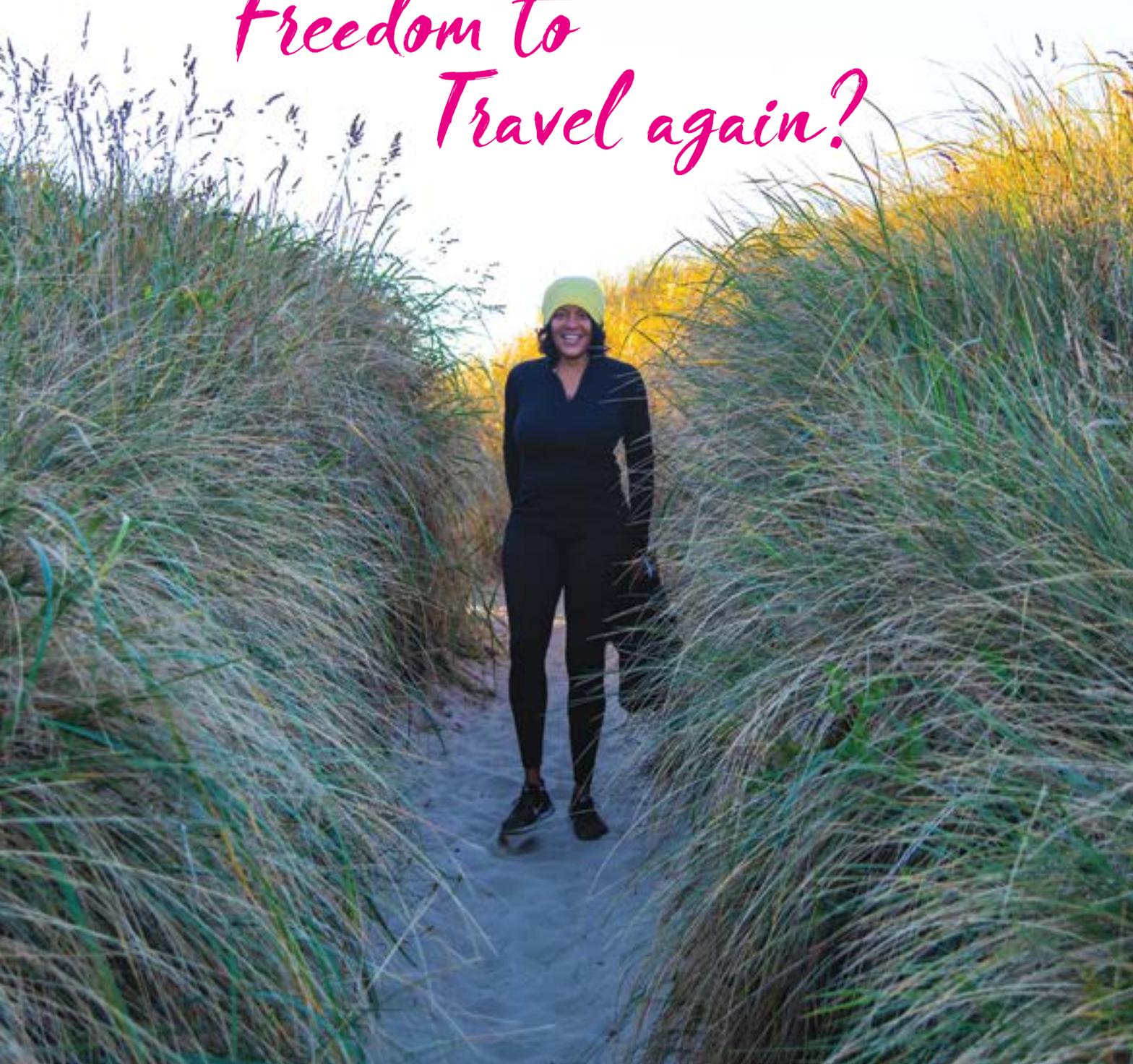


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# LETTER FROM THE *EDITOR IN CHIEF*

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*www.SwankyRetreats.com*

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Hi,

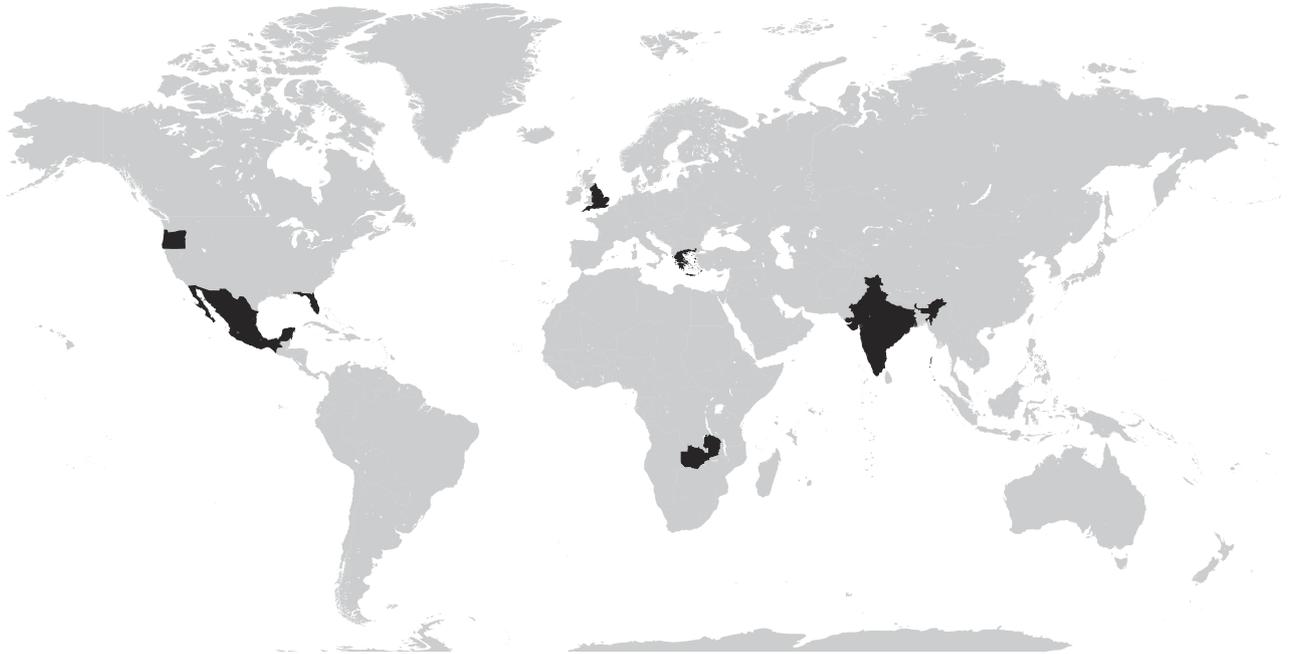
Me again. I hope you enjoy this double travel issue. A little Caribbean to spice up your travel planning for 2021. If you didn't know about our sister magazine, now's a good time to get acquainted and make some plans a little closer to home once we are all free to roam again. The pent up desire to travel is really real. I hear it from some of you on our social media networks and I feel it myself. I actually took to the open road on a bike a little while ago. I see a new way of traveling on the horizon. I love a swanky resort. What I am about to tell you might sound like I have traded in my luxury lifestyle card for a more basic one, but trust me I have not. Sufre, I slept in a tent to get you guys this story, but read it to the end and you'll see it was well worth the campy side of life. Then there's Sophie in Rajasthan, the archetype of the fairytale East. We have you covered, not to worry.

Space is the new luxury and you'll find plenty of that if you follow along with us down the Oregon Coast, over to Tampa and across the pond to Bath. Travel will return in new and more creative ways. Thanks for staying connected to us and we hope you enjoy this double issue.

PS, I am back to being pampered and spoiled. Check it out in the next issue.

Yours in travel,

# CONTENTS



5-18 | **SWELLEGANT STAYS**



19-22 | **LETTERS FROM**



23-25 | **THE SWANK LIST**



26-31 | **THE CAPE LOST CABOS**



32-40 | **CYCLING THE OREGON COAST**



42-50 | **GASTRONOMIC GALLIVANTS**

# THE SWANK TEAM



**ALEXANDRA MAE**  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

When you look up "wanderlust" in the dictionary odds are that a picture of me is in the definition.



**AMY SEDEÑO**  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

As a self-proclaimed @hotelista I do quite a bit of traveling, and from holding a tarantula in an ancient site in Guatemala to drinking high tea in Dubai, and petting grey whales in Baja, you bet I've got stories to tell.



**ANDREW INNERARITY**  
**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

I prefer to let the images do the talking.



**ANN MARIE SCHEIDLER**  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

"Thailand was the trip of a lifetime for this Chicago girl...a sensory overload in the best of ways. The people, the food, the landscape: all unforgettable."



**AVA ROSALES**  
**FEATURES EDITOR**

Wherever the destination may be, it's the villa life for me.



**BRIANA LOZANO**  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

My favorite place to travel to is one I have never been to before! New cities, new sights, new food, new music, new people, new memories, new ways of life. The only way to truly know, is to see it for yourself. I am forever wanderlust. Thank you, Briana



**DYLAN BENOIT**  
**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR**

I'm a chef with Champagne taste and a beer budget, but always seem to find myself surrounded by the most amazing people in the most amazing places. From eating termites in the Honduran jungle to learning how to make dim sum in Hong Kong, for me treasure is in the story.



