



Meet the Family

exotic resorts in dreamy locations

Welcome...

Welcome to the latest issue of our regular travel magazine where we hope to entice you with a varied selection of worldwide holiday ideas and destinations. So, why not treat yourself, partner, family or a group of friends to a well-earned break.

This issue focuses on a number of popular types of holidays including cruising, fly-drive and safari.

The choice of holidays afloat is huge and set to continue as the cruise companies take delivery of more, new ships ranging from grand ocean liners and super yachts to sleek, shallow-draft river cruisers. These floating hotels have redefined hospitality on the water. 'Round the world' with the leading luxury cruise ships and a review of non-European river cruises are covered in this edition as well as a piece on island hopping yacht charters in the British Virgin Islands with a more affordable yacht-share option.

If you could go on safari in Africa just once, then you would want to see it all; the 'Big 5' AND Mountain gorillas. Tauck does just that on a true 'bucket list' escorted tour to East Africa. For those that seek a more independent approach our review of self-drive holidays in Namibia is a must read. Continuing on motor touring this issue begins with a two-centre recommendation in timeless Tuscany.

Malta has had a colourful history through the ages, but today it is an island nation that retains a warm affection for visitors from



the UK. It is certainly a great place to escape to with an excellent year-round climate and many excellent hotels and resorts.

Finally we are very pleased that our new web site, www.spiritaway.co.uk, has been so well received. All our spirited moments, past and present, are featured in greater depth giving you informative insights into the places we have visited. It will also be updated at regular intervals and you can always view past Spirit Away magazines under 'Inspire Me'. **Happy browsing.**

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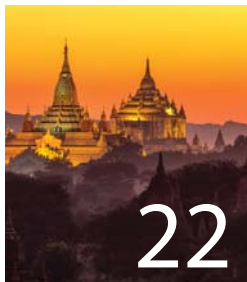


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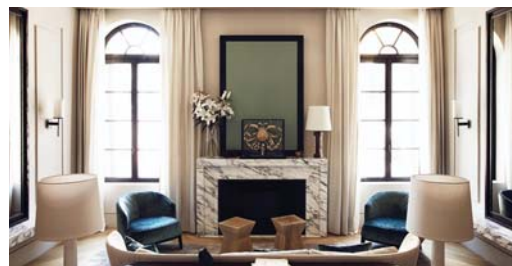
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Palazzo Cristo - Exquisite designer living in Venetian palace immortalised by Canaletto



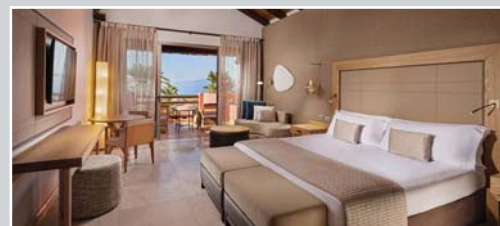
Palazzo Cristo offers a choice of three spacious, elegant and contemporary apartment suites in the Castello district of Venice. Situated in Campo Santi Giovanni, the historic building dates back to the 16th Century, and features in paintings by both Canaletto and Francesco Guardi. Prior to its current renovation it had remained untouched for nearly 70 years.

The stylish, 'modern classic' interiors are a celebration of the design talents of owners, Anna Covre and Frederic Tubau, who have created a private and luxurious place to stay in one of Venice's popular hotspots that still retains a vibrant, local atmosphere. Palazzo Cristo is ideal both as a romantic hideaway for a couple in either of the two 1-bedroom suites, whilst the 3-bedroom suite will appeal to small groups and families.

The Ritz-Carlton, Abama launches new family accommodations



This wonderful year-round resort always has families in mind with its exceptional accommodations, amazing panoramic views and outstanding facilities. Now, to put the icing on the cake, they are launching new family accommodations in Row 4 of the 'Villa' area nestled in lush, botanical gardens with ocean or resort views. This row has its own enticing swimming pool with 22 new sets of interconnecting Villa deluxe rooms (12 ocean view & 10 resort view) and four Villa one bed family suites (1 ocean view & 3 resort view).



New Forest lifestyle favourite offers ideal ski-in ski-out retreat in the French Alps



If you have been fortunate to visit either The Pig or Lime Wood in Hampshire's New Forest then you will know that they are renowned for their sparky service, effortless style and tasty food, and that you should book well in advance to secure a table for a glorious dinner let alone a room for the weekend!

Well, those clever chappies have exported their woodland magic onto the prestigious slopes of Courchevel 1650 with the superbly positioned ski-in ski-out Portetta. With forty-four hotel rooms, including six loft suites, plus three self-catering ski chalets they can accommodate a wide range of contingencies. The Piste View rooms are recommended for their mountain vistas and sunny morning aspect. The hotel has a great spa and compliments its UK cousins with an equally fine restaurant.

The Canny Traveller

Getting understood in a very foreign land

Speak with hand gestures

Pointing, miming, and playing charades can often get your message across. If you think you've mistakenly offended someone, pull out the Namaste gesture: Press your hands together with your fingers pointing upwards and your thumbs close to your chest, and bow your head slightly. That gesture is usually received as a sign of respect and peace.

Technology in your hand - Use a translator app

There are many to choose from, but the Google Translate app can be a lifesaver: Point the app's camera at text (a menu, a road sign, a plaque in a museum), and the app automatically translates it. It also lets you have a conversation with someone: Select your languages, talk into the microphone, and the app translates whatever it hears in either language into the other.

Carry your hotel's business card in the local language

That way you can always find your way back to the hotel by showing the address to a taxi driver or to someone on the street.

Ask the right people for directions

If you're trying to figure out who on a street to ask for directions, the person most likely to speak English is usually a professionally dressed young person. But also consider walking into any hotel, restaurant, or store and asking an employee there for directions.

