



Sedona, Arizona : 9



Denbies Wine Estate, UK : 17



Madeira : 6



Bodie, California : 13



Cuba : 8



Vanuatu : 18



Bern : 19



Amazon : 10



Barbados : 22



Bhutan : 16

This issue includes :



Mole National Park, Ghana : 20



Kefalonia : 14



Vancouver Island, Canada : 21



Sailing Tenacious : 7



Kruger National Park, South Africa : 12



United Arab Emirates : 23



Champagne, France : 11

Travelling near and far again will be so well worth the effort

Welcome to the first *AllWays Traveller's Journal* of 2021.

It is also available at www.allwaystraveller.com, and highlights just a few of the hundred's of travel features waiting for you on *AllWays Traveller* itself.

The first shoots of recovery from the *Coronavirus* are beginning to appear everywhere as the world takes the first tentative steps back to normality.

And though travel remains a challenge I know we will all be ready and oh so willing to embrace it – when the time comes.

All of the extensive research undertaken in recent months shows we have lost none of our desire or determination to travel, when it is safe and possible to do so.

We may well find additional conditions imposed on us when travelling again (as in the aftermath of 9/11) but it will be so worth the effort.

Whether it's a short visit to a local tourist attraction or that first, post-virus, long-haul trip

The *International Travel Writers Alliance*, which produces *AllWays Traveller*, believes its journalists can and should be *Making a difference in today's world*.

In addition to having a great time, travelling allows us to :

- broaden our horizons
- appreciate diversity, cultural difference and national identity
- champion indigenous populations and local communities

Visit : www.allwaystraveller.com

- embrace environmental and sustainability initiatives
- support those striving to protect natural habitats and the animals that live there
- champion conservation and heritage projects, and
- foster a mutual and universal understanding among all people.

Subscribing to *AllWays Traveller*

Subscribe free to the *AllWays Traveller's Journal* by visiting www.AllWaysTraveller.com and clicking on register.

Please ask your family, friends and colleagues to do the same.

AllWays Traveller's Journal Facebook group

And please join the new *AllWays Traveller's Journal Facebook group* where we will publishing regular items of information and where you can do the same.

Finally, please follow us on Twitter at @allwaystraveler.

Safe and successful travelling.



Ann Mealor
Managing Editor
AllWays Traveller
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The world in one place :



A round-up of travel in the news ...

Porto Santo becomes a biosphere reserve

Portugal



Madeira's Porto Santo has been selected as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Porto Santo Island is one of 25 new locations to become UNESCO biosphere reserves.

The aim of these reserves is to seek to reconcile human activity with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The Porto Santo Biosphere Reserve, is located in the archipelago of Madeira and is home to 2,110 species, some exclusive to the island.

Visit : www.visitportosanto.pt/en and www.visitmadeira.pt/en

Rocky Mountaineer : Rockies to the Red Rocks

Colorado, USA



Rocky Mountaineer, which operates multi-day, daytime train journeys in glass-domed train coaches, will launch a new route through Colorado in 2021.

Rocky Mountaineer has offered luxury train journeys between Vancouver and the Canadian Rockies, showcasing the best scenery Western Canada has to offer, for over 30 years.

Visit : www.rockymountaineer.com and www.colorado.com

Desert & Delta

Botswana



The Desert & Delta Community & Conservation package lets guests experience the diversity of a Botswana safari through some of the country's most highly sought-after destinations.

It includes the chance to witness Botswana's zebra migration (May to October).

Due to the arid nature of the landscape, the best time to stay is in July through to August, when the nutrient-rich western grasslands attract an abundant array of wildlife.

Visit : www.desertdelta.com

RV road trips through Alabama

USA



America as you like it has a 14 night RV package with Cruise America to Alabama and Deep South USA.

Picking up the Cruise America RV in Nashville there is the chance to head South to Muscle Shoals, the 'hit recording Capital of the World'. In between there is the Civil Rights Trail from Birmingham to Selma and Montgomery.

There is also the chance to take in Mobile and the white sand beaches of Gulf Shores along with Lookout Mountain Parkway, America's 'most colourful 100mile scenic drive' with waterfalls, canyons, scenic brow vistas, small towns and villages and national parks.

The high-tech Rocket City of Huntsville provides the chance to visit the U.S. Space & Rocket Center before returning to Nashville.

Visit : www.americaasyoulikeit.com, www.cruiseamerica.com, www.alabama.travel and www.deep-south-usa.com/alabama

The Faroe Islands



The rugged and remote Faroe Islands, an archipelago of 18 islands in the North Atlantic, have been chosen in the Community Connection list of Lonely Planet's Best in Travel for 2021.

Located between Scotland, Norway and Iceland, the Faroe Islands are close-knit community with a population of just under 53,000.

Community is at the heart of everyday life including Heimablíðni, 'home hospitality' supper clubs, where locals invite tourists into their homes for Faroese food, to HOYMA, the acoustic music festival performed in the living rooms of locals' homes.

The Faroes Islands' summer festival, Ólavsøka National Day, is held in the capital, Tórshavn, and brings together nearly all of the islands' residents for chain dancing, ballad singing and 'joyous celebrations'.

Visit : www.visitfaroeislands.com and www.lonelyplanet.com/best-in-travel

Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort

Aruba



The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba is located about from Venezuela.

The Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba is the first hotel to win the Global United Nations 2020 Climate Action Award for Climate Neutral Now.

With the Bucuti & Tara award, the UN is recognising the significant affect the hospitality sector, can have in combating climate change.

The UN's Momentum for Change programme is a highlight of the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference.

The independently owned Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, which is located on the largest swathe of Eagle Beach, was opened by Austrian-born Ewald Biemans in 1987.

In August 2018, it became the Caribbean's first carbon-neutral hotel and remains the only one

Visit : www.Bucuti.com

The world in one place :

Natural SouthWest Germany



SouthWest Germany is one of Europe's greenest regions, with forests, rivers, rolling hills and abundant wildlife, with a network of well-signposted hiking and biking trails.

The federal state of Baden-Württemberg is also Germany's sunniest state, with a Mediterranean-like climate on Lake Constance.

The region has attracted travellers since Roman times, and today offers the gardens of Mainau and Baden-Baden, the vineyards in Stuttgart and birdwatching on Lake Constance.

Visit : www.tourism-bw.com

Cebu

The Philippines



Cebu in the Philippines Central Visayas region, comprising Cebu Island and more than 150 smaller surrounding islands and islets.