**JEFFREY SOBEL**  
**CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

All I need is a book, a bourbon and a boat to a new destination - I'll be just fine.



**SERGIO OLIVARES**  
**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**

When I am not at a music concert, you might catch me hunting down new and exciting roads to drive on the weekends. "I live my life a quarter mile at a time." - Dom Toretto.



**SOPHIE IBBOTSON**  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

I'm an entrepreneur, writer, and lover of wild places. I like nothing more than exploring new destinations with extraordinary landscapes, rich cultures, and preferably a sprinkling of remarkable wildlife, too. A jaw droppingly beautiful place to stay is the icing on the cake.

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7000 Acres

5 Decades

1 Perfect moment



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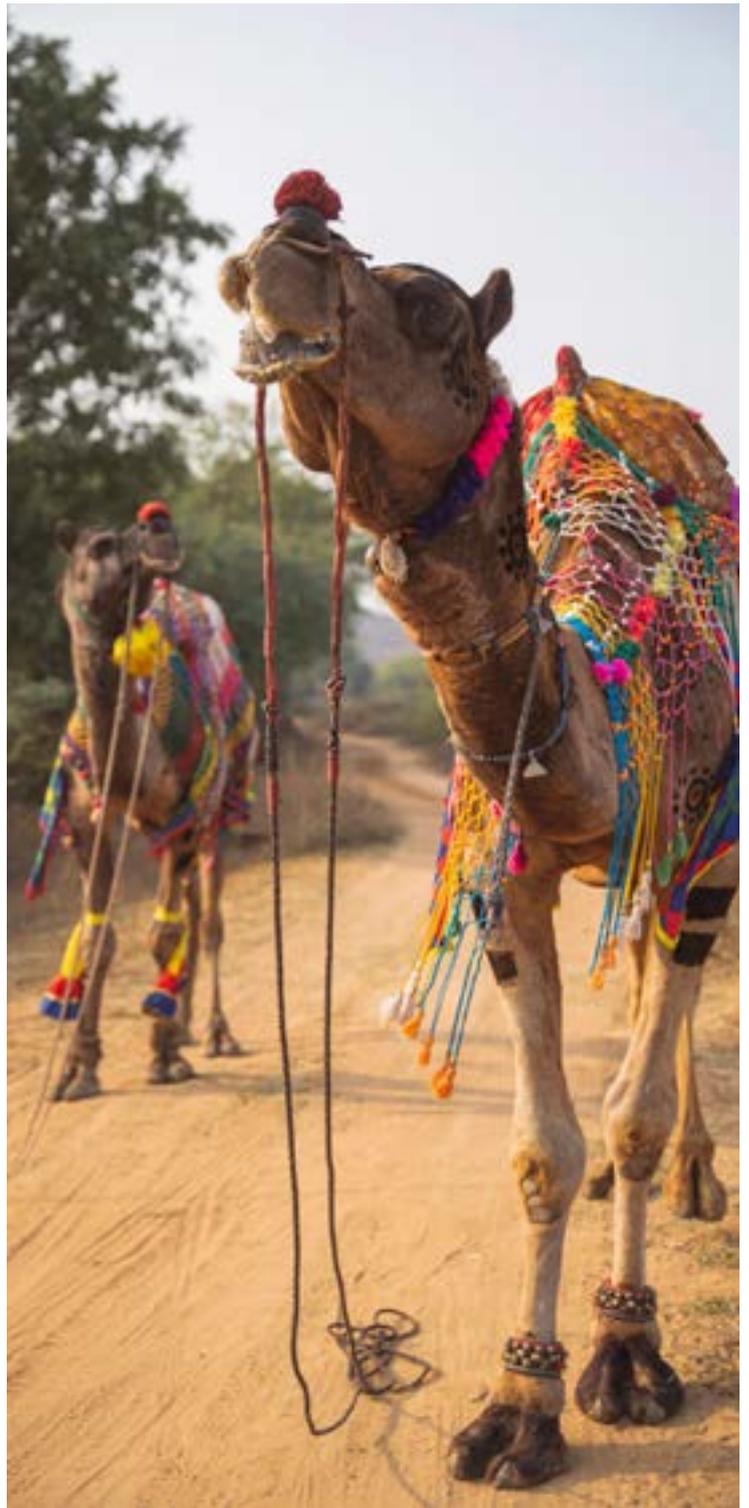
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# SWELLEGANT STAYS

*The indefinable sense of style that makes us swoon:  
swanky, swell & elegant.*





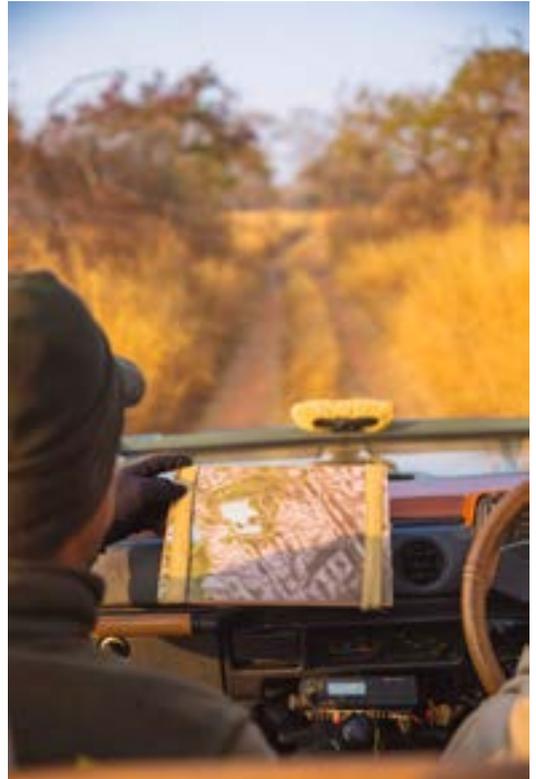
## Aman-i-Khas

Rajasthan, India

Rajasthan is already the archetype of the fairytale East, and when you stay at Aman-i-Khas you might as well be stepping into the pages of 1,001 Nights or The Jungle Book. The tented Mughal pavilions are inspired by the travelling tents of emperors and maharajas; dinner is served by uniformed waiters in the lamp light; and in the surrounding forest and brush, leopards and tigers roam wild.

Aman-i-Khas is an extraordinary tented resort in India's Aravalli Hills, midway between Jaipur and Delhi. It is on the very edge of the Ranthambore National Park, often regarded as the best place in the country to see tigers in their natural habitat. Daily jeep drives take guests out into the wilderness so you have a good chance of not only spotting the well-camouflaged big cats, but also species such as deer, hyenas, wild boar, civets, and more than 270 different kinds of birds. The bee eaters and pelicans are especially eye catching.

Like all of the Aman Group's properties, Aman-i-Khas is a visual feast. The simple lines, lightness, and airiness of the tents contrasts sharply with the ruggedness of the landscape outside, and the designers perfectly balance simplicity and luxury. Beneath the two tiered canvas roof you will discover king or twin sized beds, free standing baths, twin vanities and writing desks, plus a daybed perfectly suited to lounging. Still in your dressing gown, you can venture out each morning onto the sundeck for a cool drink or a coffee, sipping on it as the parakeets chatter to you.





Breakfasts are served outside amongst the trees of the resort's guava orchard, and there are favourite lunch spots for picnics in the national park and nearby fortress ruins. You might like to join the chef for a lakeside cookery demonstration, savouring the fragrant spices; or wander through the organic vegetable garden. When darkness falls, feast on Mughal cuisine in the elegant lamp-lit dining tent, then relax a while with fellow guests before the dancing flames of the roaring campfire.

Aman-i-Khas is a magical place where any kind of story could happen. Will it be the setting for your own romantic adventure?

**[www.journeysmiths.co.uk/post/accommodation/aman-i-khas](http://www.journeysmiths.co.uk/post/accommodation/aman-i-khas)**

## Calilo Ios, Greece

At just one year old, Calilo is already making a name for itself in the Mediterranean. Occupying a 1,000 acre private estate on the Greek island of Ios, the neighbour of the more famous (and far more crowded) Mykonos and Santorini, this is where those in the know escape for a quiet retreat in the Aegean Sea.

The five star Calilo sits on Papas Bay, one of many untouched sandy beaches on the island. It is a place so remote that it is best approached by boat, and this is certainly a romantic way to arrive. The resort's 28 stunning suites are spread out along the coastline for optimal privacy, and they have been carefully designed to blend in with the natural environment. In fact, you will hardly spot them until you are right on the beach.

Calilo's newest suites opened for the 2020 season, and all of them have panoramic sea views. The architect must have been a mermaid in a previous life, as water is omnipresent, from the cascading rock pools with waterfalls to the private swimming pools lined with handcrafted mosaics and the unique indoor cavern pools. The submerged loungers are the ultimate treat for water babies.





But when you stay at Calilo, you do want to leave the water behind now and then and get out and explore the island. The owners have built five miles of signposted hiking trails within the estate, so you can escape to a multiplicity of secluded spots along the pristine coastline. A hike, a picnic, and a cool-off swim or snorkel in the crystal clear waters of one of the coves makes for an unbeatable day, and is undoubtedly the best way to appreciate the natural beauty and peacefulness of los.



