

6

REASONS
TO

SLOW-TRAVEL NOW

JUNE 2018

T+L'S SELECTION OF ASIAN EXPERIENCES THAT ARE WORTH YOUR TIME.

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NO. 1 LAID-BACK BALI

A vacation in Bali is as good for the soul as it is for the body. And the longer it is, the better. Finding a long-term stay on the island is now easier than ever: the new 'plus' feature of Airbnb (airbnb.co.in) has an array of exclusive villas designed for modern living. Pick a stay in the aloof paddy fields of Ubud, or the desolate beaches of Lovina. While in Ubud, try glamping with the new **Sandat Glamping Tents** (glampingsandat.com), and infuse your vacation with wellness therapies at **Maya Resort** (mayaresorts.com), which has one of the best luxury spas in Bali.

Bookworms should plan in advance for the **Ubud Writers and Readers Festival** (ubudwritersfestival.com), which brings together over 150 writers from across the world in October. If you love 'the beautiful game', head over to the **Trans Resort** in Seminyak from June 14 to July 15 to watch the broadcast of FIFA World Cup 2018 with football-themed desserts designed by Chef Francois Galtier.

Pura Ulun Danu Bratan Temple, Bali.
Below: Spa on the banks of the Petanu River at Maya Resort.



FROM TOP: MARTIN PUDDY/GETTYIMAGES; COURTESY OF MAYA RESORT

NO. **2**

THAI LIFE IS THE GOOD LIFE

A culinary revolution is sweeping over the mountainous region of Chiang Mai in Thailand. The likes of **Rustic & Blue** (rusticandblue.com) and **Reform Kafé** (facebook.com/reformkafe) are leading the way in cultivating a culture of healthy eating, making this the ideal area for the slow, sustainable traveller. Stay at the **Dhara Dhevi resort** (dharadhevi.com), a Lanna kingdom-style accommodation rated among the best in the world. For those who love the animal kingdom, spend your days feeding and bathing rescued tuskers at the **Elephant Nature Park** (elephantnaturepark.org).

Go on a luxury bike tour to the Golden Triangle region (where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar meet) with **Vintage Rides** (vintagerides.travel). End the tour in Chiang Rai, the sleepy town in northern Thailand, where you can catch the Pomelo festival, which celebrates the unique savoury fruit, in September. Cherry on top? Living in the **Anantara Resort** (anantara.com) with incredible vistas of the Mekong River for company.

Right: A fallen angel sculpture at 798 Art Zone, Beijing.



NO. **3**
SLOW AND ARTSY IN CHINA

To truly understand the beauty beneath the chaos of Beijing, one needs to give it ample time. That's when you discover its less popular facets, like its artsy side that comes to the fore at **798 Art Zone** (798district.com), an area that also hosts the majestic 798 Art Festival every September. Stay secluded from the city's frenetic

pace at **Waldorf Astoria's private Hutong Villa** (waldorfastoriahotels.com).

Make your way to the old capital of **Xi'an** and join Xi'an Insiders (xianinsiders.com) on a vintage jeep or sidecar motorbike tour that'll take you through the countryside, where cave dwellers live to this day. In **Chengdu**, spend a few weeks volunteering with **GoEco** (goeco.org) at

the **Panda Conservation Centre**, where Giant Pandas are bred with love. Introduce your palate to local fare at **Baguo Buyi**, an institution that teaches Sichuan cooking in Chengdu.

Bring down the curtains on your sojourn by meeting ethnic communities in picturesque **Dali**, on a customised tour with **Wild China** (wildchina.com).



From left: A distillation kettle stands opposite the Sapporo Beer Museum in Japan; the beer garden at Odori Park.

