

Spring 2017

No BOUNDARIES FOR US

Inspiration for the inexperienced traveler

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A DougBardwell.com Publication

Travel, tech, photography and more

Spring greetings,

Depending on where you are, spring may be the last thing you are thinking about as snow blankets a good portion of the eastern seaboard.

But, we all know, spring is on its way and people are already talking about spring-break, get-aways and summer vacation. Hopefully some of our articles might help with your decision.



Last fall, we spent a fair amount of time touring the full state of Delaware. For as small as it is, there are some fantastic places to visit, so be sure to check out that extensive article.

This issue also continues our RV series. In this issue, we cover the Class A type RV. That's the big, sleek RV style favored by celebrities and rock stars. We are neither, but like so many seniors, we immensely enjoyed our rental from Planet RV when we drove it south to Key West and the Everglades.

If you are looking for further travel inspiration, we've got two sets of suggestions in this edition. The first is inspired by some of the world's most inspiring women travelers, sharing where they would like to go next. Our second is a list of seven transformative adventures that will expand your worldview and will be anything but dull.

Remember - Get Up and Get Outdoors!

Doug

Spring 2017 Issue

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19 Reasons to Explore the State of Delaware

What's the top thing to do in Delaware? Mostly, prepare to be amazed. With attractions, so diverse and so much fun, the state's small footprint belies its potential. Don't know much about Delaware? Follow along as we illustrate 19 great Delaware discoveries we made last fall.

1) **Rehoboth Beach** For my money, [Rehoboth Beach](#) is one of the best beaches on the eastern seaboard. Wide and clean, this beach offers something for everyone. Plenty of room for sunbathers, book readers, or for building sand castles. The sand warms and comforts each footstep as you are drawn to the waves – large enough for fun, but still family friendly.

The boardwalk, originally built in 1873, stretches a mile long, and is ideal for bike riding in the morning. Feeling frisky, continue north to Gordon Pond Wildlife Area or all the way to [Cape Henlopen State Park](#).



2) **Boardwalk Plaza Hotel** If you can get a reservation, the [Boardwalk Plaza Hotel](#) (2 Olive Ave & the Boardwalk | Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971) is the iconic place to stay in Rehoboth Beach. Victorian in design, but up-to-date with T-1 Internet access, this beautiful hotel is famous for their service and hospitality. Complimentary parking is invaluable, and the hotel is located just a one-minute walk from the center of activity in downtown Rehoboth.

There's a coffee shop on the boardwalk level that's great for that cup-to-go with fabulous bakery treats, but take time if you can, and dine in the three-level restaurant with great beach and boardwalk views. You'll be entertained by Jeff Irwin on the baby-grand, who's been playing there ever week since 1992.





3) **Chesapeake & Maine** Looking for some beer-inspired cooking? [Chesapeake & Maine](#) (316 Rehoboth Avenue; Rehoboth Beach, DE (302) 226-3600) is the place. As part of Dogfish Brewery, you'll be able to get all the Dogfish favorites along with keg-conditioned cocktails.

Select from a wide variety of oysters or the raw bar, ocean inspired appetizers, soups & salads, seafood entrees, or try the Land & Sea Burger – a blend of Angus beef burger with butter-poached lobster on toasted brioche. We ate here with a number of friends, and everyone raved about their meals.



4) **Delaware Distilling Company** If you're into craft spirits, a ride down the street to [Delaware Distilling Company](#) (18693 Highway One Rehoboth Beach; vDelaware 19971 (302) 645.8273) would be in order. They make their own vodka, rum and gin. Until we visited, I never imagined I would appreciate gin neat before. I was pleasantly surprised, as their premium gin is quite tasty with blood orange and a special bo-



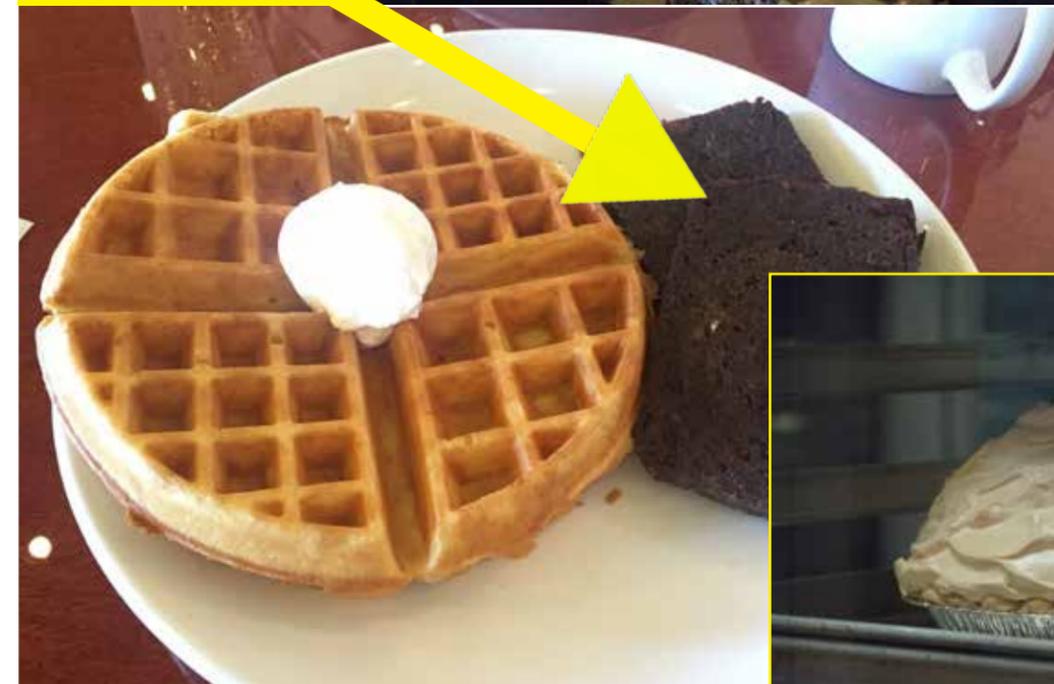
tanical blend.

5) **Jimmy's Grille** Before leaving Rehoboth, you'll kick yourself if you don't stop here for breakfast – served until 11 a.m. [Jimmy's Grill](#) (19724 Coastal Highway, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971. (302) 227-4888) They make their own bread for sumptuous thick French toast, but my favorite was the perfectly done, golden waffle with a side of scrapple, like you only get on the eastern seaboard.

Save room for dessert, or take a pie with you. You've never seen a stack of meringue like they pile on their coconut or lemon meringue pies. It's enormous.

Scrapple =

A dish the locals love. Approximately a mix between the taste of hash and sausage. Until you've had it and loved it, just do yourself a favor and don't ask what's in it.



DANGER

MONSTER-SIZED MERINGUE BELOW





Dogfish Head celebrates three years with the Steampunk Treehouse
 Dogfish Head Craft Brewery
 2,819 views

6) **Dogfish Head Craft Brewery** If there's one site you won't see anywhere else, it has to be the "treehouse" outside [Dogfish Head Craft Brewery](#). (6 Cannery Village Center; Milton, DE 19968 1-888-8dogfish) Milton is about 30 minutes from Rehoboth, but worth the trip.

Officially named the Steampunk Tree House, it originally was created in 2007 for Burning Man in Nevada, but was adopted by Dogfish in 2010 and brought to Milton. Standing 40' tall, with branches 40' wide, it's a site to behold.

But, the real business takes place inside the brewery. Originally a craft beer brewery, Dogfish distills their own vodka and gin in giant copper stills. Rum and whiskey are rumored to be on the horizon. Bring or buy a growler and get it filled with any of your favorite Dogfish brews in their store – open until 7 p.m.



Wilmington, DE

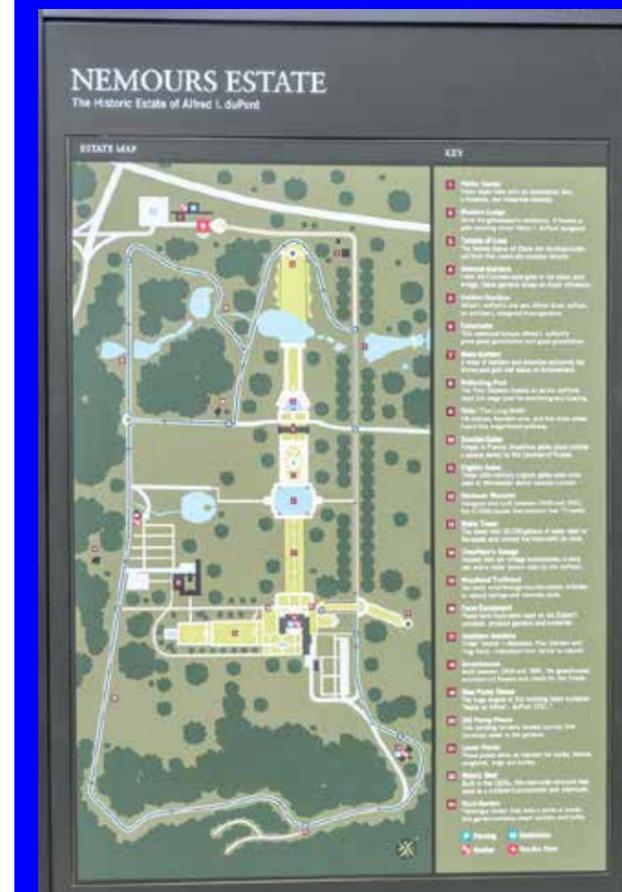
If there's an area that is over-endowed with fabulous gardens and magnificent mansions, it would have to be the Brandywine Valley and Scenic Byway. Just north of Wilmington, the area and its visual riches will take your breath away. It did ours. For more information, visit [visitwilmingtonde.com](#).