Condé Nast Traveler declared Cebu the 'Top Island in Asia' in its 2020 Readers' Choice Awards.

Cebu City its port capital is the country's oldest city retains landmarks from its 16th-century Spanish colonial past.

The island offers a range of activities from bustling nightlife to beaches and waterfalls.

South Cebu is known for its canyoneering, the best lechon (roasted pig) and sardines run.

North Cebu has its dive spots, rich marine life and less crowded white-sand beaches.

Visit :
www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.co.uk
www.guidetothephilippines.ph

Lisbon's Urban Art Route

Portugal



The Portuguese capital of Lisbon has a thriving urban art scene, with many recognised artists creating murals in the city's streets.

To celebrate this movement, Turismo de Lisboa has launched a new video showcasing the city's Urban Art Route.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYPskZVjR6M

Visit : www.visitlisboa.com/en

Byway : flight-free travel



Byway is a new flight-free travel company geared to making 'the journey the star of the show'.

It focuses on slow, personal travel off the beaten path by train, boat and bike.

Rail travel accounts for just 14g of CO2 per passenger mile, compared to 285g for air.

Byway holidays will be built around experiences away from the crowds by highlighting where and when to go, which tickets to buy and where to stay.

Round the clock Covid-travel assistance has been developed to keep in constant contact with travellers using WhatsApp.

Trips are currently available across the UK and France, including Yorkshire, the Scottish Highlands and the English West Country, as well as France's Alsace region and Corsica.

Visit : www.byway.travel

Love Home Swap



Love Home Swap is a member's only global home swapping platform, allowing travellers to 'explore the world through the power of sharing'.

Founded in the UK in 2011, it helps members swap houses and lives in 110+ countries worldwide.

Members can choose from a *Classic Swap*, where they swap houses with someone else, either at the same time or on different dates, or a non-simultaneous *Points Swap*, allowing them to travel without having to match their plans with another member.

Visit : www.lovehomeswap.com

Icehotel, Sweden



Icehotel has opened for the season in Jukkasjärvi, in the north of Sweden.

The hotel's creative team of artists and designers have created 12 unique art suites Icehotel 31 (name annually after the years of operation) and six new art suites in Icehotel 365

The hotel, which first opened in 1989, also acts as an art exhibition with ever-changing displays of ice and snow.

Icehotel is created in a new 'guise' every winter, and is made out of natural ice from Torne River, one of Sweden's national rivers.

When the winter season's hotel has melted back in the spring, a part of the hotel remains; a place where visitors can experience the ice and snow year-round.

Visit : www.icehotel.com

Japan Railways launch 36+3 sightseeing train



The new 36+3 sightseeing train joins the Seven Stars sleeper train in Kyushu, adding five new routes to Japan's southernmost main island.

The new service will offer day trips on five different scenic routes throughout the seven Kyushu prefectures of Oita, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki and Kagoshima.

Visit : www.welcomekyushu.com

Vie di Dante, Tuscany and Romagna

Italy



Emilia Romagna's Vie di Dante (Roads of Dante) is a 245-mile 'meditative meander' linking the places that Dante visited during his exile in the early 14th century.

Dante Alighieri, often referred to simply as Dante, was an Italian poet, writer and philosopher.

The slow travel experience winds, in 20 stages, among ancient palaces, Romanesque churches, villages, museums, libraries and unspoiled countryside.

The northern part has the Apennine Mountains, Bologna and other medieval cities and seaside resorts.

Ravenna, near the Adriatic coast, is known for its Byzantine mosaics, while Tuscany offers the island of Elba's beaches on the Tyrrhenian Sea and Chianti's olive groves and vineyards.

Florence has some of the finest Renaissance art and architecture.

Visit : www.viedidante.it/en and www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it/en

Portugal

A short stay in the garden island of Madeira

By Adam Jacot de Boinod



Madeira, an autonomous region of Portugal, is an archipelago comprising four islands off the northwest coast of Africa.

It is known for its namesake wine and warm, subtropical climate.

The main island of Madeira is volcanic, green and rugged, with high cliffs, pebbly beaches and settlements on deltas of the Fajã River.

Capital Funchal has botanic gardens and is known for its harbour and a large New Year's fireworks show.

The island is next best known perhaps for its fortified wine. I developed a real liking for it especially the 'Blandy's 10 Bual'.

Meaning 'fennel plantation' and much the dominant centre of the island, Funchal, is home to flower sellers obliged by law to wear their distinctive red and yellow striped skirts along with a red bolero and a red cape.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/a-short-stay-in-madiera>

Visit : www.visitmadeira.pt

Arctic and Antarctic

Sailing Tenacious on the far side of the world

By Ken Mortell

John Masefield's poem "Sea Fever" is inspirational in stirring the imagination in extolling the virtues of the call of the sea and specifically its romanticism of sailing on a Tallship.

Being inspired is one thing, taking the opportunity to sail on a Tallship is another.

This brings to the fore the Jubilee Sailing Trust's (JST) Tallship "Tenacious" undertaking a circumnavigation of the World.

Tenacious is no ordinary Tallship as, along with the JST's other sailing vessel Lord Nelson, it is one of only two wooden built Tallship vessels designed to be fully accessible to those with disabilities.

A few examples of such additional design criteria are the hydraulic lifts, wide companionways to accommodate wheelchairs.

An option of joystick steering for those with limited hand dexterity (instead of the conventional steering wheel) and a speaking compass for those with sight impairment.

The Tenacious has a maximum compliment of forty-nine personnel, made up of nine permanent crew and forty voyage crew-a number being professional volunteers who are also accommodated.