NO. **4**
JUST WALK IN JAPAN

In Japan's true north, the arrival of summer is marked by the opening of multiple hiking routes that take you through the region's unspoiled forests and lakes. Embark on the 12-lake (*juniko*) trail, which takes you to Aoike, a strikingly blue pond that remains a well-kept secret. Relax your muscles after each hike in true Japanese style in the milky waters of **Nyuto Onsen** (hot springs) and go to bed like a local in one of Japan's premier *ryokans*, **Yamanoyado Bekkan**.

Further north, summer is the time to sit back and gulp down craft beers from Japan's most remote villages at the huge 13,000-seater beer garden of **Sapporo Summer Festival**. The newly opened community of 3-4 bedroom luxury chalets at **The Orchards** in Eastern Hokkaido is the ideal place to disconnect from the world for a few days while embarking on spectacular hikes through Japan's rugged countryside.

HERE
+ NOW



NO. 5 TEE OFF IN JORDAN

Hyatt's decision to open its second Jordan property in **Aqaba** this May speaks volumes about the city's rise as Jordan's most exciting destination. A stone's throw away from the new **Hyatt** is a golfer's paradise: a recently developed, solar-powered 18-hole championship golf course, **Ayla** (ayla.com.jo), designed by professional golfer Greg Norman.

Head to the **Wadi Rum Desert** and sleep in a glass bubble under the starlit sky at **Full Of Stars Hotel** (wadirumnight.com). While in Wadi Rum, challenge yourself to adventures like skydiving and aeromodelling with **The Royal Aero Sports Club** (rasej.com). Instead of driving to **Dana**, hike your way from Wadi Rum with **Jordan Trail** (jordantrail.org), and spend the journey camping in the villages en route. End the vacation in **Amman** with cold beer at Jordan's first and only craft microbrewery, **Carakale** (carakale.com).



From top: Skydiving in Wadi Rum; Ayla is an 18-hole solar-powered golf course in Aqaba designed by golfer Greg Norman.

NO. 6 CAST AWAY IN PHILIPPINES

Do you wish to sequester yourself to a faraway island? Take a cue from Madonna who chose to drift off to the private island of **Pamalican** (accessible by a private plane only) in Philippines right before her concert. Brad Pitt and Bill Gates, too, have stayed on the island, at the **Amanpulo Resort** (aman.com). For a long-term stay, pick **Brother Island**, which features just one villa on its premises available on Airbnb (airbnb.com).

After a sleepy week or two on the island, head to **Cebu** for its wilderness: a new species of owl called *ninox rumseyi* was discovered. Diving in Cebu's clear waters may introduce you to an endemic freshwater fish, *sicyopus cebuensis*, among other marine life forms. Dine at **The Pig & Palm** (thepigandpalm.ph), a Spanish tapas restaurant launched by Michelin-star chef Jason Atherton. Another day, experience a sunset cruise or a private yacht party with **Jokai Cruises** (jokaicruises.com).



Mirissa, Sri Lanka

LUXE TRAVEL COMPANIES FOR THE SLOW TRAVELLER

ZICASSO HANDCRAFTED TRAVEL

It was called a 'matchmaking service for travellers' by the *New York Times*. No two vacations at Zicasso look the same. Choose your duration and interests for Zicasso's worldwide experts to develop a flexible itinerary. zicasso.com

KER & DOWNEY An experiential and luxury travel company, this one also assists with philanthropy during a vacation.

The semi-assembled itineraries are slow and can be modified to your needs. kerdowney.com

REMOTE LANDS Like the name suggests, the company specialises in remote places of Asia. It puts together ultra-luxe and immersive itineraries. remotelands.com

ABERCROMBIE AND KENT A 50-year-old player with travel insiders in over 100 countries,

it has its own private jet tour around the world. Pick a readymade itinerary or make one from scratch. abercrombiekent.com

BROWN AND HUDSON Self-proclaimed as an 'antidote to everything that is packaged,' this one picks a handful of customers every year, charges a minimum of nearly ₹1 lac to create an itinerary, and fulfills every demand of yours. brownandhudson.com

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