## **Grand Bohemian Hotel**

Orlando, Florida

The hotel is on point with the bohemian vibe. If one is familiar with the definition of the word bohemian, they will be absorbed by their surroundings upon entering this hotel. As a refresher, the term is defined as a socially unconventional person, especially one who is involved in the arts. Believe us, you will be involved with the arts once you arrive. From jazz performances in the restaurant, flanked by dark shutters on the windows and red tassels swagged from ceiling to floor to opaque the view between dining tables and exude a flapper-style setting, you have a definite sense of place. If a baby grand piano housed within its own room sounds more like a musical instrument to you than a piece of art, you must come and see this for yourself. The space and the instrument come to life during brunch in the most entertaining of ways. Yet another way the hotel soaks its guests in art, without trying too hard. The rooftop terrace is actually the place to do most of one's soaking. A tented pavilion, clad with chandeliers, flanks the pool. Take in downtown Orlando while you dip in the sparkling pool or lounge on the intentionally ornate furnishing. Our personal favorite is the red chaise lounge, if you are lucky enough to find it and plant yourself into it before anyone else does. It is an exclamation mark at this 6th floor pool



The boutique hotel feel to the suites at this property frames the art that is strewn throughout. Dining is not excluded from this artisanal experience. It is served with the level of care one would hope for in such a juxtaposed property in this Florida city, most famously known for other types of entertainment. Our top recommendations are the beef tenderloin as it is cooked to perfection and the lobster and crab bisque. We respect the culinary art of perfecting a great bisque that is both creamy and tangy at the same time. Grand Bohemian has exceeded all expectations and whether the art be Deco, culinary, ornate, or statuesque, this hotel checks all the boxes.

[www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/mcoak-grand-bohemian-hotel-orlando-autograph-collection](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/mcoak-grand-bohemian-hotel-orlando-autograph-collection)



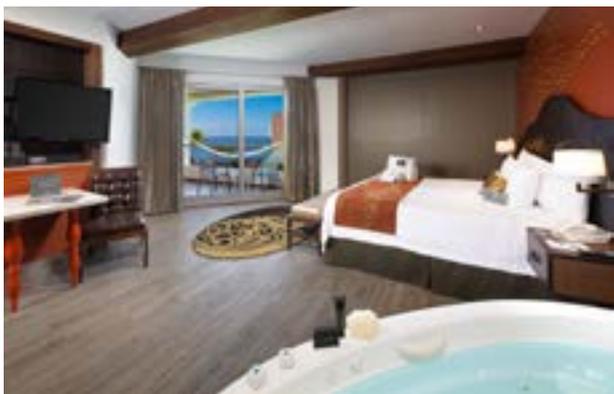
## **Hard Rock Hotel Riviera** Puerto Aventuras, Mexico

If you're looking for a family-friendly spot to stay in the stunning Riviera Maya region of Mexico, then you can stop searching because we've found you the place: Hard Rock Hotel Riviera Maya. This all-inclusive resort sits on a private white sand beach that is straight out of your dreams. Photo opportunities are at every turn when you're out on this beach.

The resort itself carries on the Hard Rock tradition of incorporating music at every turn. From outfits worn by your favorite musicians on stage hanging on the walls to guitars played by the biggest rock stars to ever live, if music is your thing, then you will love the decor of Hard Rock Hotel Riviera Maya. You can bring the music back to your room with the hotel's record player amenity. Throw on some of your favorite records as you look out your room window to the property filled with fun. You can even check out your own guitar to strum some tunes in your room.

The property itself has a variety of activities that will keep kids and adults entertained at all times. There are pools for everyone here, starting with Zero Entry Kids' Pool meant just for the young ones to hang, as well as a family pool where games are aplenty, and adults can imbibe some drinks from the swim-up bar.

And when the adults need some time to relax, head to the Rock Spa where you'll find every treatment you could ever want, and more. This is the largest spa in the Caribbean and features 75 treatment rooms as well as steam rooms, hydrotherapy pools, and a spa butler to ensure your experience makes you feel like the ultimate rock star. There is a Yoga Temple on-site as well where you can tap into your inner zen while looking out to the tropical paradise in front of you. Hit the Fitness Center when you're ready to work off some of the food you've been eating, and enjoy the wide variety of equipment that will keep you in-shape while you're having fun.





Speaking of food, there are some great options at Hard Rock Hotel Riviera Maya. From Mexican to Italian, and everything in between, this is a place you will never go hungry. And when you start to get thirsty, know that there is no limit to the number of tasty drinks you can enjoy all over the resort.

Whether you're looking for a relaxing vacation or something that is full of fun and activity, you can find that here at Hard Rock Hotel Riviera Maya. There really is something for everyone here. You may find yourself hard-pressed to go home, and we don't blame you! With views like this right outside your window, why would you ever want to leave?

[www.hardrockhotels.com](http://www.hardrockhotels.com)



## **Royal Chundu Island Lodge**

Katambora, Zambia

In Zambia there is just one property remarkable enough to be part of Relais & Chateaux. You will find it in the middle of the great Zambezi River amidst the Katombora rapids, a short distance upstream from Victoria Falls. Royal Chundu has a private island, on which sit just four luxurious villas, lounges and a dining room, and a striking infinity pool.

The island lodge is remote and exclusive, accessible only by boat. The stunningly designed villas are open sided, so whether you are lying in your four poster bed, relaxing in an easy chair beside the open fire, or soaking in the sumptuous bath tub on your private deck, you can always see and hear the roar of the river.



Decor in the villas mixes dark polished wood, natural hues fabrics, hand knitted silk carpets, and now and then a splash of cobalt blue colour. Chandeliers hang from the ceilings, and in the evening an attendant will light glass lanterns, too. You could easily while away a day beneath the muslin nets draped over the king side bed, but by doing you'd miss out on the natural wonders which await outside.

However glorious the lodge's architecture, furnishings, and facilities, though, they pale into insignificance when compared with the natural treasures surrounding Royal Chundu. Canoeing along the Zambezi in a dug out canoe, you'll see hippos and crocodiles, plus dozens of species of birds. Waterbuck wander down to the riverbank to drink, and are seemingly undisturbed by the presence of a canoe or boat.



Guests at Royal Chundu Island Lodge can also take to the skies with a flight over UNESCO listed Victoria Falls. It is without doubt one of the most spectacular views in the world, dozens of rainbows dancing amongst the water spray. The deafening roar as the water hits the rocks below gives the waterfall its native name: Mosi-oa-Tunya means “the smoke that thunders”.

**[www.safari.co.uk/post/accommodation/royal-chundu-victoria-falls-zambia](http://www.safari.co.uk/post/accommodation/royal-chundu-victoria-falls-zambia)**

Bonjour mes amis,

In Europe, ski season is in full flow. I've come to Courchevel in the French Alps to breathe in the fresh mountain air, feast my eyes on the snow covered landscapes, and to explore Les Trois Vallées (the Three Valleys) the largest linked ski area in the world.

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mountains themselves), a  
lines between the lodge and

towards  
and the pool  
dipped my toes in  
what a treat it'd be to come

There's no chance to swim in the gardens,  
Hotel Mansour Eddahbi Marrakech. The spa area  
and the outdoor swimming pool is a turquoise jewel. I can  
at any great speed, for a few dozen lengths, then lounge  
gently warm afternoon sun. A few guests were stretching  
and I was tempted to enter the hammam, but in the end  
glass of tea.

in set faster than I had expected, and at night  
in the air. Couples cooed up to  
Mansour Bar & Lounge, then  
and grant diners a little  
and occasional giggles

# LETTERS FROM...

By The Swank Team

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# A LETTER FROM *Europe:*

# BATH, ENGLAND

By Sophie Ibbotson

Friends, Romans, countrymen!

Welcome to Bath. The Romans knew a thing or two about how to build a city, and 2,000 years ago they founded Aquae Sulis – “The Waters of Sul” – on the banks of the River Avon in Somerset. Even then, they knew that there was something special about the geothermal springs which burst forth from these hills, and the bath houses they built here were as ornate and celebrated as the temples.

