

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Dive into history: exploring a sunken submarine off Croatia's coast, a journey truly Beyond the Beaten Path.

Beyond the Beaten Path: Active Exploration of History and Culture

Dear Friends,

As I'm sure you have learned and felt over the years in the industry, travel is at its most rewarding when it engages our body, mind, and spirit. We agree wholeheartedly and are grateful to work with hotels and DMC's across the globe that provide experiences designed for the traveler who wants to do more than simply observe. These are your clients who prefer to *move* through history, culture, and nature to truly connect with a destination rather than simply sit on the sidelines. From the rugged sandstone plateaus of South Africa to the cobbled streets of Europe's historic cities, every trail, gallery, or garden is a portal into the past.

In South Africa, guests may venture out on guided hikes and mountain bike trails to discover ancient San rock art, kayak along spring-fed rivers, and connect with conservation efforts that protect endangered wildlife and rare cedar trees. Kenya offers opportunities to spot wildlife, from elephants to reticulated giraffes, on savannah plains and under vast open skies.

Across the ocean, your clients can explore Charleston and Savannah on foot to uncover hidden corners of American history—from moss-draped cemeteries to elegant gardens with local guides who weave stories that bring each place to life. In Napa, oenophiles can immerse themselves in the region-identifying wine culture, led by respected professionals who share the cultural and geographical story.

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Europe offers plenty of its own immersive adventures: in Greece, guided walks through ancient Messini and rafting along the Voidomatis River reveal the region's heritage alongside stunning natural landscapes. In Tuscany, your travelers can trace medieval hamlets and lemon-scented paths, meeting artisans whose craft has endured for centuries. Meanwhile, the United Kingdom offers opportunities to hike Snowdonia, ride heritage railways, and explore centuries-old country houses, where guests can live out their own page in estate history.

For those who include UNESCO World Heritage Sites on their bucket list, there are seven to explore within one breathtaking valley around Kathmandu. In Sri Lanka, the Pekoe Trail waits to be trodden, a 300-kilometer UNESCO-endorsed path through the country's central highlands and tea estates. In Conwy, a UNESCO World Heritage Town, a medieval castle offers a tangible bridge to Wales's past.

Urban explorers are equally rewarded: in London, some of our favorite hotels provide curated walking, cycling, and cultural experiences—from contemporary art at the Saatchi Gallery to private tours of Royal Albert Hall—offering travelers the chance to see, feel, and engage with the city in motion. In Edinburgh, culture seekers can design their own kilt from their clan tartan or explore a historic hotel's legacy through its art collection and hand-painted murals.

Across continents, these journeys demonstrate that the most meaningful travel blends activity, history, and culture. It's our pleasure to bring these experiences to your attention, to help your clients dream, and then do the things that truly speak to them, creating their own story along the way.

Please allow us to make an introduction to any of these suppliers, so that you can expertly craft an insider-led experience for your active culture-minded clients.

Fondly,

Rebecca



Rebecca Slater, exploring the rich culture of the Dordogne region in France.

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[News from Africa](#)



Explore the rich heritage of winemaking at The Story of Wine Museum, Babylonstoren, where interactive storytelling and multi-sensory encounters bridge past and present.

[Babylonstoren, Franschhoek Wine Valley, South Africa](#) - Disconnect and Discover Nature, History, and Wine

Babylonstoren offers guests plentiful opportunities to engage deeply with the Cape Winelands and to immerse themselves in nature, cultural experiences, and history. Hotel guests are invited to log off completely and find rest in nature. Farm walks, mountain drives, gardening, rowing, and fishing activities abound, while just a short shuttle ride from Babylonstoren, Soetmelksvlei is an interactive Boland farmyard set in the late 19th century, where guests get a glimpse of farm life before the turn of the 20th century. Take a seat at the kitchen table in the immaculately recreated farmhouse interior for a cup of freshly brewed *moerkoffie*. Enjoy a rusk or still-warm bread and home-churned butter while observing the kitchen utensils and methods of the 19th-century cook. Spend the day observing and interacting with craftspeople as they go about their chores—milking cows, separating cream, churning butter, milling wheat, blacksmithing and carpentry, animal husbandry, and traditional baking.

Back on Babylonstoren, *The Story of Wine Museum* is a space designed to preserve, share, and reimagine the culture and knowledge of winemaking for generations to come. At its heart, *The Story of Wine* is dedicated to transmitting knowledge. From the origins of viticulture to the social and cultural traditions surrounding wine, the museum bridges past and present through interactive storytelling, multi-sensory encounters, and cross-cultural accessibility.

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Witnessing the majestic elephants of Namunyak Wildlife Conservancy as they gather at a drinking hole, a truly unforgettable encounter in East Africa's pristine wilderness.

