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All kinds of magic

Regular readers might notice that this issue of *Traveller* has had something of a rethink, both in terms of style and content. Not just for the sake of it, obviously. For more than four decades this magazine has aimed to publish articles many other travel magazines don't have the commercial inclination to run; we've picked pictures we think are so well taken we would never dream of manipulating them, or swapping some of the grittier ones for others that have more aspirational appeal.

But we've long wanted to give our articles the space they deserve to breathe, and to showcase the images that we choose more elegantly, so a redesign has been in order for some time now. And more than anything, we've wanted, while moving forward in terms of the visual direction, to return to the glory days in some ways. To remember the old editorial imperative that sparked the birth of *Traveller*, to emphatically revive the magazine's original, now old-fashioned in so many ways ethos of mixing inspiration with reality.

It seems more trite than ever these days to pretend that this world we're lucky enough to traverse for fun is solely a long and lovely stretch of cobalt skies and unspoilt vistas and charming locals and delightful cafés and you-must-absolutely-sees, from sea to sparkling aquamarine sea with no hardships, poverty, political tensions, fears and tears in between.

How can it be when we know only too well that others are forced to traverse it out of nothing more than sheer need (and not greed as many would have us believe)? Fergal Keane's powerful piece on migration, a take simultaneously so much more human and pragmatic than those headline-grabbing emotive and designed-to-scare images, is one of the most thought-provoking pieces in this issue.

So is Sarah Ward's letter from Greece, which includes the reaction of the locals to both their on-going economic crisis and their sympathy for those washed up on their shores. Justine Hardy, who we're delighted to welcome as a new regular columnist, has sent as a tasty starter a piece full of her trademark incisive insight, on the varied lives behind veils.



Amy Sohanpaul rings the changes



Some of these features are the very flipside of conventional travelogues saturated with stunning, spectacular, sun-drenched style. To run them alongside dreamier pieces hopefully highlights that the world is all the more achingly rewarding because of that *soly sombra*, those contrasts.

To walk the streets of India is to observe all these vagaries, captured so cleverly in Francesco Lastrucci's pictures of Amritsar. The defiantly optimistic shades of hot pink against drab poverty, of searing red against grey and crumbling streets, the purposeful pleasure in cooking and devouring roadside snacks of samosas and kebabs for a fast food fix of fundamental pleasure against the chaos of it all. There's a similar sense of optimism and fun in our other photo story, on a slowly resurgent Detroit. The cracks and dereliction still loom large, but amidst them, there's fun to be had and a future on its way.

At the other end of the spectrum, sophistication skates lightly through our piece on the Bauhaus in Dessau, written by Freddie Reynolds, *Traveller's* former deputy editor, very back on board for this issue, for which he's done so much more than write another slightly surreal but sublime piece. More surreal still is Alex Robinson's piece on a magical encounter on a South American beach, and still stranger, we have a mesmerising account of lunch with a vodou priest in Haiti.

It's not all about the strange stuff though.

The animals and landscapes of Uganda,
photographed by Cheryl-Samantha Owen, are
straightforward enough in their staggering appeal;
Alex Stewart's piece on Oman is enough to entice
anyone to wind their way into the desert and beyond;
Helena Atlee's ode to marmalade-making in Sicily
serves up another sort of temptation.

So here it is, the old and the new *Traveller*, full of the odd and the ordinary ways in which people live their lives around the world, features that follow high and low roads, pictures that reflect both the wonderful and the weird. We hope you like it.

TRAVELLER

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Traveller is Britain's original magazine for intelligent travel. Since 1970 it has reported on the real experience of travelling the world, and many of today's leading explorers and adventurers are on the Editorial Board.

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Sir Hereward Wake BT MC DL is a baronet and retired major who has been involved in youth expeditions worldwide.

Every issue we seek out today's most distinguished and interesting travellers to contribute to the magazine

THE PEOPLE BEHIND OUR STORIES

ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG

one half of comedy duo Armstrong and Miller whose latest series, *Land of the Midnight Sun*, takes him to the far north.

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CAROLINE EDEN

journalist and photographer whose work has featured in numerous publications as well as on Radio 4's From Our Own Correspondent.

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HOSSEIN FATEMI

photographer who has travelled extensively since the mid-9os, mainly focusing on Lebanon, Pakistan, Iran, Russia and the USA. SEE PAGE 40

JUSTINE HARDY

celebrated author, journalist, yoga teacher, the founder of Healing Kashmir and *Traveller's* new columnist.

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TIM HAYWARD

food journalist, restauranter and the author of *Food DIY* and *The DIY Cook*.

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FERGAL KEANE

BBC special correspondent and member of *Traveller's* honorary editorial board who has spent recent months reporting on the refugee crisis in Europe.

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FRANCESCO LASTRUCCI

freelance photographer whose work has been exhibited worldwide. Here he documents the colourful streets of Amritsar. SEE PAGE 10

CHERYL-SAMANTHA

OWEN photojournalist born in Kenya who has spent a lifetime travelling the African continent. She reports from Uganda.

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MAHESH RAO

award-winning author who grew up in Nairobi and now lives in Mysore. His new book, *One Point Two Billion*, is published by Daunt Books. **SEE PAGE 86**

FREDDIE REYNOLDS

freelance writer and editor based in Cambridge. Here he writes about a visit to the Bauhaus in the East German city of Dessau.

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ALEX ROBINSON

award-winning journalist, guidebook writer and photographer who specialises in Latin America. Here he reports from the coast of Brazil.

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SARAHWARD

fiction author who spends much of her time on the Greek island of Hydra, where she writes from for this issue.

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Intro pages feature maps by Stamen Design, under CC BY 3.0. Data by OpenStreetMap, under CC BY SA.

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On the cover: Luke Best, from Beat 6: Eland Editions

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Mashrou' Leila 28 NOVEMBER

This Lebanese five-piece was formed in Beirut in 2008 as the indie scene became a focal point for musicians to meet and escape the stresses associated with the country's on going political unrest. Since then, the band's everpopular brand of pop has spread across the Arab world, earning them the label, 'the voice of the Arab Spring'. This November they'll reach the Barbican in London. Tickets £20–25.

barbican.org.uk



Artist & Empire: Facing Britains Imperial Past

25 NOVEMBER TO 10 APRIL, 2016
This major exhibition at Tate
Britain brings together a vast
collection of works including
maps, portraits, photographs,
sculptures and artefacts that
explore the legacy of the British
Empire. Works by Joshua Reynolds,
George Stubbs, Hew Locke and
Sonia Boyce all feature.
Admission from £12.70.

tate.org.uk

EVENTS

Above: Stork art by Francisco

Mingorance,

Left: Maori Chieftainess,

Natural History Museum

from the Artist &

Empire exhibition at Tate Britain

Right: Ajrakh inspired jacket

by Rajesh Pratap

Singh, Victoria and Albert Museum

Broken Lives: Slavery in Modern India

TO 24 APRIL, 2016

This revealing exhibition at the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool highlights the plight of the 'Dalits' – formerly known as 'Untouchables' – in modern-day India, examining the shocking marginalisation, poverty and crippling labour experienced by millions of people in the world's largest democracy. Admission free. **liverpoolmuseums.org.uk**

Wildlife Photographer of the Year

16 OCTOBER TO 10 APRIL, 2016

Each year the Natural History
Museum hosts one of the world's
most popular photography
competitions. Last years winner
was Michael Nichols' black-andwhite image of a pride of lions
basking on an exposed rock,
and this year's entries promise
be similarly outstanding. From
£13.50.

nhm.ac.uk



The Fabric of India

TO 10 JANUARY, 2016

India has been a byword for colourful textiles for centuries. Many of the words we use today – muslin, calico, chintz – have their origins in India, where abundant cotton and intricate embroidery techniques first attracted British merchants. This exhibition at the V&A showcases the subcontinent's fascinating fabric output. From £14.

vam.ac.uk



Emily Jacir: Europa

TO 3 JANUARY, 2016

Palestinian artist Emily Jacir works in a variety of media to create thought-provoking installations, short films and performances that enable greater audience interaction. Her Europeanthemed works are currently on display in the Whitechapel Gallery. Admission free.

whitechapelgallery.org

Wilderness Lectures

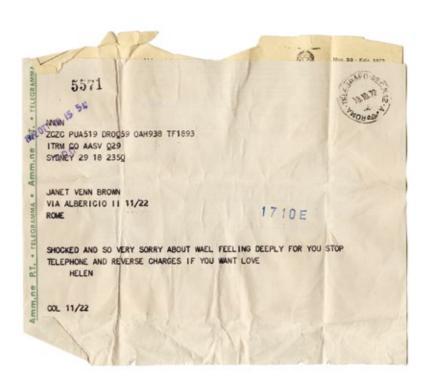
SELECTED WEDNESDAYS

This series of fascinating lectures at the University of Bristol features intrepid explorers, adventurers and adrenaline junkies. From November, speakers include Alain Robert, Leo Houlding, John Pilkington, Maria Liejerstam, Niall McCann and Dave Cornthwaite. From £8.50.

wildernesslectures.com

Right: Material for a film (detail) (Telegram: 18/10/1972), 2004, by Emily Jacir, at the Whitechapel Gallery

Below: Limestone sculpture of the Egyptian god Horus in Roman Military Costume. 1st-2nd century AD © The Trustees of the British



CURATOR'S COMMENT

Only through the remarkable preservation made possible by Egypt's climate do we know about this ancient land's Jewish communities and the subsequent arrival of Christianity and later Islam. This exhibition reveals the story of how ancient Egypt was transformed by Jews, Christians and Muslims, featuring gospels that were excluded from the New Testament, illustrated manuscripts and colourful clothing.

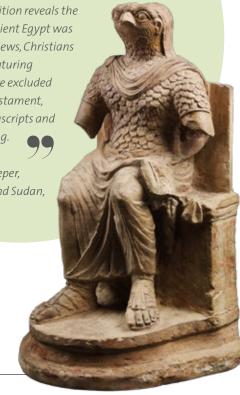
> Neal Spencer, Keeper, Ancient Egypt and Sudan, British Museum



Egypt: Faith After the Pharaohs

29 OCTOBER TO 7 FEBRUARY, 2016

No museum outside of Cairo houses more Egyptian antiquities than the British Museum. Pyramid pieces and the Rosetta Stone tell only part of the nation's and Judaism, and this new exhibition illustrates today's Arab Republic. Admission from £10; under 16s free. britishmuseum.org



Paved with Gold

pictures by Francesco Lastrucci

As the day's first light begins to filter through the heady haze above Amritsar, the Golden Temple is a hive of activity. Worshippers line the causeway connecting the temple with the outer walls of the complex, a spectrum of saris and turbans slowly shuffling forward. A droning, chanting voice and the gentle pitter-patter of the tabla drift across the water of the square pool that surrounds the temple, known reverently as the Pool of the Nectar of Immortality – from which the city gained its present name.

Amritsar is the centre of the Sikh world. The pool was sanctified by Guru Ram Das in the sixteenth century, and Valmiki wrote the celebrated epic the *Ramayana* around the hallowed site. In keeping with Sikh magnanimity, the temple welcomes visitors of all colours, creeds and genders in astonishing numbers every day to dine free of charge on dhal, rice, vegetables, chapati and roti, seated together on the floor, all equal under God. This miraculous feeding of the multitude requires the help of volunteers and generous donations, and the temple also feeds a wider industry of hospitality and market trading that keeps the city alert and alive long into the night.

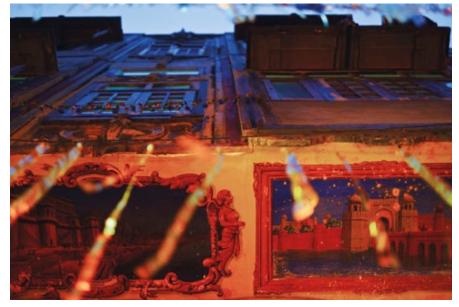




Previous pages: Street scene in downtown Amritsar, a *Gurdwara* – Sikh temple – in the background.



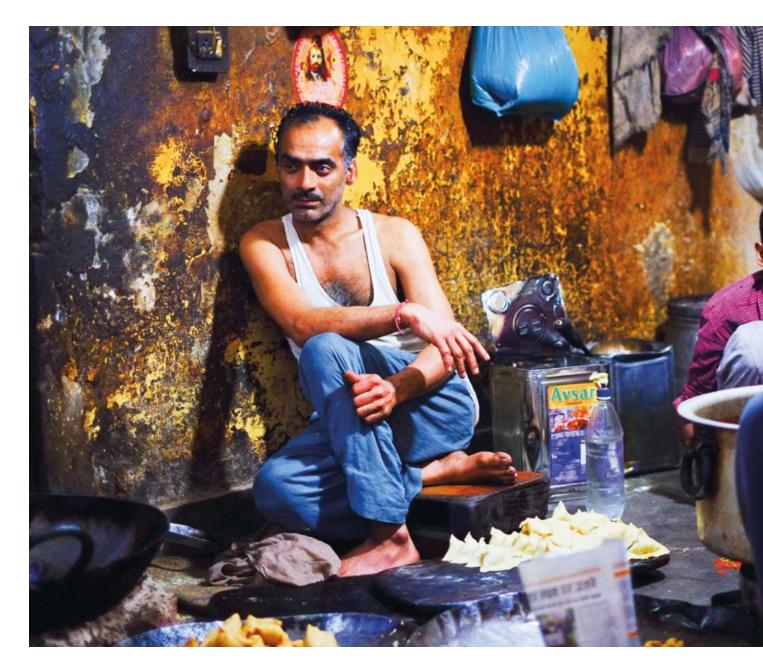








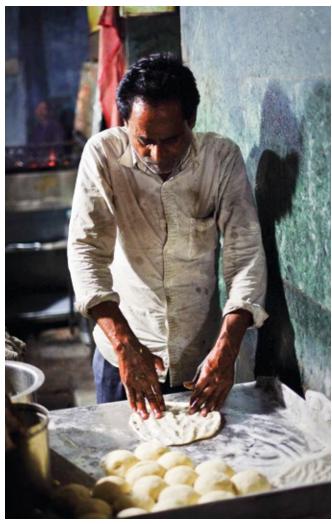
These pages (clockwise from bottom left): traditional wooden house in downtown Amritsar; fading picture of a Punjabi actress hanging in an old photography studio; inside the Harmandir Sahib at dusk; downtown Amritsar downtown Amritsar at dusk – the area around the Golden Temple is full of market stalls and shops.





These pages (clockwise from bottom left): downtown Amritsar at night; making samosas at a streetside stall; making traditional Punjabi bread at the roadside; young Sikhs enjoying street food on the roadside late at night.







These pages (clockwise from bottom left): outside an old photography studio; women peeling garlic in the Golden Temple's kitchen, which serves meals to over 50,000 people every day; a young woman with henna dye on her hands.











Armstrong's Arctic Freddie Reynolds talks to Alexander Armstrong about his new travel series

Alexander Armstrong is someone that some might more likely associate with home.

As in: 'What do you miss most about home?'

'Chips and gravy. A proper cup of tea. Comedies on BBC 2.'

As it so happens, he's currently beaming into my home – my bricks-and-mortar home, not that imagined Great Cuppa Kingdom that exists outside – this time over the phone, from his own home in the reception-free "wilds of Oxfordshire."

It's worth noting here that there's very little to distinguish Alexander Armstrong on TV/radio with Xander – as his publicity people call him – over the phone. Warm, friendly, always on the cusp of a chuckle. A sunny presence. A proper cup of tea.

He's got a new TV show out soon, and an accompanying book, too, neither of which have anything to do with home. Although the prospect of a broken home was, he says, utterly apparent. "My wife and I have quite a young family," he tells me, speaking in that voice, his voice. "And we were discussing what perhaps might be a manageable balance between doing something exciting and avoiding divorce."

Perhaps unexpectedly, that something ended up being a travel series about the far north and a short while later he set off, film crew in tow, and swung pendulum-like from Scandinavia to Iceland, then Greenland, Canada and Alaska where he plonked onto the island Little Diomede, right on the international dateline. An epic 8,000 mile journey (ITV, 2015).

But why?

"It's part of the world and part of my mind that I haven't explored," he says.
"I grew up in Northumberland, which is northern, you might say. I grew up a long way from anywhere – Northumberland is a quite remote part of the country and we lived in a very, very remote part of Northumberland. So I have an affinity with cold and isolation."

"I have always felt that the Arctic has called to me," he says, and laughs.

Armstrong is somewhat aware of the greats of Arctic exploration whose footsteps he loosely and more leisurely tracked. 'For some reason all my music is on the iCloud,' he writes. 'I bet Ranulph Fiennes doesn't make such schoolboy errors.' And he's happy to undergo the pre-trip training 'provided by the excellent Paul Mattin, an ex-Major in the Marines, who spend the day plying us with cautionary tales of sub-zero derring-do. Paul said that our trip was going to be "gnarly – very gnarly indeed.""

Evidently his producer was keen for Armstrong to do the sort of stunts you might associate with the Arctic region. In a preview from the series, Armstrong is invited to go swimming in a sub-zero Norwegian sea. "This is very, very cold," he says as he approaches the shoreline. A beach of ice. "I'm wearing five layers, including quite a lot of feather and wool, gloves, hat. I'm sure it's going to be invigorating. I guess getting tazered is probably invigorating."

He strips. Heads for the waves. Strides bravely in.

But he's all but lost for words as he emerges for a post-dip piece to camera. "That really hurts," he says, visibly bothered, unable to hold then lens' gaze for more than a few seconds. This, you sense, is not how he understood his Arctic calling. The new voice of Danger Mouse has tamer tastes, subtler interests. Like snow, just looking at snow: "There's just nothing about snow that isn't beautiful," he tells me. "It falls beautifully and it lands beautifully and the way it treats the light, the way it holds the light. I rather love the anarchy it encourages, even in our country when snow falls. It's sort of festival of fools. There's a delightful anarchy to it."

Which is a pleasing way of describing much of what Armstrong encounters on his journey. The activities are too pre-planned to be anarchic. There's a section where he heads off to the east coast of Greenland to spend time 24 hours camping out with the Danish Special Forces, which is all well and good, pleasing ex-Major Mattin who 'would consider this a plausible Arctic activity' but what does it all mean? By contrast, many of the people he meets swagger deep into the realms of the eccentric, and Armstrong's attraction to the subtler aspects of life mean these characters tell us a great deal.

Take the fellow guests at the Snow Hotel: 'Astrid explains that she and her fellow Snow Hotel people like to go out at night or in storms and just 'experience the cold', whether walking in the snow or 'langlaufing' (like cross-country skiing but more 'German-sounding') through the spindrift. They LOVE the cold. LOVE IT. Simply can't get enough of the stuff.'



These pages (clockwise from bottom left): ice swimming in Norway, © ITV; Lofoten Islands in the winter, © Shutterstock; Armstrong confronts the frozen Arctic wilds, © ITV.







And then there's, Denis, rhymes with penny, a gold prospector in the Yukon and one of the book's most memorable men.

"He was a funny old fish," says Armstrong. "He was like a terrible low-rent gangster in a comedy. He kept calling me'Buddy!' [AA puts on a hyperactive Danny di Vito]. 'Hey, buddy! Hey, buddy!'He was just ridiculous. I kept expecting a bucket of glue and a bucket of feathers to come flying down. He was such a rascal.