States of Independence

The cities of Lucca and Siena are splendid focal points to plan a two-centre tour of Tuscany

One of Italy's most popular regions, Tuscany is a timeless masterpiece of rolling vineyards, winding roads lined by elegant cypress trees and iconic hilltop towns with a rich cultural heritage. Take to the road and you will be rewarded with days filled with exciting sightseeing, hilltop panoramas that are breathtaking and culinary extravaganzas washed down with the superlative wines of the region. Leave Florence for its own visit but rather make the cities of Lucca and Siena your focal points for northern and central Tuscany respectively. If arriving by air why not fly into Pisa and return home via Rome (2hrs 30 mins from Siena).

Lucca, in the north west, is a Renaissance marvel, encircled by massive 16th-century walls now used as a 4-mile elevated footpath. From soaring ancient towers to white-marble churches, Lucca combines some of the best aspects of Tuscany. For a panoramic view across the sea of terracotta rooftops of the old city, you should climb the 200-plus steps that run up the Guinigi Tower. Bizarrely, oak trees crown this medieval lookout! Lovers of opera flock to nearby Torre del Lago for the annual Puccini Festival, celebrating the music of Lucca's most famous musical son.

In close proximity to Lucca lies **Pisa** with the famous leaning tower as well as the stylish beach town of **Viareggio**, renowned for its annual carnival and favoured by Italians for a summer break to the Mediterranean. Viareggio would make a good summer base for exploring Lucca and the surrounding area.



A Princely Place

Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte, Viareggio

Built in the early 1920s, the renovated Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte, a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, is a grand and prestigious 5 star hotel facing Viareggio's immaculate beachfront. Boasting a michelin star restaurant the hotel also has a spectacular rooftop, heated pool (during colder seasons), from which you can take in the stunning vistas of the Tyrrhenian Sea.



Siena

Affairs of the Estate

Belmond Castello di Casole, nr. Siena

Lying just 20 minutes from the centre of Siena, Belmond Castello di Casole is a 41 suite hotel in a large, private estate (once home to Italian filmmaker, Visconti). There is an interesting mix of accommodation. Most suites stick closely to the stylistic parameters of the old castle, whether in the main building, the old priest's quarters or the outlying farm buildings. Nine of them, though, the Oliveto Suites, are strikingly contemporary. The stunning hotel pool overlooks a vista of rolling hills with the Castle behind. There is a rich array of activities available including truffle hunting, cookery classes, a sublime spa, or perhaps spend the day driving around the nearby villages and towns including San Gimignano and Monteriggioni in a vintage car.



Montage below from left to right:
Piazza San Martino in Lucca,
The pageantry of the Palio in Siena
The swimming pool at Belmond Castello di Casole

Surrounded by the rolling landscape of the central Tuscan winelands, the city of **Siena** occupies a strident, hilltop location that recalls its medieval heyday when Siena competed for power as an independent republic against Florence. Sadly, the might of its neighbour came to bear and the city's autonomy was absorbed into The Grand Duchy of Tuscany (Florence), unlike canny Lucca, which remained an independent state like Venice well into the 18th century. However, the architecture and traditions of this Renaissance city have been remarkably preserved including its beautiful cathedral, the colourful festival of the Palio and the imposition of an extended traffic free pedestrian zone in the heart of the medieval city centre.

The numerous hilltop towns surrounding Siena are all beautifully preserved jewels of art and architecture whether it be the sight of the 15 towers that dominate the skyline of **San Gimignano** (in medieval times there were 72) or the 14 turrets on the high walls surrounding **Monteriggioni**. For many, due to the prestige of its local grapevine cultivation, **Montalcino** is a particularly favoured destination and home to one of Italy's finest wines, Brunello di Montalcino. **Bagno Vignoni** is famous for its natural hot springs. The hot water flows in a shallow channel along the edge of the town where you can sit and soak your aching feet or you can have a proper bathe in the town's famous spa.

...the wish list of "must sees" are too many to list here, but hopefully this brief overview will stimulate you to enjoy your own Tuscan two-centre journey of discovery.





Knights' Delight

The Mediterranean nation with special appeal to UK visitors

With over 7,000 years of history, the Maltese Islands of Malta, Gozo and little Comino are steeped in culture and heritage. They're also surrounded by the bluest (and cleanest) sea and sit under cloudless azure skies for much of the year, whilst the honey-coloured landscape is as warm as the welcome extended by the islanders.

Everywhere you go on the main island, unique historic sights await. Temples, palaces, cathedrals, and forts provide a living history you can almost touch. Sound plays an important part in the life of the Islands. The

mix of fireworks and music transforms a summer night into a special memory.

To eat is to taste the islands' multicultural heritage. The history of the Maltese Islands reads like a 'who's who' of military and economic powers holding sway over the Mediterranean through the ages including the Romans, Arabs, Turks, Knights of St John, French, British and even the Normans.



After dinner, night clubs, wine bars and casinos beckon with their own brand of excitement. And best of all: to experience all this, Malta is a short flight away.

Gozo is the sister island of Malta. Situated a short 20-minute ferry ride away it is much smaller and quieter than Malta, and offers visitors a very different experience from its more party-minded neighbour (there's only one club on the whole island!). It is far more a 'local' experience filled with calming serenity, hidden beaches and vast areas of unspoilt nature.



A family favourite

The Westin Dragonara Resort, St Julian's

The Westin Dragonara Resort is perfectly located on a private peninsula which allows guests direct access to the sea via the hotel's attractive swimming pool. Owing to the variety of room choices, families are particularly well-catered for, and young guests will be sure to have fun at Westin Kids Club (3-12yrs). Deluxe rooms are particularly spacious and are perfect for families.