7) **Nemours Mansion and Garden** You'll only be minutes away from downtown Wilmington, but you'll feel like you are in another part of the world here at Nemours Estate (850 Alapocas Dr, Wilmington, DE 19803; (302) 651-6913.) This is the home of inventor, industrialist and philanthropist Alfred I. duPont.

The 47,000-square-foot home, referred to as the "grandest house in Delaware" is pure French in design, with 77 rooms and fabulous gardens.

Much to the dismay of his renowned architects, DuPont selected a heretofore unknown local builder to build this prestigious mansion. It was done without contract – with just a handshake. Construction of the home took only 18 months, but the builder stayed on for another ten years, building additional structures around the estate.

Built in 1909, the home was completely restored 100 years later. Before any restoration could start, 110,000





Dozens of rooms are open to the public, and while the antiques are stunning on the first and second floors, I was captivated by DuPont's inventions in the basement. Be sure to get a docent to explain this area to you if possible. Shuffleboard, bowling, billiards anyone? They were all available to DuPont and his guests.

There is limited availability to view the mechanical areas of the basement, but today they still are as impeccably maintained as they were in DuPont's time. He believed in redundant systems for safety, so you'll find doubles of many of the mechanical and electrical hardware here. Engineers will really appreciate this space. Write tours@nemours.org to see if you can score a viewing.



original DuPont pieces were cataloged and shipped out for storage. That took a mere 49 truckloads and five months to clear the home.

Now, with everything restored, down to the custom-woven draperies, and with the estate open to the public, the home fulfills Alfred's insistence that the estate be "maintained for the pleasure and benefit of the public..." and that it "become more beautiful and attractive to those who view it as time passes."

Photographers will want to take their cameras as there is so much to capture, and thankfully, the foundation does allow photography, just no flash.

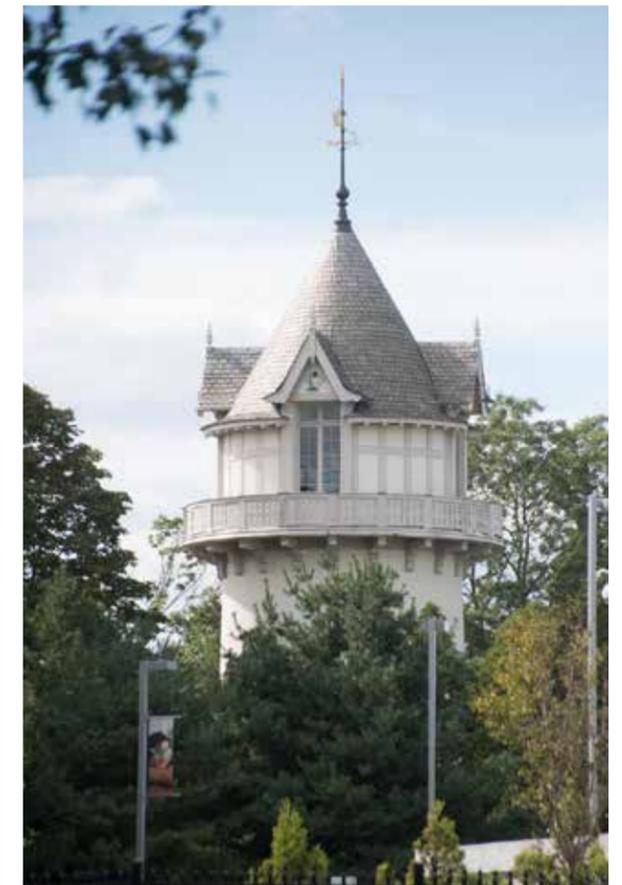




Outside, the 300-acre estate features the largest formal French gardens in the U.S. Stunning iron gates to the right and left, lead to both the southern gardens and the 18,000-gallon water tower. Proceed straight out to “The Long Walk” down cascading urn-lined, bluestone terraces, to the 800,000-gallon reflecting pool with fountain.

Don’t miss a stroll behind the mansion to the Chauffeur’s Garage. It’s a garage like none you’ve seen. Complete with machine shops for custom made parts, the garage holds many of the historic vehicles owned and used by DuPont.

Open early May through the end of December (with fabulous Christmas displays) each year, this estate alone would be worth the trip to Wilmington, Delaware.





Wilmington, DE

8) Wilmington's annual festivals There's plenty to keep you coming back to Wilmington. Here are just a couple of the more popular festivals you might want to catch on your next trip.

Brandywine Festival of the Arts For over a half-century, Wilmington has been bringing together the best of both local and national artists in a show that now tops 250 artists. Last year, more than 20,000 visitors were enthralled by the talent shown by these exhibitors. Hardly anyone seemed to leave empty-handed.

In addition to beautiful art of all sizes, there were ample stages with musical entertainment and some sumptuous food vendors. Children aren't forgotten, with many opportunities for them to try their hand at the arts.

Located in the shaded cover of Josephine Gardens, you'll be right next to the zoo, if you need to find even more things for the kids to see and do.

The first full week in May each year, you'll want to check out the **Wilmington Annual Flower Market**. Held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday in Rockford Park, you'll find stunning plants and flowers. Supporting children's charities, in addition to plants you'll enjoy tastings from local chefs & up and coming culinary students, hors d'oeuvres, cash bar and silent auction. If you are looking for volunteer opportunities, write Dawn Welch at volunteers@wilmingtonflowermarket.org.



For more annual and special events in Wilmington, check their Calendar of Events.

9) Sheraton Suites If you are looking for a central location to explore Wilmington, **Sheraton Suites** (422 Delaware Avenue; Wilmington, DE 19801 (302) 654-8300) would be a great choice. We were hosted here that last time we visited Wilmington, and were so very comfortable.

Refrigerators and microwaves in the rooms are perfect when you just crash after a full day of marketing or antiquing. Complimentary wireless in all the rooms as well as the public areas is the way life should be in a hotel.

An in-house restaurant and an elegant bar/lounge will keep you fed and hydrated with some lovely adult beverages. With an indoor pool and a fitness center, you might not want to leave. If you do, there's a complimentary shuttle bus for nearby destinations.

10) Wilmington Riverfront Whether it's a leisurely bike ride or summer stroll, the **Wilmington Riverfront** is an ideal location. Open green spaces and lots of restaurants line this 1.3-mile walkway. Other attractions include an IMAX movie theater, mini-golf, ice skating and nature walks. New in 2016, was the hugely popular Constitution Yards beer garden.





Smyrna, DE

12) **Painted Stave Distillery** What better way to restore a classic old movie theater than to restore it into a modern day craft distillery? Complete with marquis and neon wall sconces, the [Painted Stave Distillery](#) (106 W. Commerce Street, Smyrna, Delaware 19977; (302) 653-6834) retains a lot of hip, last century charm. The movie house showed films here from 1948 until it closed in the early 70's.

Dr. Ron Gomes Jr. and Michael Rusmussen have been perfecting their distilling chops since 2011 and opened the

Painted Stave in 2013. They now offer behind-the-scenes tours including structured cocktail tastings. Their specialties include Rye, Bourbon, Vodka and Gin.

An art gallery in the former lobby displays lot of local art and support STEM engineering programs for girls though the Delaware AeroSpace State Education Foundation (DASEF). The gallery can also be rented for special events.

A first for me was trying their "Off the Hoof Scrapple Flavored Vodka." Combined with a Sriracha Bloody Mary mix and you've got a Bloody Mix that is bound to please.



Montchanin, DE

11) **Montchanin Village** Founded to house the laborers at neighboring DuPont powder mills, this charming little [Montchanin Village](#) (Route 100 & Kirk Road; Montchanin, DE 19710, (302) 888-2133) now houses an inn, restored train station, a spa and a wonderful restaurant.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Inn at Montchanin Village is also a member of the Historic Hotels of America.

Originally 19th century tenement homes, the inn's luxury guest rooms now boast private marble baths and select period or reproduction furniture. Lush, private walkways and terraces connect the buildings and lead to Crazy Kats, a fine dining restaurant in a former blacksmith's shop. Food here was absolutely remarkable and the staff couldn't have been nicer. Crazy Kat's is a must-try.

For our first course, we loved the summer berry bruschetta with lemon scented balsamic reduction. For a soup course, the crab bisque with jumbo lump crab meat was sumptuous. The highlight of my meal however, was the Fennel Crusted Venison with white chocolate corn palenta.

The Spa at Monchanin offers a full-range of treatments.





Dover, DE



13) **First State Heritage Park** Delaware's first urban "[park without boundaries](#)" is where cultural and historic sites come together for a delightful, walkable days' worth of activities.

The buildings are all beautiful to look at from outside, but your first stop should be the Visitor Center (121 Martin Luther King Blvd. North (a.k.a. 121 Duke of York Street) ; Dover, DE 19901 (302) 739-9194) where you can pick up a map that explains not only what each building contains, but also various programs offered at each.

There are also walking tours of The Green, great for a quick overview of all that's here.

We got to sit in on a presentation in Legislative Hall by period dressed actors who retold what life would have been like here in 1787.

Extremely well done, the powerful presentation gave one an understanding of just how different things have become since this nation's founding.

Download the latest schedule of events at destateparks.com/heritagepark. For even more information about Kent County, delve into all the resources on VisitDover.com.





14) **The Brunch n Lunch** All that walking around The Green is bound to work up a hunger. A great place to relax and rejuvenate yourself is [The Brunch and Lunch](#) (25 W. Lockerman Street; Dover, DE 19904 (302) 678-8999.) Just off the square, this funky little restaurant is great for a leisurely meal. The food is fresh and made to order, but give yourself plenty of time – they don't have a reputation for speed here.