"But I was so glad that we got to meet him and spend time with him because he was incredibly eloquent in his portrayal of his life. He opened up everything for us. And we spent most of the day with him, prospecting. And I got it. I understand entirely why people could get bitten by that, by gold fever."

It's perhaps the sketch writer's eye, but Armstrong wonderfully magnifies these characters, these fools, reveals the significance of their lives, how the harshness of the surrounding landscape is reflected in their actions.

Doors left unlocked for polar bear escapees in Svalbard. Breathalysers-tostart-your-car in Sweden. Hard drinking in Alaska. All disparate, quasi-anarchic. All signifiers of a place where expending energy to survive is a daily demand. "When there's something potentially lethal about your climate, I think you are naturally switched on a survival instinct, and it's a very sociable survival instinct," he tells me. People, he says, are far nicer in the cold.

Land of the Midnight Sun airs on ITV from 14 October. The accompanying book is published by Bantam Press and is available now

Promised Lands

by Fergal Keane

They were the fields of a ripe autumn, no mistaking that. For miles on either side of the border the acres of corn, luminous and abundant, ignored the frontier formalities. Some were in Croatia, others in Serbia but all were rooted in the same loamy earth of *mittel* Europa.

A harvester moved nearby filling the air with dust and chaff. And feet were moving too, thousands of them along a narrow path through the fields. We took refuge from the sun in the shade of the high maize and watched them pass.

I saw Shia Hazaras from Afghanistan, Sunni tribes from Anbar in Iraq, an Iraq Christian woman from Mosul, scores of young Kurdish men avoiding the fighting in Syria, families from Aleppo and Damascus, a Ugandan and several Sudanese, many Eritreans, four young lads from Lahore seeking work in Europe – I know this because I spoke with them all. A great gate had been opened and they were marching before it was slammed shut again.

In our world we travel according to timetables. We depart knowing when we will return. The key is turned, the taxi takes us away but we are sure of the journey back. I was watching journeys that countenanced no returning. When you leave on such a journey what do you



carry? Not a lot...The young men all wore rucksacks. The families carried a little more, often using plastic bags, flimsy but waterproof. They shepherded exhausted children along rail lines, across fields, under fences, across rivers, into camps and out of camps, from border to border in search of "Germany, Germany."

Yet if you moved a mile on either side of the great migration you would never have noticed their presence. People followed those who went ahead of them. They stuck together in groups on the well-trodden routes. So it was possible for us, at the end of the day, to drive to stay at a Serbian farmhouse and find the owners unaware of the

great human spectacle taking place a few fields away. The travellers did not break away to maraud or steal. Not one person I met in the countries along their route complained of any crime being committed.

In that Serbian farmhouse a woman served us fruit tea late at night. She could not speak English and we had no Serbian. We exchanged smiles and took our refreshment in silence. As I lay in bed,



my mind restless and crowded with the images of the day, I could hear the old man of the house, possibly her father or father-in-law, talking aloud. There was no voice to answer him. I wondered if he was on the phone, but to whom at that hour? A farm dog barked. And then there was a deep silence. But I could not rest. There was too much movement in the air. The world is in the grip of a great restlessness and I do not know where it will end. In a magazine recently I saw a line from a Polish academic referring to the 1930s in which he spoke of 'history

In the morning the farmhouse revealed itself: a seventies style hacienda set in well kept gardens. I took my coffee and wandered out into the lane. Trees formed a natural arch and gave shelter from the rising sun. An old couple walked hand in hand past me, travellers from Austria who had booked their journey through here well before the migrant crisis began. Like me they were people of a settled, bourgeois Europe, whose passports would carry them home with polite nods from the border guards of several nations. They must have wondered, as I did, how this great migration would change the Europe we knew.

I spent nearly four weeks of travelling the refugee and migrant roads. It is as clear as day to me that our leaders have no concept of what to do. The well of human desperation to the south and east is very deep, limitless I would suggest. Do they imagine that by erecting fences, introducing stricter controls (whatever that means), attacking smugglers boats, throwing money into the Middle East,

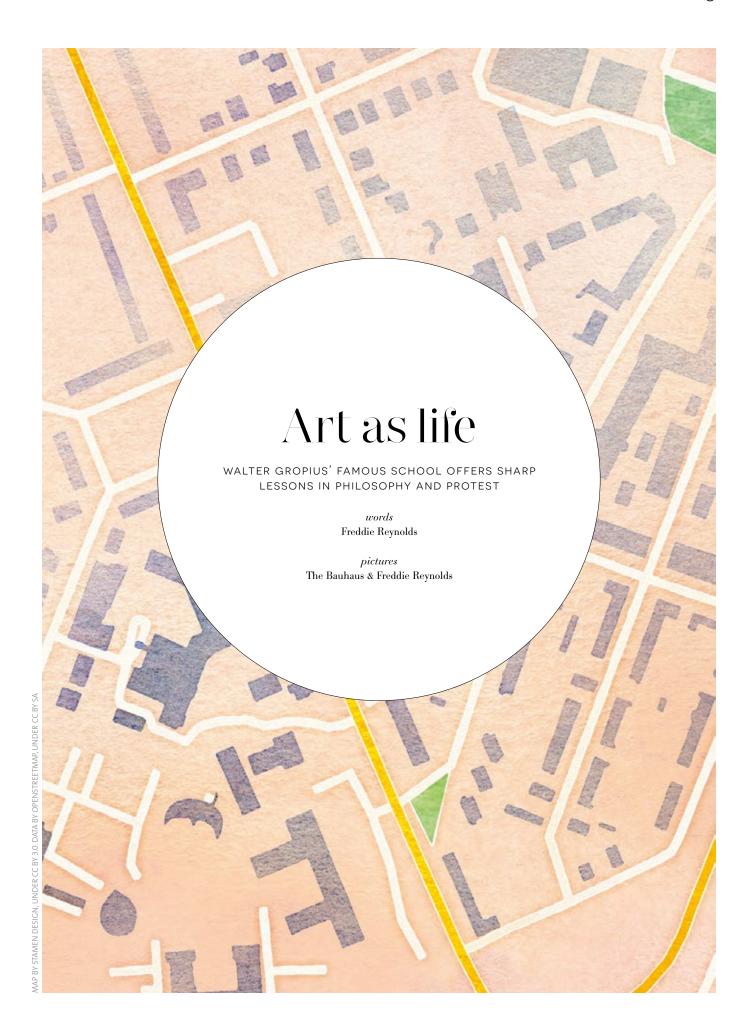
they will stop the movement of people? Pure illusion. It will not work. As long as our world holds out a better hope of life than theirs, people will come. We are at the beginning of things and we are clueless. At this point I should say I don't have answers myself. I am undone by the sheer force of history 'slipping its leash.' I am tired of the polarisation, the reduction of debate to "Refugees Welcome" and "Refugees Go Home."

These weary travellers believe our Europe is a promised land. I normally abjure the use of the word "Biblical" to describe any event. Biblical means what happened in the Bible, not now. But I make an exception here. In the cornfields of the borderlands, watching the dusty thousands move from country to country, I could not ignore the resonance of Exodus and the journey to "a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey." It is a hard journey with no telling where it ends.

The writer is a BBC Special Correspondent

Illustration by Luke Walwyn





To the Bauhaus, 60 miles from Berlin,

40 from Leipzig, from where we're now departing by train, Lucy sat opposite me sketching the enormous steel arches of the city's vast station that steadily reveals a pure white sky, as white as the page on which I'm typing this, six months on, that same, solid, illuminated white. Now as then.

Leipzig, noisy. Ask The New York Times. 'The New Berlin', they say. The New Berlin! Well... We've spent three days walking in the rain, slurping Italian coffee and gulping bottles of American beer in tiled barrooms on Soviet streets. Three days pouring through kitsch antiques, growing blisters on our fingers. Three days of piggybacking rucksacks stuffed with raincoats and we've got sore shoulders. And sore throats, too. On our final night we cheered as a large group of young people holding bedsheet banners reading 'Refugees welcome' in large black letters passed our window. We cheered as they marched up against the line of riot police who stood between theM and the serpent-like Pegida, which coiled into the main square and filled the air with the rot of tin-thin loudspeaker tones.

But now, the Bauhaus. The train takes an hour, rolling through flat fields and past pine forests, car headlights making sparks of the drizzle, which starts to lift as we arrive in Dessau station, small and silent, and we step off the train in step with the audible ticking of a clock. Out of the station and along an empty path and we're where we want to be, standing at the centre of a short, straight, newlytarmacked road, two-storey houses on either side, and Walter Gropius' squashed tiramisu, an architect's island, that famous Bauhaus building ahead. We approach, breathe.

We dance around it, with it. Lucy in silence; my camera beeps twice, clicks. Again and again. This is it, we seem to be saying to each other. We forget heavy shoulders, freezing fingers and toes. We go minor to major. Here, there... This is it.

Opposite: The Bauhaus building, Dessau, © Tadashi Okochi

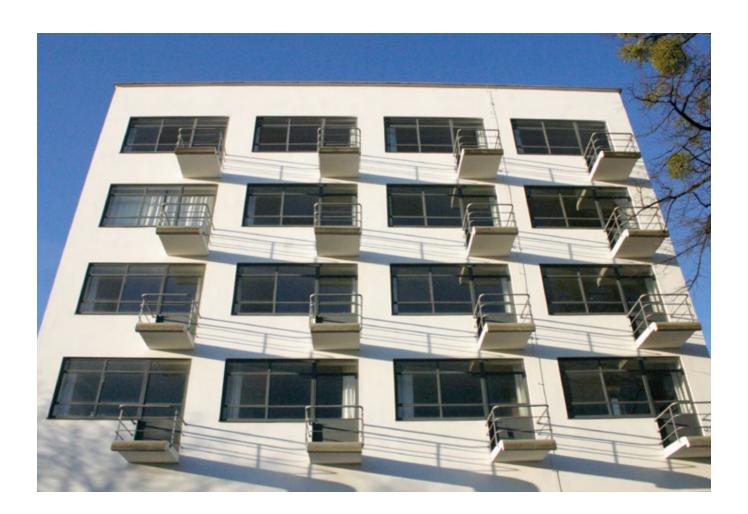






This page: Studio rooms in the Prellerhaus, © Yvonne Tenschert, 2013





We're staying in one of the studio rooms of the Prellerhaus, the five-storey block on the building's southeastern corner and we run up three flights of polished concrete stairs, whip our hands along the railings, watch our shadows drift up whitewashed walls, through a heavy red door to our room and it's scentless. The concrete floor is blood red, a deep heavy tone, and the rest is white paint, metal and glass. Placed neatly on a wooden desk, so the corners lie flush with the desk's sharp edges, a printed notice about the balcony, which you reach through a door in a wall of windows. Careful, it reads. The balcony was designed in the 1930s. It does not comply with German safety standards. Use it at your own risk.

Lucy tells me about a black-and-white photograph she's seen of a group of students dressed in white coats

cramming on to this – perhaps same? -fat-lipped balcony, sunshine on their faces in 1931.

We laugh, jump around it, ignore the advice: drizzle on our faces in 2015.

Later, exhausted, we swallow coffee and gobble mash and meatballs in the Bauhaus canteen and then take the tram from the centre of Dessau to the Torten Estate, another of the city's celebrated Gropius masterpieces, though less photographed and more constantly lived-in than his beloved Bauhaus building. Built to be affordable, not luxury, built for people, not things, the estate's matching sugar-cube suburban

Above: The Prellerhaus, studio building, designed by Walter Gropius © Šilvia Höll, 2006

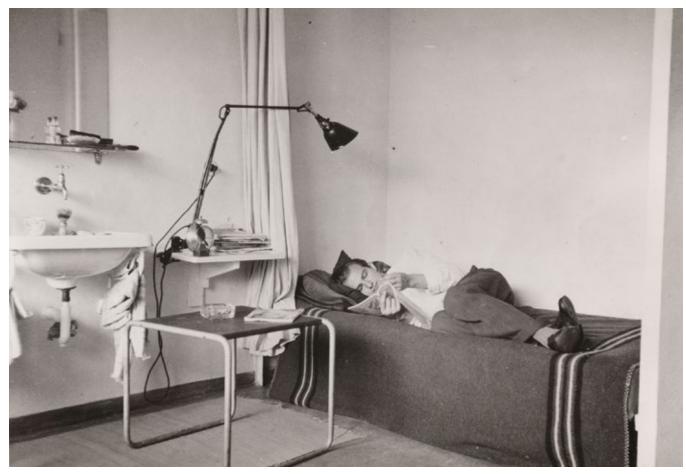




streets radiate around a single, social centre. Some of the houses have new doors, or added porches; the owners of a number of houses have repainted their front doors. People exist here, which makes a change from the city centre, where the windows of the Soviet blocks seemed painted on and even the sharpeyed optician's displays were covered in a grim layer of grey dust.

I understand very little German, Lucy more, so she leads me around the small museum at the centre of the estate. which, looking at a reproduction of Gropius' perfect plans, is about the same size as the gardens of the houses we can't enter, gardens large enough to permit a sustainable way of life for their keepers. 'Chicks on speed' reads one display in English and Lucy translates the text: recently the residents of the Tortem Estate came together to look after a brood chickens, they put the coop on wheels and moved the brood around, house to house, garden to garden.

These pages (clockwise from bottom left): Bauhausler Siegfried Giesenschlag on his bed, c. 1926-30 © Bauhuas-Archiv, Berlin; Fritz Kuhr in a studio flat, © Hermann Famulla, 1928; the iconic Bauhaus art school building, © Claudio Divizia / Shutterstock.com



Why don't we do this in the UK? we say to each other.

The Bauhaus emphasised the importance of the amalgamation of ideas, of disciplines, knew the importance of an open mind. And Gropius' school and Hannes Meyer's after and Ludwig Miles van der Rohe's after that encouraged a sense of fun. Look at Schlemmer's *Triadic Ballet*, or the abstract algebra of Kandinsky's paintings. There's revolution, progression, thought. There's co-operation, unity, playfulness. It's in part why, of course, the Bauhuas was closed – the Nazis considered it degenerate. This school where the freedom to think and act was encouraged and where Jews and socialist ideals and flat roofs all played a part would never last those bitter years. And sure enough. They chucked the students out, disbanded the teachers, stuck an eagle on the side and invited its demolition, which the allies answered in 1945 – the roof caved in during the heavy bombing of East Germany at the end of the Second World War.

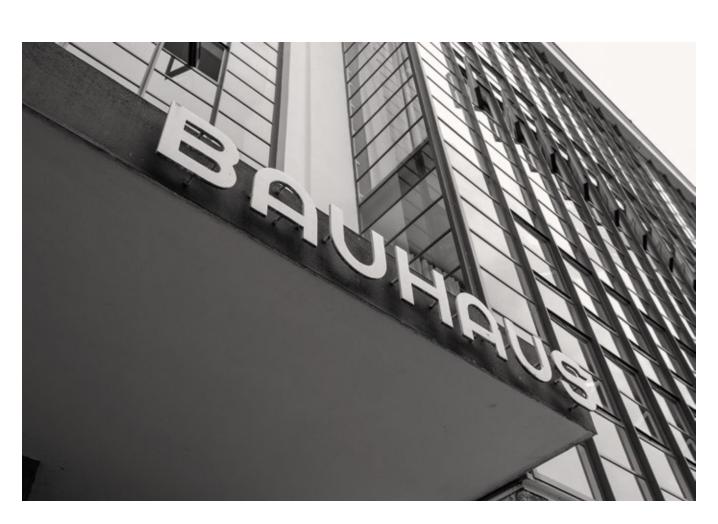
On the way back from the Tortem Estate I look down at my feet and notice four small brass plaques, each no larger than a coaster, lodged in the spaces between the stones on the pavement. We kneel down: 'HIER WOHNTE, RUTH GOUDSMID JG. 1922, DEPORTIERT 1942, ERMORDET IN SOBIBOR.' No translation necessary here. And above, Ruth's mother: 'GHETTO WARSCHAU, ERMORDET'.

We walk back to our room in the Bauhaus, quite quiet now. Urgh, Pegida, thinking back to the night before. We groan and wander distractedly around our room, the door to the balcony now shut. But then we smile and realise how you can find the opposite to that vicious exclusion in the simple faces of a building, the legacy of design.











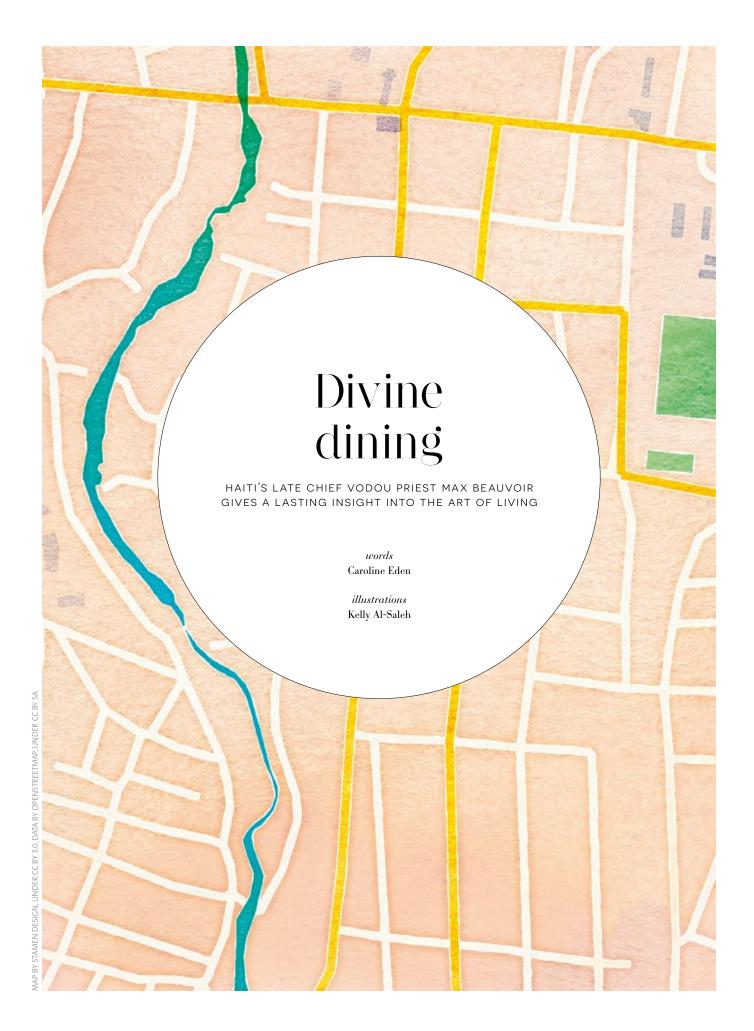
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The streets of Port-au-Prince, sticky

under the midday sun, shook to the beat of ear-splitting rara music. Floats blocked the roads throughout the city, creating queues of pick-up trucks that Haitians call 'tap-taps', imported yellow American school buses and a jumble of rumbling motorcycles.

Carnival was only days away and revellers had swelled into the streets to practice their parade songs. Musicians waved bells, banged drums and shook maracas, led by men who marched while simultaneously blowing into metre-long bamboo vuvuzelas. They filled the radio airwaves too, competing for the number one Carnival tune. Seeking extra providence, many had set off that morning from their local vodou ounfo.

My taxi sat stationary in this chaotic mix. One hour passed, then another. Getting to Le Péristyle de Mariani, home and temple of Max Beauvoir, Haiti's chief Vodou priest, in time for lunch was proving a challenge.