Boutique Baroque

The Xara Palace Relais & Chateaux, Mdina

Perched on ancient bastions within the original walls of a 17th century Palazzo and surrounded by stunning baroque architecture in Malta's former capital, the silent medieval walled city of Mdina, The Xara Palace is family run and deliciously exclusive, ideal for the most discerning of travellers and a perfect secluded setting for anniversary celebrations and romancing honeymooners.



Complete relaxation

Kempinski Hotel San Lawrenz, Gozo

Located close to the iconic 'Dwejra Bay' on Malta's idyllic sister island Gozo this 5-star hideaway resort is set amidst 30,000 sq m of semi-tropical gardens, and features 140 elegant rustic rooms and suites as well as a range of distinctive dining venues. Its authentic Ayurveda Centre is one of the largest in the Mediterranean offering a variety of therapies and cures and, at Kempinski The Spa, a wide choice of wellness treatments is also available.



Romantic seclusion

Ta' Cenc, Sannat, Gozo

Built on Gozo's highest point, Ta' Cenc has magnificent views across to the islands of Malta and Comino. It also occupies a peaceful setting in 160 hectares of gardens and countryside. 83 ground-level rooms, suites, bungalows, trullios and family apartments are tastefully furnished with either a terrace or a small private garden. For lunch and dinner, the 'Il Carrubo' restaurant offers Italian cuisine, along with Gozitan and international dishes.



The Crown and the Lion

From a Boston beginnings and into the “Big Blue” with The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company

Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve, Thailand



Al Bustan Palace, A Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Oman



The name Ritz-Carlton is synonymous the world over as a deluxe hotel brand that represents the very finest hospitality. The striking logo, that is so recognisable as a statement of excellence, is an amalgam of the British royal seal (the crown) and the logo of a financial backer (the lion).

From its birth in 1927, with the opening of the Ritz-Carlton Boston, it has witnessed global growth built on a legacy that honours the principles of Cesar Ritz, the “king of hoteliers and hotelier to kings” as well as the gastronomic accomplishments of his partner, Auguste Escoffier, the godfather of fine dining.

Today Ritz-Carlton hotels and resorts are to be found on every continent and is very much a company on a strong growth curve. Beyond hotels, Ritz-Carlton also manages, under its brand, spas, golf courses, residences, luxury meeting venues and, from 2020, will also promote its own luxury cruises on custom-made super yachts.

Looking after and exceeding the needs of each and every guest is at the very foundation of the Ritz-Carlton success story. The hotels are considered the gold standard of hospitality because of the conviction that employees are the face of their company, and that service isn't just part of the brand, it is the brand. Attention to detail is bound to have a positive effect on guests and The Ritz-Carlton are justifiably proud of the high percentage of repeat business from contented customers.

For those of you who would perhaps like to see the bar placed even higher then mention should be made of the Ritz-Carlton Club Level. To be found at many of the hotels, this exclusive domain offers club level guests even more individualised attention with dedicated lounges where delicious food offerings are prepared throughout the day and a personal concierge is available to assist you with everything from hard-to-get restaurant reservations to changing your airline flights.



The Ritz-Carlton New York, Central Park



The Ritz-Carlton Abama, Tenerife

Coming soon...

The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Club



Set sail on a journey of discovery with The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. Designed to combine the luxury lifestyle of The Ritz-Carlton® and the casual freedom of a yachting vacation, The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection will offer bespoke voyages on the first of three custom-built yachts from 2020. Each yacht will feature 149 suites, each with its own private terrace, and accommodate up to 298 guests in a relaxed, casually elegant atmosphere.



The Ritz-Carlton Reynolds, Lake Oconee, Georgia



The Ritz-Carlton Vienna, Austria



Meet the Family

A once in a lifetime safari to East Africa culminating with a mountain gorilla trek

There is no doubt that one of travel's richest experiences is an African wildlife safari, and if you were to experience this just once in your life then you would want to see it all - the "Big 5" of lion, leopard, elephant, Cape Buffalo and rhino in the open savannah as well as a surreal encounter in the jungle with a family group of mountain gorillas.

Look no further because renowned escorted tours specialist, Tauck, has designed the ultimate East African adventure that will take a group of like-minded wildlife enthusiasts on a 13-day journey that is sure to be the source of lifelong reminiscence.

In a journey of three distinct sections the majesty of East Africa's natural wonders will be unveiled commencing with a week of classic safari along Tanzania's famous northern circuit. With a two night stopover on the rim of Ngorongoro Crater before entering the mighty Serengeti National Park for four nights the schedule of game drives and cultural visits will reveal plenty of close-up game viewing as well as fascinating insights into both the origins of mankind and Maasai culture.



A brief coastal interlude on the Spice Island of Zanzibar adds an opportunity to relax after a week of intensive exploration at a beachfront hotel with ocean views in Stone Town. Take a cruise on a traditional dhow and learn about the centuries old spice trade.

The grand finale sees the group travel by air to landlocked Rwanda and onwards up country to the Volcanoes National Park, where preparations will be made for small groups of just 8 to accompany mountain gorilla expert guides on a walking trek up the forest-cloaked volcanic landscape for a meeting with a family group of mountain gorillas.

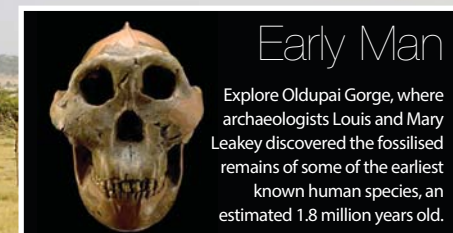
Highlights along the trail

Some of the amazing experiences to expect

TAUCK
WORLD DISCOVERY

Ballooning over the Serengeti

Lift off on an exciting hot air balloon flight as dawn breaks over the vast Serengeti grasslands; from aloft, observe wildlife in the first light of day, an African safari thrill – and enjoy another thrill upon your return where a champagne breakfast in the bush waits for you.