Photo credit - Sarara Camp in Kenya - Sarara | Safari Ecolodges & Foundation in Kenya

[Exeter Safari Company, Africa](#) - Kenya's Wild Heart in Refined Luxury

Nestled in the heart of the Namunyak Wildlife Conservancy in northern Kenya, Sarara Camp offers a luxurious gateway to one of East Africa's most pristine wilderness areas. Surrounded by savannah plains, dramatic escarpments, and vast open skies, the camp blends refined comfort with the thrill of safari adventure.

Days at Sarara are filled with unforgettable wildlife encounters. Expert guides lead morning and afternoon game drives, offering the chance to spot elephants, lions, reticulated giraffes, and other iconic African species against the backdrop of sweeping landscapes. Walking safaris allow guests to experience the bush intimately, discovering the subtle signs of wildlife and the rhythms of nature.

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*Experience refined comfort and the thrill of safari adventure within your luxurious accommodation at Sarara Camp.
Photo credit - Sarara Camp in Kenya - Sarara | Safari Ecolodges & Foundation in Kenya*

Cultural immersion is a highlight of the Sarara experience. Guests can visit local Samburu villages to witness traditional beadwork, pastoral rituals, and the preparation of fresh teas and meals, all while learning about the customs that have shaped this resilient community. These exclusive day visits provide a meaningful connection without compromising luxury.

Exeter Safari Company ensures effortless access to Sarara Camp, offering curated itineraries, seamless transfers, and expert-led activities that transform every safari moment into a once-in-a-lifetime experience. At Sarara, adventure, culture, and nature converge to create memories that linger long after the journey ends.

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[News from Americas](#)



Savor the flavors of Savannah amidst the beauty of its First Squares, where a lovely fountain provides a picturesque backdrop to a private food tour.

[American Stories Travel, East Coast, United States](#) - Move Through Time in Charleston and Savannah

Sometimes the best way to understand a place is to move through it on foot. For travelers who crave more than sightseeing, [Charleston and Savannah](#) offer the chance to actively explore history, culture, and nature in one unforgettable journey.

In [Charleston](#), your guests will walk the cobblestone streets with a private guide who brings the city's layered past to life, from Revolutionary beginnings to Civil War echoes. They can step into stories of resilience on a [City at the Crossroads](#) tour or wander through the elegant [Middleton Place](#) grounds and stunning gardens on foot. Add even more depth with a [They Wore the Ring](#) experience at The Citadel, exploring generations of Southern legacy and change. Strolling these preserved landscapes invites reflection and opens up deeper conversations with a guide and fellow travelers.

In [Savannah](#), uncover hidden corners on our [Historic Walking Tour](#), stroll beneath moss-draped oaks in [Bonaventure Cemetery](#), or move with intention through the city's oldest squares on a [Drums & Shadows](#) cultural experience. Along the way, you'll hear local legends, trace ancestral footsteps, and discover how the land itself holds memory from its cobblestone streets to its quiet, sacred spaces. These moments of movement and meaning turn a simple walk into something far more powerful, a personal connection to the past that stays with your travelers long after their journey ends.

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Discover the nuanced flavors shaped by Napa Valley's six mountains and diverse microclimates, as Meadowood's Wine Center takes you on a journey beyond traditional wine education.

[Meadowood Napa Valley, California](#) - Uncork the Story of Napa

The Napa Valley stands as the New World's premier wine-growing region, where wine culture intertwines deeply with the area's unique identity. The Wine Center at Meadowood serves as a gateway to understanding this rich heritage, offering immersive experiences that explore wine's technical, aesthetic, and social dimensions alongside its essential role in shaping the region's identity.

The valley's history and culture are revealed through tastings led by respected wine professionals who make the region's complexities approachable to all guests. Napa Valley's wines represent cultural threads woven through centuries, connecting terroir to tradition, and Meadowood has been a part of the story since its inception.

Napa's geographical distinctiveness defines its wine culture. The valley boasts six mountains—from Mt. Veeder to Pritchard Hill to Howell Mountain—a rare concentration that creates diverse microclimates and soil compositions. This geological variety shapes the region's flagship grape, Cabernet Sauvignon, producing wines with remarkable nuance based on altitude, soil type, and climate.

Understanding Napa Valley wine means appreciating how its physical landscape translates into distinct flavors and styles. The Wine Center at Meadowood's curated programs provide context for both newcomers and connoisseurs, examining how terroir influences taste and exploring the stylistic choices of various producers. Through these experiences, guests gain insight into Napa Valley's significant role in global wine culture.

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[News from Asia](#)



Experience the passion behind preserving Newari heritage with a woodcarving session at The Dwarika's, a unique encounter in Kathmandu, one of Asia's most fascinating cultural capitals.