The people watching made up for it. Men chatted outside barbershops with names like 'Baby Chop', children with neatly braided hair filed into schools under signs that worryingly read 'elementary, secondary and adultery classes' and queues formed in front of lotto stands called Eber Nezer and Patience.

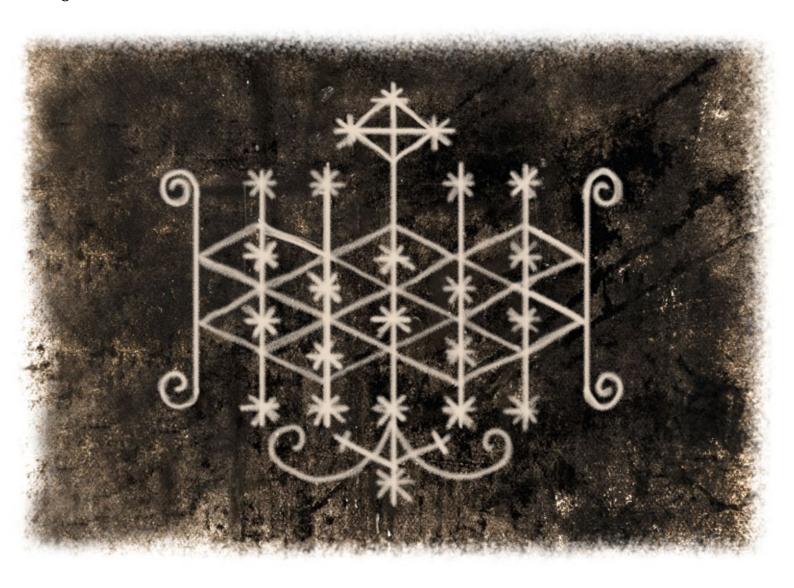
We inched forwards on the road that connects downtown Port-au-Prince to Carrefour, a wild west suburb that the FCO advises against 'all but essential travel' to and where land is claimed by whoever first builds a shack. The last stretch of road to Mariani is much the same, a moodsouring mix of corrugated homes, shops crafted out of shipping containers and earthquake-damaged buildings.

Finally, I arrived. A gate then a path led me to a tree-shaded courtyard the size of a tennis court. Dozens of small rattan chairs were piled up giving the impression of an amphitheatre. Murals of the lwa – spirits who are the intermediaries between man and god – decorated the stone wall

of the dais. Damballa the snake - who offers protection, fertility and serenity - is depicted, as is Ibo, the goddess of patience.

Despite my lateness, Max Beauvoir radiated serenity. Dressed in a white trouser suit that made him look a bit like the man from Del Monte, he greeted me warmly. He then flicked a gold lighter and lit a long, thin cigarette and motioned me to sit. His hair is white with age but his skin is almost wrinklefree. He looks remarkably good for an 86-year-old man.





The parasol he sat under, branded with a large Digicel logo, reminded me of the earthquake that had struck Port-au-Prince in 2010 killing 250,000 people. Owned by Irish billionaire Denis O'Brien, Digicel had pledged five million dollars in aid to Haiti. Since then it has successfully restored the historic Iron Market, which has become a symbol for regeneration of the city. As a result, the Digicel red-and-white logo can be found everywhere nowadays. Even in sacred spaces like this.

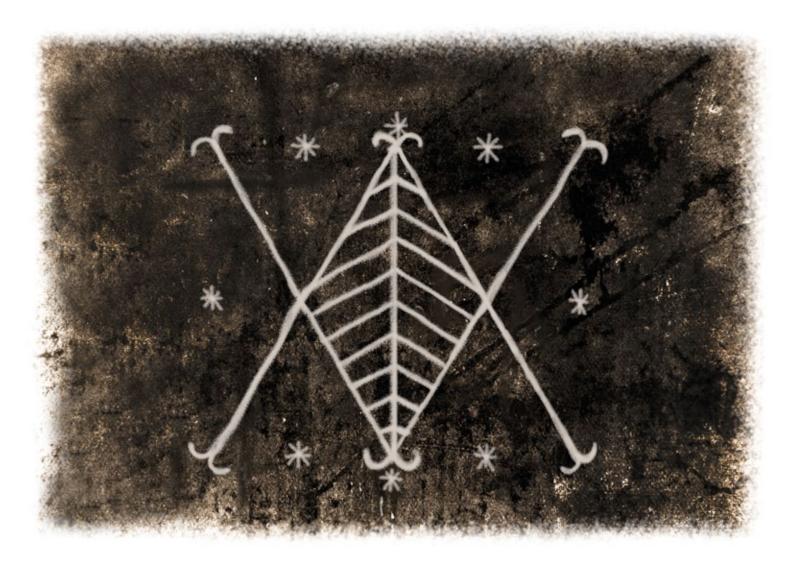
Rachelle, Beauvoir's daughter, handed me a Prestige beer. The condensation dropped down the bottle and the smell of sizzling goat and chicken wafted up from the fire pit. Heavy wooden doors that lead into Max's house shone in the sunshine, all are carved with pipe-smoking Africans, goddesses and snakes. Beauvoir tells me that one door leads to "Haiti's only vodou museum."

The pronunciation and spelling of vodou is significant. 'Voodoo' is a Hollywood word created to conjure up black magic and sorcery rituals that were made popular in movies and in pulp fiction novels. 'Vodou' was named by the Fon people, natives of Francophone Benin. They arrived in Haiti as slaves and brought their religion with them.

As we talked the newly opened church next door began to blare out Baptist songs from tinny-sounding speakers. The hand clapping and beatific singing travelled easily over the vegetation and high walls. Although we couldn't see the church, the music highlighted the growing conflict between the faiths. According to Beauvoir, anti-Vodou campaigns have been stepped up a year on from the appointment of Haiti's first ever Roman Catholic cardinal, Chibly Langlois, a man who has dismissed vodou as 'magic'.

"The faiths are at war," Beauvoir says. Not literally, he assures me, but coexistence has "become difficult."

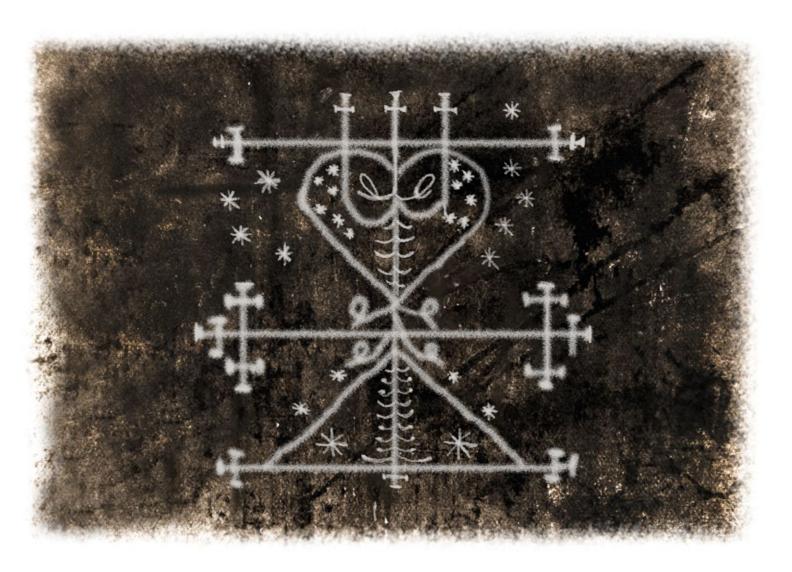
There are strong beliefs on both sides. I describe how on my flight between Miami and Port-au-Prince, one man, part of a large group of missionaries all heading to Haiti, had told me that Haitians needed to be saved from themselves. In a slow southern drawl he explained to me that in order to break free from their French slave masters in the past, Haitians had "sworn a



pact with the devil" and that now they're paying the price – with disease, dictatorships and earthquakes. He then said that if I needed proof I didn't need to look further than the Dominican Republic, which despite sharing the same island as Haiti (Hispaniola), benefits from holiday resorts and good healthcare while Haitians suffer grimly across the border.

Beauvoir blankly nods at this as though he has heard it all before. We change the subject and over chicken, rice and more Prestige beer Beauvoir explains the basics of vodou to me. It is an art of living – opposed to a traditional faith - a complex belief system that is "the religion and the culture of the Haitian

people." Historically, Beauvoir tells me that it connected slaves together in a shared faith and provided them with a way to communicate and socialise when they arrived in Haiti. Vodou beliefs are cemented into Haitian culture but the missionaries are always thinking of ways to force their religion onto the vodouists. When the church next door opened two years ago, Beauvoir received aggressive offers to buy his family home, despite the fact





that he's lived there for 50 years. Still, he remains undeterred and steadfast. "These people are newcomers. Haitians will always practice their vodou beliefs, even after they've been converted. Lots of them sign up to Catholicism or Christianity just to join certain schools," he says laughing.

As one of the world's foremost practitioners of vodou – a role handed to him from his grandfather – Beauvoir and his family are used to foreign guests. Diplomats, and even the odd Broadway star, pop in to visit when they're in town, he tells me. It's easy to see how Beauvoir, with his steeliness,

determination and charm, can easily flit between grand foreign embassies and Haitian villages so small that no map marks them.

Max Gesner Beauvoir, 25 August, 1936 -12 September, 2015

Living for the City

words Freddie Reynolds

pictures Hossein Fatemi

Two tales we all know: first, this city was it. Ford, GM, Packard, all had a go, built skyscrapers to prove it. Motown climbed higher.

Then: COLLAPSE. Within 50 years Detroit heaves then halves its heartbeat, one million people move out. Our coffee tables feature books filled with images of abandoned theatres, shattered factories, tiled roofs tempting gravity, whole houses tempting gravity. Ruin porn, we called it – the city's dirty secret. And we loved it.

But now, like James Jameson, flat on his back drunk at Hitsville, USA, gliding through bass lines like molten gold on silver, the city's tattered streets begin to emit life anew. Those factories are still there, empty and decrepit, but laughs and loves exist among them. What are cities made of, if not their people?

Detroit - Motor City, Comeback King?









These pages
(clockwise from
bottom left):
the abandoned
Packard
Automotive
Plant; a couple
walking through
the unkempt
grass at the Ride
It Sculpture Park;
Evelyn Stewart
and her son on
the front steps of
her house, next
to the Packard
Plant; dancing
at a gathering of
friends; a young
girl walks past the
Abandoned Central
Michigan Station.









Clockwise from top right: a man and his dog on the front steps of a squatted house; a woman reveals a tattoo to a friend; a group of young people gather at the Ride It Sculpture Park, four vacant lots alongside the East Davison Freeway – the park extends into the neighbourhood, revamping neglected alleys, garages and vacant lots; a man skateboarding at the Ride It Sculpture Park.







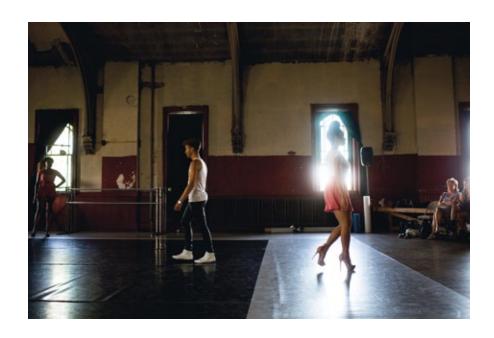




Clockwise from bottom left: bottom left: drinking and smoking at a house party; smoking a shisha at La Hookah Town lounge bar; a rehearsal for the 'Walk on Water' fashion show; a basement full basement full of blue-painted shoes, part of the Heidelberg Project, an outdoor art an outdoor art project created by artist Tyree Guyton and his grandfather Sam Mackey in the McDougall-Hunt neighbourhood on the city's east side.

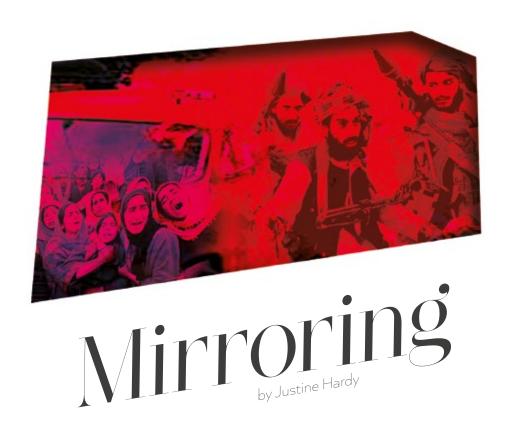












I am five — hot in a dress, a new one

that is digging in under my armpits. I am feeling sick. The car smells of dust and plastic. We are at the border in Cyprus, waiting to be let through. Everyone is tense. War is coming. My father is outside, shouting at a border guard, his face as red as his hair is blonde. My sister is picking at her measles vaccination scab. She wants to pick at mine as well. She is older so I give in.

It is my birthday. We are going across the border to a restaurant to celebrate. I do not want to be here.

It all feels wrong, tight, hot, frightening.

A woman crosses the road in front of us. draped in black, head-to-toe, swathed. I am used to seeing this, the big mamas who sell fish on the beach are always

pinching my rosy cheeks as they waddle about in black, clucking, tweaking. This woman is different, tall and fine, a fluid figure. Her head is covered, her face partly veiled. She looks so powerful and contained.

My mother hisses.

The woman looks beautiful to my eyes. I do not understand what my mother is seeing.

And now I am nearly fifty. I am standing beside a young woman. We are both carefully draped head to foot. She is newly arrived in the place where I work. Kashmir has particular kind of Islamic orthodoxy espoused as one of the very few solid, rule-bound structures in a violent place. More than a quarter of a century of intermittent fighting has destroyed most of the other societal structures that these valley people once knew.

The young woman and I are at the door of our main clinic in Srinagar, the capital city of the Kashmir Valley. She is one of our international summer interns, and so she has has been advised to cover her head if she wants to move around more easily, to fit in. She has already travelled a lot and she has readily accepted the guidance.

She is watching a woman walking towards us, five steps behind her husband, fully covered in black, even her hands in black gloves in the high heat of summer. Beside me the young woman's expression is momentarily unguarded. I do not know what she is thinking, but her expression is a mix of confusion and maybe a certain freshly-minted, campus-feministtrigger reaction—slightly narrowed eyes behind which judgements could be spinning. Her eyes flick. She catches me watching her. She blushes and looks away. It sits between us, noted.



And now, weeks later, I am talking to her again, home and away from the constant tension that is the backdrop to the everyday in Kashmir.

'Do any of the women rebel?' she asks. I know that she is talking about the veil.

I don't know what to say, whether to launch into a timeline about the veil and its origins, beyond and across religions, the choice of women as a means to move around beyond the invasive eyes of men. But what about the young woman who wears her veil as garment of aggression, a badge of honour to parade her radical views?

Or the woman raised in a place where every woman was veiled, who was forced to flee by war, and to start again somewhere else. A woman who is so fearful of her constantly shifting world that the veil presents a continuity, a talisman, a comfort blanket?

And then there are the young women who come to the clinic sometimes, fully covered, everything, faces, hands, eyes. They admit that this is how they hide their promiscuity—the burqa as false piety in a sexually confused and confusing society where tradition and modernity clash as frequently and violently as the soldiers and the militants?

Or the young women of the Women's College in Srinagar who had acid thrown in their faces by male militants who demanded that they wear the burqa or die — young women who had the courage to defy the threat, to rebel.

I have seen the veil put on as a rebellion, and I have seen it taken off for the same reason. I have seen it worn in and out of the covered world as both protection and oppression, as a disguise, even by men hiding weapons or foreigners trying too hard to fit in. It can seem profoundly feminine at times, wholly loathing of women at others. I know my reaction to the veil shifts. It mirrors me, my mood of optimism or despair about what is happening in Kashmir, Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, wherever the veil is worn culturally, religiously or contentiously.

'Yes,' I reply to the intern's question 'they do rebel.'

It is what I did in response to my mother's hissing when I was five, hot, and sick, though I did not understand why.

Justine Hardy is the founder and CEO of Healing Kashmir, healingkashmir.org

Illustration by Luke Walwyn





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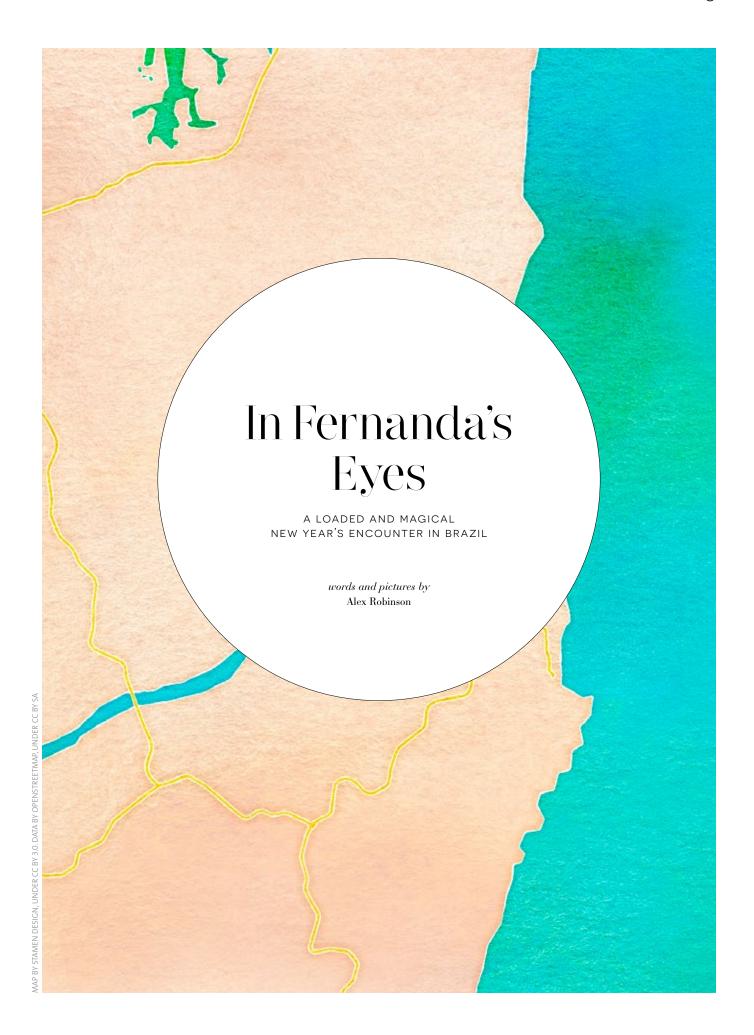
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I got to the beach just as the sun was going down. There was no electricity and I slung up my hammock in the wattle-stick shack by the light of a tiny torch — trying to remember how to tie the ropes so that one easy pull would release the hammock. It seemed to take hours. By the time I left, the gentle dunes where the shack sat were bathed in the limpid light of a full moon which hovered low over the water, rippling the waves like a stairway. A warm wind billowed the palms. Terns flew past, silhouetted briefly against the moon before disappearing into night.

I felt a rush of grief. Why was I here alone? Where was Mary Ann? Mary Ann was in New York. With someone else. I pushed the bitterness away. God help me, I thought. Help me on this New Year's Eve. Let me be free of this grief. This pain.