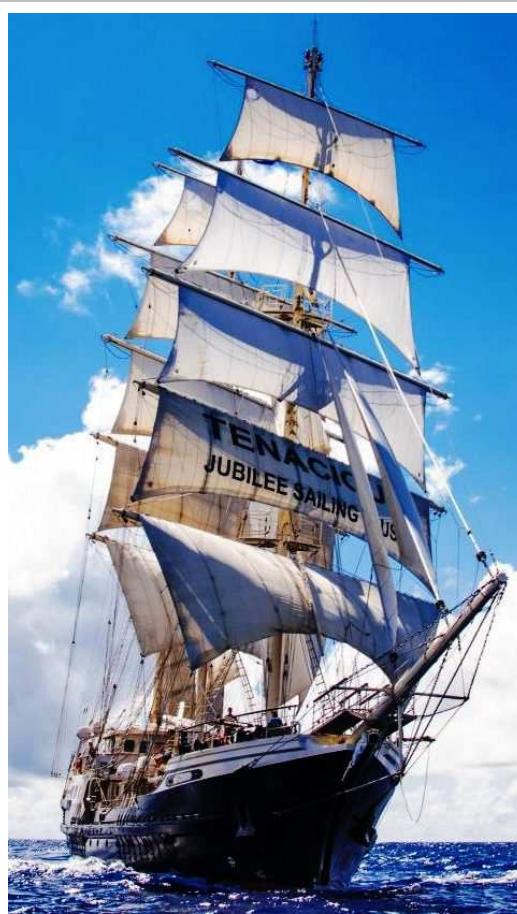
The vessel operates a buddy-buddy system ensuring engagement and support for all its crew with the onus much on teamwork.

As is the JST ethos, a number of the trainee crew are of mixed physical disabilities, with it being assured that there is a role for all personnel onboard, challenging and testing as that may be.

Below decks there is certain machinery that ensures comfort and that life support is maintained.

Propulsion engines when the occasion requires, diesel generators, utilities (freshwater generation, HVAC, lighting, sewage system, fire pumps, navigational equipment, etc).

An additional requirement was for the Engine Department (composed of the Chief and Second Engineer) was to run the on-board Bar).



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/arctic/sailing-tenacious-on-the-far-side-of-the-world>
 Visit : www.jst.org.uk

Cuba

Still accessible and truly fascinating

By Karen Feld



A mere 90 miles from the US mainland but seemingly worlds away, there's a mystique about Cuba!

Havana is an architectural gem and culturally rich destination.

Its coffee beans and cane sugar, salsa and jazz, its warm people and rich culture were long forbidden fruit for Americans like myself.

As regulations loosened during Obama's presidency, regularly scheduled commercial flights from the US made it easier for Americans to discover the lure of this enticing and emerging destination.

Although restrictions were still in place, Americans could join sanctioned tour groups as long as they didn't spend dollars there. Now fewer Americans, except those traveling via cruise ship, are venturing to Cuba.

Perhaps that shouldn't have been surprising since the perception is that it isn't safe for Americans.

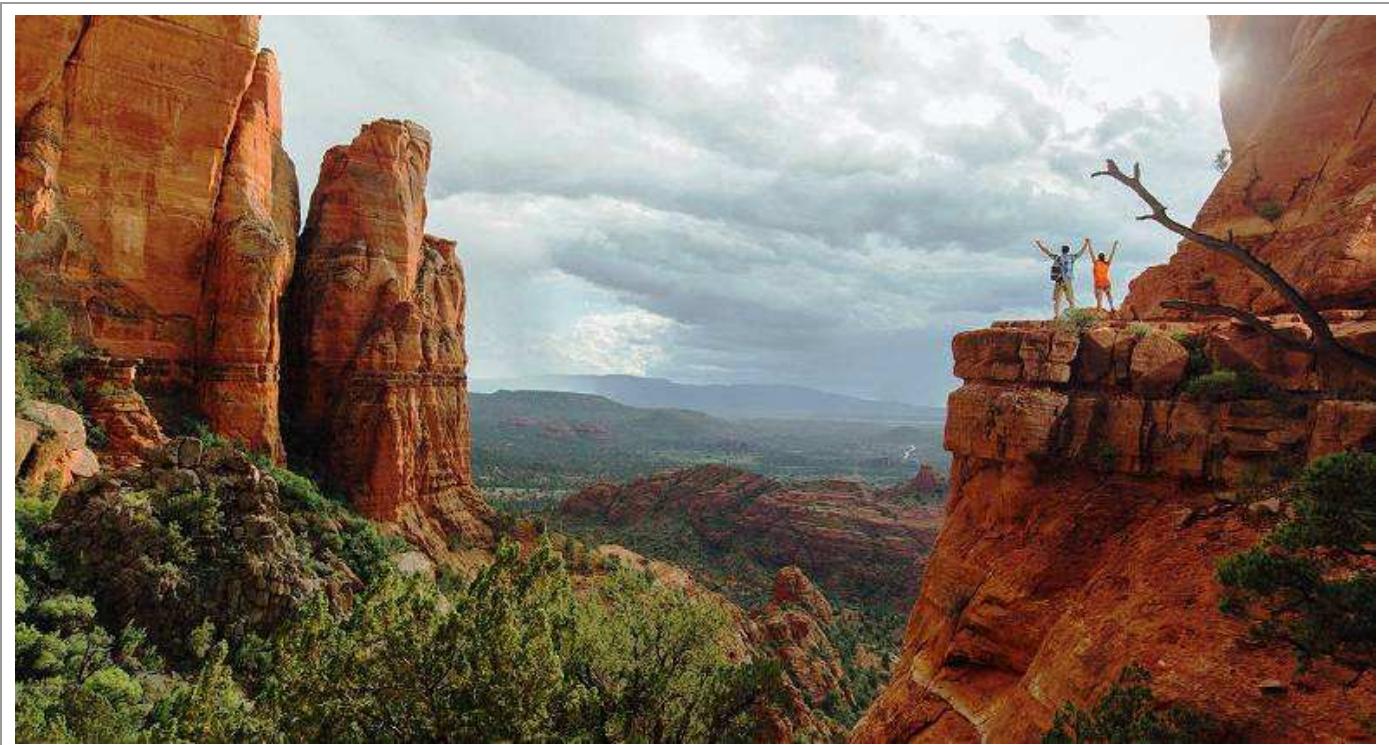
The truth is, Cuba remains a safe, legal, inexpensive and fascinating destination for Americans and, indeed any other nationality.

Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/america-n/cuba-still-safe-and-accessible-for-americans>
 Visit : www.insightcuba.com

Sedona, Arizona, USA

America's most colourful mountain area

By Ken Mink



Red-coated mountains stretch thousands of feet into the sky with their jagged shapes, from razorpoint edges to jellyroll roundness.

The reddish copper-color permeates throughout and is especially beautiful on sunny days (which exist here most of the time).

The striking red-rock formations were shaped by millions of years of sediment deposits and erosion. The rocks owe their red hues to a thin coating of iron oxide.

Sedona has only a relative handful of courses but it more than makes up for its sparsity of fairways with a bevy of beauty.