[Dwarika's Hotel, Nepal](#) - Discover Kathmandu's Newari Soul

Adventure in Kathmandu unfolds beyond trails and peaks. At its heart lies the ancient Newari civilization - one of Asia's oldest urban cultures - still pulsing with the rhythms of its rich heritage. With seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites nestled within one valley, Kathmandu is a living museum where time, tradition, and creativity converge. Imagine the historical gravitas of Rome meeting the contemporary cool of Berlin—timeless yet trending.

Rooted in this legacy, The Dwarika's stands as a sanctuary where centuries-old craftsmanship and refined elegance meet. Within its courtyards, hand-carved windows and quiet brick arcades whisper the artistry of generations. At the same time, its hospitality, inspired by *Atithi Devo Bhava*—the guest is god—reflects warmth straight from the Nepali heart.

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*Witness the spiritual tradition of Arati at a Hidden Temple,
an experience curated by The Dwarika's that opens to all faiths.*

Beyond its walls, Dwarika's curates rare encounters: Tea at the Restoration Workshop with Vijay, the founder's grandson, revealing the passion behind preserving Newari heritage; a Woodcarving Session with Master Artisan, a hands-on woodcarving session; Arati at a Hidden Temple open to all faiths; and Pashupatinath Morning Walk, a guided walk to Pashupatinath—one of Hinduism's holiest sites and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Family-run and deeply layered, Dwarika's embodies Kathmandu, one of Asia's most fascinating cultural capitals.

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Trek selected stages of the Pekoe Trail at Ceylon Tea Trails, where a leisurely stroll through the tea estate offers a meaningful connection with Sri Lanka's heritage and landscapes.

[Resplendent Ceylon, Sri Lanka](#) - Finding Sri Lanka's Soul in the Misty Highlands

Ceylon Tea Trails offers adventure travelers a unique way to experience Sri Lanka's central highlands, balancing activity, nature, and culture. Surrounded by sweeping tea fields and misty mountain ridges, the planter-era bungalows of Tea Trails provide both comfort and a gateway to discovery. Guests can explore the island's tea heritage alongside resident planters who share their knowledge of this timeless craft.

The Pekoe Trail, a 300-kilometer UNESCO-endorsed hiking route, traverses this landscape, inviting travelers to explore it on foot. Trekking selected stages of the trail takes guests beyond the tea estates into rural villages, where everyday life unfolds against a backdrop of temples, gardens, and community gatherings. These walks create opportunities to meet local people, exchange stories, and experience authentic culture while immersed in nature.

Together, Tea Trails and the Pekoe Trail offer more than scenic beauty - they provide a meaningful connection with Sri Lanka's heritage, its people, and its landscapes. For the adventure traveler, it is an invitation to slow down, walk through living history, and experience the soul of the highlands.

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[News from Australasia](#)



Looking east from Blanket Bay, Glenorchy, New Zealand, with breathtaking vistas of the Dart and Rees Valleys, Mount Alfred, and Mount Earnslaw.

[Blanket Bay, Glenorchy, New Zealand](#) - A Southern Alps Sanctuary

Built in the grand style of the finest alpine lodges, Blanket Bay is set on the shores of Lake Wakatipu against the snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps and is consistently ranked as one of the world's leading luxury hideaways. Just a 40-minute drive from Queenstown, Blanket Bay boasts magnificent west-facing views over Lake Wakatipu to the Humboldt range, with breathtaking vistas of the Dart and Rees valleys, Mount Alfred, and Mount Earnslaw.

Beyond its luxurious amenities and adventurous spirit, Blanket Bay offers a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in the region's rich cultural tapestry and fascinating history. Guests can delve into the heritage of Glenorchy, an authentic New Zealand frontier town with a distinctive country flavor that provides a glimpse into the lives of early settlers and the enduring spirit of the Southern Alps.

Guests can explore the historical significance of the Dart and Rees valleys, which were once vital pathways for Māori travelers and later for European prospectors during the gold rush era. Discover the stories embedded in the landscape, from the ancient geological formations of the Humboldt Range to the majestic peaks of Mount Earnslaw. These peaks have witnessed centuries of human interaction within this dramatic environment.

For those seeking a deeper connection, the nearby Routeburn Track, a world-renowned hiking route, stands as a testament to both natural grandeur and the pioneering spirit of exploration. Blanket Bay provides an elegant base from which to engage with this vibrant past, offering a blend of opulent comfort and authentic cultural discovery.

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Creating lasting memories with an immersive sand-art experience on Australia's Great Ocean Road.

[Southern Crossings, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji](#) - Active Ways to Experience the Spirit of the South Pacific

[Australia](#)

Australia is home to the world's oldest living culture. Far from needing to just read about the fascinating First Nations culture and traditions or simply wander through local museums and galleries to marvel at Traditional Custodians' art and artifacts, Southern Crossings can introduce visitors to dozens of different ways to really connect with culture through active and immersive touring experiences.