The BnL Mac n Cheese burger will please those who love both and their massive milkshakes are a specialty.



15) **Air Mobility Command Museum** That's a long title for an [Air Force Museum](#) housed inside and outside an old WWII hangar alongside Dover AFB (1301 Heritage Road; Dover AFB, DE 19902 (302) 677-5938). A true bargain, with free admission, the museum has a phenomenal collection of aircraft, from the simplest, smallest, single seater to the monstrous C-5A Galaxy. Many can be boarded, so you can see them from inside and out.





Ever flown a fighter? Now you can try the next best thing with their free simulators. Call ahead to check hours of operation. (They are always closed on Mondays.) Be sure to climb the control tower to get a great aerial view of all the planes outside.

This is the only museum in the country that is dedicated to Airlift and Air Refueling history. Surprisingly, many of the 180 volunteers that work here, were the same mechanics who originally worked on these planes while they were in service.

Walking into the hole of the C5-A Galaxy gives new meaning to the word "huge." The one here holds the honor of being the only one that ever launched an inter-continental ballistic missile in-flight. Almost 250 feet long, the C5-A is notable in that both nose and tail hinge upwards for speedy loading and unloading.

Looking for the perfect selfie opportunity, why not in the Vice-President's Air Force Two. The DC-9 was also used as a make-shift Air Force One for presidents Reagan, Clinton and both Bush presidents when they flew into smaller airports that couldn't handle Air Force One.





16) **Fordham & Dominion Brewing Company** Fordham Brewery started in Annapolis, MD and Dominion started in Ashburn, VA. Joining forces in 2007, they opened this consolidated operation in 2009.

[Fordham & Dominion Brewing Company](#) (1284 Mc D Drive; Dover, DE 19901 (302) 678-4810) offers something for the entire family. In addition to the hand-crafted beers and ales by both Fordham and Dominion, the kids (over and under 21) are going to love the four Dominion sodas. Sample a root beer, ginger ale, creamy orange or black cherry, and you are sure to be taking a pack home. They are just that good. Why not? A six-pack of the black cherry packs more than a pound of sugar. Mmmmm.

Factory tours are available on Fridays and Saturdays. The tasting room is open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Check the website for hours.



Lewes, DE

17) **Beach Time Distilling** Ultra-premium, hand-crafted spirits are distilled in limited quantities and enjoyed by those in the Lewes, DE area. Specializing in in rums, vodkas and gins, [Beach Time Distilling](#) (32191 Nassau Road, Unit 5; Lewes, DE 19958 (302) 644-2850) has a tasting room open Wednesday thru Saturday.

Greg Christmas has been brewing and distilling for over 25 years, but just opened Beach Time in the summer of 2015. Be sure to try my favorite, his [Beach Fin Gin](#), made with 10 botanicals. He tones down the juniper and amps up the others, including lemon grass, lavender and cucumber. He calls it his new American style gin, as opposed to the classic England London dry style. However he does it – it's delightfully refreshing.



18) **Zwaanendael Museum** Dare you to say that three times fast. Seriously though, the Zwaanendael Museum (102 Kings Highway; Lewes, DE 19958 (302) 645-1148) commemorates the first Dutch settlement in Delaware in 1631.

This three-story museum presents artifacts and exhibits that showcase the maritime, social and military history of this part of the eastern shore. A large exhibit focuses on the His Majesty's DeBraak, a ship that sunk off the Delaware Coast more than 200 years ago. It was recovered in the 1980's by the British Royal Navy with some 26,000 artifacts.

For those who want to delve deeper, two-hour guided tours are available for \$10, which includes van transfer to the DeBraak conservation facility where you can see the actual hull of the ship.

The first floor of the museum is accessible to those with a wheelchair, but there is no elevator. Days and hours vary from summer to winter. [Check their website for the latest times.](#)





Rehoboth Beach, DE

19) **Crooked Hammock Brewery** We return to Rehoboth once again for the last stop on our tour of the Delaware Beer Wine & Spirits Trail.

The [Crooked Hammock Brewery](#) (18693 Highway One; Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971 (302) 645-8273) is the kind of place you'd like your backyard to be. Hammocks, fire ring, Adirondack chairs and beach volleyball. Oh yeah, and lots of beer.

That's craft brewed on location of course. Starting in October 2015, they've already tripled their capacity, going from 7 to 22 barrel tanks. Plans are to go to 30.

They offer a wide variety of foods with their wide variety of beers. While I absolutely loved my crab cake sandwich and fries, I couldn't stop tasting their amazing giant Bavarian pretzel. I left very full and very happy.

NINETEEN - COUNT EM

Well, that's it. 19 Places to enjoy in Delaware. For such a small state, there's an abundance of attractions worth a visit. Plan a weekend getaway, or better yet, a full weeks' vacation. You'll be amazed at all there is to see and do.

DID YOU KNOW?

Do you travel with or know someone with special needs? For many, travel is a concern, not knowing if they will have the equipment they need when reaching their destination.

Here's a name of someone to consult. They just celebrated their 10th anniversary and they serve both normal and seagoing needs.

**SPECIAL
NEEDS
GROUP**



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

2007-2017

Since 2007, SNG has been achieving unprecedented milestones in providing those with special needs and/or disabilities the ability to travel, whether it be across the globe or within their own area.

SNG staff will commemorate the milestone during a Feb. 21 meeting with its travel partners, the NACTA (National Association of Career Travel Agents). The event will be catered by the ARC Broward Culinary School, which provides opportunities for people with disabilities and other life changes to realize their full potential.

Since it was launched, SNG has completed over 150,000 orders, making travel dreams come true for individuals with special needs and/or disabilities. This includes "slow walkers," and the baby boomer/silver segment of the population. The accessible travel segment is the fastest-growing market segment in travel.

"SNG was founded with a strategic vision to deliver an accessible world and make it possible for anyone to travel, even if they have a disability or special need," stated Andrew J Garnett, SNG founder, president & CEO. "Today, we are breaking travel barriers for hundreds of thousands of individuals with special needs who wish to see the world."

SNG services 165 metropolitan areas in 35 countries across the globe. It is the leading global provider of wheelchair rentals, scooter rentals, oxygen rentals and other special needs equipment rentals, and also offers a broad range of special needs equipment for purchase. The only mobility and oxygen equipment supplier in the world trusted by all major cruise lines, the company also services guests visiting hotels, resorts, theme parks and convention centers.

In addition to providing special needs equipment, SNG continuously raises awareness of special needs travel through newsletters, webinars, blogs, social media tools, panel discussions, and presentations. Also, the company supports ARC Broward, Camillus House, and local elementary schools.

Over 3,200 travel professionals have become Certified Accessible Travel Advocates™ through SNG's groundbreaking Certified Accessible Travel Advocate program, launched in 2011, which allows travel professionals to

become conversant with the accessible travel market segment through online study and testing.

Plus, over 14,000 travel agents are registered with SNG, allowing them to provide clients with the confidence of booking with one of the top providers of special needs equipment.

Special Needs Group® / Special Needs at Sea® is the leading global provider of wheelchair rentals, scooter rentals, oxygen rentals and other special needs equipment rentals. It also offers a broad range of special needs equipment for purchase. Recommended by the world's major cruise lines for superior service and value, Special Needs Group also services guests visiting hotels, resorts, theme parks and convention centers. Special Needs Group is the only mobility and oxygen equipment supplier that is approved to deliver to all major cruise lines Special Needs Group is the travel industry's only total special needs travel solution. Special Needs Group provides service in 165 ports and cities located in 35 countries. It is located at 302 NW 1st Street, Dania Beach, FL 33004. For more information, visit _____ or call 1-800-513-4515.



2017 Top 100 Hot Spot Restaurants in America

The list of the Top 100 Hot Spot Restaurants in America is generated solely from more than 10 million verified OpenTable diner reviews collected between February 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. All restaurants with a minimum “overall” score and number of qualifying reviews were included for consideration. Qualifying restaurants were then scored and sorted according to the percentage of reviews for which “hot spot” was selected as a special feature.

Based on this methodology, the following restaurants, listed in alphabetical order, comprise the Top 100 Hot Spots Restaurants in America for 2017 according to OpenTable diners. The complete list may also be viewed at <http://www.opentable.com/m/diners-picks-hot-spot-restaurants-in-america-for-2017/>.