Music was spilling over the sand from the resort bar and it pulled me away from the view with a dull yearning for drink and company. I walked towards it and found an open-sided palapa-thatch bar on the other side of the dunes. The sand was warm and soft under my bare feet and it ran all the way to the tables – white plastic under the palmthatch. The electric lights – powered by a chugging generator out back – made the bar an island in the dark. Chatter and lilting reggae washing out the wisps of the breeze in palms and casuarinas.

As I walked in a woman sitting on the far side of the space caught my eyes. And held them, fixedly for a few intense seconds. By the time I'd ordered a Sol she'd gone.

But you're never alone on a backpacker beach and I was soon at a table with a mixed group of travellers, chatting busily, exchanging tales and lists of places to see. It softened the bitterness a little. And when the bar closed we moved to the beach itself and a driftwood fire someone had built earlier.

By now the moon was high in the sky, painting everything with a soft, silvery light, silhouetting all the beach huts – glinting through the wattle walls. The sand was sugar, dimpled with soft shadows. The sea playing gently on the beach was a ripple of silvery wavelets shimmering to an indigo-grey horizon. I sat cross-legged by the fire. And as I did so someone sat beside me.

It was the woman from the bar. She was as lithe as a dancer, bare feet and brown legs beneath a wispy cotton skirt, a singlet top tight against her athletic body. Her face framed by an unruly rush of thick black hair mixed old with young – crow's feet and smile lines were shallow valleys in smooth skin burnished by firelight. The flames flared in her dark almond eyes.

"Hola," she said, "Me llamo Fernanda."

I told her mine and for a while we exchanged travel pleasantries. She was Mexican, I British, she'd arrived from Oaxaca. I from Atitlán.

"Vamos a buscar madera?" she asked.

And we wandered down the shoreline, searching for driftwood beyond the fire. Then, called by the sea we left our clothes on the sand and made dark footprints to the water. Her skin and the surface of the waves were mercury in the moonlight. I plunged under the warm waves.

As we left the water she took my hand and pressed it hard with her thumb – right in the heel where the muscle meets the wrist. Right down to the bone. I winced.

"Como piense," she said. It's just as I thought."Hay algo que le ha herido." Something's hurt you.

It hurt. I pulled my hand away.

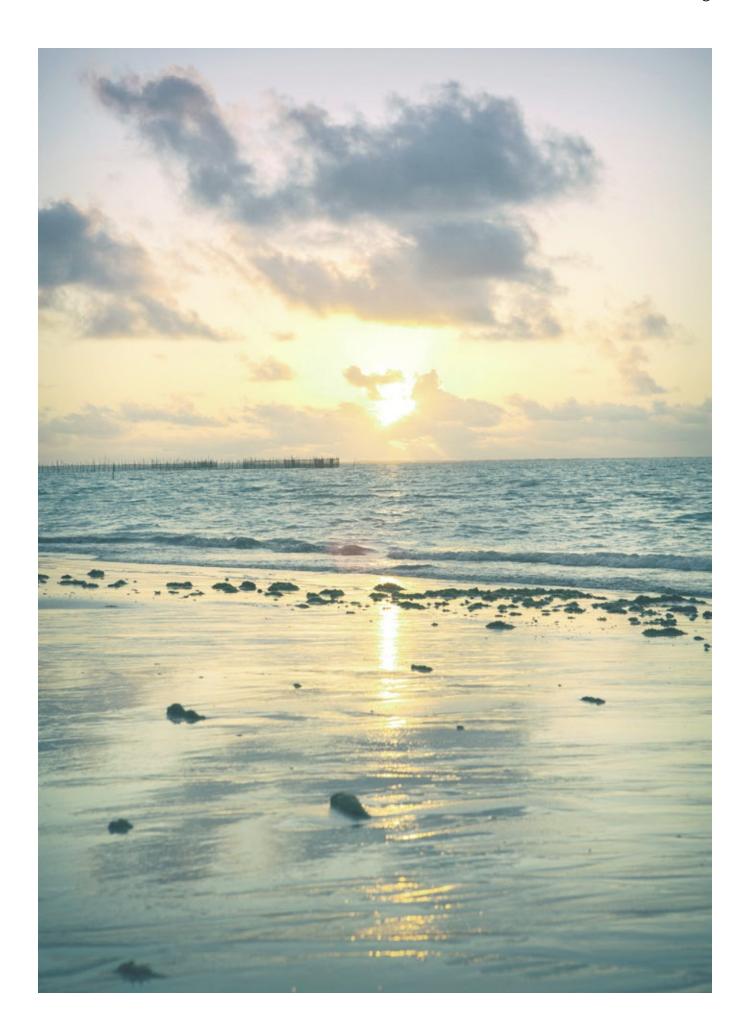
I told her about Mary Ann. About how we'd planned our trip round the world together. I told her how we'd arranged to meet here for New Year's Eve on the beach – to begin our trip together. Yes. Here. Tonight. But she'd met someone else on the way. And now I had six months alone.

Fernanda looked at me deeply.

"Tal vez es el mejor..." She said and began to walk away. "Meet me back at the fire in ten minutes, I think I can help."

She was there with Daniel, a lean, wiry man in his early fifties with a straggly beard and blue eyes, which pierced as deeply as Fernanda's. He said nothing more than his name as I sat, just taking my hand and pressing it in the heel – as Fernanda had done. This time the pain wasn't just physical. It seemed to unlock a tightness in my chest. Tears welled up, spilt down my face.

"Let's go somewhere more private," said Daniel. And for some reason I didn't hesitate. The three of us walked down the beach half a kilometre towards the cliffs – sketched in glowing black and white by the moonlight – until the bongos of beach fire party had faded and all we could hear was the lapping of the waves and the breeze blowing through the palm fronds.







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"Choose a spot," said Daniel. So I did, under a casuarina tree, facing the light of the moon, some fifty metres from the shoreline.

"You don't have to be lost in pain or projections anymore," said Daniel. "If you want we can help you cut yourself free. You want help?"

I nodded. "Sure, why not?" London was long gone. She was gone – faded away behind a cloud of grief. I had nothing left to lose.

And Daniel laid me down in the sand like a corpse.

"Spread your arms and legs", he said.
"Give me your hand."

Fernanda crouched over me, her face a few centimetres from mine.

"You ready for this?" she smiled. "It's going to hurt..."

And she pushed her fingers hard into my solar plexus and pubic bone, while Daniel dug his thumb into the heel of my hand. Agony, I winced, screamed and thrashed my head. Picture memories flooded into my mind. Her letter. Mary Ann. God it hurt. God....

"Breathe deep!", Daniel shouted, "in through the belly. Suck up the air. Right to the top of your nose, push it out through the mouth. Breathe, breathe."

And I gulped in the air. Pushed out the pain. For hours. The silhouetted palms faded into inky darkness, the moon disappeared from the sky leaving an afterglow behind the hills. Then came velvet black dotted with billions of glittering stars. The wind swept up. The waves pounded on the shore.

And still it went on.

"Suelta-lo!" shouted Fernanda. "Let it out. Push it out!"

I sucked in the clean sea wind. The salty air. Pushed out the hot tears. Vomited out the pain. Shrieked it into a night shifting from black into indigo, before a rosy tint appeared on the edge of the sea. And then I was alone in a ruin of sand and the pain had gone. Daniel was leaning against a palm, smoking a cigarette. And Fernanda was looking into my eyes.

"We are nearly there," she said. She helped me up from the battered sand and passed me a bottle of water. I was warm inside. Peaceful, my body light, my throat parched. I took a long, thirsty gulp and then walked across to Daniel, shook his hand. He pressed his finger into the heel of my palm. This time I felt no pain. Daniel smiled broadly, stood up and embraced me.

"Well done, my friend," he said holding me tight, "Nepauz pashpishau.... Now let Fernanda quide you on that final step."

Fernanda walked me a little further on and found a secluded spot under a towering coconut palm.

"Sienta," she said. I sat down in a half lotus. She walked around me, drawing a big circle in the sand and then marking a cross whose two branches met at the point where I was sitting. She sat opposite me, her legs right on my legs, her hands in mine. I could see her clearly now in the half-light. Her face centimetres from my own. Her eyes soft and deep.

"We are going to do the tres pasos," she said. "You must breathe like you did before – sucking in the air through your belly, bringing it up to your eyes. And you need to look in my eyes. All the time. Never break away."

As as I did, her face began to shift, move, fall in and out of focus. Only her eyes remained, swimming spirals I was falling into.

"That's it," she said, "now make a loop of feeling. Out of your right eye, into my left eye. Out of my right eye into your left eye."

The connection became stronger – a dizzying whirl of energy. I felt a surge, a pressure so strong it hurt.

"Release it," she whispered, "through your body, through the stomach, into the heart, through the throat, to the eyes."

She breathed deeply, sucking in the air through her nose. Waves rose through me with the breath, and then they exploded, washing out my heart and passing straight from my eyes into hers.

All that was left was peace and light. The light of the New Year morning sun, rising over the water behind me and reflected in Fernanda's eyes.

I'm finally here. As I get older, my year falls into a pattern that provides comfort in uncertain times. An annual trip to Iceland to enjoy the beauty of the landscape, the round of UK crime fiction festivals where I catch up with fellow writers and a return to Greece to visit the country where I lived for years.

It's been twelve months since I was last here. In Athens I'm shocked at how tired people are of politics, sick of being portrayed as the idle of Europe when they're facing an anxious future. I need to get out of the city to regain my equilibrium and retreat into the make-believe world of my books.

Waiting for the boat to Hydra is reassuring in its sameness. The smell of diesel fills the air and I can hear a tourist worrying if the atmosphere inside will be as bad as in the harbour. Ports are like railway stations. All of society passes through them. But the migrants touting their wares seem to have multiplied, desperate to sell their cigarette lighters, sunglasses and other pieces of ephemera. The snaking line of passengers, sweating in the heat, ignores them. Once we depart and I look around me, it's the usual cargo of Greeks going about their business and tourists off to enjoy the delights of the islands.

At my hotel, the manager says that tourism is down but what can he expect? He presses a card in my hand and asks me to leave a positive review on a travel website. I'm anxious to inspect the room and ensure it has the promised desk so I can write but I say I will tell everyone about the beauty of the island. But I do that anyway. Hydra is part of my annual pilgrimage.

I started both my novels here. Thoughts that have been reverberating around my head suddenly settle when faced with a still landscape. Ideas that I have been mulling over crystallise into a shape that allows me, after breakfast, to sit down at my laptop and begin to write.

It's an island famed for its creative ambiance. Artists paint the stone buildings and frothy sea during the day and then congregate in the harbour bars in the evening. Leonard Cohen met his Marianne here and, as I struggle to get an internet connection, I'm reminded of his song 'Bird on the Wire' written when the arrival of telephone posts allowed the outside world to encroach on his haven of peace.

Life is still changing on Hydra. I hear of an appalling burglary which ended in the death of a well-known restaurant owner, asphyxiated

in his own home. His assailants fled back to mainland Greece and some were caught en route in the very boat on which I'd arrived. It's shocked the local community and, as I weave my own tale of murder and revenge, I can't help reflecting how potent a theme it is of the serpent appearing in paradise.

In the afternoon I wander down to one of the harbour cafes where a television plays quietly in the back of the room. It's a news channel and two topics dominate the discussions: the migrant crisis and more elections.

The images broadcast from the isles of Lesbos and Kos are horrific. Refugees huddle together in the ports as bikini-clad tourists walk by. The juxtaposition is upsetting and it can only get worse. Winter is coming, cold and bleak, and many Greeks move to the capital for winter jobs. What will happen to these people then? Hydra, nestled in the Saronic Gulf, is far from the migrant route but the people I speak to sympathise with both the migrants and their fellow islanders. How can you help others when you are struggling yourself, they ask me.

The economic crisis has affected everyone. Favourite tavernas have closed and English friends have left as work opportunities disappear. The Greeks struggle on but, blighted by higher taxes and rising prices, have no safety net if things get worse. I reflect on my own position. I'm a full-time writer acutely conscious of where my money goes. But, as I sit in a cafe with my expensive laptop, determined to shut out the outside world, I'm aware of the choices that I have. This island remains a magnet for the creative and the nomadic but we have the ability to move on. Migrants of a very different kind.



In Bitter Chill by Sarah Ward is out now (Faber & Faber, £7.99)

PREMIUM ECONOMY CLASS

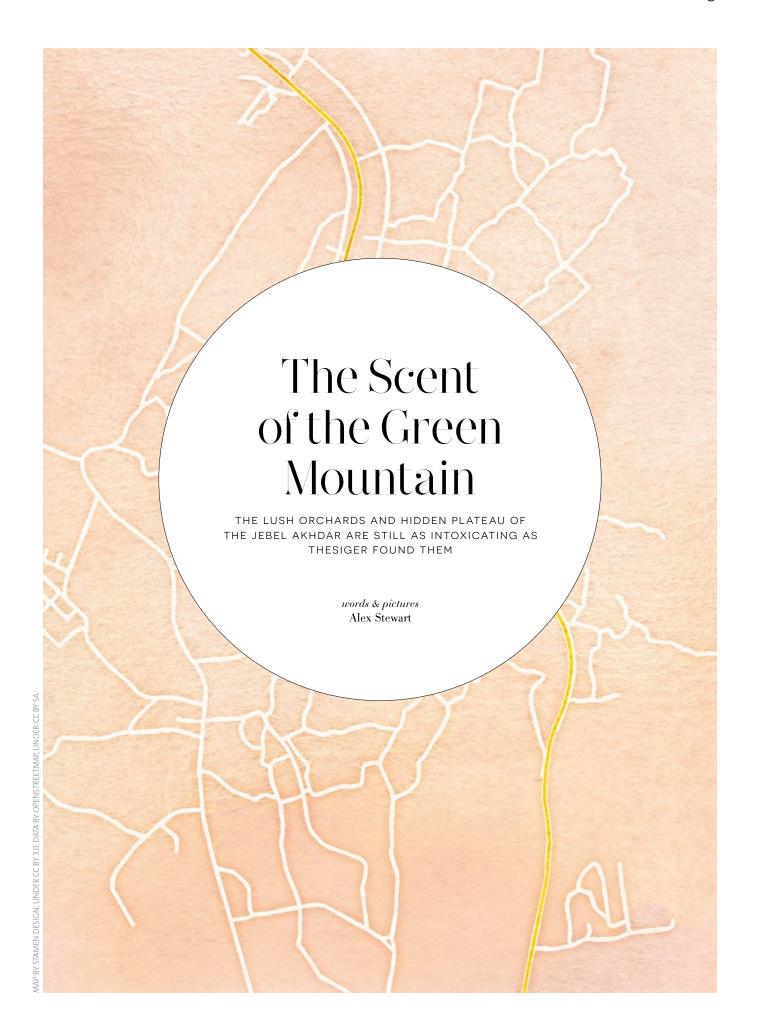


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These pages: Falaj irrigation channel carrying water through the Saiq Plateau

The idea of Oman's desert exists in

the imagination of everyone, evoked by a handful of images – sand, dunes, date palms and oil wells – distilled into the romantic phrase 'The Empty Quarter'. What I find heading into the interior though is mile after mile of barren, spiky rubble, cliffs of jutting sharp rocks, unrelieved by a single piece of vegetation or water.

With my guide Yusuf, a jovial, refined Anglophile who carries a khaizaran, a cane-swagger-stick once an integral part of Arabic formal dress, we drive for hours as if across the moon. At one point a man appears by the road, dressed in a traditional ankle-length dishdasha as meagre protection against the heat. Where was he from? Where was he going? There was no sight of habitation let alone a way of him making a living.





Suddenly a few date palms pierce the horizon, then a few more and I understand the ingenuity of a people who have learned how to use every



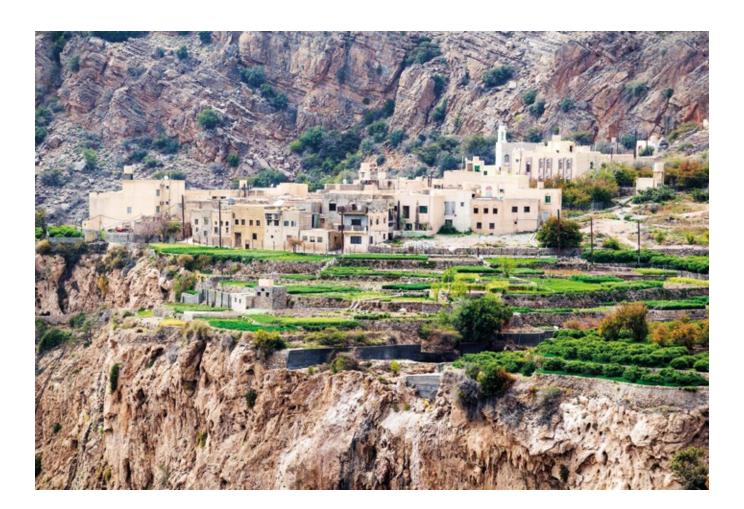
These pages (above left to right): Roses growing on the Saiq Plateau; the hamlet of Al Ayn clinging to the cliffside, with terraced rose growing plots below.

drop of water they can find. We come across an oasis, a wadi, welling from the ground like a small miracle. Where there had been roads and dusty orange sand, now there are lush fields, a lattice of falaj irrigation canals to feed the crops, verdant groves of date palms and an unlikely pool of green water gleaming coolly in the midday sun. Enormous iridescent dragonflies hover over the water and frogs croak vociferously while brightly-coloured birds including Indian rollers loop lazily overhead. The village of Misfah turns out to be a hidden gem, much like the Saig Plateau, an isolated upland area hidden at the heart of Jebel Akhdar, the abrupt wall of mountains that we are ascending towards.

In early 1950 the great desert explorer Wilfred Thesiger set out to climb the Jebel Akhdar. The siger had spent the previous five years travelling, mostly in disguise, seeking silence and decency in Oman's Empty Quarter, crossing deserts with the Bedouin and discovering that, "The harder the life, the finer the person."

It was intrigue rather than hardship that drew him to the Jebel Akhdar. The name translates as the Green Mountain, and for more than a century European explorers had returned from this area of Oman with improbable tales of mists and sudden valleys, of unreachable villages and pomegranate trees, cooler and fresher than the blinding desert below. A century later the place had grown all but inaccessible, a mythical redoubt ruled with medieval enthusiasm by sheikh Suleiman bin Hamyer, who styled himself the 'King of Nebhania and Lord of the Green Mountain'. The sheikh blocked The siger's passage and he wasn't to return to the region for 27 years.

The peaks on the plateau are both a physical barrier between the coastal plain and desert interior and a frontline between one-time warring factions; the sheikh and his brother, Oman's Imam, controlled the interior, centred on the old capital Nizwa, while the Sultan ruled the rest from the current capital Muscat. With the discovery of oil in the interior, conflict inevitably



arose. Struggle ensued until the sultan secured the lands around Jebel Akhdar with the aid of the British army in 1959. Wary of the region's history and fearing rebellion, he sealed off the area to prevent any further insurrections. The Jebel Akhdar didn't open again until 2005, out of bounds to all but resident villagers and permit-carrying visitors.

On our approach we stop at Nizwa, famed for its fort, livestock market and souk. At the fine, reconstructed fort Yusuf points out 'murder holes' in the immense earthen walls, ingenious slots for pouring boiling date syrup on unsuspecting attackers. In the souk he identifies the many grades of frankincense on sale, describing how the precious perfume lay behind Oman's historical fame and wealth. He scooped his hand into baskets and held up handfuls of the dried crystalline

gum. "Smell that! Now that's good." He insists I buy some of the finest grade and try it out: musky, sweet, intoxicating.