From a tasty guided bushtucker walking tour of Sydney's waterside Botanic Gardens, rounded out with a gourmet picnic of local flavors enjoying views across the harbor or a First Nations-led foraging tour on the beaches of Far North Queensland, to a new multi-day guided hike through Australia's Red Centre developed in collaboration with Anangu Traditional owners, visitors to Australia can get outdoors and active to immerse themselves in nature, while forging meaningful connections to the destination through ancient cultures.

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*Create Aboriginal art under the guidance of a local artist in the Daintree Rainforest.
Photo credit - Tourism Australia*

Alternatively, the Southern Crossings team can arrange a beachside sunrise yoga and breathwork session to the soothing sounds of the didgeridoo in Sydney or a guided star-gazing experience in the outback to learn about local creation stories written in the skies. Visitors can also join an Indigenous BridgeClimb experience to enjoy iconic views and engaging insights from the summit of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, or an Indigenous-ranger led snorkeling experience on the Great Barrier Reef, or an immersive sand-art experience on the Great Ocean Road, an Aboriginal cultural tour quad-biking, and sand-boarding on the giant sand dunes near Port Stephens ... and so much more.

Visitors to Australia who are keen to learn about Australia's more recent history and contemporary culture can also take a guided private walking tour to learn about Australia's colonization and convict history; those keen for more tailored experiences can also learn more about:

- The nation's Jewish culture, including special access to the currently closed to the public Sydney Jewish museum, a coastal walk with an engaging local rabbi, or a hands-on challah-baking experience with a welcoming member of the local Jewish community.
- Vibrant local arts and culture: spending an afternoon in Sydney with ARIA-winning band, Sneaky Sound System's former frontman, and talented local artists, Damon Downey; or going behind-the-scenes at NGV (National Gallery of Victoria) to see art-conservationists at work restoring and preserving treasured works.

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- Melbourne’s passionate sporting culture (including the opportunity to experience the local “religion” of Aussie Rules Football with a former player to explain the rules and the city’s obsession with the sport).

Southern Crossings Travel Designers can curate immersive local cultural experiences, whatever your clients’ passions or interests.



An iwi-guided scenic hike on Mount Tarawera’s crater rim to learn about the volcano’s significance to New Zealand’s history and culture. Photo credit - Volcanic Air New Zealand

[New Zealand](#)

Likewise, in New Zealand, the Southern Crossings Travel Design team can connect visitors with local culture through active experiences tailored to their interests:

- An iwi-guided scenic hike on Mount Tarawera’s crater rim to learn about the volcano’s significance to New Zealand’s history and culture.
- A waka (Maori canoe) paddling experience to explore Abel Tasman National Park’s stunning waterways.
- A day of fishing, foraging, and feasting with a former professional Maori footballer, enjoying genuine local hospitality and a hands-on traditional hangi cooking experience at his coastal home.
- A hands-on greenstone (Pounamu) carving experience to create a personalized memento of your clients’ travels while learning about the significance and traditions of these taonga pieces.
- An immersive and restorative cultural wellness experience at Rotorua’s Wai Ariki Hot Springs and Spa.

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- A deliciously different walking tour in the company of a knowledgeable local Maori guide to introduce visitors to Christchurch's tasty laneway treats, ancient local legends, and manaakitanga (hospitality).



Savoring the fresh aromas of the garden, a true farm-to-table experience.

[Fiji](#)

And in Fiji, Southern Crossings' Travel Designers can connect travelers of all ages with the welcoming Fijian culture through hands-on engaging experiences, including village tours to meet local choirs and school children, kava ceremonies and colorful meke (traditional dance and storytelling), beach rugby games with the locals, hands-on weaving workshops, and guided waterfall hikes to learn about the locals' deep connections to their natural environment.

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[News from Europe](#)



A guided walk through the amphitheaters and sanctuaries of Ancient Messini brings the ancient city to life.

[Curated Greece](#) - Threads in Motion: Experiencing Greece's Hidden Culture and Nature

In Greece, nature and culture are inseparable. Every mountain trail, olive grove, and river bend carries centuries of stories. Exploring the outdoors goes beyond adventure and becomes a way to unfold the many layers of Greek history and daily life.

In Messinia, the spirit of antiquity still echoes through the ruins of Ancient Messini. A guided walk through its amphitheaters and sanctuaries brings the ancient city to life, while a visit to a nearby olive mill reveals another legacy: Messinia's celebrated olive oil. Recognized among the finest in Greece, this "liquid gold" is central to the region's gastronomy and heritage.

Monemvasia, the striking medieval fortress town perched on a rocky islet of the Peloponnesian coast, captivates with its dramatic landscape. Curated Greece invites travelers to complement their stay with wellness activities such as yoga and mindful movement at a local estate, where serene surroundings and flowing practices reflect Greek philosophy and nurture body and mind.

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Monemvasia: a striking medieval fortress town where dramatic landscapes and serene wellness experiences offer a luxurious journey beyond the beaten path.