In fact, the three 18-hole championship courses here rank among the most beautiful courses in America. Yep, the whole country.

As the saying goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

And the vast majority of those who have played Seven Canyons, Sedona Golf Resort and Oakcreek come away with their golf cap in their hand, realizing they have trod on royal soil.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features-home/sedona-ariz-americas-most-colorful-mountain-area>
 Visit : www.visitsedona.com

Brazil

The Amazon for the not so adventurous

By Debbie Pugh-Jones



The Amazon has a mythical allure with images of deep forests, coloured birds and howler monkeys.

But don't expect your ship to be squeezing its way through the jungle's narrow water courses.

The Amazon accounts for one fifth of the world's total river flow and parts exceed 120 miles in width.

It makes its way through much of north-western Brazil and extends into Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Peru.

I set sail on Fred Olsen's Braemar from Barbados and headed for Manaus in Brazil known as 'Paris of the Jungle'.

Four days were used relaxing and planning visits at the ports of call.

The art classes were also fun where we learned how to paint land and seascapes. An art exhibition was held at the end of the cruise.



Speakers included a woman adventurer who had negotiated the Amazon in a canoe and a wildlife photographer.

At Santarem, a small city in the state of Para, the Alter Do Chao beach transfer boasted an incredibly beautiful location.

Ilha do Amor (Island of Love) was no more than a large white sandbank. Reached by a tiny canoe, it has a restaurant and bar, and not surprisingly is known as the 'Caribbean of the Amazon'.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features-home/a-trip-down-the-amazon-for-the-not-so-adventurous>
 Visit : www.worldwildlife.org/places/amazon and www.fredolsencruises.com

Southern Champagne, France

French bonhomie with added sparkle

By Ann Mealor



The Champagne region of France is known worldwide for the sparkling white and rosé wine that proudly bears its name.

The 220km Route Touristique du Champagne allows visitors to explore the region while getting to know the Champagne producers and their wine.

In centuries past, the area was one of the great economic 'powerhouses' of Europe, with the Medieval fairs at Troyes being hugely important to its economic prosperity.

This has left a considerable historic legacy for the visitor today to admire.

Champagne is also a rural region of rich and rolling countryside, speckled with small towns and sleepy villages and, in the *Parc national de forêts*, the latest and largest national park in France



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/french-bonhomie-with-added-sparkle>
 Visit : www.tourisme-hautemarne.com

Kruger National Park, South Africa

Greater Kruger offers spectacular viewing

By Barry Barford

From the safety of our Land Cruiser we watched the leopard looking down at us disdainfully, from the branches of a marula tree.



It had just finished devouring its kill, letting the remains drop to the ground where they were quickly snatched up by scavenging hyenas.

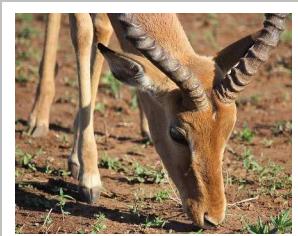
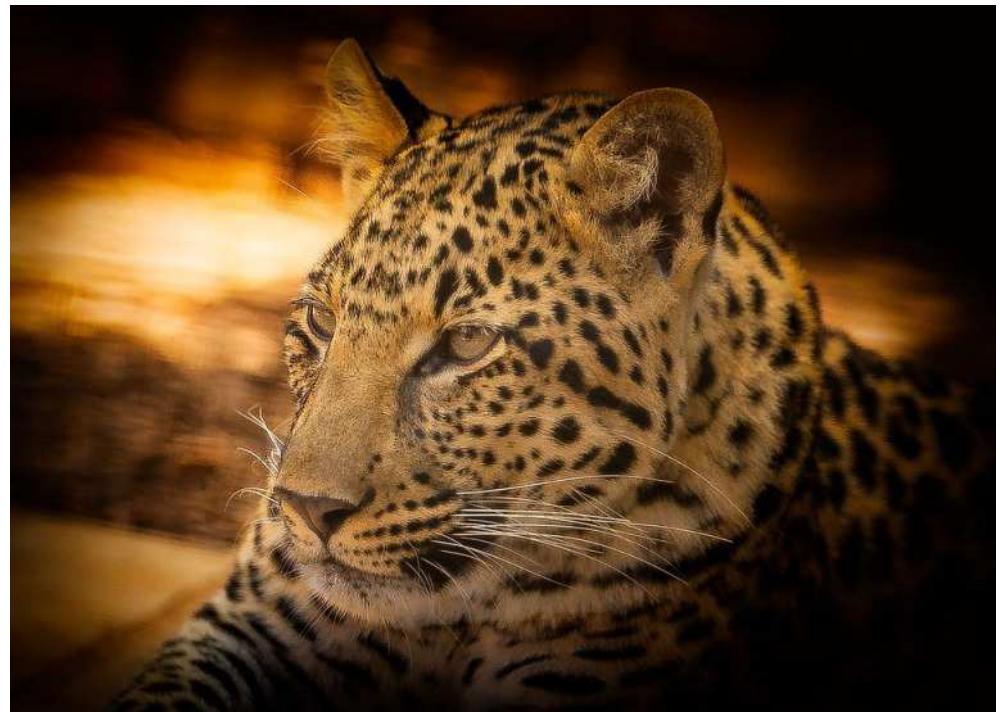
Leopards usually hoist their killed prey of any substantial size high up into trees – often with great difficulty – to prevent it being stolen by hyenas and lions. Hyenas will hang around the base of the trees waiting for scraps to fall.

You'll most likely witness this scene on more than one occasion if you stay any length of time in South Africa's Greater Kruger region, particularly in Sabi Sands Game Reserve.

The two Kruger parks

The Greater Kruger region lies to the west of, and should not be confused with, the well-known Kruger National Park. The latter is a State-sponsored national park managed by SANParks, while the former is a collection of private game reserves, of which Sabi Sands is one.

Sabi Sands is a 65,000-hectare paradise for wildlife photographers, outdoor adventure enthusiasts or anyone simply looking for a holiday that gets the adrenaline pumping. Other reserves in Greater Kruger include Klaserie, Thornybush and Timbavati.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/africa/south-africa-s-greater-kruger-region-offers-outstanding-game-viewing>
 Visit : www.sabi.krugerpark.co.za

Bodie, California, USA

One of America's best preserved ghost towns

By Ashley Gibbins



Bodie, which is one of the best-preserved ghost towns in the western USA, was once a thriving boomtown with over 10,000 people and home to one of the richest gold strikes in California.