Elsewhere I pass fishmongers filleting calf-sized tuna, shelves of sun-dried limes and bottles of molasses-black local honey. The press is hardest around the traders selling halwa, the dark, sweet, sticky dessert so beloved by Omanis, served in enamelled tin dishes decorated with hand-painted leaves, flowers and mountain views. The special ingredient is Omani rosewater, only grown near the summit of Jebel Akhdar and every bit as fragrant and intoxicating as Frankincense.



A checkpoint still guards the entrance to Jebel Akhdar although these days it's more of a formality, as much to ensure that only 4x4s are permitted to make the perilously steep journey as to check on paperwork and eligibility. The road, completed by the military only a few years ago, then snakes into the sky through some of Oman's most spectacular scenery. Cliff sides have been gouged and smoothed to allow the road to rise 3,000m into the hot, endlessly-folding rocks. It takes a short while and some sweeping switchbacks before the air begins to thin and cool and the rippled escarpment of the main Saiq Plateau, at 2,000m, is revealed, dotted with bushes and trees, juniper, wild fig and olive. Climbing higher and heading towards the edge of the mountain we come to a gargantuan gorge of rust- and gunmetal-streaked stone. Equally unexpected is the silence. Here, it's more than just an absence of noise. It's an incongruous vacuum without even a whisper of wind, almost as if the stillness is a quiet apology for the brutality of the landscape.

After the best part of a century as a military zone the place has a surreal feel. There's still a base on the plateau and camouflaged pick-ups pass us from time to time. Despite recent development and the presence of new luxury hotels, the sense of isolated emptiness is pervasive. Nothing blots the landscape here while the light changes by the hour. In the morning a pale honeycomb glow bathes the

These pages (left to right): the spectacular Saiq Plateau, dotted with scrub and shrubs; typical Omani mosaic tile patterning in the Grand Mosque in Muscat.

land; in the evening the hard rocky lines are softened by a milky pink-lavender light and the depths of the canyons are rendered unfathomably dark. Then night falls, like a cold hand on your shoulder.

Jebel Akhdar's most resounding feature though is its lack of water. The folds of the canyons look as if they've been carved by rivers cascading through the sheersided abyss but in fact they're bone dry. Thousands of years of habitation however, have meant that people have learned to deal with little rainfall; the falaj system such as we'd seen in Misfah was invented by the ancient people of Oman to irrigate the land via a network of spring-fed aqueducts and allowed them to farm peaches, pears, grapes, apples and pomegranates in this most hostile of gardens.

The following day I wander down a stony track with Yusuf, wary of the terrifying drop to the wadi below. We explore small villages stacked against vertical hillsides or tucked in the lee of the gorge. In the hamlet of Al Ayn, clinging to a promontory, we find a spring and a lattice of aflaj that fed an array of terraces used to grow delicate damask roses amid the abrasive mountainsides. No one knows when roses first appeared on mountaintop terraces but they were probably introduced by the Persian dynasties that ruled Oman before the arrival of Islam. Despite not featuring in the Qur'an, roses and rosewater permeate almost every aspect of Islamic culture. They embellish gardens and are celebrated by physicians, poets, perfumers and philosophers, including Sufi mystics such as Rumi and Ruzbihan Baqli. Here, these flowers provide flashes of colour in the mountain fastness.

For several weeks in spring parts of the Green Mountain turn shocking pink. The petals of the fully-grown roses are carefully plucked at dawn when the weather is coolest, to help preserve their intense aroma, and then taken for processing. As we stroll through the narrow alleys we gaze into oppressively hot, dark rooms so



soot-caked, they seem as if they'd been gutted by fire. Inside, petals are being distilled in copper pans over mud ovens. An old man weighing rose petals from the morning's harvest gives us coffee flavoured with cardamom, and offers us dates. He explains that the resultant rose-flavoured steam condenses into a metal container, which is then repeatedly filtered over several months to produce a clear liquid used in the production of the prized rosewater.

ATASTE OF THE ORIENT

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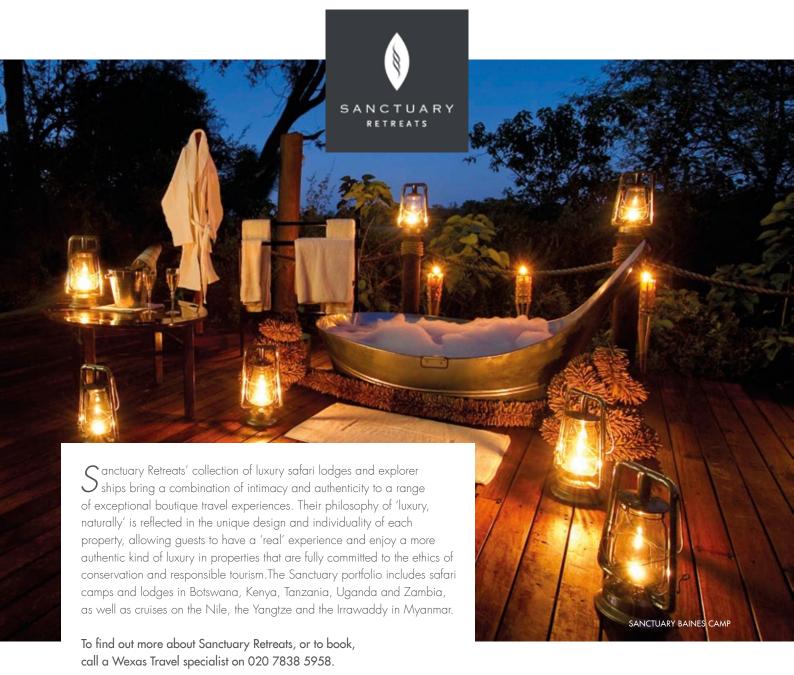
Above: Massed ridges of the Saiq Plateau at sunset.

The scent is rose sweet but acrid. "It takes time," he observes, passing me a perfect pink bloom, soft, deep and many-petalled. Its heady perfume seems a fragrance straight out of the poetry of Rumi:

What is the scent of the rose? The breath of reason and intelligence, A sweet guide on the way to the eternal kingdom.

Jebel Akhdar may be green in name but it is still a barren and difficult place of rock and cliff, of terraces tightly scribbled across the land like contours.

Oman's transformation over the last four decades from a divided desert backwater to one of the most united, forwardthinking Arab nations in the Gulf has brought about a great deal of change. With its unequivocally modern capital and roads paid for by oil money it's no longer the country Thesiger remembered as, "one of the very few places left where I could satisfy an urge to go where others had not been." But it still conceals hidden gems, communities desperately hanging on to traditions and, above all, it retains the power to astound.



SANCTUARY BAINES CAMP OKAVANGO DELTA, BOTSWANA

This environmentally friendly safari camp features just five luxury suites with four-poster beds draped in nets that can be rolled out onto a private elevated deck for nights under the stars. There's also the option of an outdoor star bubble bath. The main lodge, which is connected to the suites by a series of wooden walkways, raised above the Boro River, features an outdoor dining area, a fire core and a pool. Away from the camp, guests can participate in unique elephant interaction as well as guided game drives and water-based dugout canoe safaris.



SANCTUARY MAKANYANE SAFARI LODGE, MADIKWE GAME RESERVE, SOUTH AFRICA

This luxury lodge overlooks the Marico River in the secluded northeastern corner of the malaria-free Madikwe Game Reserve. Suites are reached along shady paths that wind through the forest and feature elegant teak furnishings, outdoor bathrooms and wraparound glass walls that provide uninterrupted views of the river and bush beyond. Guests also have the opportunity to forgo the luxury of their suite and spend a night in the Star View Sleep-out Hide.





BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK, UGANDA

Nestled deep within the World Heritagelisted Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in southwest Uganda, this remarkable camp is one of the most atmospheric in Africa. It's the ideal base from which to visit the mountain gorillas that live in the forest, and it's not uncommon for gorillas to visit the camp itself. Accommodation comes in the form of eight stylish tents, each with two queen beds, a huge bathtub and views of the jungle canopy from a large private deck.

SANCTUARY ANANDA **MYANMAR**

Custom built by local craftsmen, Sanctuary Ananda provides sleek and contemporary accommodation with a nod to the unique heritage of Myanmar, the country in which it's sailed since November 2014. The culture of Burma is also reflected in the 21 luxurious suites - all of which feature private balconies – as well as the outstanding on board cuisine. Wow-factor moments include a riverbank lantern dinner and a

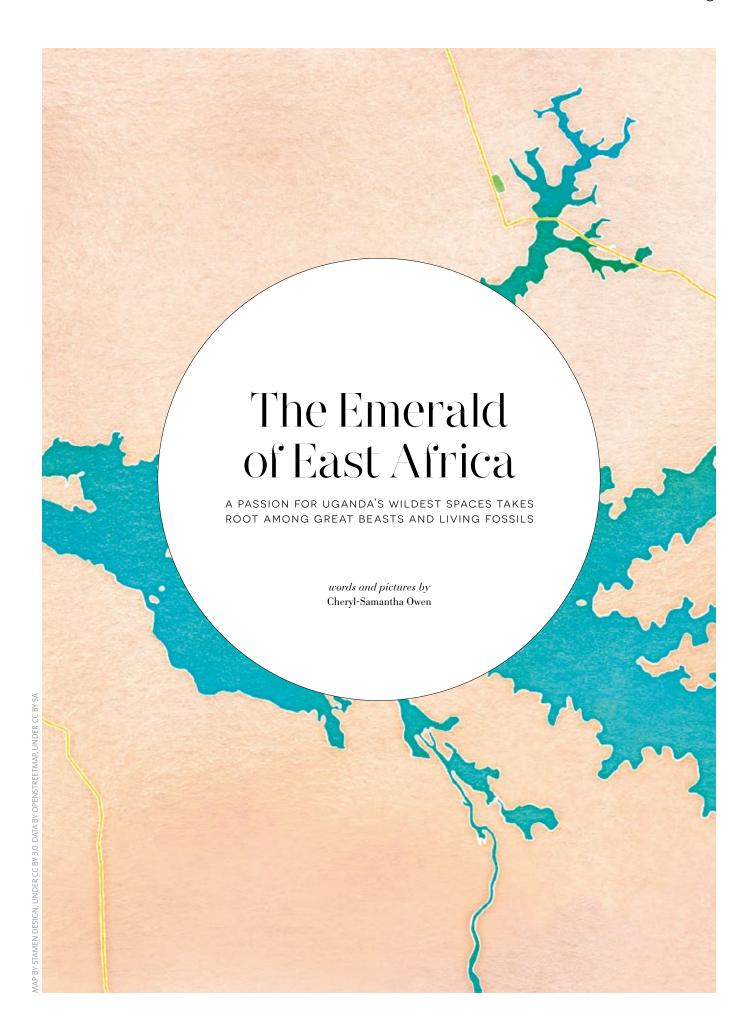


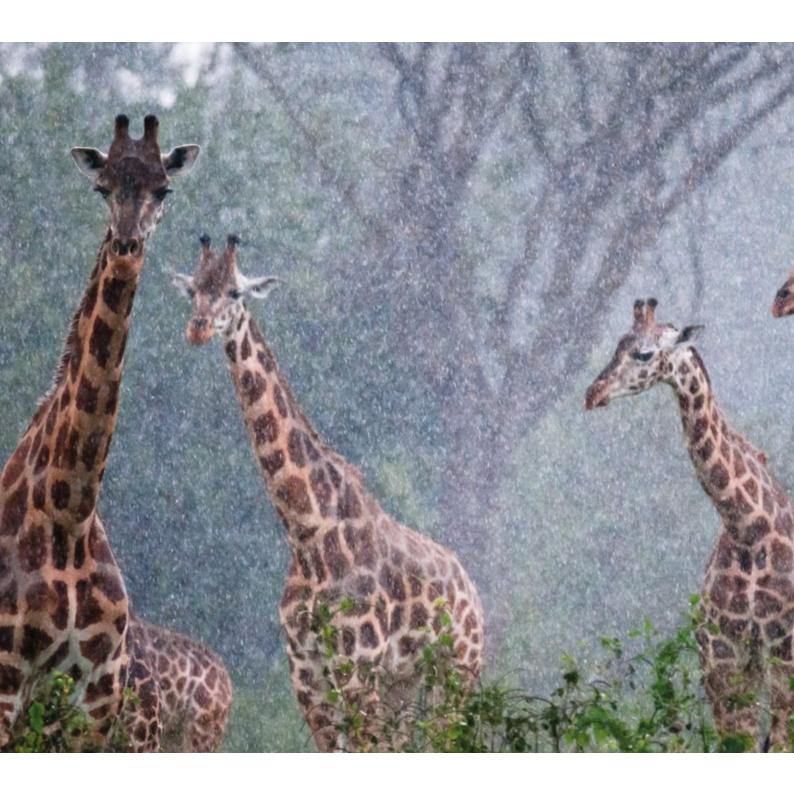


SANCTUARY OLONANA. MASAI MARA, KENYA

This gold Kenya eco-tourism award winner is set on the banks of the Mara River in a private concession bordering Kenya's most famous reserve. This was the first of Sanctuary's luxury safari properties and, with a resident pod of hippo and the Oloololo escarpment (where Out of Africa was filmed) as a backdrop, it remains one of its finest. The camp is perfect for families with twelve oversized safari tents featuring two queensized beds, a pizza oven, mosquito nets and private verandahs overlooking the Mara River.







Bouncing north through the

African sky, I rubbed away a patch of encrusted red murram dust from the little plane's window and gulped in the enormity of the River Nile below. Two hours of flying over almost 300 miles of green speckled bush and winding waterways and I was deep in middle Africa, or so it felt. The pilot turned to me shouting, "Beyond that pyramid-shaped hill is Southern Sudan." While

not quite the heart of Africa, equatorial Uganda is sandwiched between Kenya, Tanzania, Congo, Rwanda and Southern Sudan (think coffee, Kilimanjaro, gorillas, war). Its infamous history, defined by a power-crazed dictator and a child-kidnapping wizard rebel, defied even the most inviting of tourism brochures for decades, but today Uganda is the emerald of East Africa. All preconceived notions that this country

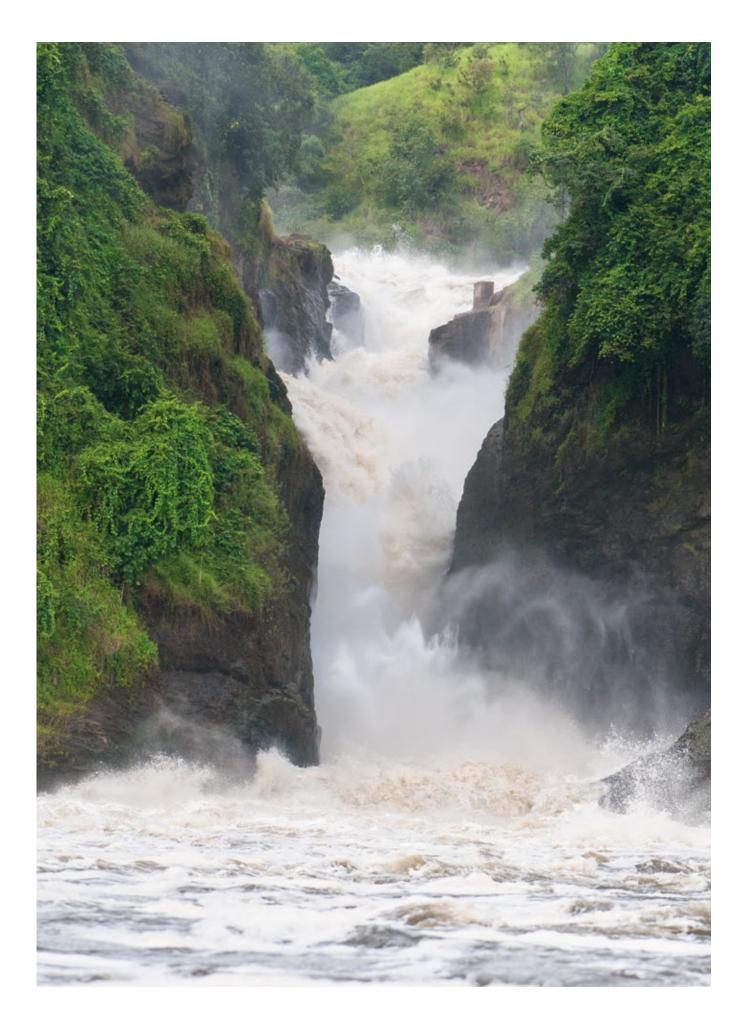




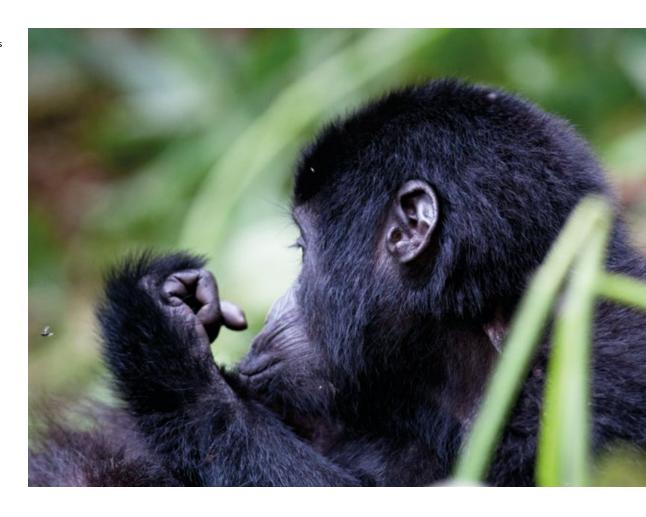


had been tamed, a paradise lost, were ambushed on my journey from north to south. Uganda exposed a face of Africa that has all but vanished from the familiar khaki-and-jeep burdened safari routes.

Abyssinian ground hornbills burst into flight as we skimmed over the bush airstrip before circling back to land in Kidepo Valley National Park. It is Uganda's most northerly and remote National Park, and until the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) moved their reign of terror campaigns to the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), it was a no-go zone for tourists and locals alike. I was expecting arid badlands, but the rains had arrived early and produced a banquet in this isolated corner of wilderness. Open savannah spilled out across the valley floor, a landscape $\,$ similar to the Mara-Serengeti region, and with every gust of wind the elephant-high grass danced across the gargantuan landscape.



These pages (left to right): Murchison Falls on the White Nile; gorilla in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.



Julius, the zealous guide at Apoka Lodge, greeted us with the ubiquitous warmth of most Ugandans. The torrential downpours each afternoon did nothing to dampen our spirits, instead the rain and theatrical skies amplified the region's rich primordial nature. "When the rain comes and the sun is still shining we know a leopard has given birth to her cubs," said Julius, driving towards a rainbow in the hills.

My ideas of reaching the South Sudan border to explore the edges of the park and photograph fabled hot springs bubbling in the area were thwarted by the Kidepo River, which had burst its banks and devoured the road. Instead, we trekked after lions and watched as six cubs learnt to negotiate their rocky kingdom, while their mothers spied a thousandstrong herd of buffalo In the evening we found 'the lads', five male lions,

stirring from their siesta at the top of a 100-metre high outcrop. As night fell, their calls echoed through the valley. One by one, they scrambled down and emerged from the long grass directly behind us, rather less wideeyed than me.