- 4 Bells – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Acorn – Denver, Colorado
- The Avenue Steak Tavern – Columbus, Ohio
- Barton G. The Restaurant – Multiple Locations
- The Bayou – Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- The Bazaar by José Andrés South Beach – Miami Beach, Florida
- Beat Brasserie (Beat Hotel) – Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Beauty & Essex – New York, New York
- Besito Mexican – Huntington, New York
- Bida Manda Restaurant and Bar – Raleigh, North Carolina
- Bistro 821 – Naples, Florida
- Blend on the Water – Long Island City, New York
- BRAVO Cucina Italiana – Naples, Florida
- Broadway by Amar Santana – Laguna Beach, California
- Buccan – Palm Beach, Florida
- Buddakan NY – New York, New York
- Butcher & the Boar – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Café Tu Tu Tango – Orlando, Florida
- Campielo – Naples, Florida

- Capo Restaurant – South Boston, Massachusetts
- Carnivale – Chicago, Illinois
- Centro Restaurant – Des Moines, Iowa
- Chino Latino – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Continental Naples – Naples, Florida
- Culinary Dropout – Multiple Locations
- Departure Restaurant and Lounge – Portland, Oregon
- Don & Charlie’s – Scottsdale, Arizona
- E+O Kitchen – Cincinnati, Ohio
- Edmund’s Oast – Charleston, South Carolina
- Eight4Nine – Palm Springs, California
- El Camino Mexican Soul Food & Tequila Bar – Delray Beach, Florida
- Fixe – Austin, Texas
- Flight Restaurant & Wine Bar – Memphis, Tennessee
- Fogo de Chao Brazilian Steakhouse – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Forno Kitchen and Bar – Columbus, Ohio
- Girl & the Goat – Chicago, Illinois
- Grato – West Palm Beach, Florida
- The Greenhouse Tavern – Cleveland, Ohio
- The Grey – Savannah, Georgia
- .ink – West Hollywood, California
- Ironside Fish & Oyster – San Diego, California
- Juniper & Ivy – San Diego, California
- Kaluz Restaurant – Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- La Cuchara – Baltimore, Maryland
- Lola-A Michael Symon Restaurant – Cleveland, Ohio
- Louie Bossi’s Ristorante Bar Pizzeria – Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Mastro’s Ocean Club – Scottsdale, Arizona
- Mateo – Durham, North Carolina
- Mercantile dining & provision – Denver, Colorado
- The Millworks – Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- The Mission-Old Town – Scottsdale, Arizona
- Mita’s – Cincinnati, Ohio
- Morcilla – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Nada – Cincinnati, Ohio
- The Nest – Indian Wells, California
- O-Ku – Atlanta, Georgia
- Officine BRERA – Los Angeles, California
- Ophelia’s Electric Soapbox – Denver, Colorado
- The Pearl – Columbus, Ohio
- Perch LA – Los Angeles, California

- Poros – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Prasino – St. Charles, Missouri
- Puckett’s 5th & Church – Nashville, Tennessee
- Pump – West Hollywood, California
- Raglan Road Irish Pub – Lake Buena Vista, Florida
- Red Rooster Harlem – New York, New York
- Republic – Detroit, Michigan
- Root Down – Denver, Colorado
- Rose. Rabbit. Lie. at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas – Las Vegas, Nevada
- Selva Grill – Sarasota, Florida
- Shore Diner – Sarasota, Florida
- The Southern – Nashville, Tennessee
- Spoon and Stable – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Steak 44 – Phoenix, Arizona
- STK – Multiple Locations
- Stoney River Steakhouse and Grill – Germantown, Tennessee
- Strip by Strega – Boston, Massachusetts
- SumoMaya Mexican-Asian Kitchen – Scottsdale, Arizona
- Tao – Multiple Locations
- Texas de Brazil – Multiple Locations
- Three Muses – New Orleans, Louisiana
- Toca Madera – West Hollywood, California
- Tony’s of Lexington – Lexington, Kentucky
- Toutant – Buffalo, New York
- Trio Restaurant – Palm Springs, California
- The Tropicale – Palm Springs, California
- The Twisted Olive – Green, Ohio
- TWO urban licks – Atlanta, Georgia
- Uchi – Austin, Texas
- Uchiko – Austin, Texas
- Ulele – Tampa, Florida
- Union 50 – Indianapolis, Indiana
- VACA – Costa Mesa, California
- Vandal – New York, New York
- Vida – Indianapolis, Indiana
- Warmdaddy’s – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Whitfield – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- YOLO – Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Yoshi’s – Oakland, California
- Zahav – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THE WORLD'S LARGEST

A glance at the world's largest hotel companies, brands, properties, pipelines and global markets by room count. All figures are as of December 2016, according to STR.

PIPELINE*	PROPERTIES	ROOMS
Marriott International	2,045	348,422
Hilton Worldwide	1,774	274,483
InterContinental Hotels Group	1,379	221,281
AccorHotels Group	737	136,553
Hyatt Hotels Corporation	221	45,543

* (Under Contract, including projects in the In Construction, Final Planning and Planning stages)

COMPANIES	PROPERTIES	ROOMS
Marriott International	5,929	1,158,107
Hilton Worldwide	4,856	790,659
InterContinental Hotels Group	5,034	727,820
Wyndham Worldwide	7,699	675,036
AccorHotels Group	3,897	528,369

BRANDS	PROPERTIES	ROOMS
Holiday Inn Express Hotel	2,487	245,799
Holiday Inn	1,207	222,835
Hampton	2,217	222,543
Hilton	569	207,943
Marriott	536	191,479

METRO MARKETS*	PROPERTIES	ROOMS
Beijing	1,368	228,623
Shanghai	1,340	224,546
Las Vegas	350	162,498
Greater London	1,342	129,202
Orlando, Florida	491	123,566

* Clarification, 14 February 2017: This updated section better reflects the world's largest major metro markets.

PROPERTIES*	CITY	ROOMS
First World Hotel	Genting Highlands, Malaysia	7,351
MGM Grand Hotel	Las Vegas	4,994
Luxor Hotel	Las Vegas	4,400
The Venetian	Las Vegas	4,028
Aria Resort & Casino	Las Vegas	4,004

* Correction, 14 February 2017: An earlier version of this infographic showed an incorrect ranking of the world's largest hotel properties.

Two for the road

We love doing product reviews, and bringing you hot new ideas that we've discovered. Here are a pair to pack on that next roadtrip and a pair to keep at home or in that vacation cabin.

[Note: All products shown on these four pages were provided by the respective manufacturers, but they did not provide additional compensation. All opinions are our own.]

HITCASE UPGRADES YOUR IPHONE IN A SNAP

It's not often that I find add-on products to be really compelling, but Hitcase has been an exception. The Hitcase Snap is an easy-to-add protective case for your phone, that accommodates a variety of accessories. The photos it produces, makes your cellphone more like carrying a big DSLR with interchangeable lenses...but way less bulky.



[Read the entire review on our blog](#)



LENOVO MIIIX510 IS THE 2-IN-1 TABLET THAT THINKS IT'S A LAPTOP

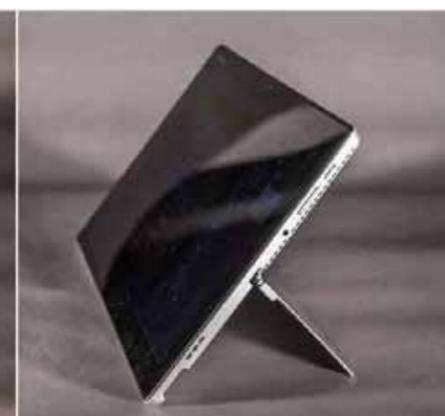
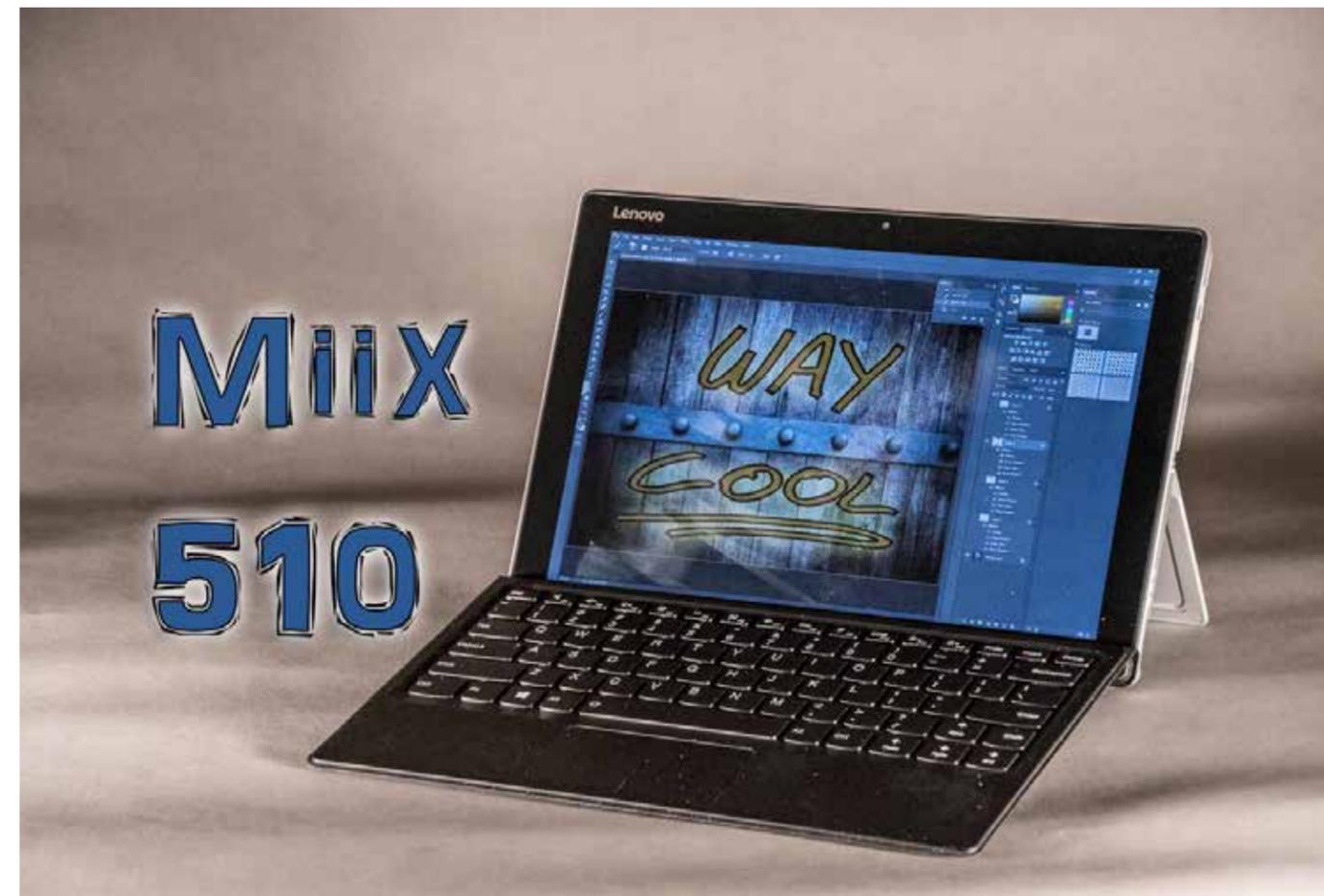
Truth be known, I think so to. The Lenovo Miix510 is a really compact machine that delivers for work or for play. I've got Adobe's Creative Suite loaded on its 500GB PCIe solid-state drive (SSD), and with 8GB of RAM, I'm doing serious photo and video editing without breaking a sweat. In fact, this entire magazine is being edited on the Miix510.