In 1859 William S. Bodey discovered gold near what is now called Bodie Bluff.

A mill was established in 1861 and the town began to grow. Starting with about 20 miners and grew to an estimated 10,000 people by 1880.

By then, the town of Bodie had families, robbers, miners, store owners, gunfighters, prostitutes and people from every country in the world.

Bodie became a State Historic Park in 1962, with the park authority's maintaining the buildings in a state of 'arrested decay', which means nothing is repaired.

This policy to restore the buildings and relics in their aged and weathered 1880s appearance.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/america-n/bodie-one-of-america-s-best-preserved-ghost-towns>
 Visit : www.bodie.com

Greece

Kefalonia and her northern coves

By Adam Jacot de Boinod.

So delightful is the airport at Kefalonia that I landed by the sea and so small that I was in and out within ten minutes writes



Kefalonia is an island in the Ionian Sea, west of mainland Greece.

It's marked by sandy coves and dry rugged landscapes, with capital Argostoli built on a hillside overlooking a narrow harbor.

Within a season that stretches from April to October, I chose a perfect time to visit in mid-September with the schools back but the summer's heat sustained.

This strong affiliation and affection for the island with the Brits has a long history.

It was one of the Heptanese (the seven Ionian islands under Venetian, then Napoleonic and then British rule before being transferred back to Greece in 1862).

I found myself inexorably drawn to a northern fishing village called Fiscardo.

It faces Ithaca, the home of Odysseus, and is a yachties's paradise.

There are no nightclubs here. It's a place for relaxation and repose.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/kefalonia-and-her-northern-coves>
 Visit : www.visitgreece.gr/en/greek_islands/kefalonia and www.greeka.com/ionic/kefalonia

USA

Nature and history in Virginia and Maryland

By Joseph Ciccanti



Imagine taking a road trip for a day on a scenic, relaxing drive on Delmarva's eastern shore.

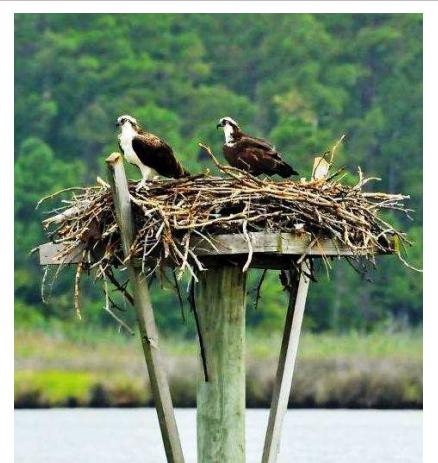
As you parallel the coast, you leave thoughts about work, traffic and a busy tight schedule. Your attention now turns to Delmarva's rich history, unique and interesting wildlife, and the trees that rustle gently in the breeze.

As you drive along Chincoteague Road, you gaze at miles of Salt Marsh Cordgrass surrounded by the glittery Chincoteague Bay.

The ripples reflect the brightly shining sun and its rays through the trees. The snow geese cheerfully glide and then gather into one place along the marshy wetlands.

The marsh lands extend as far as the eye could see in all directions. Surrounded by nature, you take it all as you traverse the island. You find that this type of experience reenergizes and recharges you.

If you are the type of person who enjoys nature and likes to learn about the history of an area, there are unique landmarks here.



Visit : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/america-n/a-journey-through-nature-and-history-on-virginia-s-and-maryland-s-eastern-shore>
 Read more : www.visitmaryland.org and www.virginia.org

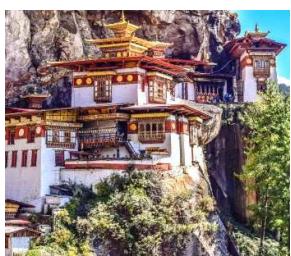
Bhutan

Bhutan, the land of happiness

By Jane Wilson



Far away and high in the clouds there lies a Land of Happiness - really - where the wealth of the country is measured by happiness.



Happiness is a smile, a ray of sunshine, a hug, being with loved ones; a state of mind meaning different things to different people.

And happiness is travel, the discovery of new adventures unfolding cultures bathed in rich backdrops accompanied by unique sights and sounds.



Squeezed between its mighty neighbours of China and India is the tiny kingdom of Bhutan.

This remote place sits peacefully and snuggly amongst the majestic amphitheatre of the Himalayas.

Happiness and harmony weave through the land's rich and colourful culture.

It is expressed through traditional festivals and acrobatic mask dance performances which celebrate the kingdom's independence and sovereignty.



The kingdom's elevated, natural surroundings are often draped in transparent mist and oxygenated in unpolluted air.

Dramatic, mysterious and breathtaking. Monasteries clinging to the cliff edge, glacier-fed rivers carving routes through deep mountain valleys dressed in lush aromatic forests.

Read more : www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features-home/destination-happiness

Visit : www.bhutan.travel

UK

A fine wine experience in the Surrey Hills

By Ann Mealor

The 265 acre Denbies Wine Estate is located on the North Downs and within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The estate's south facing slopes, chalky soil and warm micro-climate are well suited to producing fine English wines and Denbies has become one of the UK's largest and most successful wineries.

Its wines are award-winning, achieving top awards for quality in international and UK competitions.

From a wine tourism perspective, Denbies has also developed a visitor experience that is likely unequalled.

In addition to the winery and vineyard tours, naturally with tastings, there are two fine dining restaurants and the new farmhouse Vineyard Hotel. Miles of walking and cycle paths and bridalways criss cross the estate and the natural beauty of the Surrey Hills lies just beyond.

An annual programme of special events can enhance a visit to Denbies.

And as befits an estate that has long recognised the role nature and the seasons' plays in the production of its wines, Denbies places great emphasis on a sustainable, carbon neutral, approach to us enjoying the estate and its wines.

Visiting Denbies it takes no time at all to appreciate why this flourishing wine estate is one of the UK's most successful in, the relatively recent, art of English winemaking.

For wine making is an undoubted art with its producers true artisans.

And winemaking in the UK, on any scale, can be traced back decades rather than centuries.

It was not until well into the second half of the 20th century that commercial grape growing and wine making really began to take off.

This is certainly true with the Denbies Wine Estate.