Heading north to Zagorochoria, rafting along the crystal waters of the Voidomatis River reveals a wilder Greece. The journey winds through stone bridges and forested gorges, blending natural beauty with the traditions of mountain villages untouched by time.

On Crete, the Apokoronas region offers a curated exploration of traditional villages like Vamos and Gavalochori, paired with a visit to the tranquil Lake Kournas. It's a landscape of authenticity and warmth—a reminder that Greece's truest spirit thrives off the beaten path.

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Tom, working for Schlattgut, a farm in Herrliberg, Switzerland, and part of The Living Circle hotel group, enjoys fresh yogurt made from the milk of its cows, a true taste of their farm-to-table philosophy.

[The Living Circle Hotel Group](#) - From Farm to Table, Heart to Soul

In Zürich, history, culture, and nature come together in perfect harmony. With [The Living Circle](#), this connection becomes a tangible experience. Guided by the philosophy “*from farm to table - and heart to soul*,” guests are invited to discover Switzerland through its authentic traditions and natural abundance.

Just a short journey from the city lies [Schlattgut](#) Farm in Herrliberg. Visitors can stroll through orchards, meet the animals, and see how life on the farm unfolds with care and respect for the land. The products grown and produced here find their way directly to the kitchens of The Living Circle’s hotels—the [Storchen](#), the [Widder](#), and [Alex Lake Zürich](#)—where they are transformed into refined dishes that celebrate seasonality and sustainability.

Active travelers can experience the connection between culture and nature firsthand: cycling along Lake Zürich, hiking through golden vineyards, or joining a guided walk that traces the region’s agricultural heritage. At the end of the day, guests return to their hotel with a sense of fulfillment, knowing that every flavor and every view is part of a living tradition that links city and countryside in harmony.

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Evenings in the highlands offer a contrast to the day's raw wilderness—refined comfort, warm hospitality, gourmet dining, and, if the skies are clear, the northern lights. Photo credit - The Highland Base

[Nine Worlds, Iceland, and Greenland](#) - Beyond the Beaten Path: Active Exploration of History and Culture

Some places feel like they're at the edge of the world. Kerlingarfjöll—a tall volcanic mass, in the heart of Iceland's central Highland—is one of them, a landscape where steaming valleys meet rust-red peaks, and silence stretches for miles.

For decades, this remote mountain range drew adventurers for summer skiing on its glacier slopes. Today, it continues to attract active travelers, now offering year-round opportunities to explore its geothermal heart. Trails wind past bubbling hot springs, snow patches that linger through summer, and panoramic ridges that reveal the vast beauty of the highlands.

With Nine Worlds, your clients can immerse themselves in this environment through guided hikes, cross-country skiing in pristine winter landscapes, or photography-focused expeditions. Along the way, expert guides share stories of the area's volcanic origins, its transformation into a ski hub, and its role in Iceland's adventure culture.

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Explore the geothermal heart of Iceland's central Highlands, where trails wind past bubbling hot springs and panoramic ridges. Photo credit - The Highland Base

Evenings in the highlands offer a contrast to the day's raw wilderness—refined comfort, warm hospitality, gourmet dining, and, if skies are clear, the northern lights.

For travelers seeking the perfect balance of physical challenge, natural beauty, and cultural insight, Kerlingarfjöll highlands deliver an experience beyond the beaten path.

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A curated hike above Dubrovnik offers a perspective of the Pearl of the Adriatic, a truly magnificent experience.

[Dinaric Adventures, Croatia and Beyond](#) - Croatia Uncharted

Inspire your clients to step off the usual tourist trail and discover Croatia in a way that truly connects them with its history, culture, and nature.

Adventure travelers can stop in a charming farmhouse in Dalmatian Zagora and wander through fields of chard and tomatoes, visit a greenhouse library, meet friendly farm animals, and savor a traditional peka cooked with local ingredients. Every experience tells a story, offering a hands-on connection to the region's heritage.

Thrill-seekers can climb a via ferrata with a guide, bike through the UNESCO-protected Stari Grad Plain on Hvar, or hike and zipline over the breathtaking Cetina Canyon near Omiš. Explore the historic Poljica Republic, tasting local soparnik, visiting the birthplace of Mile Gojsalić, and hearing tales of the region's rich history. History and adventure also merge as guests hike up Klis Fortress overlooking Split, pick olives during the harvest, visit traditional Zagora castles, or wander among the waterfalls and trails of Plitvice Lakes.

For divers, Croatia offers an extraordinary underwater journey: exploring the wreck of a World War II B-24 Liberator bomber off Vis, resting at 39-40 meters after crashing into the sea in December 1944.

Croatia invites one to engage fully—physically, intellectually, and culturally. Every step, climb, paddle, or dive is an opportunity to explore and connect with the local environment and people. Discover Croatia beyond the beaten path, where every adventure tells a story.