Sometime after midnight the males announced their presence in camp, and I woke to an extravaganza. Forked lightning zigzagged to the east and west, stars jumped out of the pitchblack sky above, and glowworms twinkled in the grass beyond. The soundtrack, a raucous mix of lion, hyena and jackal, was no less spectacular. The following morning a cantankerous old buffalo snorted a greeting as he rubbed against a dead tree inches from

my luxurious veranda, a dawn ritual I grew to expect. Later, our spotter, a local from the Karamajong tribe, found the fabled leopard, and as she sprang to the ground the forest erupted with a flock of rose-winged parakeets, the only kind that lives in Africa.

After observing their brightening flight, I headed south to look for waterfalls, shoebills and gorillas. In a tiny tin boat, we rocked our way up the Victoria Nile in search of Murchison Falls, but once immersed in the river ecosystem time slowed to the lazy rhythm of water lapping the banks and the destination dissolved into irrelevance. Virtually eye-level with hippos and buffalo and without another boat in sight, the Nile had me under its spell. Pied kingfishers and red-throated bee-eaters darted out of nests in the steep sandy cliffs, and then... straight from the pages of a Tarzan novel, elephants swam across the river ahead, with trunks fashioned into snorkels for the smallest - and water pistols for the teenagers.

The famous falls announced their presence upstream in an offering of foamy water and a current that gripped the boat and threatened to pull us down into 'crocodile pools', but the skipper knew the river well and the crescendo roar from ahead drowned the engine's complaining whine as we jerked rapidly forwards. Watching the mighty Nile crash through a cleft in the Albertine Rift's escarpment only seven metres wide when you are heading straight for it is, I would imagine, how an ant balancing on a leaf's edge feels when the turbo sprinklers come to life. I peeled my camera from my eye seconds before we veered off our collision course and into the calm waters along the bank. The sensory overload was as good an adrenaline shot as any, the ferocity of the flow is staggering.

In another boat on nearby Lake Albert prehistoric-looking Marabou storks scavenged anything from the army of traders, who appeared to deal in everything, en route to DRC. The shore was lined with large boats that looked worthy of ocean voyages and a neverending convoy of trucks emptied goods ranging from cooking oil, cement and orange squash to cheap Chinese umbrellas. Most disheartening to see were the heavy loads of timber coming across the lake from DRC. Uganda's own timber supply cannot meet the country's demand, and both its own and its neighbour's forests continue to shrink at an alarming rate. Less than three per cent of the country's land area remains covered in tropical high forest. With the current president offering up patches of remaining forest to foreign investors, the future of this green land looks dubious.

Storks and traders aside, the stars of Lake Albert are its avian living fossils -the resident shoebills. They stand statuesque for several hours, daring only to blink, until the opportune moment to lunge at their prey. I stared one down for 45 minutes until the shoebill darted below the water, caught a lungfish and gulped down the wriggling meal before I had registered what was happening. Then, with the same ease of a bird that would easily fit in its eye socket, the winged mammoth took to flight.

Further south in a fragment of African rainforest that is protected (and guarded by the most committed rangers I have ever met) I slipped down near-vertical slopes, tripped over twisted vines, lost my boots in a muddy bog and stumbled for eight hours behind the seasoned ranger who, all the while, strolled through the forest and whistled to the birds like a Disney film character. It was the mountain gorillas that had tempted me to Uganda in the first place, and cornering a clump of bamboo, I looked straight into the

soulful eyes of a huge blackback, a young male. Next to him was the impressive silverback, the dominant male that holds the family together. There are 700-800 mountain gorillas alive today and 350 of them were in this very forest, Bwindi Impenetrable. I was lucky enough to sit with nine of them for almost an hour. Before the clock struck the silverback gathered what felt like my newfound family and disappeared into the green.

Whether or not they will continue to be photographed in years to come is not certain. Their survival depends on the continued existence of their rainforest habitat, already a small fraction of what it once was. Responsible tourism has proven to be their final chance, and I was truly inspired by the dedication

of the park rangers who guide people to them and also act as their protectors. Tourism is by no means a panacea for conservation, in fact I shudder at the thought of Kidepo being overrun by vehicles and lined with hotels, or a single shoebill being surrounded by a flotilla of boats dripping with twitchy spectators, but perhaps Ugandans will be wise enough to not give away their forests, savannahs and water sources to mass tourism or agriculture. It is often said that if you plant a stick in Ugandan soil it will take root overnight. My hope is that as Uganda grows, a true picture of its wilderness value will flourish too.

These pages: a pair of baboons sitting in









hoever named the 7 Wonders of the World must have never seen Mt. Hood, whose snowy peak is crowned by eleven glaciers — one for every thousand feet it rises above sea level — and stands watch over Timberline Lodge and year-round ski lifts and the lakes, forest and farmland of its valley.

They certainly didn't explore the Oregon Coast. Not its sand dunes or its sand traps, trapped inside the best golf resort in America. Nor its punch bowls or lighthouses or tide pools, or craggy coves hiding secret surf spots. Perhaps they didn't know all 363 miles of it are free and open for all of us to enjoy.

We're confident they missed the grandeur of the Columbia River Gorge. Although US Congress didn't; they recognised its unique splendour and designated it the largest National Scenic Area our great country has ever known.

The exposed earth of the Painted Hills must have escaped their gaze as well. Which is too bad, because gazing upon these glorious mountains of coloured earth, you realise prehistoric creatures didn't just roam the earth—they roamed the very earth beneath your feet.

Smith Rock's towers of volcanic ash, which rise like the spires of a cathedral out of the sage and dust of Central Oregon, somehow didn't attract whoever was tasked with coming up with the list. Although its thousands of routes attract climbers from every part of the globe.

The Wallowas were overlooked as well. Where you can look down from an alpine summit and see the high desert of Indian country roll out in front of you in one direction, and then turn around and see past Hells Canyon into the next state, and some say all the way past it to the next one after that.

All we can guess is whoever came up with the 7 Wonders of the World never actually set foot in Oregon.

Because even Crater Lake was left off their list. Which is a shame, because standing high atop the rim of the deepest lake in America—which was once a volcano that erupted so violently it left a hole that rain and snow filled in over thousands of years—you can see what a wonder our earth really is.



So we see your Wonders, world. And raise you 7 of our own.

And we invite you to visit them. Not just to see them. But to actually experience them.

Our Wonders aren't just for taking pictures of. They're adventures to have, vast enough to get lost inside and find yourself again.

To truly say you've seen our Wonders, you have to get out of the car, hike down from the scenic vista and feel them beneath your feet.

Just remember: This is Oregon. So how you go about doing that is entirely up to you.

The 7 Wonders of Oregon.
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A Pattern of Islands

words Arthur Grimble illustrations Luke Best

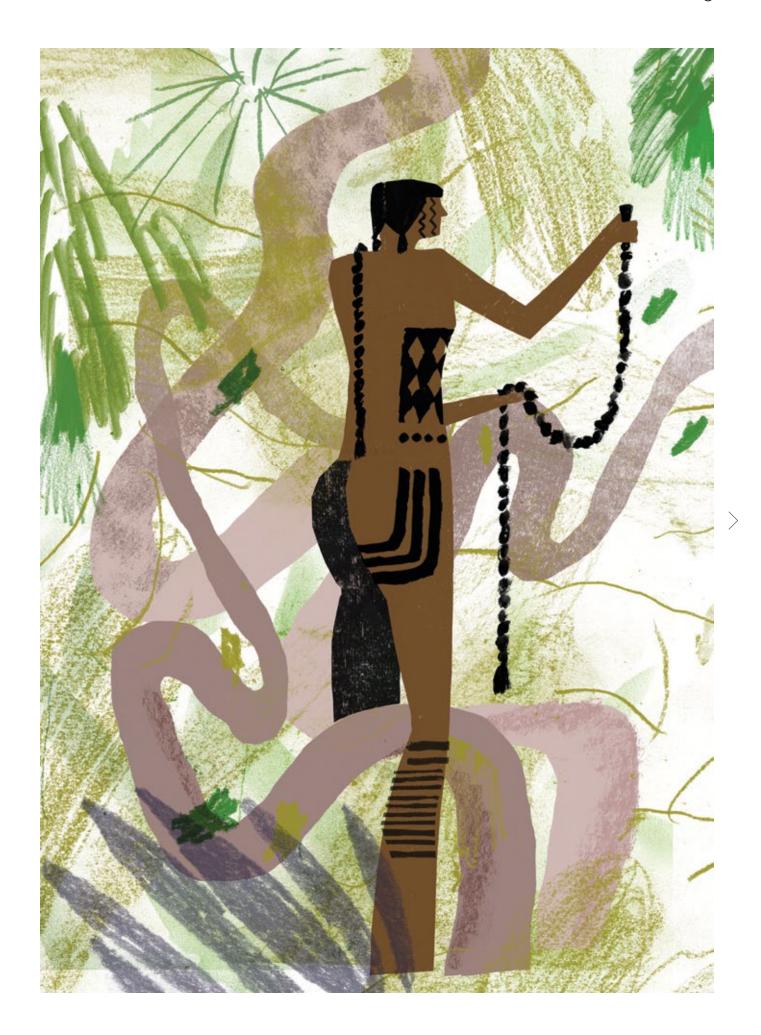
The land in that part of Tarawa is cut by a tidal passage between lagoon and ocean. When the springs flood high through the passage, they bring riding in with them from outside a minute marine organism, which settles along the shallows. The weed, or animalcule, or plankton (I do not know which it is) makes tempting food for millions of tiny soft crabs that live on the water's edge. Great hosts of these, none much bigger than a sequin, are lured by the bait an inch or so deeper into the sea than they usually venture.

The next scene belongs to the teeming sardines. Perhaps they too have mustered in their millions because of the tide-borne food; or perhaps they know that the coming of the food spells crabs in the shallows. Whichever enticed them first, they remain for only one purpose. Their battalions, massed like silver clouds in the two-foot shoals, charge wave upon wave to the lip of the tide bent upon nothing but the massacre of crabs.

But sardines make just the food the grey mullet love best. The mullet have been massing for their own purposes a little farther out. If these again are initially attracted by the floating food, they soon forget it. They plunge in among the sardines, a ravening army of one-pounders. The small fish twist and scatter wildly into open water, the bigger ones after them.

And that is why the vivid, blue backed trevally have come so close inshore. Their meat is mullet. They sweep to landward of their quarry and hunt them out to sea, devouring as they go. But alas for their strength and beauty! Engrossed in their chase, they drive straight for the bank where the tiger shark are mustered. A sixty-pound trevally is a streak of azure lightning over the shining bottom. He can zig-zag in a flash and leap a man's height sheer from the sea to escape a close pursuer. No heavy-barrelled tiger shark, hunting alone, is a match for his dazzling tactics. But for all his desperate twists and turns, his breachings and his soundings, he is lost where a hundred rushing jaws are above and below and around him.

Yet, in the last act, it is not the tigers that triumph. The ultimate destroyer in that chain of hungry bellies and ravening jaws is no creature of the sea but man himself, out after shark flesh in those innocently smiling waters.





Thirty-five years ago, the Gilbertese were beginning to use steel hooks for shark fishing; but there were many who still claimed that the old-style twelve-inch ironwood hook, trained to the right shape on the living tree, was the only thing for tiger shark. A twig of the tree (*Pemphis acidula*) was bent so that it recurved upon itself, and left to grow lashed in that position for a year or two. When it was rather more than half an inch thick, it was cut and fashioned for service. The outstanding virtue of this gigantic instrument was that it could be

grown with magic, trained with magic, cut with magic, and trimmed with magic. Good luck for the fisherman and bad luck for the shark could be poured into it at every stage of its manufacture, whereas a steel hook bought from a trade store could only be magicked once, as a finished article. According to the old men, nobody but folk ignorant of the proper spells would ever dream of using anything but ironwood.

A three-foot length of plaited hair from the head of the fisher's wife or daughter made the trace for an old-style hook, and the line was a coconut-fibre rope as thick as a man's forefinger. The shark hunter was not out for sport; he wanted nothing but dead shark. His gaff was not a gaff, but a glorious club with a ten-pound rock for its head. And it was not for simple fun that he did his fishing from a canoe not much longer than a man; the basic reason was that he could not handle the line himself; if he did, the bite of any sizeable shark would snatch him flying into the sea. He had to make the line fast to the middle of his craft; and that spelt a small canoe, because the resistance of a big one to the first furious jerks of his catch would tear the hull apart.

I imagine the broad technique of it is still very much as it used to be in those days. The fisher paddles out in his cockleshell, baits his hook, whether ironwood or steel, with a couple of pounds of almost any kind of offal, lets it hang from amidships on two or three fathoms of line, and drifts waiting for a bite, his club beside him. A big one takes the hook. The quiet canoe gives a sudden lurch and starts careering round in mad little circles; or it bounces insanely up and down; or it zig-zags like a misdirected rocket; or it rushes off in a

straight line, forwards or backwards as the case may be, at sizzling speed, the fisherman holding on grimly whatever it does. Half a dozen small craft milling around like that all at the same time, without visible means of propulsion, make a wildly eccentric sight from the shore. But the fury of a tiger-shark's struggles soon exhausts it. It floats limply to the surface and then comes the high moment of the fisherman's day. He hauls the spent brute cautiously alongside and, letting out one piercing howl of pleasure, cracks it on the nose with his trusty club. That is the only part of the business, I think, that affords him anything like the savage thrill that civilised sportsmen get out of killing things.

But although safety first is the rule when tiger shark are about in numbers, plenty of Gilbertese are ready to fight a lone prowler in its own element. Owing to his great girth, a tiger cannot turn quickly; once launched on its attack, it thunders straight forward like a bull; there lies the hunter's advantage in single combat. Out sailing with a Tarawa friend one day, I pointed out a cruising dorsal fin. 'That's a tababa,' he said, 'watch me kill him.' We lowered sail and drifted. He slid

overboard with his knife and paddled around waiting to be noticed. He soon was. The fin began to circle him, and he knew he was being stalked; he trod water; it closed in gradually, lazily to fifteen yards.

He held his knife right-handed, blade down, the handle just above the water, his crooked right elbow pointed always towards the gliding fin. He would have a split second to act in when the charge came. It came from ten yards' range. There was a frothing swirl; the fin shot forward like an arrow; the head and shoulders of the brute broke surface, rolling as they lunged. My friend flicked aside in the last blink of time and shot his knife into the up swinging belly as it surged by. His enemy's momentum did the rest. I saw the belly rip itself open like a zip-fastener, discharging blood and guts. The tiger disappeared for a while, to float up dead a hundred yards off.

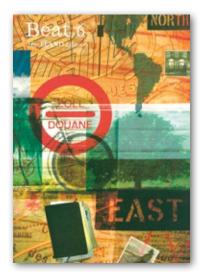
That kind of single combat used to be fairly common. It was rather like a nice score of fifty at cricket in England; the villagers applauded but did not make a great song about it.

Eland Books and the Heart Agency came together earlier this year though the 134 deliciously illustrated pages of Beat 6: The Eland Edition. A collaboration of words and art, Heart's illustrators took inspiration from the publisher's catalogue of great travel writing, and through the vision of the illustrators, these vibrant texts come to life anew.

This collaboration of these two independent spirits governed by a commitment to art and the power of prose comes at a time when the virtues of small businesses are increasingly celebrated. Taking pride over their individual instincts has helped set them apart, and Beat 6 is a fitting tribute to their separate, but here collective endeavours.

Beat 6 includes 31 illustrations based on extracts from Eland's travel classics, including Portrait of a Turkish Family by Irfan Orga and The Trouble I've Seen by Martha Gelhorn.

Visit heartagency.com and travelbooks.co.uk for more





The mythical-tinged wilds of Swedish Lapland, together with its people, offer amazing opportunities for outdoor adventure, from winter wildlife safaris to woodland hikes, Northern Lights shows and dog sledding tours.

The Swedish Lapland experience is one of almost constant excitement and adventure. A seemingly endless network of snowy woodland trails are ready-made for dogledding and snowmobiling, while Ice Music concerts and fabulous food tours—the region is blessed a treasure-trove of fresh and flavourful ingredients—provide a relaxing yet equally enthralling alternative.

All this is topped off with some of Scandinavia's most interesting accommodation, from cosy lodges like Pine Bay to the original ICEHOTEL and the wonderfully unique Treehotel, which offers comfortable accommodation in magnificently designed tree houses with names like Mirrorcube and the UFO. Elsewhere, the Aurora Safari Camp, with just five traditional lavvu rooms, is located far from the interruptions of artificial light, perfect for viewing the Northern Lights.



For more information on Swedish Lapland, call a Wexas Scandinavia Specialist on O2O 7838 5958.



Evening in Axarquía

poem Neil Rollinson

for Richard Skinner

This is as close as you get to the end of the continent.

Beyond the last mountain a glimmer of sea turns purple.

There's nothing here but cactus and bitter almonds. The nuts crack as they cool, and dogs are barking from every hill.

I drink a beer at the window, feeling far from home.

A flock of blue-throats fly down the valley, chirruping, heading home to Africa; you can just see, in the distance, the coast of Morocco, the Atlas Mountains as they fade.

This is the loneliest place on the planet tonight: alien, harsh.

It darkens quickly, and everything falls into silence – except the dogs, the indefatigable dogs, barking mad with the heat and emptiness.

Extracted from the collection *Talking Dead* published by Jonathan Cape, PBK, 64PP, £10. © Neil Rollinson 2015.

A bumpy road to transcendence

An extract from 'Eternal Bliss' in Mahesh Rao's new story collection One Point Two Billion



Culture arrived late in the afternoon. The officials at the Directorate of Spiritual Affairs (DoSA) would be making their annual inspections in the weeks to come. All licensed institutes of spiritual practice and moral disciplines were required to ensure that their facilities and procedures met the approved government standards. Ample notice was provided to all relevant parties as DoSA seemed to recognise that superintendence by ambush served no one, least of all their inspectors, who had become accustomed to a level of comfort that could seldom be provided at short notice.

A rush of nausea assailed Bindu. The responsibilities of her job had been taking their toll. At night a stubborn cinder burnt its way through her stomach and in the morning her neck was tense and achy. She had taken to drinking large quantities of milk to cool her insides but had begun to put on weight and was plagued by indigestion. And now important government officials would descend on the centre, piling out of cars with sirens, pens ranged in their pockets. They would peer into files, look under beds, question the guests and sniff the air for signs of degeneracy.

"Don't worry, madam," said Santhosh, the assistant manager, a man in his late twenties, on the cusp of running to fat. "They will just stamp this paper, fix that

seal, have lunch and go. We have already paid for the licence so what else is there for them to do?"

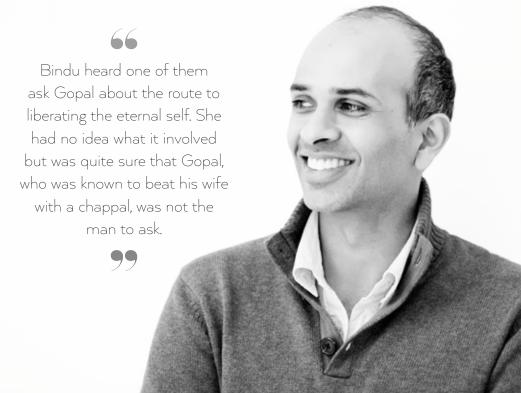
"It's an inspection, Santhosh. They will inspect. Have you seen the state of the kitchen today? And the laundry has not been done since Tuesday. And that American lady is being a Brahmin on the grass that we have just planted. Go and do something."