Today, Its 265 acres under vines produce a range of 14 fine still white and rose still and sparkling wines and one red – some 400,000 bottles in a good vintage and about 10% of total UK wine production.

Its Surrey Gold and Flint Valley whites are the two biggest-selling English wines Denbies' Chalk Ridge Rosé 2010 won an IWC Gold and was named 'Best Rosé in the World.'

As befits the natural nature of its business, Denbies is striving to become carbon neutral and also lets areas of its vineyard go untreated to encourage the native wildflowers.

This has seen a real increase in birds, including partridge, wagtails and woodpecker, on the estate.

The planting of 1,600 oak and hazel trees will be more greatly appreciated by generations to come.

The estate attracts over 350,000 day and staying visitors every year, with its chateau style centre housing the wine and gift shop, an art gallery, local farm shop and a craft brewery.

Denbies also has two fine dining restaurants and recently opened England's first Vineyard Hotel and a health and wellbeing centre.

It all makes Denbies Wine Estate a hugely enjoyable place to visit for a day or two or as a base for taking in the whole of the Surrey Hills.

Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/a-fine-wine-experience-in-the-surrey-hills>
 Visit : www.denbies.co.uk

Destination

Vanuatu offers the best of the Pacific

By Barry Barford



The South Pacific islands are largely coronavirus-free, but pandemic shutdowns and loss of tourism dollars are devastating their economies.



Many Pacific islands including Vanuatu are COVID-free and most have closed their borders to ensure that they remain that way.

But they want to reopen at the earliest safe opportunity, so if you're dreaming of a tropical island holiday when the world finally returns to normal, or the new normal or however you see it, then Vanuatu would be a good choice.

Vanuatu is located 1,770 kilometres east of Australia and about 800 kilometres west of Fiji.

The tropical islands of the South Pacific that became Vanuatu are believed to have been inhabited for 4,000 years.

A long history involving the West has made the islands predominantly Christian and Western in their ways, but local culture still follows a slow and laidback island lifestyle.

Recorded history began with the arrival of Spanish and Portuguese explorers during the age of discovery.

Later, in 1768, British explorer Captain James Cook came to Vanuatu and named the archipelago the New Hebrides.

The name remained until the country gained independence in 1980.

Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/australia-oceania/vanuatu-offers-the-best-of-the-pacific>
 Visit : www.vanuatu.travel/au/

Switzerland

Bern, a fairytale destination

By Sheila O'Connor



"Wow, it's like something out of Hansel and Gretel!" exclaims the young girl beside me.

She looks around taking in cobbled streets, fairy tale clocks and a multitude of colorful arcades that are bursting with shoppers, diners and those, like me, just out to sightsee.

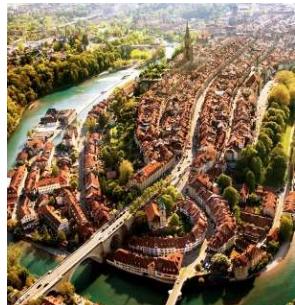
She pulls her mothers to one of the novelty stores and is clearly wide-eyed with delight just looking at everything.

If thinking of Switzerland makes you think of chocolate, cheese, Swiss watches and a yodelling damsel, then think again.

This country has a lot more to offer in the way of culture and heritage.

Just take the city of Bern, for instance, the capital of Switzerland.

This has to be one of Europe's most beautiful, medieval cities. And it's an explorer's paradise.



The city of Bern was originally founded by a German Duke in 1191.

When it came to finding a name for it, however, he was at somewhat of a loss, and decided therefore to leave it to chance.

He organised a hunting party and decreed that the first animal they killed would lend its name to this new city he had founded.



That animal was a bear (Bern).

Today, the symbol of the bear is used everywhere including on the city's flag.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/bern>
 Visit : www.bern.com/en/home

Ghana

Bullish Behaviour in the Mole National Park

By Karl Beeney



He slid down from the vehicle with the silent cunning of a snake, threw his head over his shoulder one last time before disappearing into the undergrowth.



Turning from a serpent into a bloodhound in a tenacious pursuance as if he really were on the heels of a nearby fox.

Only faintly betrayed by the wakened shudders of bush and shrub as a lithe figure in safari-green glided on through.

One believed the feeling this man could adopt the stalking trait of any being.

The soft padding of a lioness, an unhurried gaze of an owl, weaving like a viper or marching like an ant and fading into the landscape much like mist at sunrise.

His reappearance moments later elicited a gasp, fit for a magicians trick.

I never really understood the two girls in the front seat, all jitters and emotion as if the safari vehicle had ended up in Jurassic Park. An eager hand attached to a perspiring body gestured us to leave the vehicle.

Electricity pulsed through the gathering, overloading those final few seconds of unbearable excitement much in tune to a great artist finally appearing on stage.

For no more than five metres from the roadside grazed a single bull elephant, pushed from the herd to stand on his own four feet.