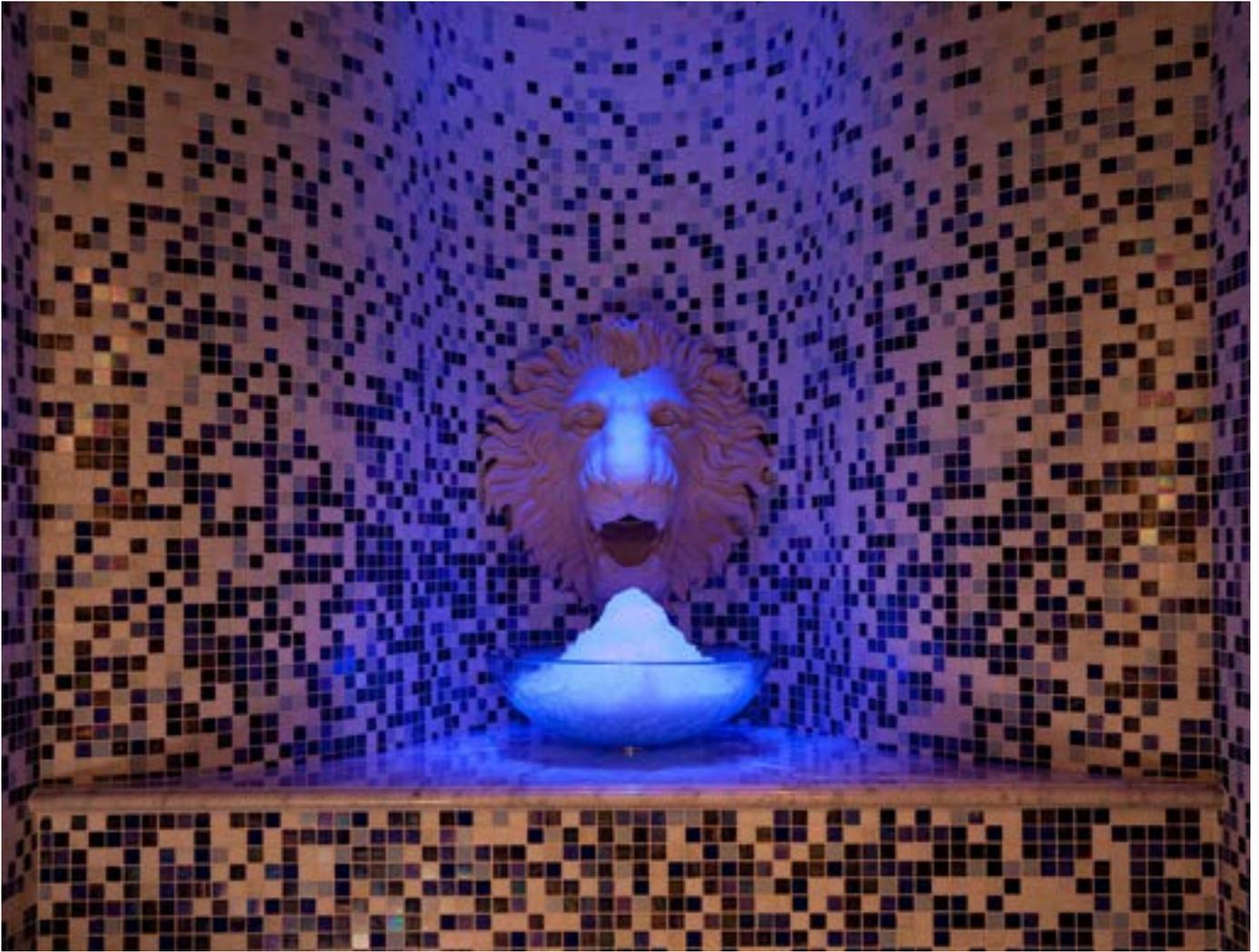


Bath has always been a fashionable retreat. Jane Austen and the society figures who inspired her novels would retreat here from London, living in houses in the Royal Crescent and the Circus, attending balls and concerts in the Assembly Rooms, and taking afternoon tea in the Grand Pump Rooms. Like the Romans, the Georgians recognised the curative properties of Bath’s natural spring water, advocating that it be drunk for good health as well as bathed in.

The Gainsborough Bath Spa is my home for the weekend, and it is the epitome of Georgian sophistication. The architects have joined together two Grade II listed houses in the heart of the UNESCO World Heritage listed city, and created a magnificent YTL Hotel, complete with its own thermal spa.



The hotel interiors at The Gainsborough have been created by the award winning Champalimaud Design, complete with custom furniture, five star amenities, and views across the rooftops of Bath. The styling is classic and elegant, and many of the guest rooms have two poster beds and roll top beds. If Mr Darcy had the chance to stay here, he’d be impressed.



I have tell you more about the spa, because I've spent a disproportionate amount of time here: I hardly wanted to go out and explore! Set beneath a four-storey high glass atrium with elegant white columns beside the pool, the scalding natural spring water has to be cooled for comfort. I flit back and forth between the three thermal pools, the infrared sauna, the ice alcove, and the relaxation terrace, then dissolve into a jello-like state with the Ginger Renewal exfoliation and massage treatment. After this I can barely walk.

Head Chef Dan Moon has opened his namesake restaurant at The Gainsborough, adding to Bath's already formidable gastronomic scene. Born and raised in England's West Country, Dan has won three AA rosettes for his food, and it is a delight from breakfast through lunch to afternoon tea, and on to his mouth watering evening tasting menu. The seven-course menu is a competitively priced £80 and includes carefully crafted flavours which pop on the tongue. Springtime favourites include the cured fillet of beef with fennel and dill; and perfect sauteed scallops with a citrusy kick of yuzu and a creamy seafood risotto.



Tempting as it is to remain within the walls of The Gainsborough, the cultural and historic highlights of Bath are right on the hotel's doorstep, and it would be shameful to ignore them. I want to listen to the live pianist performing in the Grand Pump Rooms, and to learn more about the characters, plot, and inspiration for *Pride and Prejudice* at The Jane Austen Centre. The immaculately restored Roman Baths, including the Sacred Spring and Roman Temple, are open to the public every day. And in the summer months you can tour them after dark by torch light. Is that the ghost of a Roman in his toga that I see floating in the shadows?

It almost could be in the heightened atmosphere of dusk.

Anyway, I must bid you adieu. Another revitalising dip in the water awaits.

*Sophie*

[www.thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk](http://www.thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk)

*The*  
**SWANK**  
*List*  
By The Editors

This Swank List is what we all (over 21) need to kick off '21

These are a few of our favorite things, to drink throughout a year full of hope and possibilities.

## Keep your spirits high this year

We adore the well-rounded foundation of a great bourbon. Four Roses Small Batch Bourbon is named American Whisky Distiller of the Year for three years in a row by Whisky Magazine. Founded in 1884, today Master Distiller, Brent Elliott carries on the legacy of the brand. Four Roses Small Batch Bourbon is proof you can mingle bourbons from four original bourbon recipes and the result is a perfectly balanced, smooth sip. Four Roses Small Batch Bourbon is a bourbon drinker's bourbon. This baby is worth the wait. Aged six to seven years minimum, the end product is simply a fantastic pour. Enjoy it straight up, on the rocks or simply with a splash of your favorite mixer. Four Roses Small Batch Bourbon 45% ABV, \$34.99.



## Scotch, Scotch, Scotch,

you can always tell an original from all the rest. When you want a peaty Scotch from Scotland, there are few that stand up to Ardbeg Corryvreckan. Named after a treacherous whirlpool near Islay and celebrated in Celtic legend, this raw full-bodied, high-proof expression mirrors the spirit of Ardbeg and is not made for the faint-hearted. The process entails starting with Ardbeg matured in New 'Virgin' French Oak casks then balanced with Ardbeg matured in ex-Bourbon American Oak casks, creating the most complex and smoky of all the Islay whiskies. The end result is a phenomenal deep, swirling whisky with big spicy flavors of cloves, cinnamon and licorice which enhances the existing herbal, floral characteristic of Ardbeg Ten Years Old. Ardbeg Corryvreckan won Best Single Malt Scotch and a total of five Gold Medals at the 2020 International Whisky Competition, proving how distinctive Ardbeg is. Ardbeg Corryvreckan 57.1% ABV, \$89.99. For those venturing into the boggy waters of peats, here's a quick intro: Peated whisky is given a smoky flavour by compounds which are released by the peat fires used to dry malted barley. The accumulation of water in boggy areas slows down the decomposition of plant material such as moss, grass and tree roots which leads to the creation of peat. Not for the faint of heart.



## Compoveda.

Period and full stop. This is Tequila for people who never thought they could ever love a Tequila. It's viscosity resembles a medium-bodied Syrah, while its taste profile is vanilla, toasted oak, maple, brown baking spice, and hints of red, jammy fruit- like a sultry Bourbon. This unique experience is only available on-line through [SipTequila.com](http://SipTequila.com). The 750mL bottle retails for \$175, the 375mL is \$90; and they offer subscriptions on this item as well the gorgeous leather carrier. This is with the splurge. You will probably want to invest in the cask. It's not just a conversation piece, but a great way to store and pour Compoveda.

The company is offering a small lot of Compoveda Tequila Founder's Casks, featuring Compoveda Tequila - which has been aged in both French and American Oak barrels that previously held California red wines. This tequila is then flash aged in new medium-charred American Oak barrels, bringing a fresh woody nose, a soft maple and vanilla taste, and smooth but clean finish that will set this tequila apart from anything you've tasted in the past. This is a must for any proper in-home classic bar in 2021. You will be hard pressed to find anything comparable.

SR



# THE CAPE

LOS  
CABOS

The Cape, a Thompson Hotel, reopening today, welcomes guests back with enhanced safety procedures and creative offerings designed to meet the needs of today's traveler. From the option to bring signature experiences in room (cooking classes, wellness, spa, and more) to bespoke private Villa stays ideal for travelling families, friends, and remote workers, amenities are curated to ensure guests are at ease and can continue to enjoy this unique Baja destination.

