

New YEAR, NEW view

On the horizon
BELOW: THE RUGGED
PLAINS OF ARCHES
NATIONAL PARK IN MOAB,
UNITED STATES, PROVIDE AN
OTHERWORLDLY ESCAPE

WELCOME TO 2021. AFTER A YEAR OF UNCERTAINTY, OUR DESIRE
to travel is stronger than ever, SO WHETHER YOU'RE PLANNING,
OR JUST DAYDREAMING, LET ELLE FUEL *your wanderlust*

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1. VAN LIFE

Take your next road trip up a notch by renting a campervan from the super-luxe likes of Glamper RV. For a cool conversion, head to Camptoo, the Airbnb of motorhomes. Or, if you prefer a classic 1967 VW, visit O'Connors Campers. There are plenty of incredible adventures to be had in Europe, such as driving down the Estrada rebrand, where you'll pass through castle-crowned towns, the Douro Valley's terraced vineyards and the pretty 'garden city' of Viseu, named on account of its multiple parks. Proof that sometimes it's the journey, not the destination.

Nature's finest
DISCOVER VIRTUALLY
UNTOUCHED
COUNTRYSIDE AND
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE
IN ROMANIA

Long-haul travel may remain unpredictable for some time. Lucky then, that we have unique, up-and-coming destinations such as Transylvania, just a three-hour flight from the UK, where newcomer Bethlen Estates is set to open in spring. Since 2007, the Bethlen family has quietly acquired tumbledown buildings in their ancestral village of Cris, restoring them to their former glory with stylish interiors peppered with antique kilim rugs, warming tiled stoves and Tom Dixon lighting. Carefully curated experiences will allow guests to delve into Transylvania's historic citadels, untamed countryside and spectacular wildlife – it's often referred to as Europe's last true wilderness.



2. TAKE ME TO TRANSYLVANIA



Pure luxury
ELEVATE YOUR JOURNEY
ACROSS SCOTLAND
BY TRAVELLING IN
BELMOND'S OPULENT
TRAIN CABINS

4. A DIFFERENT TRACK

3. LADIES FIRST

Women-only travel is booming. Check out companies such as AdventureWomen (offering canyoning through the Utah desert and whale watching in Baja) and Intrepid's Women's Expeditions. Or why not join one of the upcoming retreats run by the London Girls Surf Club in Sri Lanka, Fuerteventura or Morocco? Surfing makes its debut in the Tokyo Olympics, rescheduled for summer 2021, so now's the time to ride the wave. And, in Finland, there's SuperShe Island: a scenic 3.4 hectare women-only plot. To secure a spot, you have to apply and be selected – the odds rival getting a Glasto ticket, with 8,000 competing for just 100 places last summer.

With experiential train travel on the increase, it's worth getting ahead of the crowds to seek out the best journeys – for example, traversing mountain ranges on the Bernina Express from Switzerland into northern Italy. In the UK, Belmond has upped its train game after a cash injection from new owners LVMH, with the Royal Scotsman featuring an onboard Bamford spa and menu by chef Tom Kitchin, while the British Pullman debuts a route along the cool east Kent coastline. Further afield is Anantara's The Vietage: a luxury carriage for the six-hour route through Vietnam countryside between the brand's hotels in Da Nang and Quy Nhon. ▶



5.

ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY

Sky high
VIEWS ACROSS THE DOLOMITES FROM THE PENTHOUSE SUITE AT ITALY'S FORESTIS HOTEL

Say goodbye to the city break: it's time to look towards more rural delights. Forget shopping in Milan, and instead think yoga in the Dolomites. Just-opened hideaway Forestis offers plum views of the mountains from all its suites, alongside pine, spruce and larch treatments in the spa. Across the pond, Hudson Valley has become the favoured retreat of the fashionable New York crowd keen to escape the urban jungle. Be one of the first to book a room at Hutton Brickyards, a cool new offering from Salt Hotels, which opens in April with 31 Shaker-inspired cabins, an archery range, wildflower cutting gardens and a riverside spa. Also see Hipcamp, aimed at wilderness nuts looking for the best stargazing spots in the US.



City retreat
AVOID THE BUSTLE OF NEW YORK BY HEADING TO HUTTON BRICKYARDS, A COOL COLLECTION OF CABINS IN NEARBY HUDSON VALLEY

6. DOMESTIC BLISS

Thanks to pandemic-restricted travel, the British micro-adventure has come into its own and some unlikely hotspots have emerged. Take Herefordshire: its acres of beautiful countryside (from the Wye Valley to the Malvern Hills), network of cider farms and off-grid glamping options have put it firmly on the fashion pack's radar. Meanwhile, Easter sees the highly anticipated launch of Three Mile Beach, a collection of 15 self-catering beach houses hidden among sand dunes on the northern Cornwall coast. Created by Audley Travel founder Craig Burkinshaw and his partner Joanne Le Bon, each hut comes complete with eclectic artwork and sunken cedar hot tubs – join the waiting list now.

Forever summer
NEW EXTENDED VISA OPTIONS MEAN YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THAILAND'S PICTURESQUE BEACHES, SUCH AS RAILAY (BELOW), FOR UP TO 90 DAYS



7. THE NEVER-ENDING HOLIDAY

Seeking more than just a temporary fly and flop? To boost visitor numbers and jump-start revenues that have suffered because of Covid-19, several tourism-dependent nations are coming up with innovative visas, which means you can stay for longer than usual. There's Thailand's special tourist visa, which allows travellers to stay for up to 90 days, and other countries including Estonia and Georgia are offering a 'digital nomad' option, targeted at the new group of remote workers. Perhaps most tempting of all is Barbados' 12-month Welcome Stamp Visa (£1,500 per person), which means your next Zoom call could be taken from the beach. □

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