Santhosh sighed and made his way towards the kitchen. He saw little value in being overly zealous in his duties – he knew that he was destined

A H ES H RAO



for better things. He had overheard snatches of conversation between guests discussing the transformative nature of their spiritual experiences at the centre. Santhosh was unsure what it all meant but had concluded





that he had transformative powers too. He was the second in command in a place that attracted people who were much more worldly and educated than him. They must have therefore recognised something special about him. He wondered whether he was the reincarnation of an important historical figure. Unable to decide but keen to distinguish himself, he had taken a loan and bought a new motorbike.

*It was easy to spot the guests who were keen to learn. They competed to place their mats in the front row of the hall and were arriving for classes ever earlier. They would stay late after class too, engaging the teachers in conversation, making detailed enquiries as to sequence, breath counts and curvature. Bindu heard one of them ask Gopal about the route to liberating the eternal self. She had no idea what it involved but was quite sure that Gopal, who was known to beat his wife with a chappal, was not the man to ask.

A few of the guests had been at the centre for months and showed no indication of leaving. Adam was one of them. He owned a second-hand car showroom in Manchester and it was not clear to Bindu who was running it in his absence. Adam's attendance at classes was commendable and in the afternoons he meditated on the front lawn in a lungi, a frangipani blossom tucked behind his right ear.

"You have a beautiful Indian face," he said to Bindu one day.

She was not sure whether he meant that her face was beautiful in spite of being Indian or that it was so un-Indian, and yet beautiful, that both she and he needed to be reminded of its Indianness.

She smiled and said: "Thank you."
Another long-term guest was Mathilde from Switzerland. Her animated conversations over dinner often resulted in her glass bangles breaking as they struck the table, and she would replace them on frequent trips to Mysore.

Mathilde enjoyed providing instructions and advice to her fellow guests. On days when her yoga practice had been particularly fulfilling, she was even more garrulous. Her main areas of expertise were temple etiquette, stray dogs and the principles of effective bargaining. She was the only guest who had managed to evoke a troubled antipathy in Bindu. Mathilde had a tendency to appear in the reception area when Bindu was registering new guests, her darting eyes aglow with the urge to facilitate. Bindu was not normally a territorial woman but had recently taken to welcoming new arrivals in a secluded spot under a jackfruit tree.

Between yoga sessions there seemed to be little to occupy the guests and Bindu sometimes worried that in moments of idleness they would get together and formulate complaints about her work. So when Santhosh suggested that they organise a few day trips, she agreed gladly. Excursions were arranged to the Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary and to Tipu Sultan's summer palace in Srirangapatna. Santhosh had also heard that some of the guests were eager to become active in the community by doing some voluntary work. Without consulting Bindu, he arranged for a minibus to transport a few guests to a nearby orphanage. He presumed that the children, some of whom had escaped deeply traumatic situations, would enjoy a bit of novelty in their routine.

The trip was a disaster. The sight of so many strangers, some of them well over six feet tall with shaved heads and tattoos, unsettled the children and one of them suffered a fit. The foreigners returned to the centre, crestfallen and exhausted. Bindu felt compelled to give Santhosh a formal warning.

One Point Two Billion is published by Daunt Books, РВК, £9.99

Unthinkable, unsinkable

Mark Reynolds talks to Zimbabwean author **Petina Gappah** about memory, home and a recent outrage against nature



Petina Gappah's story collection An Elegy for Easterly, a dazzling evocation of the resourcefulness and yearnings of

daily life in contemporary Zimbabwe, won the 2009 Guardian First Book Award and announced the arrival of a bold new voice in African literature. She has now released her debut novel *The Book of Memory*, about a black albino girl apparently sold into a wealthy white family who is subsequently charged with the murder of her adopted father.

[MR] The locations in *The Book of Memory* range from the townships of the poor to the gated suburbs and country retreats of the wealthy. Are the locations drawn from memory, research or both?

[PG] I grew up on a street similar to Mharapara but in a different township, so my early childhood memories played a big role in bringing to life the Mharapara of my novel—I used a lot of the children's rhymes and games we played, and my memories of the gossiping women and of Peggy, the township ghost. Umwinsidale is an area I know well and love, it is in the valley opposite the two schools I went to. I have many friends who currently live in that neighbourhood, and a few lent me

their houses to write from. So both these places, though very different, have been a constant part of my life.

The narrator is writing from the high security prison at Chikurubi. How did you go about capturing the atmosphere of envy, suspicion and camaraderie between the inmates — and between the prisoners and their guards?

I simply imagined what it might be like to live in an isolated community in which everything is exaggerated because of the confinement. I read a lot of prison literature, and was particularly thrilled by Margaret Atwood's Alias Grace, a beautifully drawn novel about the relationship that a woman in prison has with the people from the outside world with whom she comes into contact.

Why was it important to you to sprinkle Shona and other local languages into the English dialogue?

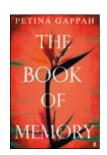
In my Zimbabwean stories and novels, I want to write the way Zimbabweans talk, and as Zimbos often mix the two languages, that felt the most natural way to do it.

One of the most notorious recent visitors to Zimbabwe was US dentist Walter Palmer, who paid \$55,000 to kill Cecil the Lion. What can the country and the world at large learn from that incident?

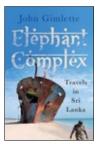
It was a terrible thing that happened to a beautiful creature. Even if the hunt was perfectly legal, as the dentist claims, it is still outrageous that money can buy you the life of a lion. That to me is the most horrible aspect of this story. It presents an ugly stereotype that Zimbabwean conservation societies have been fighting so hard against: that our country and its precious natural resources are for sale to the highest bidder.

What are the best reasons to visit Zimbabwe, and what are the country's greatest natural treasures?

Zimbabwe has so much to offer, from our wonderful nature parks and reserves like Mana Pools where you can walk with elephants, to the ancient grandeur of the Great Zimbabwe ruins. And no city in Africa parties like Harare during the International Festival of the Arts in May, particularly when local groups like Mokoomba are on stage. Our visual artists, both sculptors and painters, are among the best anywhere in the world. But the best reason to visit Zimbabwe are the people. Zimbos are humorous and engaging, resilient and fun. We are unsinkable.



The Book of Memory is published by Faber & Faber, нвк, 276рр, £14.99



ELEPHANT COMPLEX: TRAVELS IN SRI LANKA By John Gimlette Reviewed by Guy Everton

Quercus, HBK, 516PP, £25

The 'Elephant Complex' is a concept John Gimlette uses to explain the apparently preordained peaks and

troughs that recur through Sri Lanka's story in relation to the alimankadas, a network of ancient paths used by the island's pachyderms that have mysteriously fallen in and out of use over the centuries.

Gimlette's campaign through Sri Lanka is a convivial one. Everywhere we meet generals, hoteliers, politicians and quirky colonials who elucidate some part of Sri Lanka's enigma – and one imagines that by the end of his trip, Gimlette must be one of the bestconnected men in the country. However, not all of these characters are contemporary. Some historical figures ghost beside Gimlette as he retraces their footsteps and chronicles their absurdities. In one particularly comical passage about Dutch attempts to subjugate the island, an inebriated vice-admiral's bawdy humour in front of a Kandyan king gets a little lost in translation, costing not only his own life but also those of his troop, excluding one individual who lived to tell the tale. "The Dutch wisely overlooked the incident," Gimlette drily surmises.

It is in depicting the struggle between the colonial powers and the Kandyan Kingdom that Gimlette writes with his greatest flair. It is also where he is at his most adventurous, seeking out the Great Road, a disused jungle trail that was formerly the only route to Kandy from Colombo and today exists only in fragments. Hiking this trail is a unique quest worthy of a book in itself, but soon after getting started, Gimlette feels "defeated and foolish", and one cannot help but feel disappointed. It is a credit to his research and his sense for "the echo of the day" that he is then able to effortlessly complete the journey through the eyes of the various armies and emissaries who have traipsed the trail.

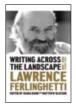
There is plenty of pleasure to be derived from the historical detail, imagery and Gimlette's dark deadpan.

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THE ROAD TO LITTLE DRIBBLING: **MORE NOTES FROM** A SMALL ISLAND **Bill Bryson** Doubleday, £20

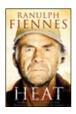
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The preserve of Sicily

Helena Attlee encounters the world of marmalade beyond the British breakfast table

IN BRITAIN WETHINK WE HAVE THE

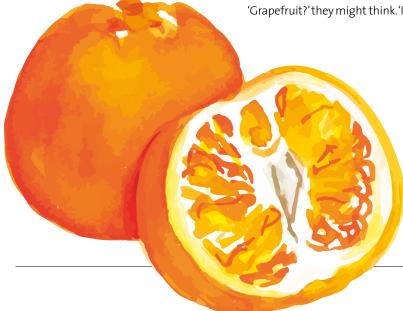
monopoly on proper marmalade. I'd like to teach our marmalade fundamentalists a lesson by taking them to San Giuliano, an organic citrus estate on the eastern side of Sicily, outside Villasmundo and south of Catania, where they have been making excellent marmalade for years. We generally consider January to be marmalade season in Britain, for this is when Seville oranges are imported from Spain, and yet San Giuliano marmalade is made from November until May. Potgrown citrus in central and northern Italy spend these months in the shelter of limonaia, while the trees on the San Giuliano estate bask in winter sunshine, their roots deep in warm volcanic soil. Their fruit is so heavy it pulls the branches down, forcing them into the soft grass that grows with perpetual springtime vigour all over the orange groves. The air

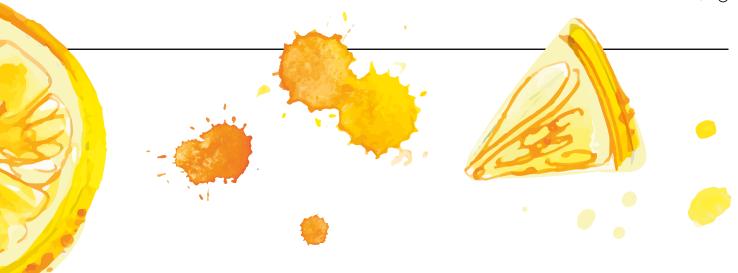
is full of energy of ripening fruit, fruit that has swollen slowly, absorbing the heat of a long Sicilian summer. The orange groves look romantic, but San Giuliano is a working farm, an ancient *masseria* or fortified farmhouse, and although the snowy peak of Mount Etna can be seen in the distance, and the grass between the trees is full of wild flowers, beneath its lush surface the ground is rutted by tractor tyres, and if that earnest marmalade committee were to walk among the trees, they'd be as likely to turn their ankles in a rut as trip over ugly aluminium ladders and piles of brightly coloured plastic boxes, the practicalities of tomorrow's harvest. And wherever they went, they would be followed by a pack of friendly dogs, stray dogs that have found their way to the farm and the promise of regular food. They might notice the old Rottweiler, who would be a fierce-looking dog if he didn't make a habit of carrying a grapefruit with him everywhere he went. 'Grapefruit?' they might think.' I hope they

aren't silly enough to make marmalade from anything but Seville oranges. Heresy!'And yet that's exactly what they do at San Giuliano.

They began to make serious quantities of marmalade on the farm when Marchese Giuseppe Paternò Castello di San Giuliano and his wife, the late Fiamma Ferragamo, took over the estate from the marchese's







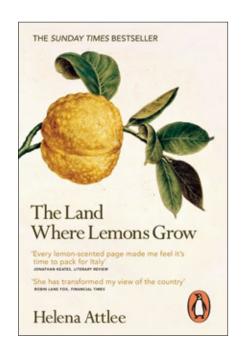
father. Fiamma Ferragamo was world famous as partner and principal designer of the Ferragamo shoe label that she inherited from her father in Florence, but at San Giuliano a different side of her nature emerged. Leafing through family cookbooks in the 1980s, she was intrigued to discover a series of recipes for marmalade made from different species of citrus fruit grown on the farm ever since the nineteenth century. She soon began to experiment with the recipes in a rudimentary kitchen installed in a shed in the garden. She adjusted the original recipes in order to make marmalade in large quantities and, given her business contacts, it wasn't long before she began to export excellent, single-fruit marmalades to America and Japan.

Sadly, Fiamma Ferragamo died prematurely in 1998, but before her death she suggested that her daughter Giulia should continue with the marmalade business. Giulia will say she was very unsure about the idea, but she thought she would 'give it a chance'. She proved to have a natural talent and soon decided to build her own company. Under her

control, production has moved to a professional kitchen on the edge of the citrus groves and expanded to include a wider variety of marmalades, organic honey, fruit slices preserved in syrup and a range of citrus-flavoured biscuits. Throughout the winter, perfect ripe fruit is hand-picked each day and brought straight to the kitchen door. Inside, a small group of women make the marmalades by hand. They might be working with lemons; tangelos (a mandarin-grapefruit hybrid); red grapefruit; clementines; mandarins, or sweet, sour or blood oranges.

Each marmalade is made to a slightly different recipe, the quantities of sugar and water being adjusted to suit the natural characteristics of the fruit. And over the years the marmalade makers have noticed that some fruits are easier to work with than others. On my last visit there, one of them remarked that you can't leave lemons alone for a moment because they will stick to the bottom of the pan. As she talked, she stirred continuously: 'They say I'd make a good baseball player,' she told me, pausing to show me the muscles in her stirring arm. But tangeli are a different matter. You can make marmalade from them almost without stirring and you can even get away with turning off the gas and heating it up again later. All of the fruit has to be washed, dried and cut up by hand.

It is all organic and it is cooked without colouring, preservatives or added pectin. When it comes to deciding whether the marmalades are ready, the women do so by instinct. You can buy them all the thermometers you want,' Giulia says, 'but they'll never use them.'



The Land Where Lemons Grow by Helena Attlee is published by Penguin Books (£9.99)





Chile stretches nearly 3,000 miles from north to south, always bound by the Andes to the east and the Pacific to the west. The scenery is extraordinarily diverse, from the lunar landscapes of the Atacama Desert in the north to the sculpted peaks of Torres del Paine in windswept Patagonia.

Chile's capital, Santiago, is a modern metropolis with an historic soul, spectacularly set against the snow-covered peaks of the Andes. Surrounding the city are some of the New World's best wineries, particularly in the valleys of Maipo and Colchagua. In the far north lies the hauntingly beautiful Atacama Desert, where

flamingos flock to giant white salt pans and the starfilled night skies are among the clearest and most beautiful on earth.

In the centre of the country the still waters of the Lake District reflect the conical peaks of volcanoes. It's a picturesque region of lakes and forests that slowly gives way to the awe-inspiring beauty of pristine Patagonia. Nowhere more is this beauty shown off than in Torres del Paine, Patagonia's flagship national park, whose mountain peaks blush pink in the rising sun. And let's not forget enigmatic Easter Island, where mysterious stone statues gaze out across the Pacific Ocean.

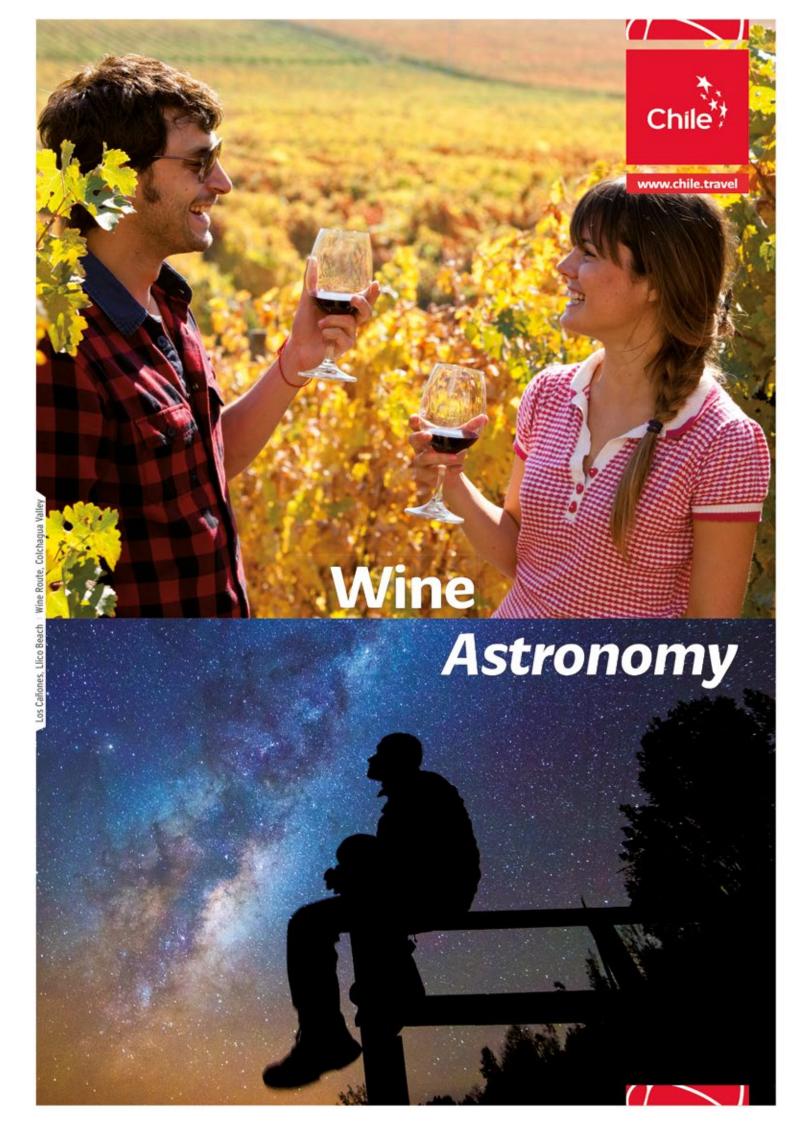


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A locale for Lionhearts

Amy Sohanpaul visits the Dordogne and, overleaf, reviews two of the region's finest hotels

The British have long been drawn to the Dordogne. The annual invasion these days flocks in to sample some of the finest food in France – from black truffles to duck in all its deliciously cooked forms – and to meander through the intensely charming landscape lining the dramatic river that gives the region its name. Long before that, the invasions had far more serious intent – we fought the French for the region until the end of the Hundred Years War, and the legacies linger on.

Right at the top of Beynac-et-Cazenac, a near-vertical village studded along steep limestone banks by the river; those legacies linger on in a most spectacular setting. Here perches a mighty fortress with a commanding view, seized with no quarter given by Richard the Lionheart. How the armies that took and retook this soaring citadel made their respective ways up and down in their armour and then actually managed to storm walls and fight away, I have no idea – it's hard work strolling uphill in light summer clothes during a scorching spring week. It's worth it for the views though, and this a good time to visit, avoiding the summer intensity that overwhelms both

in terms of heat and visitors, who now come from everywhere, not just Britain.

During the few days we traverse from valley to valley, we come across Australians, Americans, South Africans, many lycraclad and speeding along on sophisticated bikes, determined to power uphill and down again; and one notable couple in their Sixties, staying at Château de la Treyne, a most indulgent hotel (reviewed overleaf), were particularly perplexing, skipping very seriously and furiously poolside, timing their lengths in the limpid pool, all before breakfast at which they measured out the

muesli, before setting off on a long run just as the sun properly filled the sky. On the whole, however, most visitors are slightly more languid. Before that scramble up the hill to the fortress, we'd stopped riverside, just to breathe and be, and laugh as two dogs and their owners and their picnic launched and capsized and then relaunched into the flow in a kayak.