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Explore the hidden paths of Italy in Val di Vara, where medieval hamlets and mountain views offer a quieter, authentic experience.

[Vakay in Tuscany, Italy](#) - Discover Italy's Hidden Paths

Picture your clients, let's say, Robert and Shirley. They woke early in Ravello, lacing their shoes for the Sentiero dei Limoni. Guided by Vakay, they descended the ancient path connecting Ravello to Minori, each step perfumed by citrus groves. Their guide shared stories of the lemon trade that once sustained this coast, and halfway down, an elderly farmer offered them fresh lemonade under a pergola. "History you can taste," Robert laughed.

Farther north, Bruce and Annie chose a quieter trail: the hills above the Cinque Terre's Val di Vara, far from the crowded seaside paths. Their Vakay guide led them into medieval hamlets where stone arches framed mountain views. Annie paused at a small workshop where a craftsman still carves wooden saints, unchanged for centuries.

That evening, their messages crossed: one couple describing lemons by the sea, the other the scent of wood shavings in a hidden valley. Both agreed that the soul of Italy reveals itself when you step beyond the obvious.

This is the Vakay difference: Whether curating a festive Milanese adventure, a Renaissance art journey in Florence, a private wine escape through Chianti, or a moonlit gondola ride in Venice, the team crafts Italian experiences that linger vividly long after the trip is over.

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[News from the United Kingdom](#)



Cast your line into the waters of Mull with Banjo Beale, discovering the island's natural beauty and rich fishing traditions.

[Dream Escape, United Kingdom and Ireland](#) - Where Stories Live: Exploring Mull's Wild Beauty with Banjo Beale

Adventure travelers seeking a deeper connection with history, nature, and culture will find the Isle of Mull a captivating destination, especially through the lens of Banjo Beale's experiences. Mull offers a rich tapestry of physical activity and cultural immersion, from sea swims and foraging walks to exploring ancient castles and remote islands. Banjo's journey, from backpacker to designer and local resident, reflects the island's power to inspire and transform.

Through Dream Escape's curated itineraries inspired by Banjo, travelers can actively engage with Mull's untamed landscapes and storied heritage. Highlights include hiking to Fingal's Cave, wildlife cruises to puffin-inhabited islets, and private tours of Duart Castle, where Clan Maclean's legacy lives on. Cultural immersion is woven into every experience—whether meeting local artisans, dining on fresh seafood at The Boathouse café, or staying at the soon-to-open Grand Island Hotel on Ulva, a restoration project led by Banjo and Ro. These journeys invite guests to not only witness history and nature but to become part of the island's evolving story.

Read the full story and discover more [HERE](#).

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Chantry Row and The Dome at Portmeirion offer a delightful excursion, easily accessible for guests enjoying a luxurious stay at Bodysgallen Hall & Spa.

[Historic House Hotels, Bodysgallen Hall & Spa, Llandudno, North Wales](#) - A Grand Gateway to North Wales

Located in the heart of North Wales, Bodysgallen Hall is a gateway to centuries of history and vibrant Welsh culture waiting to be explored. Surrounded by 230 acres of parkland and gardens, the 17th-century Hall has a commanding position on the side of Mount Pydew, with magnificent views across its award-winning gardens to Conwy Castle and the backdrop of Snowdonia Mountain Range. It is the perfect base for those seeking active adventures steeped in heritage.

Life began in the 13th century as a watch tower to oversee the building of Conwy Castle, with the Hall being built around it in 1620, to become the home of the Mostyn family, later founders of Llandudno, the Victorian seaside town just two miles away. Enter the Hall and one is surrounded by living history, oak-paneled rooms, fireplace niches, stone-mullioned windows, and stained-glass windows bearing family heraldry. Continue to explore Bodysgallen's award-winning gardens, with a rare 17th-century parterre filled with sweet-scented herbs, a formal rose garden with sculpted box hedges surrounded by walls, and woodland paths leading to the Ladies Terrace and an ancient folly.

Conwy, a UNESCO World Heritage town, is just minutes away. Its medieval castle and well-preserved town walls provide breathtaking views and a tangible connection to Wales's storied past. Take day trips out to explore other World Heritage Castles at Caernarfon, Harlech, and Beaumaris, or the pretty Italianate village of Port Merion. Or take the heritage narrow gauge railway, admiring the views from the Bodysgallen Pullman carriage, passing through the Snowdonia National Park and the dramatic landscape of the Welsh slate quarries.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Admire the dramatic landscape of the Welsh slate quarries and Snowdonia National Park from the heritage narrow gauge railway.

