted an endemic Principe kingfisher and was dive-bombed by a grey parrot.

But the people are what made my trip. Because tourism is so young, there seems to be an absence of malice and a warm-hearted innocence totally in keeping with the untarnished African landscape. Service can be rough at the edges and the infrastructure (water, electricity) creaks at times – but that's what pioneers have to endure.

How to go: Archipelago Choice (01768 721040; archipelagochoice.com) is offering an eight-night Secrets of Sao Tome and Principe holiday from £3,398 per person, including flights from the UK, inter-island flights, accommodation, transfers and guided excursions.

Andrew Purvis is deputy editor of *Telegraph Travel*. A keen diver, he will occasionally undertake assignments above water.



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12. OSAKA, JAPAN

'Osaka has long been famed as a haven for food lovers'

BY DANIELLE DEMETRIOU

Osaka is a city that has long relished being as different as possible from Tokyo – from its unique food flavours and lively residents right down to escalator etiquette (yes, it's true – Osakans really do stand on the right-hand side, compared with Tokyo's left). Osaka – Japan's third-largest city and the capital of western Kansai – will be cast into the spotlight in September when it hosts a number of Rugby World Cup fixtures. UK visitors will soon be able to visit Osaka more easily with the launch of direct British Airways flights from London.

But sport is not the only reason to visit: Osaka has long been famed as a haven for food lovers (its nickname is *tenka no daidokoro*: "the nation's kitchen"). Visitors can tuck into local specialities, such as hearty pancake-like *okonomiyaki* and delicious *takoyaki* octopus balls. Osaka is also packed with heritage – perhaps little surprise as it was the first capital in seventh-century Japan before evolving into a key gateway for culture and commerce.

Today, visitors can visit Osaka Castle (still eye-catching with its tiered roof and moat, despite mainly being a reconstruction) plus numerous historic gardens and temples. It's also a city that relishes modernity, as reflected in a jagged skyline

of sleek urban skyscrapers, filled with offices, restaurants, shops and hotels.

Osaka is the perfect springboard for exploring, with Kyoto a 15-minute *shinkansen* (bullet train) hop away, while Tokyo takes two and a half hours by train. And best of all? Osaka's moment in the spotlight is unlikely to fade after the rugby crowds leave, as the city is celebrating a successful bid to host the 2025 World Expo.

How to go: Inside Japan Tours (0117 370 9751; insidejapantours.com) offers a 13-night trip for £2,668pp, including four nights in Osaka, three in Tokyo, three in Kyoto, two in Takayama and one in Hakone, including regional travel but excluding international flights. The company also has a special website offering Japan rugby travel tips: japanrugbytravel.com. British Airways (ba.com) launches direct flights from London to Kansai International on March 31 from £749 return including all fares and taxes.



Danielle Demetriou is *Telegraph Travel's* Japan destination expert. Since moving from London to Tokyo in 2007, she has eaten immeasurable quantities of sushi and spends as much time as possible sitting in hot-spring *onsen* baths.



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13. CAMBODIA

'A slew of new hotels will open up some less explored regions of the country'

BY MICHELLE JANA CHAN



When most think of Cambodia, they think of the Unesco world heritage site of Angkor Wat. But in 2019 a slew of new hotels will open up some less explored

regions of the country, from the coast to the forested interior. Here you can find the sleepy south-east Asian vibe mythologised in dog-eared Seventies guidebooks, from a laid-back tropical rhythm and low tourist numbers to villages of Chinese shopfronts and faded French colonial villas, and beyond untamed wilderness.

Off the coast, on pretty petite islands of their own, two new hotels hope to lure travellers away from the neighbouring beach destinations of Thailand and southern Vietnam. There's 63-room Alila Villas Koh Russey located on Bamboo Island, with a sea-facing pool and a beach shack serving Khmer cuisine. A short boat ride away, Six Senses Krabey Island has 40 rooms, each with a private pool, and a focus on wellness, with a meditation cave, gym, lap pool, fitness circuit and yoga pavilion, as well as an outdoor cinema and observatory.

A new passenger train connects the capital, Phnom Penh, to the coast creating a lovely slow-go journey and a delightful way to arrive; it's not very reliable, but returns the romance of

rail travel to this backwater.

Shinta Mani Wild, a 15-room tented camp on the riverfront in South Cardamom National Park, is part of an effort to conserve a 400-acre wildlife corridor in one of the few remaining habitats for elephants and bears. Arriving guests can take a 1,250ft zip-line above waterfalls, or opt for the Jeep, to reach their room. The restaurant uses ingredients foraged from the forest or plucked from the on-site permaculture farm. It's also action packed, with hiking, mountain biking, wild swimming and bouldering, as well as the chance to join anti-poaching patrols.