With the Miix510, you've got the complete package:

- Super portable – fits in my Scottevest pocket easily
- Sharp looks – but works like it's supposed to
- Actual 2-in-1 – works as a tablet, and works as a laptop
- Up to 512 GB SSD for storage
- Up to 8GB LPDDR4 2133 MHz memory
- Choice of Intel Core i3, i5 or i7 processor
- 12.2" LED Multi-Touch 1920x1200 display – gorgeous
- More than six hours of actual battery usage
- Windows 10 Home

Two of my favorite features are the keyboard and the touch screen. Joined together, the keyboard is quick, accurate and feels like you are actually typing on a serious laptop. With 1.5mm of key travel, you won't find yourself cursing at cheaper imitations with their chiclet keyboards. Even more, the keyboard is backlit for evening use.

[Read the entire review on our blog.](#)



Three for home

CIRCULON ULTIMUM AND NUWAY LET YOU COOK LARGE IN A SMALL SPACE

With the rise in popularity of the tiny home or the popularity of the mobile RV lifestyle, it's obvious that those big sprawling kitchens aren't going to be in your future. So how do you maintain your gourmet lifestyle while trimming back your space requirements? A two-pronged attack is working for us: [Circulon Ultimium cookware](#) and a portable [NuWave induction cooktop](#).

A perfect pair for the mobile, compact lifestyle. We've enjoyed taking the cooktop where the action is, and knowing that we can use it with the Ultimium cookware set to create just about any dish we typically serve. Best part, when the party is over, clean up is a breeze, so much so, that often we clean up immediately as the food is being served. That way, when the party is over, we are done as well. The cooktop wipes clean in an instant and is tucked back away in a drawer. Pots and pans go into the dishwasher, and it's a wrap.

[Read our full review.](#)



GOURMIA GWT230 2 SLICE MOTORIZED TOASTER WITH SEE-THROUGH WINDOW

Adjustable Instant Temperature Controls, Removable Tray - with Gourmia's Window Toaster you can enjoy perfect toast every time with the revolutionary see-through window that allows you to monitor your toast as it browns so it always comes out just right!

We just received this toaster, but what we've used it for already has been delicious. It loads the toast and raises it up so quietly, its nothing like our old toaster.

Stay tune for our full review, watch the video below, or [read more here.](#)



Touring the Class A Motorhome – inside and out

We returned the Class C motorhome after traveling to Georgia, and now we are venturing out again in a Class A motorhome from [Planet RV in Broward County, FL](#).

Flying into Fort Lauderdale, their location (3030 Burriss Rd, Davie, FL 33314) proved to be perfectly central to the places we wanted to visit.

We wanted to see Savannah, GA and it was an easy 6-hour trip north. After returning and picking up the Class A, we were off to explore Florida's southernmost destinations – Key West and the Everglades. We'll finish off with Southern Florida's largest outlet mall outside Fort Myers.



But show us the motorhome

Our biggest request from our current series of articles was to see the actual interior of the RV we were using. So, instead of making you wait until the last article of the series, we'll start out by telling you about both the inside and outside of this 37-foot Thor Challenger Class A motorhome.



Opening the door to this motorhome, was in a word – breathtaking. The cabinetry, the appliances, the four TV's and oh, yes, the fireplace, were totally unexpected. The kitchen featured corian tops with removable sections for the sink and cooktop. The large microwave also functioned as a convection oven – genius. A big refrigerator and freezer provided plenty of space for our week's worth of groceries.



In the bedroom, a king-sized bed, an oh-so comfortable mattress and a separate rooftop air-conditioner made nighttime totally comfortable.

With doors to both the bedroom and the dining area, the bathroom was perfectly convenient as well. A five-sided corner shower was spacious enough to not feel cramped and a conventional-sized toilet was the best I've seen in an RV.

Three slideouts added extra space to the living room, dining room and bedroom. The living room actually expanded both ways, with the leather sofa bed sliding out to the right and the entertainment center with flat screen TV and fireplace sliding out to the left. The two leather captain's





To Rent
or Buy, call
Planet RV
954-514-7860
rvsalesofbroward.com



chairs in the driver's compartment also spun around for conversation or TV watching.

With that introduction, here's a quick video tour of the Thor Challenger's interior:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGV02SNb7jw>

Let's talk about the driver's compartment

One of the biggest differences you'll notice is the size of the windshield and side windows in the driver's compartment. They are freaking huge. You couldn't possibly ask for a better view of the world around you as you are driving. You'll need to balance all that view with the associated sun-gain that comes through windows that large.

The front compartment console does a great job pumping out a lot of cooling from the air-conditioner in the dash. Add to that, two six-inch fans are mounted in wire cages on the ceiling, and can be directed at the driver and passenger. A full width black mesh sunscreen can come down when driving towards the sun, and an opaque screen comes down for privacy at night.

Lastly, if absolutely necessary, curtains can be drawn to block out the sun. Since the rearview mirrors are mounted well forward, the driver will still be able to see if anyone is alongside as you are driving. (I don't recommend it, but if

you are roasting in the sun, it is one way to block the heat.)

Seats for driver and passenger are very wide, leather covered and very comfortable. Think Lazy Boy more than typical van style seats. Both are power operated for front-back as well as up-down.

Does it look as good outside?

In a word – youbetcha! If you've see those sleek motorhomes that transport rock stars to their concert venues, then you've seen how sleek modern Class A motorhomes look. While Class C motorhomes may be the perfect vehicle for you, they look a little awkward with that bumpout over the driver's compartment. With a Class A, it's straight sides all the way around. Even the front is totally vertical, similar to a Greyhound bus.

So without further to do, here's the exterior tour.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIJN7YAljzU>

With so many good-sized locking doors under the chassis, you'll be able to store empty suitcases, all your sports gear and any additional camp chairs, tents, or inflatables that you might want to bring along.

If you haven't deduced it by now, this rig totally impressed me. It's luxury on wheels like nothing I've driven before.

Go Green Adventures & Earth Day Celebrations in Rockbridge County, Va.

As trees and flowers begin to bud in the Shenandoah Valley, spring is the perfect time of year to get outdoors and enjoy green adventures and special earth day celebrations in Rockbridge County, Va.

Explore the region's fields and streams with guided camping, kayaking, hiking or fly fishing trips. Like Thomas Jefferson, stand in awe of the Natural Bridge. Descend 34 stories underground to witness Caverns at Natural Bridge. Or stay in an overnight certified green property – ranging from an Asian-style home built with straw bales or in a restored 1920s C&O caboose.



Earth Day Celebrations:

- Historic Garden Week in Lexington April 22 – Walk along neighborhood streets bordered by patterned-brick walkways and visit six properties, including five homes that share an inviting hallmark of Southern living - delightful porches and patios that gracefully connect home and garden. See diverse interior and exterior architectures dating from 1821 to the present, experience a Labyrinth garden, and visit a home and studio that once belonged to Cy Twombly, an internationally recognized artist from Lexington. <http://www.vagardenweek.org/main/tourdetails?id=311>
- Fairy Forest Festival April 29 – To celebrate the official season opening of the Fairy Forest, Boxerwood Nature Center & Woodland Garden in Lexington, Va., will host a Fairy Forest Festival in conjunction with Earth Day. There will be fairy stations where children can make their own fairies or gnomes. They can create fairy furniture and fairy houses, plant magic beans, and more. For more information, email Faith@boxerwood.org or visit www.boxerwood.org

Green Adventures:

- Boxerwood Bird Walk: Members of the Rockbridge Bird Club invite bird enthusiasts to join them the first-Saturday of every month to go birding at Boxerwood. Local birding experts aid people of all ages and skill levels in locating, identifying, and bird song interpretation. As many as 85 species of birds have been identified during past walks. www.boxerwood.org
- Natural Bridge State Park: Natural wonder, natural beauty! Discover for yourself why the awe-struck Thomas Jefferson purchased the 215 ft. limestone arch in 1774. Follow the Cedar Creek Trail under the Bridge to the Monacan Indian Living History Exhibit and past an old saltpeter mine and the Lost River, ending at Lace Falls. Seasonal hours of operation. <https://lexingtonvirginia.com/directory/attractions/natural-bridge-state-park>
- Caverns at Natural Bridge: Descend 34 stories deep within the Earth! The 45 minute tour reveals cavern structures such as the Colossal Dome room, Mirror Lake, the Well Room and the stalactites and stalagmites that grow from the Canyon Room. www.naturalbridgeva.com/recreation/the-caverns-at-natural-bridge/
- Llama trekking: Things get delightfully quirky at Applewood Inn, where Jonas the Llama might sniff your hair – or spit in your general direction – during a woody trek to the river. <http://applewoodbb.com>
- Misty Mountain Alpaca Farm: At Misty Mountains Alpacas, they are passionate about breeding people-friendly Suri alpacas that produce exceptional fiber and have excellent conformation. The farm's award-winning alpacas are the result of an unwavering commitment to genetics, health, nutrition, environment and socialization. Farm visits are available by appointment. www.mistymountainalpacas.com/index.html
- Alone Mill Schoolhouse – This secluded restored schoolhouse is located on a creek with access to the Maury River. Enjoy unbridled star gazing, the sound of tree frogs in the summer, or take bike ride on the Rt. 76 TransAmerica Trail. http://alonemillschoolhouse.com/Alone_Mill_Schoolhouse/Welcome.html