The Cape—in collaboration with Los Cabos' private healthcare provider BlueNet Hospitals and parent brand Hyatt—has significantly expanded its safety and sanitation protocols, integrating the latest technology and expert counsel to best protect guests and staff. Measures exceed federal and global health guidelines and include, but are not limited to: thoroughly disinfecting airport transfer vehicles between use (including luggage), providing complimentary personal safety kits (surgical mask, hand sanitizer, antibacterial wipes), assigning guestrooms for maximum distancing, providing QR codes for in-restaurant ordering and spacing tables to allow for social distancing, utilizing the latest technology (such as electrostatic sprayers with disinfecting mist and ultraviolet light) to sanitize surfaces and objects, and conducting daily team member wellness checks.

For additional details on comprehensive safety measures at The Cape, please visit here. General information about travel to Los Cabos is available at [www.visitloscabos.travel](http://www.visitloscabos.travel)





In addition to its robust health and safety measures, The Cape reopens with an expanded selection of special offers, tailor made to meet evolving guest priorities, while continuing to embody the resort's singular approach to boutique, Baja-style hospitality. Additional offer details available here. These include:

- **Travel for Good** – “Travel is the leading economic driver for Los Cabos, meaning guests’ tourism dollars benefit the local community in truly impactful ways,” says The Cape Managing Director Eduardo Segura Vehovec. In partnership with the Los Cabos chapter of SKAL (an alliance of travel industry employees committed to promoting responsible tourism, international goodwill, and global friendship), The Cape is donating 10% of all e-Gift card purchases to support members of the local travel industry impacted by the health crisis. Funds provide healthy grocery kits for recipients, reducing their financial burden during these challenging times. e-Gift cards can be redeemed for greater value at the hotel (a \$300 e-Gift card for \$360, a \$500 e-Gift for \$625, and a \$1,000 e-Gift card for \$1,300). Email The Cape reservations team ([thecapereservations@thompsonhotels.com](mailto:thecapereservations@thompsonhotels.com)) or call 1.844.778.4322 for more information or to purchase. Offer valid through August 15, 2020.

- **A Villa State of Mind** – designed for those seeking a change of scenery, yet still in need of the comforts of home, this multi-night stay package begins in one of The Cape’s spacious, luxury Villas overlooking the Sea of Cortez. Amenity highlights include but are not limited to: high-speed wi-fi to allow for easy remote work, daily breakfast, dedicated personal concierge (for grocery shopping, excursion planning, and more), and private in-Villa cooking class. Multi-bedroom Villas all feature chic, mid-century modern-meets-1960s Baja surf décor; fully equipped, state-of-the-art kitchens; expansive outdoor patios with hanging daybeds; unobstructed views of the Sea of Cortez and its famous landmark El Arco; and washer/dryer. Select options also include direct beach access, private plunge pool, multiple floors, sauna, gaming room, outdoor BBQ, and more. Rates begin at \$599 per night excluding tax and resort fees; minimum seven-night stay.





• **Mind, Body & Soul at The Cape** – with a focus on physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness, this five-day retreat encourages guests to find their grounding amid Cabo San Lucas’ sweeping ocean and desert views. Guests stay in a spacious private Villa, challenge themselves with daily fitness classes led by their personal trainer (a part of celebrated fitness expert Modu Seye’s ModuVated team), find balance via guided meditation sessions (like the traditional Cacao Breathing Ceremony led by breathwork specialists from Baja Wellness), enjoy massage or facial treatments in-Villa or at Currents spa, and savor locally sourced, nourishing meals custom designed by Resort Chef Victor Garrido and a ModuVated nutritionist. Rates begin at \$1,550 per night based on double occupancy and excluding tax and resort fees; minimum 4 nights; available for private groups of 10 guests or more.

• **Expanded In-Room Experiences** – for those who prefer the security of their private guestroom or Villa, virtually all experiential amenities offered at The Cape can now be enjoyed in-room. This includes Baja Wine and Mezcal Tastings, Cooking Classes with the team at Manta or Resort Chef Victor Garrido, fitness equipment rentals recommended by celebrity trainer and resort partner Modu Seye, Currents spa treatments, and more.

Call The Cape directly at 844.778.4322 or visit [www.thompsonhotels.com/the-cape](http://www.thompsonhotels.com/the-cape) to make a reservation or inquire about these special offers.





## ABOUT

# THE CAPE

A  
THOMPSON  
HOTEL

The Cape, a Thompson Hotel, located in the Cabo San Lucas region of Baja California Sur, Mexico, is situated along one of the most desirable stretches of white sand in Los Cabos: the world-renowned surfers' paradise known as Monuments Beach. The boutique luxury hotel features 161 guestrooms, all with unobstructed views of the Sea of Cortez and the destination's famed icon, El Arco—a stunning natural phenomenon of granite carved into an arch by centuries of wind and sea exposure. The first Thompson hotel to open in Mexico, The Cape effortlessly blends the brand's upscale urban aesthetic with a distinct 1960s Baja-meets-Southern California vibe. Guests enjoy two pools, including an infinity pool with swim-up bar and another built within a natural rock formation found on property; a sixth-story rooftop lounge and garden with unmatched views of the city and sea; an intimate spa and fitness center with a private outdoor cabana for treatments with an ocean view; and a diverse array of chef-driven food and beverage destinations, including Manta by award-winning Chef Enrique Olvera. One-, two-, and three-bedroom Villas are available, as well as four, two-story Penthouse Suites with private rooftops and plunge pools. The premier Surfer Villa is a two-story, luxury suite ideal for a luxe vacation, private event, or intimate wedding. Every guestroom on property offers unobstructed ocean views, as well as outdoor terraces—many boasting hanging daybeds for enjoying the picturesque surroundings. Room rates start at \$369/night. To reserve, visit [www.thompsonhotels.com/the-cape](http://www.thompsonhotels.com/the-cape). The resort is located at Carr. Federal Libre Transpeninsular Km. 5, Misiones del Cabo, Cabo San Lucas, B.C.S., 23455. Follow The Cape on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.





# Cycling The Oregon Coast

## ADRENALINE RUSH

Story By Peta Phipps

Getting outside and connecting with nature does wonders for the soul. Nowadays, it's one of the best travel options on the planet, and what a way to see the world. From the saddle of a bike, it becomes apparent that you would be hard-pressed to find a more moving connection to the outside world. The visceral reactions that wash over you while pedalling down a coast road and seeing the ocean, outstretched, and lapping at the shore make some pedal faster while others pause to take it all in. We wanted all of this and set out to find a company that was swanky enough to accommodate our discerning tastes. While we looked around for that perfect fit, practically a butlered ride, we discovered Escape Adventures. Their motto suited us perfectly, "You dream it, we'll take you there...all you have to do is bike." Count us in!

**M** My boyfriend David is an avid cyclist and overall athlete (me, not so much). I love a grand adventure and I used to ride bikes as a kid and in college (to and from class). We selected a route from their extensive list of destinations and bike tours. The Bryce and Zion Road Bike tour, Best of Zion, Canyonlands, Arches and Moab tour, Bryce, Zion, and Grand Canyon adventure...were all dream journeys. They also came with an electric Bike option on a few of them, which had me sold. The athlete in the relationship was a little harder to convince, he loved the sound of those adventures but really wanted to get me in a tent, for a truly memorable escape adventure. See, with the electric bikes, camping is not the most conducive to charging the bikes overnight. He had a point, and I went along for the ride. He chose the Oregon Road Bike Tour for us and off we went. From the swampy lowland of South Florida, we caught a flight to Portland, Oregon where we overnighted and awaited our guides' arrival the next morning, along with the other riders who selected this trip that sounded magnificent on paper. The real test would be could I execute it in real life. The six day journey began with a gorgeous drive north of Portland. Along the way we all got to know each other, the guides and the other three riders. This was an intimate group and we were glad for that. The company really takes pride in a high level of interaction between guides and guests and service is of the utmost importance. During the two and a half hour drive up to Ft. Stevens State Park located in the northwest corner of the state, we chatted about everything and I began gazing at the views outside the van window. Our bikes were all safely mounted atop the vehicle, as we motored to our starting point. I wondered just how different it was going to be when the rubber of my bike hit the road and I became one with the scenery. Alex and Carter, our guides brought me back to the present moment as they started describing some of the gourmet offerings they were going to be preparing for us along the way. With a 360 mile journey ahead of us, I knew food was going to be a necessity, but their descriptions sounded far more appealing than sustenance.

These guys were not just our guides, they were to be our personal chefs, our campfire storytellers, sunset-watching, dune-climbing buddies. Trust me when I tell you they were all of that and more, keep reading to find out all about the plot twist and how the words Escape Adventure were more aptly applied to our trip than we could have ever imagined. I'll start with an overview of how the trip was designed to go:





## Day 1:

Meet in Portland. From a morning pick-up at the hotel, we'll shuttle two-and-a-half hours to Ft. Stevens State Park. Amidst this 156-year old coastal defense battery in Oregon's northwest corner, we'll get acquainted over a lunch, prepared by your guides. Built in 1863 to repel anticipated British naval assaults, our first stage kicks off from Ft. Stevens at the mouth of Columbia River. Sweeping south, we'll pass through the town of Seaside, hugging the coast toward Cannon Beach. Called one of the world's most beautiful places by National Geographic, Cannon Beach is a seaside village of art galleries, glassblowing studios and smart cafes, joined by pathways and courtyards spilling over with flowers. Besides its wide, white-sand beach—called the best in Oregon—Cannon Beach can lay claim one of the largest coastal monoliths in the world: 327-ft tall Haystack Rock. The centerpiece of a national wildlife refuge, Haystack Rock looms a half-mile offshore. Birders take note: this coastal preserve draws the rare Tufted Puffin. Pushed by an oxygen rich sea breeze, our peloton continues along the coast. Manzanita, a charming coastal town stretched across seven miles of sandy shoreline closes out today's stage. We overnight in Manzanita, Oregon's third most photogenic locale.