Early Man

Explore Oldupai Gorge, where archaeologists Louis and Mary Leakey discovered the fossilised remains of some of the earliest known human species, an estimated 1.8 million years old.



Indian Ocean "safari"

Traditional Arabian sailboats called dhows have plied the Indian Ocean waters of the Swahili Coast for millennia, trading and fishing from one island port to the next. Sail out to sea from Stone Town aboard a traditional dhow for an "Indian Ocean safari" off the coast of Zanzibar. Catch a sight of dolphins frolicking in the ocean blue; cast anchor on a sandy beach for swimming and perhaps some snorkeling near beautiful coral reefs.

Tauck inclusions & exclusives

Group size limited to just 24 guests.

On-tour film vignettes custom-made for Tauck by natural history experts and other select touches.

3 nights in Rwanda featuring a rigorous, challenging private gorilla trek in Volcanoes National Park to interact with endangered mountain gorillas in their natural habitat more than 7,000 ft. above sea level.

A hot air balloon ride over the Serengeti plains at dawn, followed by a champagne breakfast.

Picnic lunch in the heart of ancient Ngorongoro Crater.

4 nights in Serengeti National Park – 2 in a Maasai 'Rondavel'- styled lodge and 2 in a luxury tented camp; an authentic "sundowner" cocktail party.

Two nights in Zanzibar include a "spice" walking tour and dhow sailboat cruise on the Indian Ocean.

Visits to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund Museum, and Kigali's Genocide Memorial Museum.

All airport transfers and on tour flights.

34 meals – (12 breakfasts, 12 lunches, 10 dinners); gratuities to local guides, service charges, taxes and portage.

Ngorongoro Crater

With two nights staying on the crater's rim, you will descend into the "lost world" within this extinct volcano. Spot the extremely rare Black rhino amid a concentration of wildlife.



Gorillas in the Mist

There are only several hundred mountain gorillas remaining on Earth, and about half live in the forests of the Virunga mountains in Rwanda. After briefings and background talks you will be ready with an early morning start for the ultimate "bucket list" adventure.

In groups of up to 8 you will be assigned a porter who will help carry your provisions and cameras and lead you to the gorilla family you are here to meet. Once the gorillas are located, you will have the rare opportunity to watch them interact with each other, and you if they choose!



A Great Namibian Adventure

The amazing self-drive wilderness experience

Namibia is a perfect choice for anyone who wants to tour independently in Africa. It has everything for a perfect self-drive holiday, from good roads to epic wildlife and landscape viewing. The destination is best travelled by vehicle, as it allows you to make your way through the regions, seeing every view as it comes. You wouldn't get half the experience if you were to do it any other way.

The country has therefore embraced this and has done a huge amount to make itself home to the perfect self drive adventure, which it has achieved. Namibia has a fantastic road network in place, a stunning collection of lodges and campsites, and is a very safe place to travel. The people here are very friendly too. So whether it's your first time self driving and you're nervous, Namibia will welcome you warmly, or whether you're an adventurer wanting to go into the unknown, Namibia will deliver.

It is important to carefully plan a balanced Namibia self-drive itinerary to avoid covering huge distances which would be very tiring and allowing plenty of time for rest and relaxation in each place before your exciting journey continues. Certainly, you can expect to stay in excellent accommodation along the route with a great selection of luxury lodges and tented camps.

A popular itinerary would include Etosha National Park, Sossusvlei, The Skeleton Coast, Damaraland and the fascinating wildlife sanctuary at Okonjima. This would cover just the right amount of territory to suit a 2-3 week holiday, after which you might want to head down to neighbouring South Africa to relax in Cape Town for a few days before returning home.



Etosha National Park

One of Africa's best National Parks, Etosha is a must see! Here you will have the enjoyment of driving over Etosha's Pans whilst viewing an incredible array of Wildlife.



Sossusvlei

The hauntingly beautiful big dunes of the Namib are a must for any visit to Namibia and a sunrise trek to the largest dune reveals spectacular vistas of the desert.



The Skeleton Coast

Famously known for its ship wrecks and dense fogs, the Skeleton Coast is one of the most unique and authentic attractions in Africa.

Tips for Self Drive

Firstly - you must enjoy driving, and view the road trip as part of the holiday. Namibia is a vast country and its marvels are spread out.

Share the driving duties with a partner.

You can mix some Namibia self drive with other modes of transport - you could fly in and out of Sossusvlei by scenic charter flight and then pick up a car in Swakopmund to continue by road. This might be a good option if you are keen on limiting the trip to two weeks.

Family Friendly?

Notwithstanding keeping the kids amused in the car, Namibia offers a very safe and exciting environment for children, who will get an adventure to tell their school friends about! There will also be no problem in arranging suitable family rooms all along the route.



Damaraland

The Damaraland's semi-desert wilderness is simply stunning. It is also home to the country's famous desert-adapted elephants and black rhino.



Okonjima Nature Reserve

Home to the AfriCat Foundation, this beautiful area of wilderness is used to rehabilitate orphaned big cats. Track the radio-collared cheetahs and leopards that roam the reserve - follow on foot or in a 4x4, led by expert guides.



W is for WOW

W Hotels is an innovative luxury lifestyle brand with a distinct and youthful approach consisting 56 properties (with 21 new openings in the pipeline) in the most vibrant destinations around the world. Inspiring, iconic, innovative and influential, W Hotels provides the ultimate in insider access to a world of "Wow."