How to go: AboutAsia (00855 63 760 190, aboutasiatravel.com/cambodia) offers a two-week trip to Cambodia including four nights at Shinta Mani Wild (all-inclusive), seven nights at Six Senses and two nights at Phum Baitang in Siem Reap from £5,345 per person, based on two people sharing (including in-country transfers and flights but not international flights). Profits support children's education.

Michelle Jana Chan is Telegraph Travel's Cambodia destination expert. She loves the coastal town of Kep with its pre-Angkor temples hidden in limestone caves, and where fishermen's shacks serve up mud crab with Kampot pepper, washed down with pastis.

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14. BERLIN, GERMANY

'The legacy of division still gives the city a special frisson'

BY ADRIAN BRIDGE



Gosh, is it really 30 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall? It is indeed, and this year presents an opportunity to gain fresh perspectives on the seismic event that totally redefined the world. The city – now of course one, and long since a major draw for lovers of history, art and partying – will be playing host to a series of exhibitions and reflections on what happened on that joyous night of Nov 9 1989, what led up to it, what followed it – and of the East German state that was so swiftly jettisoned in its wake.

There will be tours of the wall art depicted in the East Side Gallery, cycle rides along the length of what used to be the border, insights into the workings of the Stasi secret police and a series of performances at the Jazzwerkstatt Peitz, a radical festival

that back in the day was hailed as the flagship of the free jazz scene behind the Iron Curtain. Berlin is not a city that stands still – other things to look out for this year include the opening of the Humboldt Forum, a major artistic enterprise built on the site of what was once the palace of the kaisers and then the seat of parliament for the German Democratic Republic.

There are always many good reasons to visit Berlin, but even now, three decades on, the legacy of that division still gives the city a special frisson.

How to go: Kirker Holidays (020 7593 2284; kirkerholidays.com) offers four-night breaks in Berlin staying in the stunning Hotel de Rome just off the Unter den Linden from £749 per person. Includes flights and private car transfers and a 72-hour *Museumsinsel* (Museum Island) card.

Adrian Bridge is deputy editor of *Telegraph Travel* and a former Berlin correspondent.



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15. HAVANA, CUBA

'A time warp of elegantly crumbling buildings'

BY MARCEL THEROUX



Cuba is celebrating a double birthday in 2019. It's 500 years since its capital, Havana, was founded; and 60 years since Fidel Castro and

his precociously hipster-bearded band of revolutionaries overthrew the US-backed dictator and established a nascent worker's paradise on the Caribbean island.

After a wobble in the early Nineties – when the Soviet Union collapsed and Cuba had to confront the fact that it was living beyond its means – the country has rallied. Economic liberalisation under Castro's recently retired brother, Raúl, means that there's never been a better time to go. A boom in hotels, private accommodation and small restaurants has massively expanded the options for visitors, and the dreaded influx of American money, scouring away the character of the place and putting a Starbucks on every corner, has yet to materialise.

Havana remains in a kind of time warp, where Ladas are coveted, and Fifties Chevys ply the quiet roads between the elegantly crumbling buildings. The collection of art in the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes gives the visitor a crash course in Cuban identity: its thwarted aspirations for freedom, its beguiling mixture of European, American and African influences. Live music remains the heartbeat of the island. Go to a jazz show at La Zorra y El Cuervo, dance to a salsa band at Club 1830, or catch one of island's emerging artists.

How to go: Steppes Travel (01285 601050; steppestravel.com) offers a seven-day itinerary to Havana and Trinidad from £3,570pp for two sharing, on a B&B basis and including transfers and international flights.

Marcel Theroux is the author of *The Secret Books* and a frequent contributor to *Telegraph Travel*.



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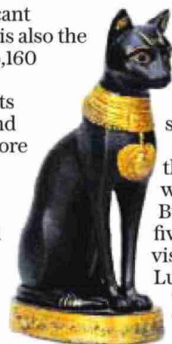
16. THE NILE, EGYPT

'Experience history on one of the world's most enthralling river journeys'

BY TERESA MACHAN



It is surely no coincidence that, of all the rivers in the world, the one that first lured British travellers in significant numbers is also the longest (4,160 miles/6,700km). Egypt's key transportation artery is also its archaeological showcase – and what better way to imbibe more than 5,000 years of history than on one of the world's most enthralling river journeys? Through thick and thin, our love affair with Egypt endures. Antiquities put it on the map, but we return again and again for



Egypt's other charms – warm winters, exotic cities and desert landscapes and the warmest of welcomes. After a prolonged period in the doldrums, tour operators are voting with their feet.