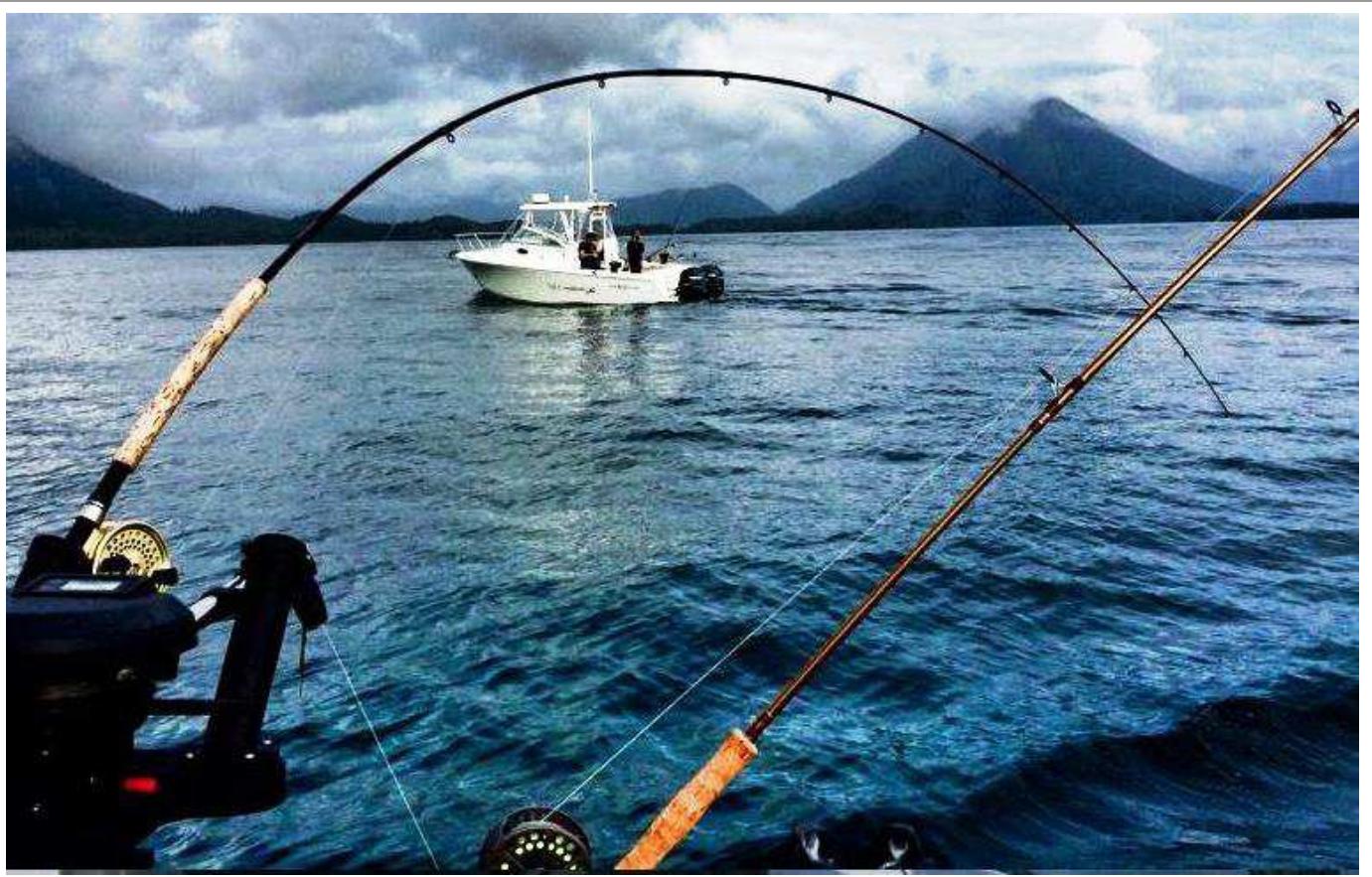
For those of us who had never seen an elephant in the wild, the encounter ordained an immediate, more profound disclosure from being up close and personal as you could hope to be.

Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/africa/bullish-behaviour>
 Visit : www.molenationalpark.org www.visitghana.com

Canada

Salmon fishing on Vancouver Island

By Steve MacNaull



Vancouver Island, off Canada's Pacific Coast, is known for its mild climate and thriving arts community.

On its southern tip is Victoria, British Columbia's capital, and its boat-lined Inner Harbour, neo-baroque Parliament Buildings, grand Fairmont Empress Hotel and English-style gardens.

Harbour city Nanaimo has an Old City Quarter with shops, galleries and restaurants.

Salmon fishing on the Canadian West Coast was one of the first tourism sectors to open as COVID restrictions eased.

The big salmon are biting like crazy off the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

COVID hasn't changed that.

But what the pandemic did change is how the West Coast sport fishing tourism sector is rebounding after two months of lockdown.

Following all the guidelines

"We're following all health guidelines," says Wade Dayley of Wicked Salmon in Port Hardy a division of Bear Cove Cottages & Sport Fishing.

"We're using common sense and social distancing on the boats and masks and gloves."

In the past, the B.C. salmon sport fishing industry attracted a lot of big-spending Americans, who booked into specialized fishing lodges and hired guides up and down the coast.

With coronavirus travel bans lingering, high rollers from the U.S. and elsewhere in the world are out of the equation.

"We're now promoting salmon fishing as a keep-it-local, drivable activity for tourists" says Dayley.

"You can also fly into Comox Valley Airport from Calgary and rent a car to drive the three hours and fifteen minutes to Port Hardy."

An epic three-generation experience

All this talk about the sport fishing industry reopening reminds me of when me, my dad and my son went out with Wicked Salmon for an epic three-generation experience.

The bravado hits fever-pitch when my son and I score the fishing double-header.

For the uninitiated, the double-header is the much-hyped, but seldom-seen, phenomena of two fishermen in the boat having giant Chinook salmon on the line at the same time.



Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/america-n/salmon-fishing-on-vancouver-island>
 Visit : www.vancouverisland.com

Barbados

Bajan beauty abounds in Barbados

By Steve MacNaull

Ship-wreck snorkelling and luxe-resort accommodation are just the ticket to feel special in Barbados.

The Bajan Queen partied too hard. And now she's at the bottom of the Caribbean Sea.

But, all is good.

This 45-metre tugboat, which toiled for years at the port in Bridgetown, Barbados and finished out her above-water life as a tourist-party boat, was sunk deliberately in Carlisle Bay in 2001.

Now, in only 10 metres of water, she is coral-crusted and serves as a fish-rich marine park and snorkelling magnet.

Sun, sand and snorkel

My wife, Kerry, and I are introduced to the Bajan Queen on Island Routes Sun, Sand and

Snorkel five-hour excursion aboard the Cool Runnings II catamaran.

She's the second stop on the itinerary, right beside Ellion, the drug boat sunk in 1989 by the Barbados Coast Guard.

As our group of 30 snorkels, the contrast of the vessels' checkered past to current fishy habitat is not lost on us.

Neither is the idyllic setting of melted-gemstone green water, filtered sunshine and reggae playing on the catamaran's sound system.