Each property offers a unique mix of innovative design and passions around fashion, music, entertainment, art, architecture, pop culture, and everything in between. They are unique and individual expressions of modern living, reflected in the brand's sensibility to a complete lifestyle experience with cutting-edge design, contemporary restaurant concepts, glamorous nightlife occasions, and signature spas.

When it comes to cutting-edge beach resorts, W Hotels have developed awe-inspiring "Escapes" and "Retreats" in some of the most sought after tropical island locations from the Caribbean to Bali. This feature showcases the current islands collection and looks forward with anticipation to new openings in Costa Rica, Ibiza and The Palm, Dubai.



W Vieques Island

Surrender to indulgence at W Retreat & Spa - Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, where the everyday recedes away on white beaches. Voted best Caribbean island by Travel & Leisure magazine, frolic in the secluded natural haven and discover charmed island life amid lush landscapes. Dive into the bioluminescent bay or discover lush mountains on horseback. Breathtaking views beckon beyond the natural aesthetics of 156 sand-sational rooms.



W Maldives

Castaway yet connected. Natural yet designed. Secluded yet welcoming. W Maldives is a luxury private island resort, where style flirts with soul in a wonderland of white-sand beaches, turquoise lagoons and breathtaking reefs. Pamper yourself with lavish Maldivian living. Bask in the sun on the escape's beaches, partake in adrenaline-filled water sports, or explore the island's private reef, declared one of the best house reefs in the Maldives.



W Koh Samui

Tranquil by day. Electric by night. Situated on a 30-square-mile tropical Thai island in the middle of the Gulf of Thailand, overlooking stunning beaches and lush forests, W Koh Samui awakens as the sun goes down, igniting the unexpected. Start the day with a workout at FIT or dip at WET before unwinding with a local therapy at AWAY Spa. Then, light up the evening with signature cocktails at W Lounge before dinner. Surrounded by verdant foliage, each of the 74 villas boasts a private outdoor pool.



W Bali

Escape hectic philosophies and lose yourself in the sophisticated splendour of W Bali, Seminyak, where you'll find chic restaurants, eclectic art and posh boutiques by the seductive sea in this paradise founded on contemporary fantasies. Dive into Bali's most sizzling resort, where the landscaped tropical WET® pool sets the scene for paradise. 229 rooms, suites and villas with stunning ocean and garden views mix sleek style with contemporary design.





Island Hopping Heaven

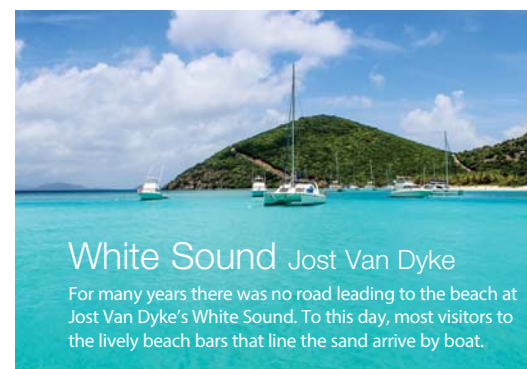
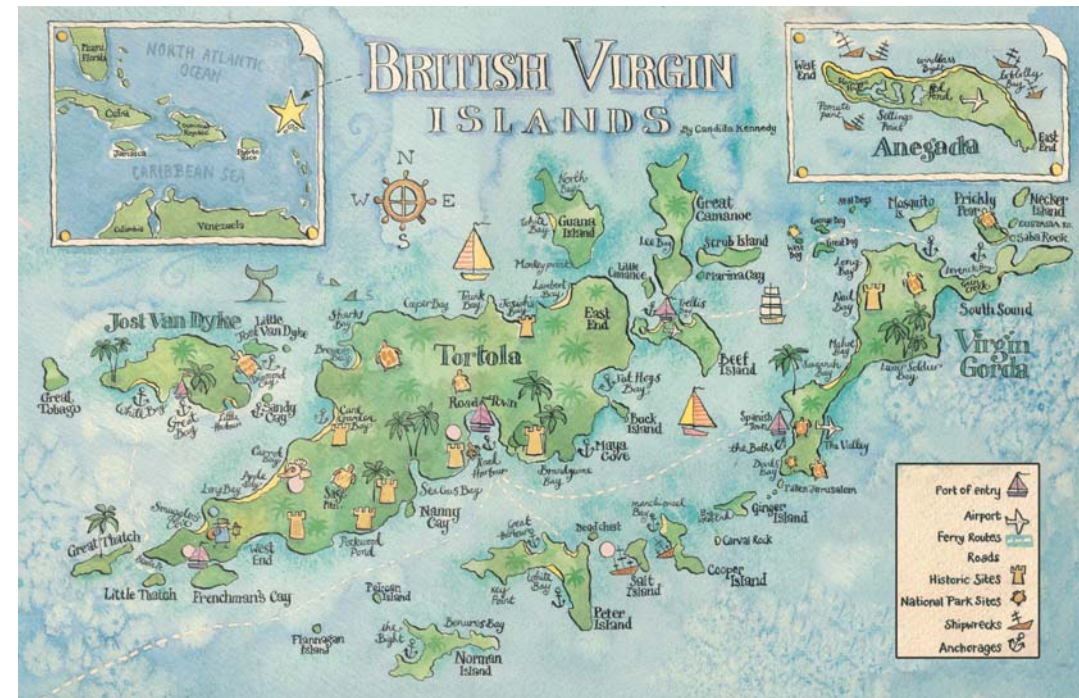
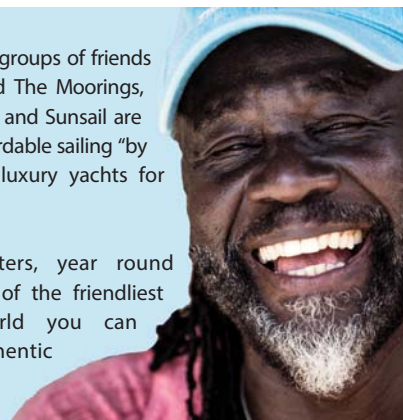
Once a playground for pirates, the BVI's are a haven for yachts and sailboats.