Nile river ships are refurbished or new; itineraries are refreshed and, just when you think you've seen it all, up pops a new discovery – most recently (last month) eight limestone sarcophagi filled with mummies.

The most popular stretch of the Nile is from Luxor to Aswan, which can be done in three days. But what's the rush? A relaxed five-night sailing would take in visits to temples at Karnak and Luxor, the Valley of the Kings, the Temple of Horus at Edfu, the Temple of Philae and the Aswan



Low Dam and the Unfinished Obelisk.

For a more immersive experience, take the "long" cruise (up to 12 days), from Cairo to Aswan, visiting the pyramids at Giza and temples and tombs that fly under the radar, including Dendera and Abydos, while allowing time to wonder at how little has changed since

Thomas Cook began bringing tourists here in the late 19th century. Cross-legged sailors steer feluccas languidly up and downstream, water buffalo turn the fields, oxen carts rumble through ramshackle villages, children splash off riparian beaches and, around the next bend, a remarkably intact temple will probably appear. **How to go:** An 11-night Luxor-to-Cairo cruise costs from £1,799pp (no single supplement on the lower deck) on the 48-cabin Jaz Royale with Discover Egypt (discoveregypt.co.uk). A three-night cruise on the Sanctuary Sunboat IV (above) costs from £764pp including all excursions (sanctuaryretreats.com). Both exclude flights.

Teresa Machan is Telegraph Travel's cruise editor.



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17. MONTREAL, CANADA

'A flurry of chic hotel openings has added to the spirit of flamboyant otherness'

BY HARRIET O'BRIEN



handshake is the norm. It's just one of the things that sets the vibrant metropolis apart. A flurry of chic hotel openings has also been adding to the spirit of flamboyant otherness. A seven-and-a-half-hour direct flight

In exuberant, foodie Montreal, the local greeting is a kiss on both cheeks – right side first, strictly speaking – whereas in Canada's other major cities a

from Heathrow (with several daily services from BA and Air Canada), Montreal glories in its heritage, its festivals and its edgy combination of cultures; not only francophone and anglophone, but also Spanish, Greek, Vietnamese (they say 80 languages are spoken). All of which underlies the sense of energy and creativity that has sparked a boom of new architecture and places to stay. Le Mount Stephen in the Golden Square Mile paved the way, opening in 2017 and wowing the city with a stately, well-preserved 19th-century façade concealing an



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ultra-modern building. Hotel Monville, further east in Downtown, was launched in spring 2018, complete with bright, minimalist bedrooms for which robots provide room service. The apogee looks to be the 168-room hotel that Canada's uber-luxurious Four Seasons group will open in 2019. Also in the Golden Square Mile, close to the art galleries of the Old Port, the 18-storey building will be connected to upmarket Ogilvy department store; it will offer a state-of-the-art spa and three top-notch restaurants.
How to go: Canada Holiday Architects

(canadaholidayarchitects.net; 01242 253073) offers a week-long trip to Montreal from £1,635pp, based on two sharing, with six nights at Le Mount Stephen, flights from Heathrow, and a guided city walk. For details about the Four Seasons Montreal, visit fourseasons.com/montreal.

Harriet O'Brien is a regular contributor to *Telegraph Travel* and an enthusiast about Canada, having worked in the Canadian media.

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18. RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

‘South America’s most feted city is lively, noisy and seductive’

BY CHRIS LEADBEATER



You no longer see the words “Rio de Janeiro” and “low-cost” in the same sentence. South America’s most feted city is many things – lively; noisy;

seductive – but with the growth of the Brazilian economy in the past 20 years, and the drop in the value of the pound since 2016, the samba centrepiece is not the “cheap” place it was at the turn of the millennium.

However, this will change a little on March 31 – when Norwegian (0330 828 0854; norwegian.com) launches a

direct service to Galeao International Airport from Gatwick. It should be no surprise that this ambitious low-cost airline is making eyes at the home of Corcovado and Copacabana – it has hugely expanded its route map into the US in the past three years, taking on the national carriers. It intends to provide competition for the only other non-stop link to Rio from the UK – the British Airways flight from Heathrow.

The price of staying in the city varies according to the time of year, and those seeking to limit their outlay should certainly avoid the Rio Carnival (March 2-9 in 2019). However, if you set off on May 1 and linger for a week, you can book a return with Norwegian from £450 per person – the “LowFare” option, which allows for just 10kg of hand luggage. More realistically, a “LowFare+” reservation – said carry-on allowance, 20kg hold bag, a meal and choice of seat – for the same dates costs from £550 a head.