This happened and my skill level was obviously not a level 2-3. I was a bit shaken, or as the kids like to say, "shook". I soldiered on though and my boyfriend stayed with me at my frightfully slower pace than he is accustomed to.



## Day 2:

Today's stage transitions from lush coastal rainforests to dairy country. Departing Manzanita in soft morning light, we swept along the North Oregon coast toward Rockaway Beach, a family-friendly vacation spot since 1920. Next up is Tillamook, where cows far outnumber bipeds. After taking in the home base of the world-famous cheese producer, set amidst estuaries, coastal bays, sloughs and freshwater lakes, this stage then merges onto the wildly scenic Three Capes scenic route (alternate to US-101). Segments along this 40-mile stage range from old growth forest to high coastal headlands where Grey whales are often sighted. Closer to the road, mink, elk, seabirds and raptors are regularly spotted along this route. We close out with panoramic flourish at Pacific City, the southernmost settlement along the Three Capes route: another sweet spot renowned for its epic seaside sunsets.

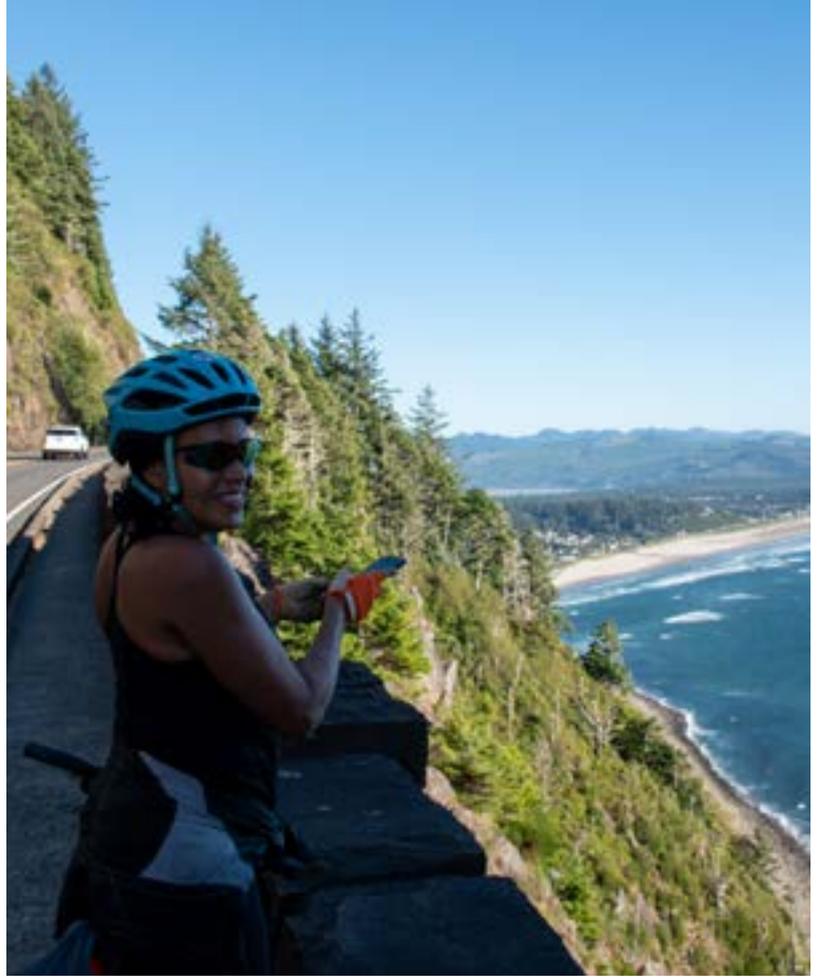
All of this happened. The faster, more skilled set of riders advanced with Alex as David and I kept guard at the back with Carter by our side. Truly in Tillamook, I wanted nothing more than to stop and indulge in a scoop of ice cream, fresh from the creamery. Alas, it was not meant to be that day and we soldiered on. The itinerary called for a rest day, the next day, so I hoped I could convince the group to make our way back for a scoop. A girl can dream.

## Day 3:

Call it the ultimate layover day. Giving the legs a day to refresh, we explore nearby Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area. Where heavy surf collides with sandstone headlands, you can ogle hang gliders soaring over the seaside bluffs, lose yourself in perfect crests of sand dunes, or watch fishing dories launch from the beach. If a more up-tempo option is preferable, you can thru-hike to Hart's Cove: a wonderfully withdrawn seaside inlet nestled within the stunning Cascade Head Scenic Research Area, or Cape Lookout. There's also Option Three: get barreled Pacific Northwest style. To that end, Pacific City offers both surfboard rentals if not an agreeable beachbreak. Option Four: The Happy Hollow Loop bike ride.

This is where our plans, and the itinerary, began to take a turn, thanks to Mother Nature. I did indeed get my ice cream from the creamery. Guess what? Everybody was onboard and loved laying on the lawn and enjoying their scoops. What was to follow in the coming hours was a little more adventurous than planned. This journey was to take us further down the coast for more climbs and sprints and well, more coastline. However, when we hopped in the van, bikes aloft the hospitality trailer, there was a new look to the day. The air was thick and thickening with smoke and an orange glow illuminated what appeared to be a sky at dusk, but it was actually midday. Conversations turned a bit more serious as we all wanted to continue the trip, but safely. As we drove to escape the obvious effects of the raging fires that were sweeping up from California, we were met with an official roadblock. Fire Engines and police cars blocked the road and we were forced to turn around. Things got a little more still in the van and decisions were being made. Alex and Carter wanted us to be safe, happy and to keep the trip alive. We all wanted the same. As we wended our way through Oregon, the air was not getting any clearer, there was no part of the sky untouched by the ominous orange glow. The group of three guys that were on our trip decided they were going to end their trip and head back home. They had driven in from Nevada and really only wanted to see the coast. Carter and Alex did everything in their power to make that happen but life and limb were their top priority and officials would not allow us to carry on as planned. We ended up dropping the guys, sadly, back at the designated departure point and the four of us that remained decided to head north. This is where the adventure begins!





You know things are bad when you head to Mount Saint Helens to find clearer air and safe refuge. What a treat that was. We managed to dodge the smoke, for a couple of days. We entered uncharted territory and rode through lands that looked like another planet. Trees had been cleared and there was not another soul in sight. We rode on shale, up and down dusty unmarked paths, experienced two flat tires and had the time of our lives as the adrenaline coursed through our veins. Ironically, I did some of my best riding in these parts. There were no cars, no people, and about eleven miles in, we discovered there was only one way out...back the way we came. With one guide having suffered two flats, the other decided to ride the eleven miles back to our campsite, ditch his bike and unhitch the van from the trailer, this way he could come back and retrieve us as we walked our bikes back to the meeting point on the paved road. As daylight slowly drifted away, we hastened our steps to make our way out of this land where we had encountered bear scat, heard animal snorts in the distance, and knew we were never totally "alone". Some time into our trek back toward the gate where we know our guide would be coming to our rescue, we got a call. The voice on the other end uttered the words we all feared hearing. "The gate is locked. I can't make it in to pick you guys up. You're going to have to keep walking." We surmised that we had about two more miles to go, and at our rapid pace, we would definitely make it before the light totally faded. Our calculations were correct and smiles came over each of our faces as we rounded a bend and the van came into site. Parked next to a blackberry bush, anyone watching (as if there were anyone for miles) would have called this a scene out of a survival movie where the rescue finally happens and the survivors are so starved they step in the bear scat surrounding the bush and go to town on the berries.

Luckily for us there was a gourmet meal to be prepared and a night of stories to be told. The guide who didn't have the flat (I am leaving their names out of this piece because they were both equally heroic.) rode back at a record speed, hearing large animals as he rode his way out of the wilderness, music blasting as both a defense and a motivator. He had a wild solo ride to fill us in on. While the three of us had our own tales to tell. We did all of this over a delectable dinner, replete with appetizers and dessert. These guys are the best. Nothing deters them from providing the most enjoyable, upbeat, hospitable experience possible. Before turning in for the night, they always ensured our tents were secure and we were happy. With wildfires in the state, we could not do campfires, but that didn't stop us from sitting around and chatting under the stars. This was the adventure we were looking for. I am going to leave the rest of the planned itinerary below. I highly recommend traveling with Escape Adventures. They do private tours, custom tours (even on the fly) and their adventures are great for solo travelers, families, friends, and couples.





## Day 4:

Today's stage, long on calming atmospheric and big-rhythm winds through stands of dense forest beyond Lincoln City (pop. 7930). Sweeping south we route through a number of state parks, including Siletz Bay: a federal wildlife refuge where hawks, herons if not thousands shorebirds gather above prime Chinook salmon and Cutthroat trout habitat. Today's stage closes at Newport, (pop. 9,989), a 151-year old settlement. Home to the Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area, Newport can claim not only the state's tallest lighthouse (93-ft.), but a mile-wide stretch of basalt rocks below that applaud the oncoming tidal surges. At The Old Bay Front, Newport's 19-century roots are on full display along a lively, if wonderfully preserved waterfront. But that dazzle extends clear out into the Pacific, given Newport's status as one of Oregon's premier ocean diving areas. The evening is given over to an enjoyable stroll through town, dropping into the art and jewelry shops along Main Street.