The British Virgin Islands are undoubtedly the sailing capital of The Caribbean. With 60 islands to explore in only 60 square miles, you can always see land and eat breakfast, lunch and dinner on different islands.

Following the destruction caused by Hurricane Irma in 2017, the marinas, bars, restaurants and anchorages are back up, brand new and welcoming sailors. The un-crowded beaches and beautiful reefs are as always.

Perfect for families or groups of friends and recently launched The Moorings, Dream Yacht Charters and Sunsail are now offering very affordable sailing "by the cabin" on their luxury yachts for couples and singles.

With non-tidal waters, year round sunshine and some of the friendliest locals in the world you can experience an authentic Caribbean holiday.



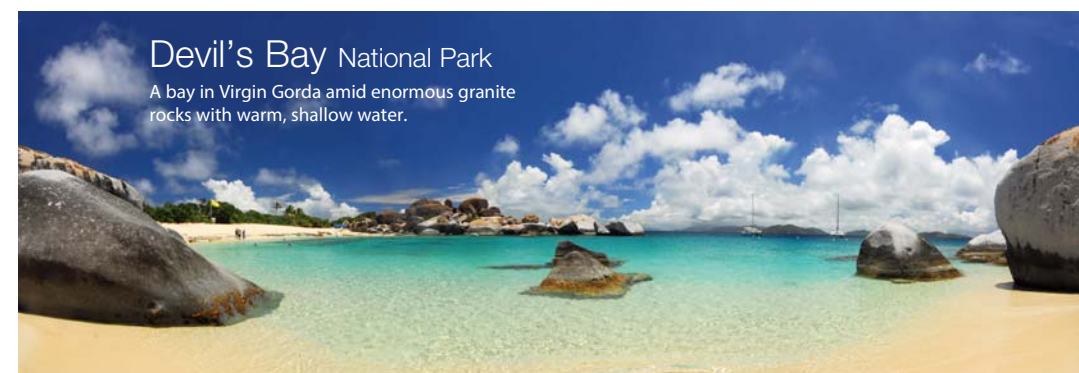
White Sound Jost Van Dyke

For many years there was no road leading to the beach at Jost Van Dyke's White Sound. To this day, most visitors to the lively beach bars that line the sand arrive by boat.



Pirates Bight Norman Island

Straight out of a Robert Louis Stevenson novel, Norman Island is a picturesque little spit of land that happens to be home to one of the BVI's most protected anchorages, The Bight.



Devil's Bay National Park

A bay in Virgin Gorda amid enormous granite rocks with warm, shallow water.



Caribbean Beach Chic

Jamaica Inn

Intimate hideaway on Jamaica's north coast

Hidden away on a secluded sandy cove just east of Ochos Rios, Jamaica Inn is renowned for its high standards of service and luxury. Celebrating its 60th diamond jubilee anniversary this iconic property is consistently ranked amongst the top luxury hotels in the Caribbean.

52 intimate suites and cottages showcase enchanting views of the Caribbean Sea and feature either a large furnished verandah or balustrade balcony from which to enjoy the calming sea breeze. Retaining an air of colonial Jamaica, the hotel has played host to a number of celebrities over the years including Winston Churchill, Marilyn Monroe and Ian Fleming.

Dining is on an outdoor terrace with stunning, uninterrupted sea views and delectable cuisine. For total relaxation, the Ocean Spa specialises in locally inspired treatments using products drawn from the plants of the island, sourced from local organic farmers and wild-gathered by environmentally sustainable methods.



Bequia Beach Hotel

Classic Caribbean charm with retro styling

Bequia is located 100 miles west of Barbados and lies nine miles south of St. Vincent measuring seven square miles and is home to just 5,000 inhabitants. Bequia Beach Hotel is the only privately owned and managed hotel to have been built in the West Indies for more than ten years. A contemporary take on colonial Caribbean architecture, the hotel combines elegance and charm with a vintage fifties retro feel, reminiscent of the Caribbean of yesteryear.

The property is set within nine acres of lush tropical gardens, on one of the island's best beaches, Friendship Bay. The distinctive 58 suites comprise Beachfront, Ocean, Classic Sea View, private villas and a penthouse suite. The Estate Villa features two twin and two master bedrooms, refined living amenities, a large private infinity pool and a striking wraparound terrace with unrivalled views across the bay.

Meticulously finished, the suites exude comfort and privacy and feature vintage art work from world renowned artist Kerne Erickson. Inspired by Oliver Messel, the famed Mustique architect, the main reception building offers guests a stylish Library, the property also offers a locally inspired spa, gym room, sauna and outdoor rock shower and two swimming pools.

The dining options at Bequia are influenced by the islands eclectic history, the hotel's main restaurant 'Bagatelle' is located right on Friendship Beach whilst 'Blue Tropic' and bar (open in high-season) offers a classic Italian-styled menu. Alternatively, newly acquired 'Jacks Beach Bar' at Princess Margaret's Beach is a free, daily 10 minute ride away with changing facilities and showers so guests can spend the day there.

The World is your Oyster

Around the world aboard the leading luxury cruise ships

With a dwindling supply of cabins remaining for luxury round the world cruises in 2019 it would seem that the popularity of the ultimate "bucket list" experience is very much back in vogue.