For those who love the outdoors, Snowdonia National Park lies within easy reach, offering invigorating hikes, waterfalls, and mountain trails, the raw beauty of which has inspired Welsh legends for generations. Nearby, the coastal town of Llandudno blends Victorian charm with a lively cultural scene, from art galleries to traditional Welsh music. It also has a strong connection to Alice in Wonderland, as it was a favorite holiday destination for the real Alice Liddell, who was the muse for Lewis Carroll’s classic book. The town has created a permanent “Alice in Wonderland” trail with large wooden sculptures of characters from the story.

For garden lovers, take a short ride over to the National Trust’s Bodnant Garden and discover a haven of camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas, and in June, the famous laburnum arch. Bodysgallen Hall is the perfect base from which to engage deeply with North Wales’ living history—where every path, castle, and coastline tells a story waiting to be discovered.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Discover the quiet beauty of rural England with a stroll along the scenic footpaths from Hartwell House, surrounded by the stunning fall foliage of the Chiltern Hills.

[Historic House Hotels, Hartwell House & Spa, Buckinghamshire, England](#) - A Royal Retreat in the English Countryside

Set within 90 acres of tranquil parkland in the Buckinghamshire countryside, yet only an hour from London, Hartwell House & Spa offers a peaceful retreat where English heritage, nature, and gentle adventure blend effortlessly. This is a place to slow down, explore, and discover the quiet beauty of rural England.

Once home to King Louis XVIII of France during his exile, Hartwell's elegant rooms and sweeping grounds reflect the layers of history that have shaped the house over centuries. Guests are free to wander the tree-lined avenues, ornamental lakes, and classical statuary, designed in the 18th-century by Richard Woods, a contemporary of Capability Brown, whose work still defines the estate's character today.

Beyond the estate, the surrounding Chiltern Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, offers endless opportunities for exploration. Visitors can stroll along scenic footpaths through wildflower meadows and ancient beech woods or drive through flint-built villages with thatched cottages and welcoming country pubs, where a hearty lunch or a pint of local ale awaits.

Day trips can include visits to Waddesdon Manor, Cliveden, or Hughenden - all National Trust properties that showcase the region's art, architecture, and craftsmanship. For those who wish to wander farther, the Cotswolds and the picture-perfect village of Bibury are within easy reach, offering another glimpse of quintessential England.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Discover the quiet beauty of rural England with a stroll along the scenic footpaths from Hartwell House, surrounded by the stunning fall foliage of the Chiltern Hills.

After a day exploring countryside and culture, guests return to the calm of Hartwell's spa and indoor pool, where the stillness of the estate provides the perfect contrast to the open air and adventure beyond. At Hartwell House, the story of England unfolds not in museums, but in moments—through landscapes walked, gardens explored, and experiences shared.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Witness the grandeur of a pristine steam locomotive, like the iconic Mallard or Flying Scotsman, at the National Railway Museum in York, where the story of rail transport comes alive.

[Historic House Hotels, Middlethorpe Hall & Spa, North Yorkshire, England](#) - A Storied Stay Near York

Set on the peaceful outskirts of York, Middlethorpe Hall offers a timeless blend of country house refinement and cultural discovery. Built in 1699, this perfectly preserved William and Mary mansion reflects the elegant style of the early 18th-century aristocratic life, giving guests a glimpse into England's social and cultural history. It is the perfect base from which to explore York, one of England's most historic and vibrant cities, and the surrounding North Yorkshire.

Just two miles away lies York's medieval center, where ancient walls surround cobbled streets filled with heritage and charm. Walk the walls to enjoy sweeping views across the city, visit the majestic York Minster, and wander through The Shambles, a perfectly preserved medieval street of shops and cafes that feels like a living museum.

History lovers can delve deeper at the York Castle Museum, Jorvik Viking Centre, or National Railway Museum, while those seeking fresh air can enjoy tranquil walks along the River Ouse or through the nearby Yorkshire Wolds, whose rolling landscapes inspired generations of artists and writers. Gain complimentary admission to the local National Trust country houses, such as Beningbrough, Newby Hall, or Treasurer's House, or take a drive up to the famous Castle Howard, where "Brideshead Revisited" was filmed.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Unwind in the elegant drawing room of Middlethorpe Hall, a perfectly preserved William and Mary mansion reflecting the refined style of 18th-century aristocratic life.

After a day of exploration, return to Middlethorpe Hall's tranquil gardens and health spa to relax and appreciate modern comforts. In the evening, choose from an imaginative seasonal menu, incorporating locally sourced and home-grown ingredients, and enjoy dinner in the elegant Oak Dining Room, surrounded by history, in a home where eminent former residents have lived, dined, and entertained through the centuries. Whether tracing centuries of history, exploring cultural treasures, or simply soaking up the atmosphere of York, your clients' stay at Middlethorpe Hall will leave lasting and enriching memories of England's storied past.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



A major group exhibition - "The Long Now: Saatchi Gallery at 40" - will celebrate four decades of the Saatchi, giving guests access to an immersive, mixed-media showcase of ambitious works.