Green Properties to Stay In:

• Tranquility Inn: This beautiful Asian-style home in the Shenandoah Valley is just 10 miles from Lexington, Virginia. Its straw bale construction (one of only five such in Rockbridge County) emphasizes the eco-consciousness of the owner. The house is furnished with museum-quality furniture and artworks collected from the owner's many travels around the world. Nearby Lake Robertson offers fishing, hiking trails and more. This is a certified green property by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. www.tranquilitybandinfo.com



• 1926 C&O Caboose Overnight Rental: What kid (young or old) wouldn't want to stay overnight in a caboose? This vacation rental is near the famous Natural Bridge. It has been fully restored to its former glory. The exterior represents the car as it might have appeared in the mid-1930s. The interior has been refurbished with western red cedar walls, cherry floors, and the original curved wood ceiling. It has a bedroom, bath and galley. Railroad memorabilia, including signal lanterns, pictures of cabooses in action and marker lights decorate the space. The caboose has been presented the certificate of environmental commitment by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

To learn more or download a free visitor guide, visit <https://lexingtonvirginia.com>.

Travel in the footsteps of the world's most inspiring women

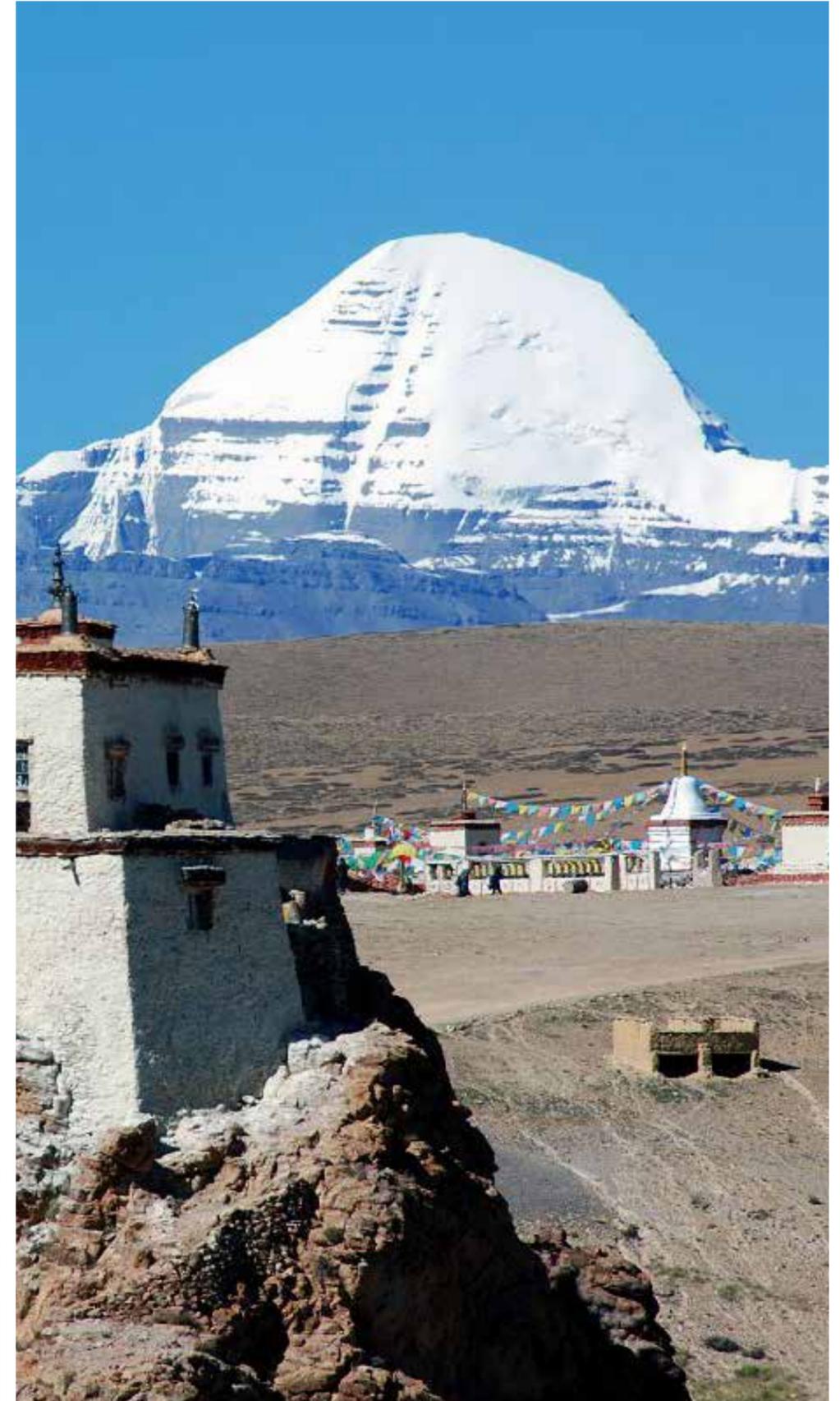
International Women's Day was March 8th, and online travel company and responsible tourism pioneer, Responsible Travel, has interviewed some of the world's most inspirational women about their travel dreams for the future and offers holiday ideas to help make dreams into a reality.

Legendary Irish travel writer Dervla Murphy:

"At 84 it would be unrealistic to dream about the future. Were I able to time-travel I'd enjoy following Alexandra David-Neel's route across 1930s Tibet."

Explore the roof of the world in 2017 on this two-week cultural tour of **Tibet's highlights**, with mountain views and visits to Buddhist monasteries. Costs from £1,095pp excluding flights with regular departure dates throughout the year: <http://www.responsible-travel.com/holiday/5633/tibet-cultural-tours> (01273 823700)

[View our range of Tibet holidays here.](#) Photos courtesy of Manakamana Treks & Expeditions



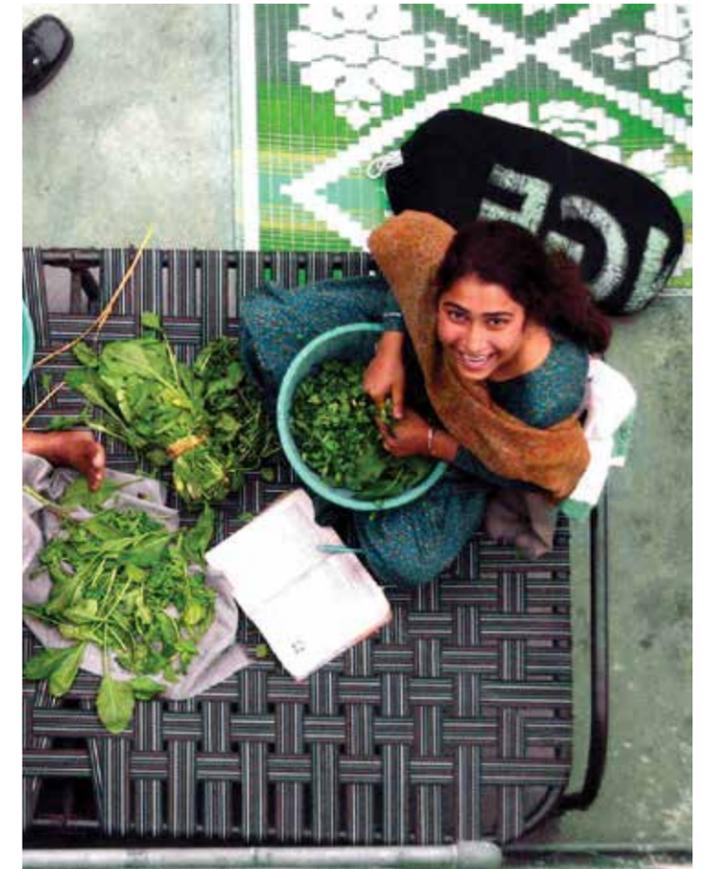


Ex-Great Britain rower, British adventurer and speaker, Anna McNuff:

“Oh my goodness - so much: walk the length of Israel, kayak around the Caribbean, swim around the Greek islands, fat bike across Morocco, run the West Highland Way, rollerblade through Europe, walk the Dragon’s Back Trail in South Korea, cycle the Karakoram Highway, travel through India and eat everything in sight... I could go on and on... I have pages and pages in a notebook filled with ideas that just sit there until one day they make it to the top of the list. Some days I have to close the notebook and just breathe - for fear I might get so over-excited about the opportunities out there that I explode.”