All the reason then, if you are reading this piece, and are wondering how to spend the kids' inheritance, that this might be a good time to reserve your cabin for a 2020 sailing, or as is more likely in this age of super deluxe cruising - your

balcony suite - for a once-in-a-lifetime indulgence lasting upwards of three months away from home ...so don't forget to tell the milkman!

But more seriously, if you are considering a world cruise it is definitely worth booking early for the best fares, and the accommodation of your choice - after all, if you are going to be away for that long, you want to be comfortable.

So what is on offer for January 2020 ...

SILVERSEA®

Seven Continents

140 nights aboard *Silver Whisper*
Fort Lauderdale to Amsterdam

Pushing the boundaries of ultra-luxury cruising, Silversea's World Cruise 2020 will incorporate many 'soft expedition' features, including an extraordinary 3-day Antarctic experience. Departing 06 January the spectacular itinerary visits all SEVEN continents including Antarctica.



Regent

SEVEN SEAS CRUISES®

Navigate the World

131 nights aboard *Seven Seas Mariner*
Miami or San Francisco round trip

The all-suite, all-balcony *Seven Seas Mariner* will host Regent's new 2020 Navigate the World cruise. This captivating 131-night itinerary, departing January 24, 2020, is a round trip from San Francisco, visiting idyllic islands of the South Pacific and ancient cultures of subcontinental India before heading around the Arabian Peninsula, and then plying the halcyon Mediterranean in springtime and cruising the Caribbean and Central America in early summer.



CRYSTAL CRUISES

Epic Empires & Idyllic Isles

105 days aboard *Crystal Serenity*
Miami to Rome

An epic adventure through the Southern Hemisphere and beyond journeying throughout the Pacific and Indian oceans, and into the Tasman, Andaman and Mediterranean seas. Uncover the marvels of man and treasures of Mother Nature, from the Panama Canal to the Great Barrier Reef. Relish the welcoming joie de vivre of idyllic French Polynesia and view in awe the majestic fjords of New Zealand. Dip your toes into the cultural melting pot of India, and follow the path of legendary empires in Arabia.



SEABOURN® Extraordinary Destinations

146 nights aboard *Seabourn Sojourn*

For the first time in 6 years Seabourn are offering a world cruise departing 4th January 2020 from Miami to San Francisco. This epic voyage includes the Caribbean, West Africa, the Indian Ocean, South East Asia, Australasia and the South Pacific.

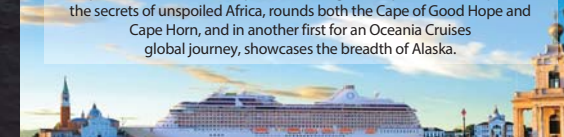


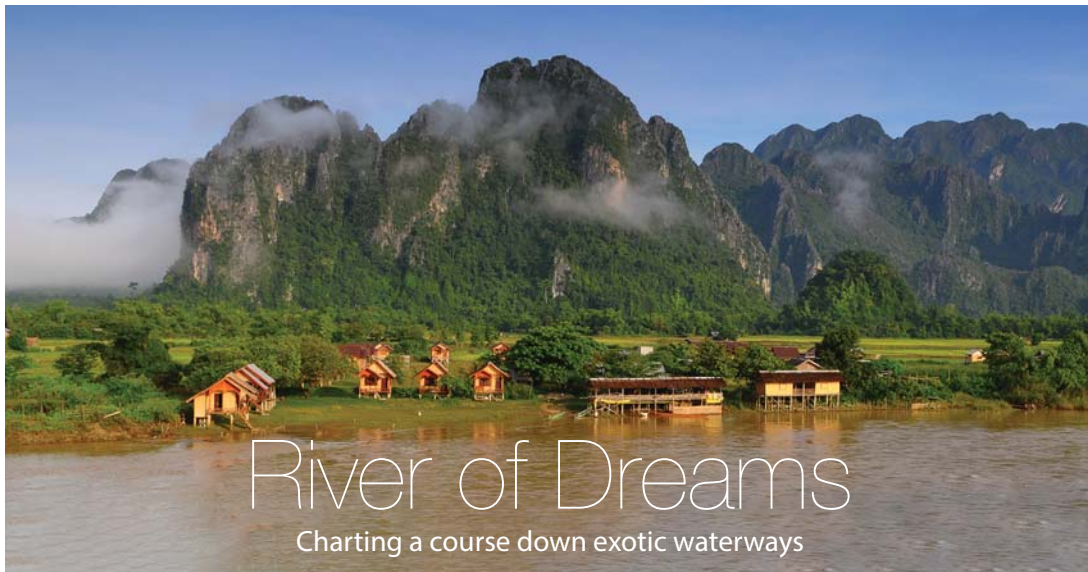
OCEANIA CRUISES®

Around the World in 180 Days

Miami to San Francisco - 180 nights aboard *Seabourn Sojourn*

The 2020 Around the World voyage represents the brand's most expansive focus ever on Japan with nine glorious ports of call, explores the secrets of unspoiled Africa, rounds both the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn, and in another first for an Oceania Cruises global journey, showcases the breadth of Alaska.





River of Dreams

Charting a course down exotic waterways

Whilst Europe's waterways are the most popular of the world's rivers, luring a kingsize portion of river cruisers from the UK, there are plenty of far-flung alternatives if you're looking for something more exotic than the Rhine, Danube, Rhône, Douro or Po.

You might cruise the upper reaches of the Amazon, embark on a cruise-safari in Africa or discover history and culture on the Mekong in Cambodia and Vietnam, the Irrawaddy in Burma and the Mississippi in the USA.