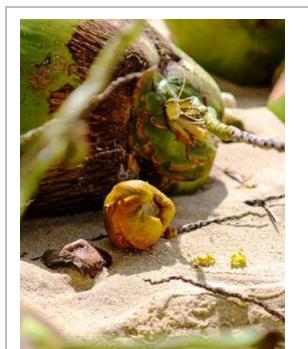
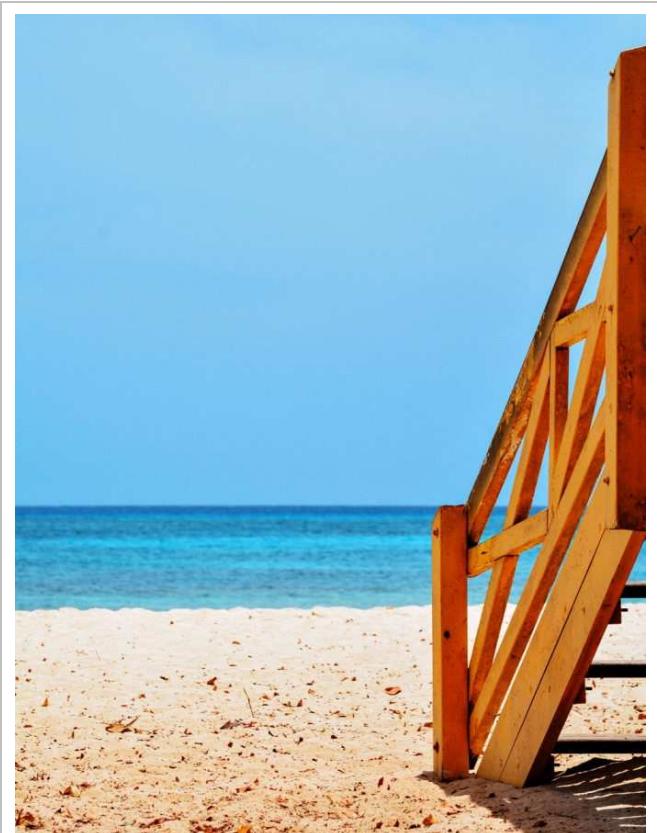
The day started when we boarded Cool Runnings II at Bridgetown's Careenage Marina and took off in a light breeze under clear skies.

Our first stop is also in Carlisle Bay, but at a sandy-bottomed section populated by green sea turtles and stingrays.

Our guide, Chad Hercules, yes, that's his real name, lures the sea creatures ever closer to our group of snorkellers with chunks of bread.

Turtles and stingrays

The turtles are discs, elegantly gliding through the water and the stingrays resemble a prehistoric bird flapping under the sea.



Back on board, the sails are raised for us to cruise the 15 kilometres to Payne's Bay at a leisurely nine knots.

There's a lunch of jerk chicken on the catamaran with swimming and sunbathing to follow, all with a view of One Sandy Lane hotel.

The hotel is the \$15,000-a-night hang out of Barbados' most-famous daughter, Rihanna.

Days of perfection are often defined this way.

They are seared in the memory not just for the warmth, sunshine and scenery, but for how they make you feel.

And we feel lucky, content and exhilarated, all at the same time.

It's a Caribbean thing, it's a Barbados thing, it's a paradise thing.

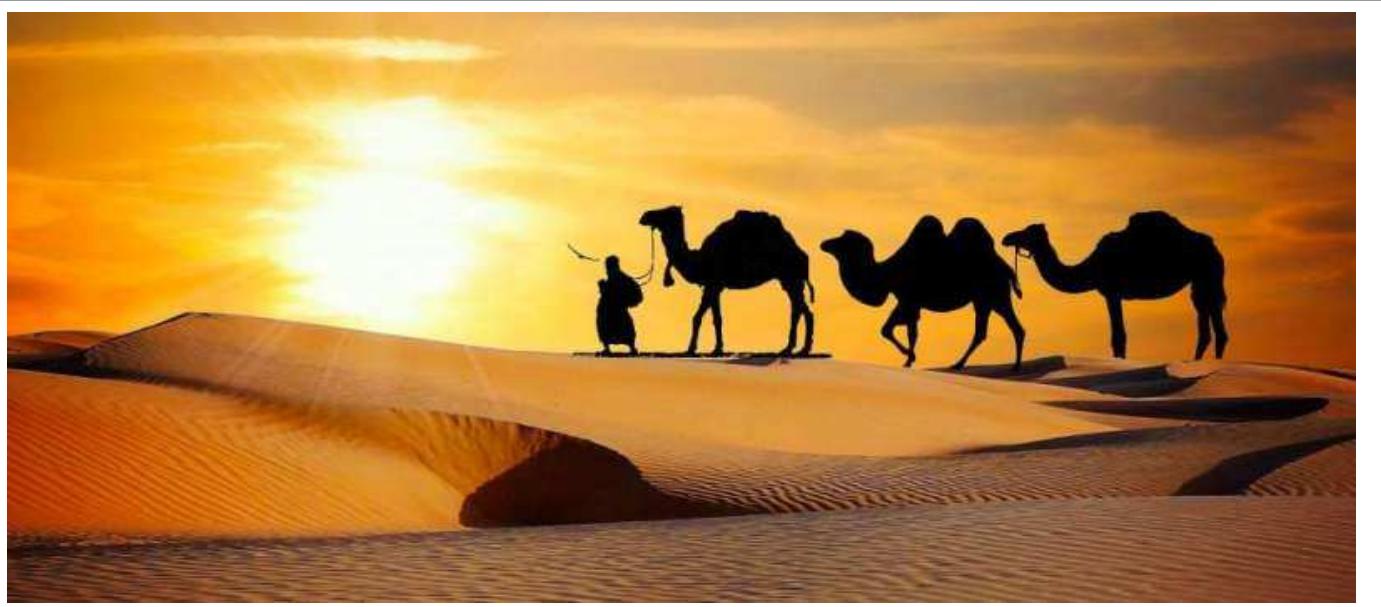
Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/america-c/bajan-beauty-abounds-in-barbados>

Visit : www.visitbarbados.org

United Arab Emirates

The Golden Lands of the Desert

By Jane Wilson



Caravans of camels plodding across the vast expanses of desert are scenes reminiscent of Lawrence of Arabia, when Peter O'Toole was filmed silhouetted in white robes shielding against a blistering sun and gusty sand storms, sitting high between the humps of his camel.

The lands of the desert that form the United Arab Emirates today offers a different scene with a new and more glamorous story to tell.

Oil has fuelled the transformation of barren lands creating a new kind of tourism which is testament to the fruition of visionary plans for these exotic and mysterious lands.

Established in 1971, it is a federation of the seven emirates of Abu Dhabi (the capital), Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain.

The country is located at the southeast end of the Arabian Peninsula on the Persian Gulf and borders Oman to the east, Saudi Arabia to the south, and shares sea borders with Qatar and Iran.

Read more : <https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features-home/the-golden-lands-of-the-desert-1>

Visit : www.u.ae/en, www.visitabudhabi.cn/en, www.ajman.travel, www.visitdubai.com/en, www.fujairahtourism.ae and www.visitsharjah.com.

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