Tickle your taste buds with Anna’s dreams and eat your way around Rajasthan on this **15 day Food Adventure**, with cooking classes and street food. Costs from £1,128pp with departures through September to April each year. <http://www.responsibletravel.com/holiday/1768/india-small-group-holiday-a-food-adventure> (01273 823700)

[View our range of India holidays here.](#) Photos courtesy of Intrepid Travel



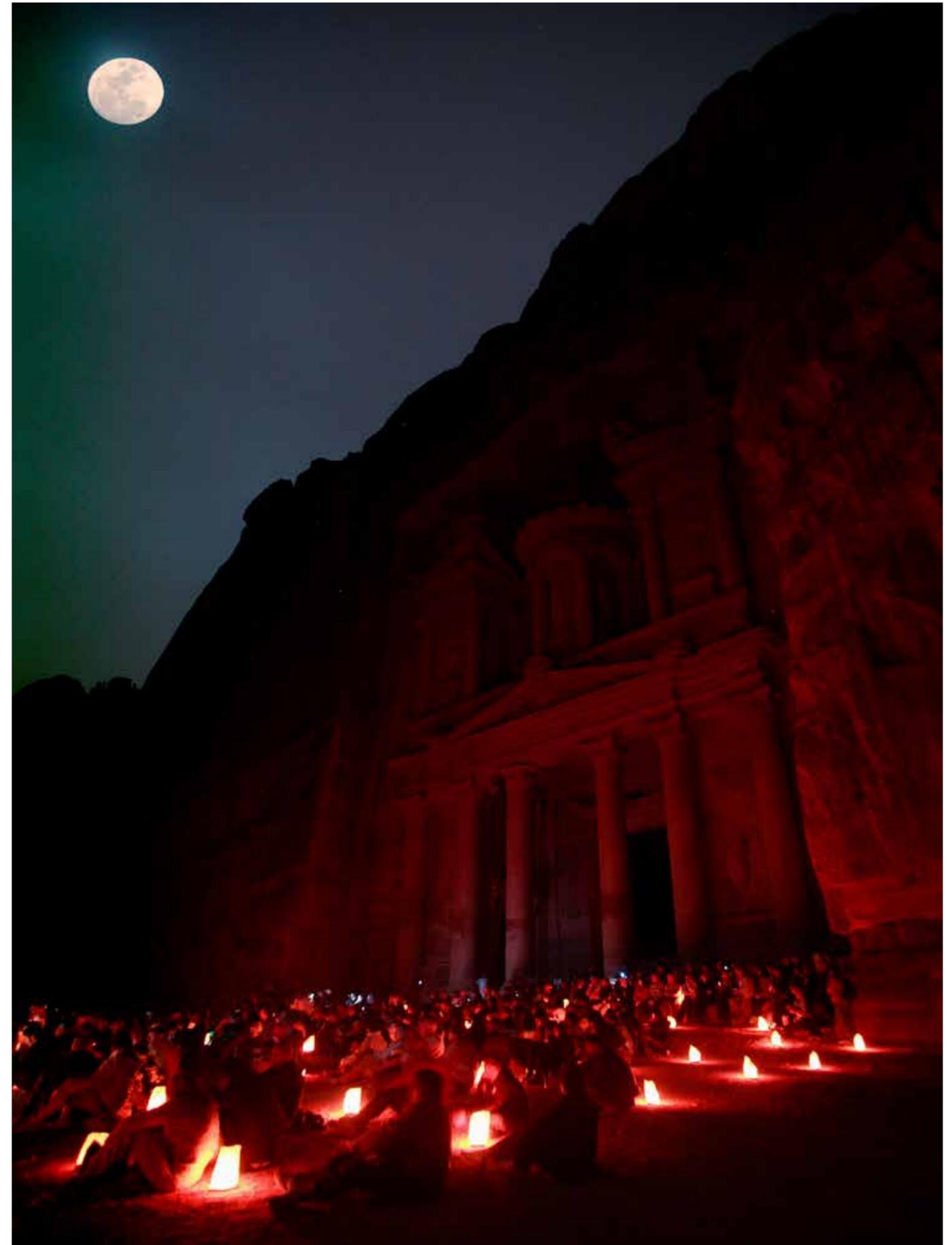


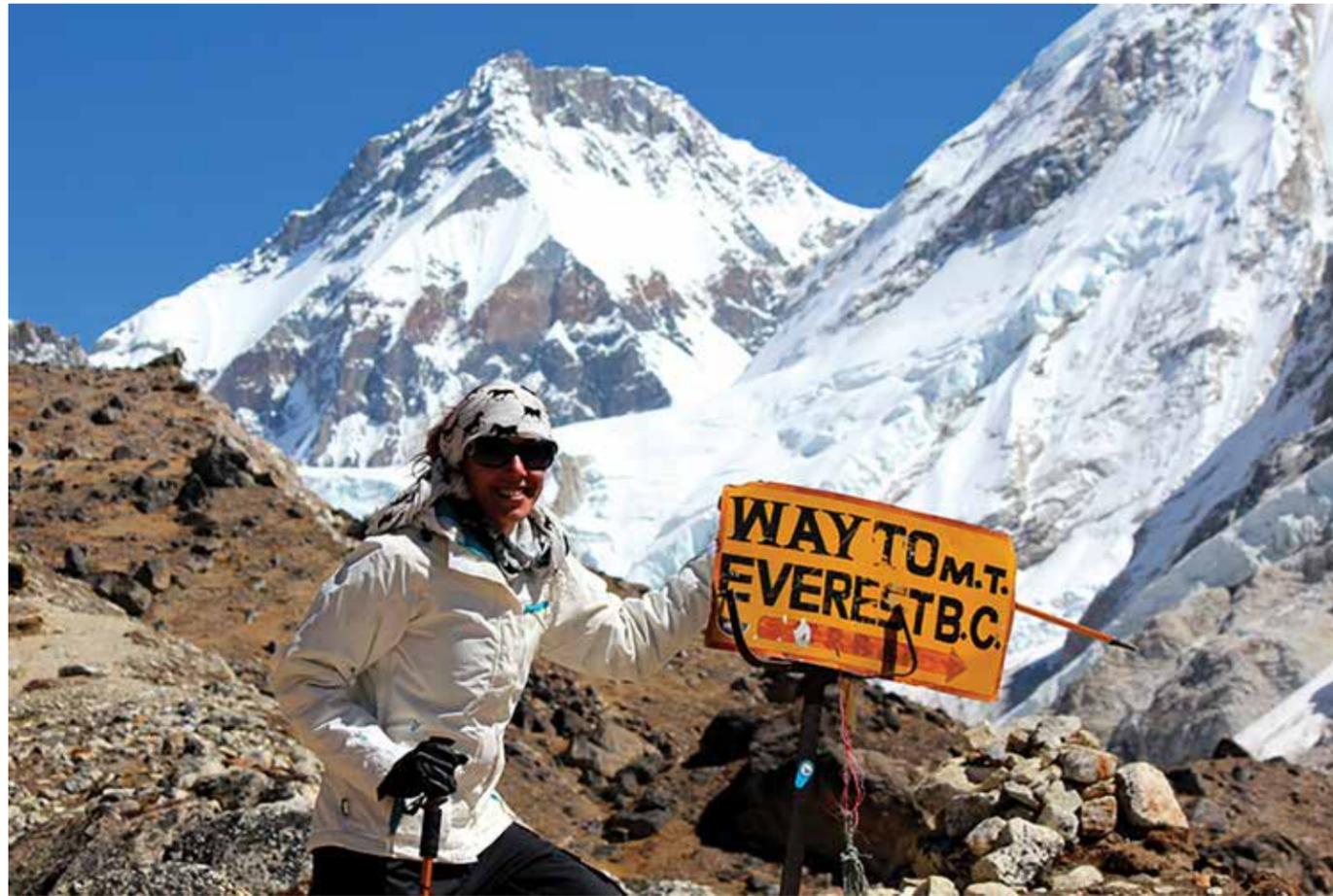
Gold medal-winning Great Britain Paralympian, Karen Darke:

“Oh everything. I never stop dreaming. There is always something. I just find the world amazing, and I meet someone or read something and get inspired. Right now I have lots of ideas to do a cycle ride on every continent, but yes, I never stop dreaming.”

Live your own travel dreams on this **Cycling Trip through Jordan**, which sees you peddle to iconic Petra and through Wadi Rum to spend a night with the Bedouin under the stars. The 9 day trip costs from £1,565pp including UK flights, with regular departure dates throughout the year: <http://www.responsibletravel.com/holiday/4140/cycling-holiday-jordan> (012738 237000)

[View our range of cycling holidays here.](#) Photos courtesy of Exodus Travel.



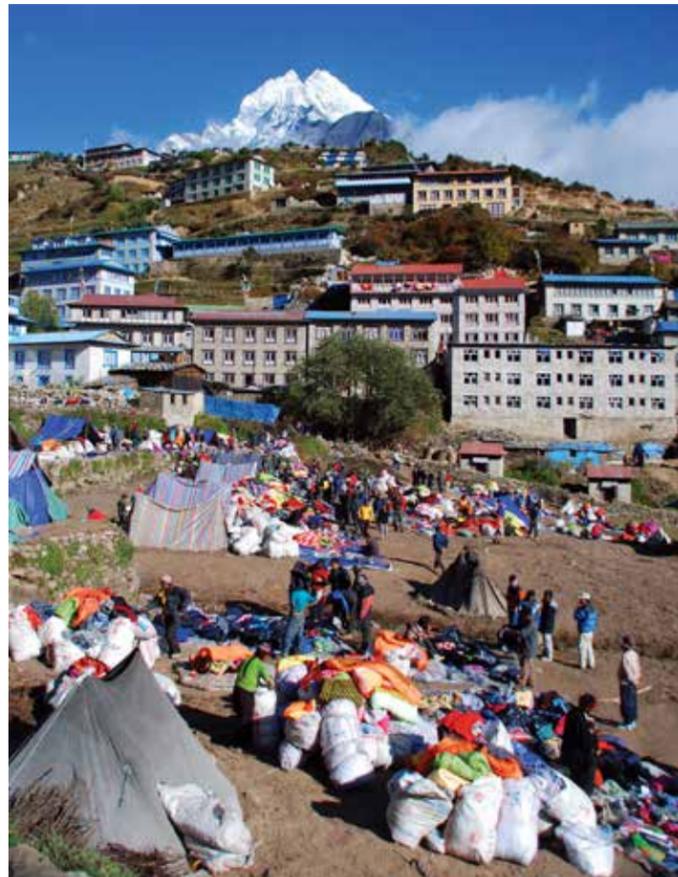


British conservationist and BBC wildlife presenter, Saba Douglas-Hamilton:

"I'd like to write a book. Climb Everest. Learn to fly."