Or how about a less-travelled alternative like the Brahmaputra in the northwest of India or the Kerala Backwaters to the far south, where you can cruise on a kettuvallam, a traditional houseboat made from planks of jack wood held together with coir rope.



With Siem Reap in Cambodia at one end of the Mekong and Ho Chi Minh City at the other, a cruise on the lower stretches of this natural highway offers a unique platform from which to absorb the rich culture and appreciate the everyday importance of the great river. Travel in style aboard a luxury river cruiser like Uniworld's *Mekong Navigator*.

Ol' Man River

Ride the largest paddle-wheel steamboat ever built

There is no better way to explore the landscape, history, heritage and culture of the Mississippi than a voyage aboard a genuine paddle-wheel steamboat like the *American Queen*. Follow in the footsteps of the classic 'Show Boat' on a nine-day journey from Memphis to New Orleans, calling at the likes of Vicksburg, Natchez and Baton Rouge along the way.



The Magic of Africa

Taking in the wildlife sights along the river bank

Moving along the banks of the great Chobe River that separates Namibia from Botswana, *Zambezi Queen* is a 5-star, 42-metre long floating hotel offering unparalleled sophistication in one of the most remote locations on the planet. Best of all, as a guest on the vessel, you can enjoy a truly unique and adventurous river safari holiday while still being surrounded by complete comfort and elegance.



Spirited Moments

Calgary to Vancouver

with breath taking scenery by *Melanie*

Our 14 day Canadian road trip this Summer began in Banff with hot springs, tumbling waterfalls and a gondola trip to Sulphur Mountain. Our next stop was the Fairmont Lake Louise where a lake view room is a must to fully appreciate the lake's changing colours from dawn to dusk. The drive to Jasper took us along the scenic Icefield Parkway where we visited the Athabasca Glacier and Glacier Skywalk.

White water rafting in Jasper was exhilarating for a first timer! and a quick dip in the 2-degree river was bracing! We travelled to Vancouver in style on the Rocky Mountaineer. The 2-day journey follows the Fraser River and passes glaciers, waterfalls and mountains and has so many photo opportunities. Upgrading to Goldleaf was definitely worth it, and it gave us superb service and food quality.

Once in Vancouver we took the ferry to Vancouver Island and drove through beautiful scenery to Tofino which is famous for its surfing,

whale watching and bear watching. Our highlight was seeing both bears and whales on two morning trips. We drove south from Tofino to Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, and stayed at the majestic Fairmont Empress which has such a great location.

Vancouver was our last stop and it is a bustling city with excellent restaurants and a focus on outdoor life. We cycled round Stanley Park, walked across the Capilano Suspension Bridge, took a cable car to the top of Grouse Mountain and visited Granville Island for delicious food.

Canada certainly exceeded my expectations.

To find out more about Canada, please call Melanie on 01732 860503 or 07785 706623 or email: melanie@spiritawaytravel.co.uk

All-inclusive Rejuvenated by *Nicola*

For some time, the all-inclusive hotel has had a bad reputation for average accommodation, low quality food and non-branded drinks. However, this reputation has begun to change with the rejuvenation of the all-inclusive offer.

Ikos group is leading the way with its 'Infinite Lifestyle' offer. Luxury is at the heart of this, with fine dining a major focus. Menus are prepared by Michelin-starred chefs across the à la carte restaurants; there's also a 'dine out' option.

Each resort has plenty of sports to enjoy, the spa has a range of treatments and children will love the kid's clubs. The hotels are modern and spacious and even when they are full, it doesn't feel like it. The service is fantastic, the staff are friendly, and you have the relief of knowing that the extra drinks and ice-creams are already paid for!

I visited Ikos Olivia and stayed in Ikos Oceania in July this year. Ikos plan 7 hotels in 7 years; Ikos Dassia opened in Corfu this summer with a fourth property planned for Kos in 2019 and a move into Spain for 2020.

If you want to enjoy all-inclusive luxury at Ikos, book early. They'll be fully booked before you know it! Please call Nicola on 020 8460 6760 or 07885 990505 or email: nicola@spiritawaytravel.co.uk



Spirited Moments

The Seychelles

by Caroline

British Airways have recently reintroduced their direct flight to the Seychelles so I felt the time had come to pay a return visit to these very special islands. Few places in the world are as beautiful as the Seychelles and with just over nine hours flying time and a three hour time difference it makes for the perfect winter sunshine destination.

A few of my friends and clients laughed when I told them I was going on a business trip to the Seychelles and, whilst it was not exactly arduous, I did have to try out six hotels in as many nights! The new Four Seasons property Desroches was our first stop and then onwards to Fregate Island, the amazing Six Senses Zil Payson, Lemuria, Raffles, Four Seasons Mahe and finally Maia with a couple of additional site inspections ...exhausting!

All of the above properties differ - from the private island experiences to the resort style hotels - but there is no doubt that Seychelles has something to offer to everybody. The combination of that very special eco-tourism, nature-inspired luxury, first-class service and some of the most beautiful beaches in the world must make Seychelles a bucket list destination.



To find out more about The Seychelles, please call Caroline on

01883 722656 or 07775 736697 or email:

caroline@spiritawaytravel.co.uk

Carlisle Bay, Antigua

by Brinley

A perfect family destination only 8 hours away with a stunning sandy beach and tranquil turquoise water, water sports galore, four tantalising restaurants, a great kids club, tennis courts and complimentary yoga and pilates at sunrise or sunset, this resort has plenty to offer. And whilst you're in Antigua, I highly recommend a swim with the manta rays at Stingray City and a fabulous sunset of live reggae music and rum punch at Shirley Heights overlooking Nelson's Dockyard.

To find out more about Carlisle Bay and Antigua, please call Brinley on

01883 723 622 or 07901 933 594

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