The day before, we'd whiled away a pleasant hour or so on the terrace of Aux Berges de la Vezere, where they serve excellent

I was wowed in these faux caves, recreated as they are, so absolutely and carefully that the famous paintings, redrawn in painstaking detail, seem to stalk off the walls and

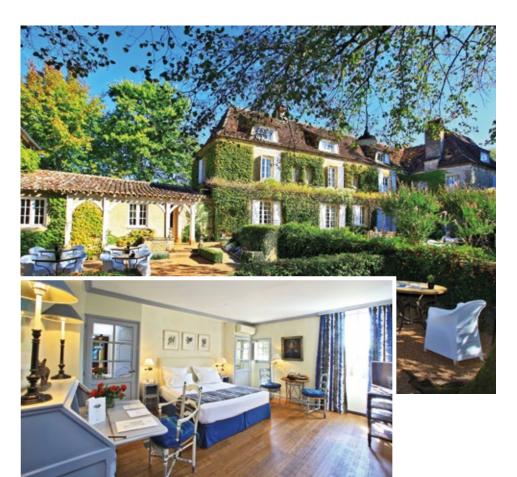


pulsate around us

steak tartare and river views, after spending ages with other entranced visitors in the replica caves of Lascaux, a visit I'd felt dubious about initially as you do about anything with the word replica in front of it. In the end, I was wowed in these faux caves, recreated as they are, so absolutely and carefully that the famous paintings, redrawn in painstaking detail, seem to stalk off the walls and pulsate around us. The original pictures can never be seen again by the general public, as the caves are sealed off to all but scientists to preserve the ancient artwork, so this is as good as it gets, and it's very good.

As are so many of the attractions that line the valleys either side of the river. The pale grey sun-washed slates of Sarlat, a wildly picturesque town with the requisite perfect square lined with the cliché of charming cafes and statues and church steeples can't fail to impress; the red sandstone streets and houses of Collonges-la-Rouge, which is straight out of a storybook, with turrets at every turn and rose-filled gardens festooned with washing lines heavy with linen bedclothes and old-fashioned bloomers, and a distinctly magical hippy vibe (contrasting oddly with a hardcore and world-famous knife shop) can't fail to enchant.

Le Vieux Logis TRÉMOLAT



There's a palpable sense of peace at this small ivy-clad, whiteshuttered and entirely charming hotel, inside and out. The glorious gardens are made for living in as much as the rooms are, and on a spring day hot enough to pass for a summer one, hours slip by smelling the roses. A fast flowing stream only emphasises the calm, a soothing soundtrack, until shockingly, shrieks rent the air. Someone's taken to the pool and it turns out it might feel like summer out here but in there it might not even be early spring.

The glinting pool has actually been the only distraction to dreaming away the entire afternoon. For some reason the screams suggest it makes sense to try it out. Once in it, it makes no sense at all, but recovery is rapid, because as if by magic pots of tea turn up, carried over by Estelle Lepers, the general manager and general genie too.

She whisks us away after this for an even more magical experience - canapés and cocktails served at the edge of a secluded cliff

overlooking the Dordogne, its rocks liberally carved with hearts and initials that are fleetingly picked out by the last rays of the sun, soon to slip behind the water.

It's been the best way to anticipate dinner, a small taste of the fuller delights to come. I'd visited the kitchen earlier in the day, where Estelle's partner and head chef Vincent Arnould had been overseeing all sorts of culinary wizardry. I know about his Michelin star, but he's never mentioned that he's also been awarded Un des Meilleurs Ouvriers de France – the highest possible accolade for French chefs. He doesn't need to. In this case the proof is certainly in the pudding and every course that precedes it.

It's exactly the kind of repast you expect at a Relais & Château hotel, served al fresco tonight under beautifully lit linden trees. Candle flames dance and conversation is lively, until the food appears and the turbot with oysters stuns us all into silence.

A breeze picks up, and Estelle swathes us in the finest fluffiest mohair wraps as the owner Bernard Giraudel comes over to chat. He's 90 now and seems at least twenty years younger. "That's because I don't work," he says. "I look after my guests." He looks after his staff too, who are like family to him, so much so that he has made them part owners of this enchanting place. The gardens are glorious, the food delectable, the rooms delightful – but what really makes Le Vieux Logis special is that it feels like what it once was – a family home.

Château De La Treyne

LACAVE

Fairytale is the word for this turreted masterpiece, clinging dramatically to a cliff overlooking the Dordogne. It looks dreamy from a distance, up close and inside, the fantasy lingers. Remnants of the building's long history add to the romance – heavy wooden doors, enormous fireplaces, lookout points, and of course, the thick old stone walls, warm wood panelling and mullioned windows, many framing perfect views of the river and surrounding countryside.

Antiques and chandeliers and enormous velvet sofas stud the public rooms; and the private ones are just as lavish. There aren't many to choose from, but picking one is tremendously difficult. Each is individually decorated and ridiculously comfortable. So choices are steered by details such as gold bathtubs, vaulted ceilings, stained glass windows, or simply which printed wallpaper fabric has most appeal. Or more simply still, by the views of the formal French gardens or of the river, and one room enjoys a private terrace with possibly the best view of all, probably making it everyone's top choice when it's available. Alas, it wasn't, but there isn't a single disappointing room here.

That's in part a testament to owner Stephanie Gombert's flair and impressive attention to detail. Her husband Philippe and his mother bought the property when it was a private house, before turning it into



input, the luxurious hotel it is now and part of the Relais & Chateaux portfolio. Stephanie shares the stories behind this impressive project as we relax on the equally impressive hotel terrace, which seems to float above the river.

There couldn't be a better setting for dinner. Swallows swoop, the sun sets, the river glows. Champagne flows as canapés are served; and then a meal almost as staggering as the surroundings is served. Michelin-starred chef Stéphanie Andrieux sends out a succession of faultless courses, including an outstanding and seemingly simple dish of raw and cooked asparagus with a truffled poached egg and a delectable fillet of John Dory with

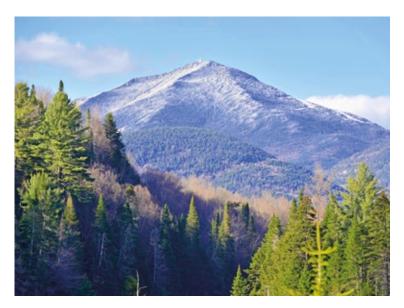
a paella-based sauce that delights. Then the cheeseboard – the size of a blackboard – arrives, laden with what looks like every variety of cheese made in France. The only way to navigate is to go very local, and the Brillat Savarin and Rocamadour don't disappoint.

The adjoining wood panelled lounge with its deep sofas is the perfect place to recover from the evening's indulgence before a slow spiral up the stone steps to bed. There's always tomorrow to explore the gorgeous grounds and to work off some of those courses with a long walk, or with a few laps of the pool. Or both.

/ YORK STATE

From skyscrapers to open sky

New York State Tourism marketing director Markly Wilson takes Traveller beyond Manhattan's city limits



Why leave New York City?

(A) Upstate New York offers an array of attractions for virtually every taste. From whitewater adventures on world-class rapids, or ski runs-turned mountain biking trails, to guided rockclimbing trips in the Adirondacks and the Gunks. Between the changing foliage, outdoor antique markets, and the array of ready-topick apples and wine trails at your disposal, heading north of the city for a weekend can make for the perfect getaway. A lot of history happened upstate, and historic sites abound alongside these modern attractions.

Where would you go for the state's best food?

(A) Culinary traditions from around the world combine with the bounty of our farms, orchards and vineyards, which produce the best ingredients for

unforgettable dining. The state has over 20,000 restaurants and some of the world's best chefs. Regional favourites include the Dinosaur Barbecue in Syracuse and Greater Niagara's original fried chicken wings. Plenty of fresh farm produce is available from 'you-pick' farms, including berries, apples and pumpkins, and markets selling some of the finest baked goods and homemade preserves imaginable. Then there's spirits, fine wines and craft beers, fresh-made yoghurts and cheese, and candy and chocolate creations. Top it off with delicious grape pie, especially popular in the Finger Lakes.

And popular outdoor pursuits?

(A) You don't have to travel far to find an outdoor adventure in New York State. There are 215 state and national parks including the Adirondacks, which has over 3,000

ponds and lakes, the Thousand Islands, where the wreckage of five ships has made it a scuba diver's paradise, and Hunter Mountain, which boasts the longest, fastest and highest zipline tour in North America. You can take to the water in a canoe or kayak and raft the Hudson, climb the famous Modern Times route at Shawangunks climbing reserve, drop a hook in Lake Cayuga or cast a fly across the Ausable River.

Q Give us a brief rundown of NYS's history, and where this can best be experienced

(A) From US presidents to leaders of the suffragette movement, to innovators in industry, technology and art, much has happened in New York State, and there are more than 500 heritage sites to see. Reminisce about baseball's finest at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, cruise through New York's canals and learn about the state's fascinating transportation history, visit the National Susan B. Anthony Museum and House in Rochester, where the suffrage leader was arrested for threatening to vote, and dance to the beat of Native American rhythms, which be traced back over millennia.

© Can you describe an iconic drive?

(A) Head for the Hudson Valley Shawangunk wine region, one of America's oldest winemaking

regions. Just over an hour from the enrichments of the city lie the most hospitable wine tasting rooms with award-winning wines made from varieties grown from all over the world. The beautiful wine trail drive indulges your senses with the best food and wine the Hudson Valley has to offer, with nine wineries in a scenic 30-mile loop, and annual festivals including the Bounty of the Hudson Food and Wine Festival and the Wreath Fineries at Nine Wineries festival en route.

Alternatively, head for the High Peaks scenic byway. The Adirondacks have one of the longest fall foliage seasons in

the country and Adirondack Park covers six million acres, making it the largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi. It boasts 2,000 miles of hiking trails and 1,500 miles of waterways, and the spectacular 30-mile byway meanders through the park's famed High Peaks, which includes 46 mountains that are taller than 4,000 feet. Most notable is Mount Marcy, which stretches to 5,344 feet.

And an interesting hotel?

(A) Saugerties Lighthouse in the Hudson Valley sits on a remote shoal that can be reached by boat or via an easy half-mile

walking trail. This 1869 landmark beacon, on the National Register of Historic Places, is both a museum and inn. The lighthouse offers a bird's-eye view of the Hudson River and is an idyllic perch for spotting bald eagles and beavers and watching the sunset.

Finally – what shouldn't travellers miss?

(A) A road trip upstate during the fall foliage season. Autumn is a perfect season for a scenic drive through New York - the air is crisp and the landscapes are painted with brilliant shades of red, yellow, orange and gold.



Dog days on the wild frontier

Traveller staff writer **Guy Everton** explores the inspirational landscape of Jack London's celebrated novel

'Man and the claims of man no

longer bound him'. So ends the tale of Buck, a Californian ranch dog kidnapped from his halcyon home and forcibly introduced to the hinterland of Canada's Klondike region in Jack London's muchloved *The Call of the Wild*. Writing through the eyes of this self-aware and insightful sled dog, London illuminates a frontier region totally alien to most of us, while playing upon a primordial yearning many intrepid travellers will recognise:

the desire to throw off the shackles of convention and venture into the unknown, chasing some inexplicable inner curiosity. "It was in the Klondike I found myself", reflected London.

This yearning once captured the imagination of thousands. Little over a century ago hordes of eager prospectors swarmed this rugged and beautiful landscape, American dreamers drawn by the rumours of gold-rich riverbeds in the northern wildernesses and unperturbed by

the often fatal, frequently futile struggle to reach their Eldorado, the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers. Beginning in Dyea, an Alaskan port at the head of a fjord in the Inside Passage, panners would embark on the arduous trail up the glacial glens and into the Canadian interior, eventually reaching a chain of lochs from where they could navigate the Yukon River to the Klondike.

Nowadays these trails are popular with campers and hikers

All aboard the culinary express

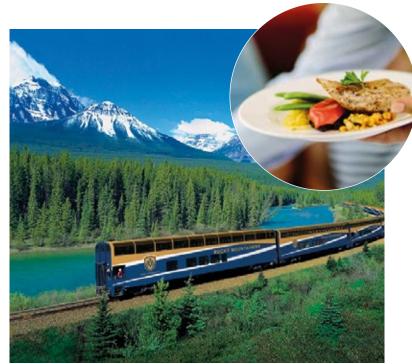
Jean Pierre Guerin, Executive Chef of the *Rocky Mountaineer* relishes the rolling kitchen on Canada's most iconic railway

O How did you come to work on the Rocky Mountaineer?

(A) It was 2008 when myself and my colleague Frédéric Couton joined the company as executive chefs. We were very excited to join the team and immediately we began to create our menus using regionally inspired, locally sourced ingredients.

Describe a typical day

(A) The wonderful thing is that every day is different. When the train is running, we are focused on service – it's like running a large, rolling, five-star restaurant. The details are critical. We start very early in the morning and Fred and



in the summer months, but under the ghostly glaze of winter, most still rely upon packs of sled dogs for transport. During the rush hundreds of hounds were brought to the region to pull the weighty supplies required for a successful mission. The indefatigable husky is today the only breed considered for the job, but in gold rush days, with resources scarce, all manner of dogs found their way onto the trail. Buck, a St Bernard-Collie cross, was based upon a real dog encountered by London during his time in the Klondike.

The story itself reads like London's own journal of events seen through Buck's eyes, and the places can still be marked on



a map should travellers want to retrace his steps from Dyea to Dawson. This is a far safer journey now, especially in summer, with well-established campsites dotted along the route and park rangers supervising. Those answering the call of the wild may seek to delve a little deeper into Canada's boundless interior.

I like to be there when the prep begins to check in with the team. Each one of our GoldLeaf domes holds 72 people and we have a dedicated kitchen and dining room in each one. During the off-season we test new dishes and ingredients in preparation for the tasting event, where we finalise the upcoming season's menu. It's one of my favourite days of the year.

What are the challenges of running a kitchen on a train?

A Train legs. Once you get used to the way the train feels when you are walking in it, life gets easier. We are a well-orchestrated symphony on the train – everyone knows their part. The main difference between ours and a traditional kitchen is the space. We have to be precise and strategic about where everything is placed. There are many similarities to a traditional kitchen also – we

cook fresh food to order, can adapt any of our dishes to suit various dietary requirements, and take incredible pride in the dishes we serve to our guests. I would not trade my rolling kitchen – it's home.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

A Welcoming our guests from around the world. No matter where people come from, the ritual of enjoying a meal is a common denominator. Food is a big part of the experience and there is nothing more rewarding than seeing our guests enjoying themselves. Of course, wildlife sightings are a highlight. Once "Bear on the right!" is uttered, a moment of chaos ensues while everyone grabs their camera.

Describe a typical menu

(A) We serve three courses in both

SilverLeaf and GoldLeaf Service.
There is always soup, freshly made, or salad, followed by entrees like roasted Pacific salmon with fennel slaw and warm vegetable salad, or Alberta beef, short rib, pork tenderloin or barley risotto with mushrooms, micro greens and parsley oil. Dessert generally tends toward classic comfort food: rhubarb crumble or dark chocolate pistachio brownies.

We buy as much as we can from local farmers. We have a thriving farming community here and are very lucky with the immense selection we have access to.

Do you have a favourite section of the journey?

(A) Mount Robson, in the Rockies, is up there for me. On those clear days when she towers high above us as we pass by, it can be majestic.

Trout after trout

Tim Hayward is a writer and broadcaster, and the current owner of Fitzbillies, a near-century-old culinary institution in the heart of Cambridge. His first book, Food DIY, was a popular guide to making 'your own everything' – from smoked salmon to sourdough – and his latest, The DIY Cook, continues this homemade approach, with a deconstruction of home cooked classics.

EXTREMADURA, SPAIN

I was commissioned to write a piece on Iberico ham and somehow ended up at Finca Al Cornocal in Barajoz Province, deep in Extremadura. A fortified farmhouse built around a courtyard and surrounded by acres of squat scrub oak trees around which the handsome black pigs root, it's way off any utility grid and at night the arrhythmic wheezing of the geriatric diesel generator was the only thing that kept us anchored in this century. We sat around a fire built of vast oak stumps, late into the night and drank lethally strong 'Gintonics' then, at six in the morning, arose for the 'Matanza', a traditional family pig-killing. It was an unbelievable privilege to be invited to join a kind of ritual of slaughter and preservation, turning the beast into salchichón, chorizo, morçilla and hams in exactly the same way my host's ancestors had done for centuries. It's not something I want to do every day but I believe everyone who eats meat should experience the connection between animals and food if they get the chance.

LINVILLE GORGE, NC, USA

My first wife was a Southerner with a taste for the outdoors that, if I'm frank, I didn't really share. I was taken, begrudgingly, on a fourday hike into the Linville Gorge, a remote part of the Appalachian national park. Our companions were two mountain guides who

believed in packing tiny portions of food, carefully calculated to nourish without weighing down the pack. They delighted in telling me how long it would take the emergency services to extract my body if I fell, and on the third, dark night, told me that this was where John Boorman had chosen to shoot the film Deliverance. On the last day though, one of the guides produced, from her pack, a tiny fly rod and a lightweight frying pan. I stood in the middle of a remote stream and hauled out trout after trout, fried them on the banks and we stuffed ourselves. I'd been unable to appreciate the sheer beauty of our surroundings on a measured handful of trail mix but full of fresh trout, I wept at the majesty of it all.

MERCATO CENTRALE, FLORENCE, ITALY

The first time I went to Florence was as an art student in the '80s. I spent some time as an assistant to a photographer then spent days wandering the streets with a diminishing stock of Lira and Tri-X. Early one morning I found myself in the Mercato Centrale - it's quite gentrified these days but back then it was a genuinely scuzzy wholesale food market. Wandering foodies are always attracted to the markets for the simple reason that the places the traders eat invariably have the best breakfasts at the lowest prices. I found myself drawn by the gravitational pull of a stall with



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a huge queue. This, it turned out, was for the Lampredotto, a local sandwich comprising a soft roll packed with hot sauce and the long, slow-braised third stomach of a cow. Yep. Tripe-in-a-bun. It's a lot better than it sounds. And though I can't replicate the student hunger that made it taste so sublime, I've been back in the last couple of years and the same family are still serving it. The queue hasn't diminished one bit.

LA TOUR D'ARGENT, PARIS

La Tour D'Argent in Paris is a sort of Ur-restaurant. It's exactly as you'd imagine a Belle Époque French dining room to be, all velvet, polished brass and glittering glassware. The speciality is Canard à la Presse, in which an individually numbered roast duck is squeezed in a giant sterling silver press at the side of your table. The juices are then reduced into a sauce, which is poured back over the duck breasts. It's a ludicrous display but so rich in culinary history that you can't help but be seduced. I had read about the place as a student and it started my obsession with food. I finally got to go there, much later, as a journalist and was served the entire meal alone, in an empty restaurant. The view over the rooftops of Paris is unparalleled and, as the sun went down and the cathedral lights came up I considered that I was sitting in the single most romantic location in the world, entirely alone, except for poor duck #1082598.



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