While Everest's summit may remain out of most people's reach, a trek along the **Iconic Route to Base Camp** is a challenging, yet rewarding experience. This 15 day trip includes a fully supported hike through the Himalayas and Sherpa villages to Everest Base Camp, as well as time to explore energetic Kathmandu. Costs from £970pp excluding flights with multiple departures each month: <http://www.responsibletravel.com/holiday/16247/everest-base-camp-trek-nepal> (01273 823700)

[View our range of Everest Base Camp holidays here.](#)
Photos courtesy of Intrepid Travel.





National Geographic photographer and filmmaker, Ami Vitale:

“Making a real difference to create more empathy on this planet.”

Homestays can be an excellent way to make genuine connections with local people on holiday, fostering friendships and deeper understanding between strangers. This **15 day holiday in Kerala** includes two-night homestays in each place you visit, so you feel less like anonymous hotel guests and more like long-lost family. Costs from £1,440pp excluding flights with departure dates tailored to your itinerary: <http://www.responsibletravel.com/holiday/5812/kerala-homestay-tour-india> (01273 823700)

[View our range of homestay holidays here.](#) Photos courtesy of Kerala Connections.

Read all Responsible Travel’s interviews with inspirational women around the world in our [‘Folks We Love’ section.](#)



Seven “Transformative Adventures” we like for 2017.

A new study by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) revealed that, more than any other motivating factor, adventure travelers are seeking out transformative experiences while on holiday. An expanded worldview, nature, mental health, and learning opportunities were other motivating factors revealed in the study.



1. Track Endangered Black Rhino - Explore the Sand Dunes of Sossusvlei, track the endangered black rhino on foot, and participate in traditional game drives in Etosha National Park. This Adventure Life tour of Namibia also spends two nights walking the Tok Tokkie Trail and interacting with the isolated Himba people.

<http://www.adventure-life.com/namibia/tours/3769/namibia-adventure>



2. Train with Russian Cosmonauts - On this exclusive Russian space tour offered by MIR Corporation, witness the manned launch of the Soyuz spacecraft, tour Russia’s premier cosmonaut training facility where you can participate in optional cosmonaut training, and experience the live Soyuz-International Space Station docking.

<http://www.mircorp.com/trip/inside-the-russian-space-program/>



3. Hangout with Mountain Gorillas - Encounter some of the last remaining mountain gorillas in the world by trekking into the lush forests of Rwanda with Gondwana EcoTours. Track chimpanzees and the beautiful golden monkey, and keep an eye out for elephants and buffalo.

<http://gondwanaecotours.com/portfolio/gorilla-trekking-in-rwanda/>



4. Visit Isolated Tribes of Ethiopia - Encounter the unique and diverse cultures of Ethiopia’s Omo Valley and learn about the rich traditions tribes there have maintained for centuries on a new tour from Adventure Life. See the fossilized remains of the early hominid “Lucy” and learn about the region’s cultures in museums before traveling out long dirt roads to meet and interact with the Hamar, Mursi, Karo, Arbore and Konso people in their villages.

[http://www.adventure-life.com/africa/ethiopia/...](http://www.adventure-life.com/africa/ethiopia/)



5. Bike from London to Rome - Ride & Seek has created a cycling tour of historical proportions, tracing the footsteps of Julius Caesar on a 33-day, 2,929 km journey from London to Rome. Crossing waterways, vine-clad hills and mountain passes, this is the only tour of its kind being offered today. Participants will never be the same.

<http://www.rideandseek.com/epic/caesar>



6. Trek Glaciers with Climate Change Scientist - Big Chill Adventures offers an opportunity to explore the southern part of Iceland, known for its glaciers, icebergs and black sand beaches. Highlights include dogsledding, trekking glaciers, snowmobiling, spelunking, and soaking in geothermal hot springs.

<http://bigchilladventure.com/trips/southern-iceland-auro-ra-march/>



7. Sip Tea with Mongolian Nomads - Explore the Mongolian capital, Ulaanbaatar and then fly to the red sands of the Gobi Desert to celebrate the Naadam Festival with parades and sporting competitions, such as archery, horse riding and wrestling.

<http://www.mircorp.com/trip/siberia-mongolia-spirits-nomads/>

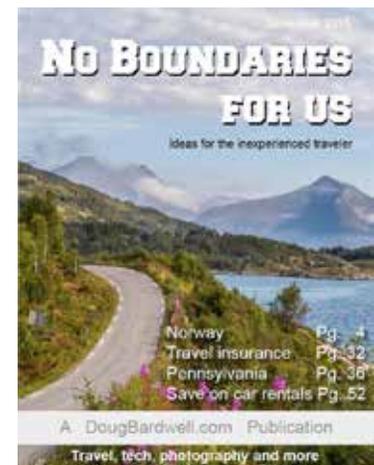
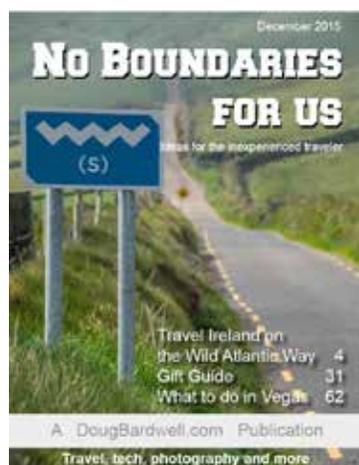
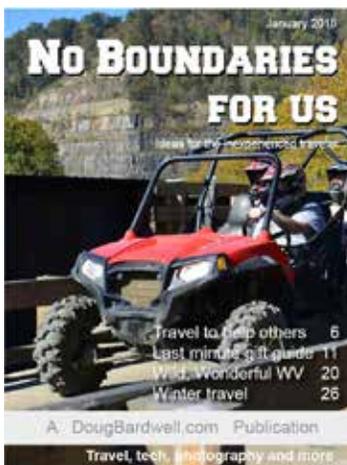
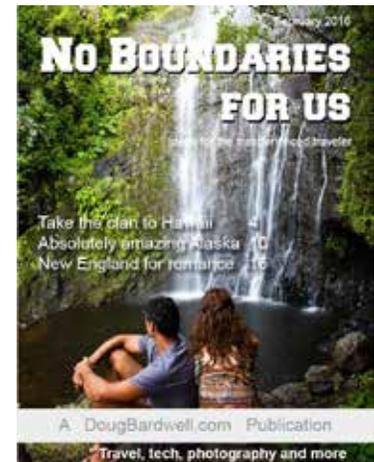
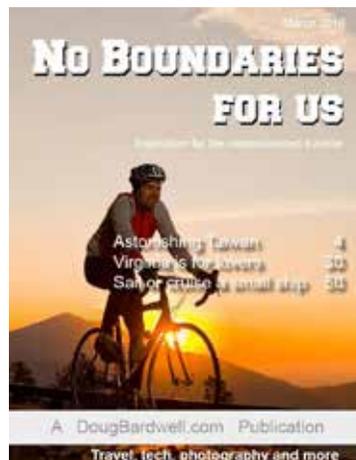
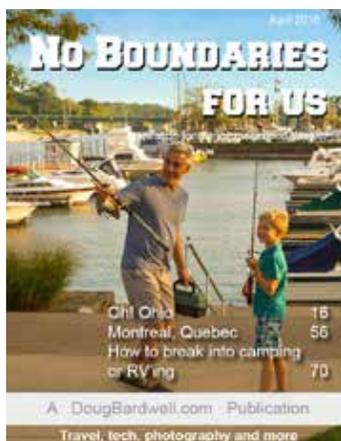
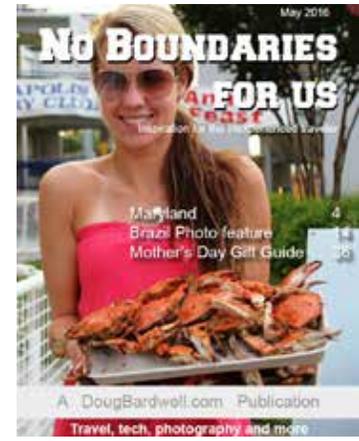
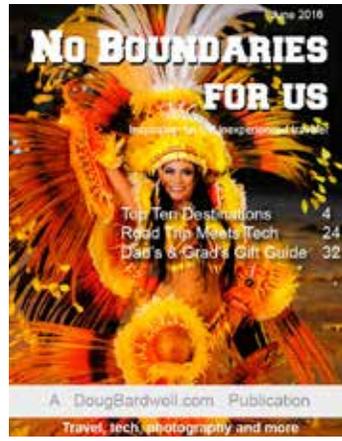
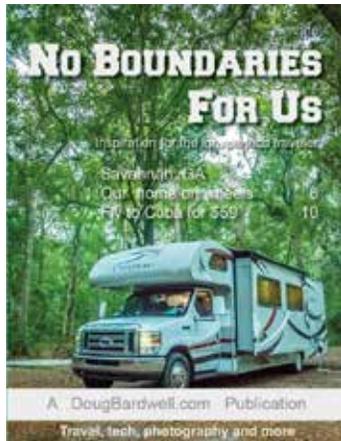


It's Jamaica, Mon!!!

Just a quick visual teaser for our next issue. We just got back from Moon Palace Jamaica Grande in Ocho Rios, Jamaica. This all-inclusive resort is the place dreams are made of. Fantastic food, superior service, fabulous spa and dozens of things to do. [Watch our blog](#) for more information or check out the [Moon Palace website](#) for current deals. We give this our ultimate recommendation.



PAST ISSUES



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