Alternatively, if you have no wish to journey further in Brazil, Norwegian also sells fly’n’flop packages.

How to go: A week at the three-star Augusto’s Copacabana Hotel (three blocks from the beach), checking in on May 1, costs from £646pp, with flights (norwegianholidays.com).

Chris Leadbeater is *The Telegraph’s* travel correspondent. He lived like a king in Rio, on pennies, in 2003.



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19. THE WILD WEST, USA

'The spirits of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid linger in salmon-pink sawtooth cliffs'

BY SARAH MARSHALL



A geological masterpiece of sky-scraping monoliths, fiery desert plateaus and canyons so deep they swallow the light, these south-western

states are a natural fit for the big screen, serving as some of the greatest cinematic backdrops to date.

Next year, two celluloid biggies celebrate their 50th birthdays, providing a nostalgic nudge to get out on those dusty, care-free, open roads. Scenes from Dennis Hopper's

Easy Rider have made Monument Valley a magnet for two and four-wheeled adventures, with self-guided routes along the Arizona-Utah border weaving past towering 6,551ft-high sandstone buttes and carving an even more effortless glide.

Further west, in Zion National Park, the spirits of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid linger in salmon-pink, sawtooth cliffs. One of Utah's "Mighty Five", the park's visitor numbers are spiralling, although there are plenty of lesser-known places for outlaws to hide; explore 43 state parks, including the Martian landscapes of Goblin Valley and the restless Coral Pink Sand

Dunes, shifting by up to 50ft a year. In spring, there's even talk of introducing a pioneering timed-entry scheme for the Arches National Park, allowing visitors to enjoy sunbursts and sandscapes framed by 2,000 wind-hewn arches – without the crowds.

But the big daddy of them all is Arizona's 1,930 sq mile (5,000 sq km) Grand Canyon National Park, celebrating a century of protected status in 2019. Special events include a Star Party (June 22-29), when a series of telescopes will shed light on constellations and distant galaxies illuminating the night sky. With Oscar-winning performances guaranteed, it's set to be a blockbuster; expect scenes no CGI effects could possibly recreate.

How to go: Audley Travel (01993 838873; audleytravel.com) offers a 15-day Audley Cultures & Canyons of Western USA Self-Drive from £2,560pp, including flights, accommodation and car hire.

Sarah Marshall is a wildlife and adventure travel writer, who loves to get off the grid whenever she can.



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**20. BRISBANE AND ADELAIDE,
AUSTRALIA**

‘Southbound trains leave Queensland’s capital for a three-night journey to Adelaide’

BY ANTHONY LAMBERT



For decades Australia's two luxury all-inclusive tourist trains, the Indian Pacific and the Ghan, have been unrivalled ways to see some of the country's most

inhospitable but entrancing places in style. Their operating company, Great Southern Rail, is introducing a new train from December 2019 linking Brisbane and Adelaide, which is served by both the other trains.

The choice of direction determines the off-train excursions and number of nights on board. The two-night option departs from Adelaide in the morning for an afternoon excursion through the rugged mountain ranges of the



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Grampians in Victoria, famous for its waterfalls, wild flowers and such fauna as wallabies and echidnas – spiny anteaters. Next morning passengers visit the country's capital of Canberra with the chance to visit Parliament House, the National Portrait Gallery and National Arboretum. Skirting Sydney, the train reaches the Pacific Ocean in New South Wales for a "Beachside Experience" while having breakfast on the final morning before a late afternoon arrival in Brisbane.

Southbound trains leave Queensland's capital at 10.15am for a three-night journey to Adelaide, enjoying a late afternoon run beside the sea along the New South Wales coast. The following morning, passengers leave for a day tour of the Hunter Valley vineyards before



skirting Sydney to reach Victoria. The third-day excursion is along the Great Ocean Road to reach the limestone stacks on the Shipwreck Coast known as the 12 Apostles – even though there are eight and have never been more

than nine. After breakfast rolling through the pastoral landscapes of South Australia on the final morning, the train arrives at Adelaide.

Accommodation is similar to that on the other trains – Gold Service single and double cabins, Gold Superior and Platinum Service, with a cabin almost twice the size of a Gold Twin cabin and access to the Chairman's Carriage.

Great Southern Rail offers a variety of add-on packages in conjunction with its three train routes.

How to go: Great Southern Rail (0061 8 8213 4401; greatsouthernrail.com.au); from £1,312pp based on two sharing

Anthony Lambert has written more than 20 books on railway travel and history and thinks it by far the best way to travel.