## Day 5:

Heading south, our stage from Newport to Cape Perpetua sweeps through a series of coastal towns: from Seal Rock to Waldport and Yachats. Stretched five sinewy miles along Oregon PCH-1, Seal Rock is defined by tide pools, estuaries, and ancient rock formations, or "seal rocks" on one side. While big, majestic forest dominates the opposite side. Riding through Waldport (pop 2033), 18-miles south of Newport, we'll traverse one of the region's best-known scenic bridges. Where 19th century German settlers, sawmills and canneries have come and gone we get a taste of a first-rate beachcomber destination whose greatest charm is its obscurity. Next, we pass through Yachats (pop. 690), a crabbing, clamming and storm-watching spot. At the center of Central Oregon, the town's name can be traced to the Chinook Indian word Yahuts: meaning dark water at the foot of the mountain. We stop here, at "the little village with a big smile"; relishing the space between lush rainforests of the Coast Range and the Pacific. The stage continues through the 630,000-acre Siuslaw National Forest to Cape Perpetua. A large, forested headland, Cape Perpetua offers terrific leg stretching: 26-miles of hiking trail through old growth forest. The CCC built not only the trail system, but also a handsome stone observation shelter. From this lookout atop the Cape, we glimpse Thor's Wall. A deep, basalt cavern—or, perhaps a collapsed sea cave—Thor's is but one enthralling feature set within the larger, utterly captivating shoreline.



## Day 6:

Today, wrap day, we transition from rocky-frothy coastline to big dune country. Two rather unique stops on this final stage add the appropriate punctuation to our Oregon Coast tour. Egressing from Cape Perpetua, we stop at the 125-year old Heceta Lighthouse, 13-miles south of Yachats. Considered amongst the most beautiful lighthouses the world over, Heceta stands 205-ft above the ocean. Next up, we sweep into an alien world... or a B-movie set at the Darlingtonia State Natural Area. An 18-acre botanical preserve dedicated to just one species, Darlingtonia is home to the Cobra Lily, or Pitcher Plant: a 10-20 inch carnivore. At Jesse M Honeymoon State Park, we close out a brisk six-day tour with a wonderfully kickback picnic, set alongside an idyllic lake. Subsequent to 1:00 p.m. lunch, we shuttle back to Portland, arriving between 4-5 p.m.

**Adrenaline rush indeed.**

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GASTRONOMIC GALLIVANTS:  
**INDULGE**  
IN THE **BAY**  
**TAMPA BAY**

Story By Peta Phipps

This destination is quickly growing into its own well-deserved place in the spotlight while embracing all the fabulous aspects of its history, interwoven in the fabric of its burgeoning food scene. For those who have yet to visit Tampa Bay or haven't visited in a while, here's a little background: the Tampa Bay region combines everything people love about Florida — roller coasters, Cuban culture, year-round outdoor activities and waterfront sunsets. It is the home of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, The Florida Aquarium and Zoo Tampa at Lowry Park. The community's diverse history and vibrant population blends Latin American influences, Florida Cracker culture, and the descendants of Cuban, Spanish, German and Italian immigrants, who built historic Ybor City into the Cigar Capital of the World. All of this leads to why we came to explore and indulge. Tampa Bay is a hotbed of award-winning restaurants and the hub of craft beer brewing in the state of Florida.

We came to eat and see for ourselves exactly what's been happening in Tampa. It had been years since I visited and my boyfriend had never stayed in the area on his numerous visits to Florida. We hotel hopped for a bit, while focusing on our main course of action: eating our way through the Tampa Bay area. Our first stay was at Le Meridien. This hotel was a historic Federal Courthouse, built in 1907. An extensive, multimillion-dollar renovation only six years ago turned Tampa Bay's former Beaux Arts-style Federal Courthouse in the heart of downtown into the city's newest boutique hotel. Despite the dramatic repurposing of the building itself, the hotel has preserved many of the most dramatic aspects of the original building. We walked on the original terrazzo tile floors, passing doors that used to lead to the judge's chambers. We saw where guests were dining beneath the coffered ceilings in a former courtroom and slept in another former judge's chamber. The renovation is well done and the contemporary furnishings are a beautiful contrast to the historic marble and columns. It is so well done that it earned Le Méridien Tampa honors from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

We tore ourselves away from the beauty of the hotel long enough to drive to Sparkman Wharf. This is where our gastronomic gallivanting began. This is a brightly colored collection of dining options set along the river. This outdoor food-hall served as an appetizer and craft brew pitstop before lunch at JOTORO Mexican Kitchen + Tequila Bar. With plenty of outdoor seating, we were able to enjoy some local suds and take in the river as the wharf sits on its banks.

JOTORO is a brand-new Mexican restaurant anchoring Sparkman Wharf bringing Tex Mex to a whole new level. One of my favorite moments was walking through the front door, which was flanked by an oversized pinata of an Alpaca. Helmed by Michelin-starred chef, Joe Isidori, JOTORO boasts traditional and fusion fare, over-the-top artwork, and a tequila bar at the heart of the restaurant. It's easy to spend a long lunch here, or a satisfying early dinner- which we did. We delved right into the eclectic menu and ordered a trio of delectable wood-fired tacos and, wait for it, a large side of kimchi fried rice, That's right, and it's topped with an egg. I wanted to eat every last thing on the menu. The highlighted green items are JOTORO faves. This Mexican mashup restaurant has our full attention. We recommend it so highly that we think Chef deserves another Michelin Star. Take what you thought was the best of East LA Mexican and multiply that by ten, then you will start to understand what it's like to dine at JOTORO. Better yet, head to Tampa and see for yourself.





We did have room for a couple of cocktails, but not enough time to hang in there for happy hour. Had we not needed to be at International Plaza and Bay Street for a decadent after-dinner shopping experience at Neiman Marcus, we could have sipped our way through the menu. This date with a personal shopper for the VIP Fitting Room Experience was not going to be missed. From the moment we met the shopping concierge on the ground floor and she glided us through the store, we knew we were in for a treat like no other. Due to the current state of affairs in Florida and indeed the world, the store hours were adjusted slightly, leaving us with just over an hour to do as much shopping as possible. When we got to the second floor, a style mteam was awaiting us and a fitting room had been bedecked with champagne and candy. Yup, candy. They must follow me on social media. Candy is second only to champagne in my book. There was also a selection of clothing hung and ready for me to try on. My head was spinning. This is the stuff celebrities get treated to. I loved the entire experience. Mia made us feel like superstars. As we sipped on champagne, she got to know us and kept popping out to work with the rest of the style team to grab more outfits. She then introduced us to more departments around the store, from jewelry to shoes. The bubbles worked. I bought everything! Tampa was showing us all its right angles. I can no longer live without a personal stylist.



I know this is a Gastronomic Gallivant piece but shopping while snacking and sipping on champagne is quite decadent and is very much a part of this new lifestyle we are quickly getting used to. This trip was so delectable, even the hotels we chose to stay in were gastrocentric. Ybor City's newest hotel is Hotel Haya in the heart of Tampa's historic Latin District. Revitalized casitas and brick façade storefronts along 7th Avenue are shining examples of Ybor City's rebirth. It all comes together at Hotel Haya. Through careful renovation and reimagining, the iconic past of Ybor and thoughtful new construction join together in a boutique hotel blending reverence for history and a welcome embrace of the future. There's so much history within these walls and we came to learn a bit more about this place over a breakfast at Quiquiriqui. Eating is one of our jams, can you tell? What we couldn't tell from our posh surroundings was that Teddy Roosevelt and his Roughriders stayed within these very walls. That nugget of information was just enough to whet my appetite for more of what this hotel had to offer. Sure we could take a spin around the city

with Max Herman. But we didn't want to pry ourselves away. When we heard he was the best guide for a Walking Tour of Historic Ybor City, my mindset changed. I love antiquity and David loves history. We needed to go explore. We learned about the Latin Quarter, why Mr. Ybor chose Tampa for his entrepreneurial endeavors, and how Jose Marti's statue is erected on Cuban soil., right here in Tampa. The tour was like stepping into a storybook. The city's charms had our attention, and now we needed to taste what she had to offer. They boldly state that the Hotel Haya food and beverage offerings are indulgent and inspired, and that's the truth. Smoky cocktails, tinctures, bitters, intricately crafted ice cubes are all artfully curated to make an evening at Flor Fina exceptionally special. Its swagger is garnered from a history of fine cigars and a cultural tapestry woven from its Cuban and Latin roots.

Those roots are deep and our trip would never be complete without a nod to the oldest restaurant in Florida, The Columbia Restaurant. Befitting a gastronomic legend such as this, the establishment fills an entire block in



the heart of Ybor City, Tampa Bay's historic Latin Quarter. Since 1905, the Gonzmart family has operated the restaurant, expanding it over the years. The expansion is noticeable from its early beginnings as a corner saloon and sandwich shop to what is now a more than 1,700 seat piece of dining history. Five consecutive generations have grown this place with love and tradition. The food is rich, complex, and truly latin. The sangria is not to be missed. If you do, you'll never forgive yourself. No matter if you come for the Flamenco entertainment six nights a week, or a brunch that will stuff you in all the right way, this piece of history and the level of service are unparalleled in Tampa, and many other parts of Florida.

