

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

CONDÉ NAST

VOLUME VI 2018

# Traveler

THE

INSPIRATION

EDITION



# 81

## PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS THAT INSPIRE US TO SEE THE WORLD

You know that feeling when you come across a photo like this one, and your fingers, as though on autopilot, clickety-clack their way across your keyboard toward the best airfare? Well, that was pretty much the remit for this entire issue:

We asked ourselves and our network of contribs around the world to look beyond garden-variety FOMO or any allegiance to a bucket list and offer up a gun-to-the-head honest answer to the question, *What image found its way from your eyes to your heart and made the hairs on your arms stand on end?* What follows are 81 points of inspiration—the surf break with the glacier backdrop, the 16th-century stone temples in South India you'll have (almost) all to yourself, the teak-paneled overnight train through the jungles of Malaysia—that really and truly made us go.

WORD OF MOUTH

40

Natural  
Selection's  
Hoanib  
Valley Camp.



FARTHER IS  
BETTER

Thoreau headed for the woods. Bowles fled to the desert. The Indigo Girls went to the mountains. We humans disappear into wild and secluded places when we need to reset: to lap up the landscape, shape our thoughts, and feel the perspective-giving stab of strangeness, even menace, of a place unmoored from the familiar. Fortunately, there are a growing number of remote retreats that don't require Outward Bound-level survival skills.

"I don't think there has ever been a time when we have needed to disconnect so much from the world around us: Political uncertainty, 24-hour connectivity, and the relentless pace of technology need an antidote," says Dave van Smeerdijk, co-founder of Natural Selection, who knows more than most people about self-imposed exile, having spent 20 years building iconic camps across the arid landscape of Namibia. His two newest are in some pretty out-there places. [Hoanib Valley Camp](#) is a ring of six →

Photograph by Michael Turek

## WORD OF MOUTH



Three Camel Lodge.

tents in Namibia's sparse Kaokoland, where desert-adapted giraffe and elephant forage over gravel hills and dry riverbeds. Seven hours west via 4x4, you hit the desolate coastline and [Shipwreck Lodge](#), 10 wood-and-glass cabins backed by rolling sand dunes, which offers little to do but gaze at the crashing Atlantic.

For committed isolation seekers, the challenge of access isn't a problem—it's the point. The tented [Outpost](#) pop-up camps opening in Chile's rugged Maule Valley (October) and glacial Patagonia's Aysén (March) will be "no roads, no wires, no cell phones. It's humbling for some and hopefully relaxing for all," says Brian Pearson, the founder of Upscape, the camps' developer. Up to 16 people stay in furnished tents that unzip onto landscapes where they can ride horses, fly-fish, or hike. Over in Mongolia, [Three Camel Lodge](#)'s traditional felt yurts are served by the only airport in the province and have views of the Gobi Desert, where herds of horses gallop

across the steppe (travel with Nomadic Expeditions). And the newly luxe-ified Wolf Lodge at Polar Park, in northern Norway, is all about the view from the wooden chalet's picture windows of the lupine pack that has been semi-habituated by "wolf whisperer" and conservationist Stig Sletten, who takes guests to sit among them as they howl. Book in winter through Frontiers International Travel, when the lodge fire is roaring and the landscape is at its most luminous and silent. ALEX POSTMAN

### MORE (ALMOST) OFF-THE-GRID SPOTS

- 46 **Arctic Bath Hotel** The late-2018 opening in Lapland, Sweden, from the team behind Treehotel looks like a bird's nest.
- 47 **Los Llanos Camp** Bird watch and track puma in this reserve near the Colombian Andes with Plan South America.
- 48 **Shinta Mani Wild** Come December, you can zip-line into Bill Bensley's isolated southern Cambodia tented camp built over a waterfall in Cardamom National Park.

**Bray**, an hour up the Thames from London, with two of the U.K.'s five restaurants with three Michelin stars, used to be a "book the table, then the bed" kind of a village. Until August, that is, when Monkey Island Estate opened in two Palladian villas, with 30 guest rooms by Alexandra Champalimaud plus a floating spa—all a stroll from Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck.

# 49