If you are feeling full just reading this then you have simply got to adjust a button or a belt and keep reading. Tampa's got classics like Columbia, where you can never go wrong (wear loose clothing). We can see you now, being as decadent as you want to be, enjoying churros and a cocktail, right after ordering right off the tapas menu. We will not judge. We think that's a great way to end the day if you popped in earlier for some roast

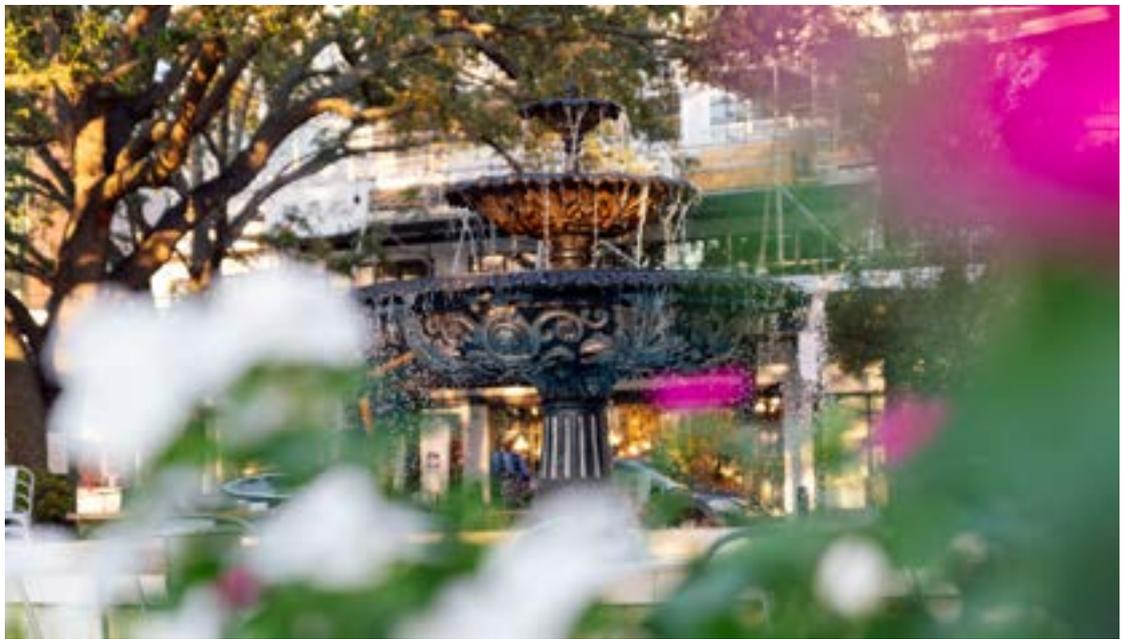
pork and sangria for lunch. Again, not judging, it's exactly what we would do if we were you. The staff will undoubtedly be ready to greet you with a smile before escorting you to your table. We heard about the newer sister restaurant of The Columbia and had to try that, one evening. Opened in 2014 on the banks of the Hillsborough River, Ulele features a menu inspired by Tampa Bay's early native population and Spanish explorers. The restaurant also includes its own craft brewery. Ulele was created by the same Tampa Bay Gonzmart family, who are in their fifth generation as owners of The Columbia. This restaurant sits inside the fully restored and reimagined original public water pump house of Tampa, along with the spring that once supplied the city's drinking water. What a spot this is. If you sit inside, you feel the melding of funky hip nouveau vibes coupled with industrial grit. The patio is also great if you're in the mood to enjoy the sunset. Expect nothing less than hearty comfort food when dining here. Check out their alligator hush puppies. They've got a nice bite to them.

Rolling right along, in more ways than one, we decided that we would take things pretty casually, without compromise. Remaining on trend, we checked out La Segunda Bakery for a fabulous little Cuban breakfast. We were made aware that after a successful century at their Ybor City location, the La Segunda family opened a South Tampa cafe location with seats. The café offers sandwiches on their famous freshly baked Cuban bread, Italian cookies and some of their most iconic Cuban pastries. We wanted to sit, so this was the plan for the morning. Cuban coffee, cafe con leche, and pastelitos de carne. Those are the meat pies you always find in the heated pastry box at a traditional Cuban coffee spot. You know what comes next, if you know Cuban food... pastelito de guayaba. The sweet stuff...there's always room for the sweet stuff.

Far from full, we checked into the Epicurean Hotel for a Spa Experience at Spa Evangeline. We kept brekkie light, knowing we were headed into this indulgent hot stone massage treatments. We would have needed our tummies rubbed instead of our backs had we stopped for lunch first. This elegant boutique hotel is made for food lovers, from the ground-floor kitchen theater to the rooftop The Edge Social Drinkery bar. The on-site Evangeline spa uses food-based materials, including coffee scrubs, to help guests relax. Also, on-site, the Chocolate Pi patisserie serves up melt-in-your mouth treats. My favourite part was a welcome glass of wine upon arrival. They may have spoiled us a bit as the wine never stopped flowing every time we walked past the front desk. Darren Reltherford, the manager, has such great energy about him, we also never wanted to leave the lobby.

Alas, we had another stop to make...it was off to Hyde Park Village for lunch (post massage) and to enjoy the outdoor neighborhood of Hyde Park Village. We jumped on bicycles provided by The Epicurean and had a blast riding down tree-lined streets that made us feel like we were somewhere other than Florida. The many faces of Tampa have us hooked. Hyde Park is a walkable neighborhood known for its meticulously preserved Arts-and-Crafts bungalows dating from the 1920s. Hyde Park Village is an open-air shopping district within that neighborhood. Although we promised ourselves a light lunch at Meat Market Tampa, shopping was out of the question. None of my clothes fit after this trip and the last thing I wanted to do was buy a size up from where I started. Meat Market is a sexier, more glamorous take on the traditional steakhouse. Opened in 2008, the restaurant became a defining presence in South Beach, Miami. It's acclaimed for Chef Sean Brasel's unique fare, its postmodern-deco décor and stunning clientele, of which we were now a part. This is a swanky spot to see and be seen and the food is amazing. There are other locations in Miami (as mentioned) Palm Beach, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. I don't know about my date but I felt fat at this point. All the model-types really sent home the message that this gastronomic gallivant had taken its toll. I felt like riding bikes for the rest of the trip.







Yes, there's more. We had to get a taste of BULLA: pronounced [boo-ya]- meaning the ability to create a stir; slang for chatter and what everyone is talking about. Simply put, a fun, casual gathering place inspired by the most popular tapas-style restaurants in Spain. Bulla's architecture was designed by New York based Celano Studio, which has created a feeling reminiscent of famous gastrobars in Spain. Like those gastrobars, Bulla serves unique Spanish dishes created with the finest and freshest ingredients. While the bar and ambiance are the center of attraction, the emphasis is on quality gastronomic creations to stir the senses and your appetite. We managed to save this fabulous spot for last. A brunch here is splendid. We sat on the terrace and went for their bottomless beverages. Luckily for us we could mix and match. We started off keeping our cool with freshly squeezed orange juice mimosas, then slid down the adult beverage slide into their four sangrias: white, rose, red and beer. That is not a typo, I said beer. You have to try it to believe me when I say that it is uniquely tasty, this beer sangria is something to behold and be sipped. Now onto the food: the avocado toast is unreal here, then take my recommendation and follow that with braised pork hash and finish with churros, all while sipping your new favorite sangria. Mine was the rose. You are going to love Tampa. If you have been before, in recent years, you know what we are talking about. If you have yet to visit or it has been a while, you need to get this destination on the books for travel and dining unlike any other city in Florida.

Here are some useful links of some our our favorite spots:

[www.jotoro.com](http://www.jotoro.com)

[www.hotelhaya.com](http://www.hotelhaya.com)

[www.columbiarestaurant.com](http://www.columbiarestaurant.com)

[www.ulele.com](http://www.ulele.com)

[www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/tpaak-epicurean-hotel-autograph-collection](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/tpaak-epicurean-hotel-autograph-collection)

[www.meatmarket.net/locations/tampa](http://www.meatmarket.net/locations/tampa)

[www.bullagastrobar.com](http://www.bullagastrobar.com)

# *CREDITS*

## **SWELLELEGANT STAYS**

Pages 6-8  
Aman-i-Khas

Pages 9-10  
Calilo

Pages 11-12  
Grand Bohemian Hotel

Pages 5,13-15  
Hard Rock Hotel Riviera

Pages 16-18  
Royal Chundu Island Lodge

## **A Letter From Europe:**

### **Bath, England**

Pages 20-22  
the gainsborough

## **The Swank List**

Page 24  
Four Roses

Page 24  
Ardbeg

Page 25  
Compoveda

## **The Cape Lost Cabos**

Pages 26-31  
Thompson Hotels

## **Cycling The Oregon Coast**

Pages 32-40  
David Blair

## **Gastronomic Gallivants:**

### **Indulge In The Bay**

Pages 42-50  
David Blair

Pages 44-50  
Visit Tampa Bay