[The Hari, London, England](#) - Step into London's Art Scene

For travelers who like to explore a city through motion, The Hari offers the perfect starting point for an art-inspired urban adventure. Just a 15-minute walk through London's quintessential cobbled streets is the Saatchi Gallery, one of the city's iconic art charities. Since 1985, the space has been dedicated to celebrating emerging contemporary artists, and like The Hari, it aims to elevate and widen the minds of the culturally curious traveler.

On November 5th, a major group exhibition—"The Long Now: Saatchi Gallery at 40"—will celebrate four decades of the Saatchi, giving guests access to an immersive, mixed-media showcase of ambitious works. The curation of the works combines historic pieces with a new generation of work, raising themes of environmental uncertainty, technology, and the future. The exhibition will feature special commissions, installations, paintings, and sculptures, as well as Richard Wilson's *20:50* - an important piece in the gallery's history. In perfect symmetry, the installation presents the building's architecture reflected on recycled engine oil, which fills the room, perfect for those inspired by thought-provoking encounters along their travels.

Guests are welcome to book tickets to the exhibition through the concierge team at The Hari, who ensure the most comfortable stay. They can also book a space for guests to unwind after the exhibition at The Hari Bar or a table at il Pampero, the perfect space for recharging. At The Hari, culture and movement go hand in hand—inviting travelers to see, feel, and experience London through every step.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Bushmans Kloof is renowned for its pioneering conservation initiatives, including the protection of the endangered Cape Mountain zebra.

[The Red Carnation Hotel Collection - London, Edinburgh, and Cederberg, South Africa](#) - Adventure Meets Culture Across Three Iconic Destinations

For the adventure-seeker, travel is a journey into the heart of a destination, its landscapes, stories, and vibrant traditions. Three Red Carnation Hotels, in particular, invite guests to connect actively with history, culture, and nature. They'll step off the well-trodden path and embrace authentic discovery, all while you, as their advisor, earn 10% commission on many of these immersive experiences, available exclusively through Red Carnation.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Witness the stories of South Africa's first people etched in stone, while learning about ancient San rock art sites on a guided hike through the rugged sandstone plateaus of Bushmans Kloof.

[Bushmans Kloof: Cederberg, South Africa](#)

In the untouched wilderness of the Cederberg Mountains, Bushmans Kloof offers a sanctuary for active explorers and cultural enthusiasts. They'll venture across rugged sandstone plateaus on guided hikes and mountain bike trails, discovering ancient San rock art sites that reveal the stories of South Africa's first people. The reserve's Heritage Centre showcases remarkable artifacts, jewelry, and photographs, providing deeper insight into the ancient nomadic way of life and the region's rich history. Kayaking on spring-fed rivers and wildlife tracking deepen one's bond with the natural rhythms of the land.

Bushmans Kloof is also renowned for its pioneering conservation initiatives, including the protection of endangered Cape Mountain zebra and the restoration of the rare Clanwilliam cedar tree through annual planting events. The reserve actively monitors and preserves over 130 San rock art sites, ensuring their legacy endures for future generations. Evenings are spent beneath vast starry skies, where fireside storytelling and South African cuisine inspire connection with local traditions. Here, each step is a stride through living history, pristine nature, and ongoing conservation.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Step into The Archibald suite at 100 Princes Street, where a vibrant India mural hints at an extraordinary journey beyond the expected.

[100 Princes Street: Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

Edinburgh's legendary spirit comes alive at 100 Princes Street, a boutique retreat overlooking the city's iconic castle. Adventures begin with guided walks along the Royal Mile, unearthing centuries of tales amid cobbled streets and medieval architecture. For active pursuits, hike up Arthur's Seat for panoramic views, or join a whisky tasting that explores the heritage of Scottish distillers.

Guests seeking a truly personal connection to Scotland's traditions can embark on a unique journey to design their own kilt. Working with expert local tailors, this hands-on experience allows your clients to select their clan tartan and learn about the craftsmanship behind this iconic garment, the perfect memento of their time in Edinburgh.

Within the hotel, curated art and historic memorabilia not only immerse visitors in Scotland's rich heritage but also pay tribute to the building's storied past as the former headquarters of the Royal Overseas League. Thoughtfully displayed pieces and hand-painted murals celebrate Scotland's legacy and its influence throughout the world, offering guests a window into the rich tapestry of international connections that have shaped 100 Princes Street through the years. This is an invitation to live and breathe Edinburgh's culture, one step at a time.

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Unveiling the magic of the Royal Albert Hall: an intimate, private tour of the stage, made possible by The Milestone Hotel & Residences' special partnership.

[The Milestone Hotel & Residences: London, England](#)

Across from Kensington Gardens, The Milestone blends classic elegance with immersive cultural experiences. Guests can explore London on guided jogging tours or cycle along the Thames to discover hidden historic neighborhoods. Thanks to a long-standing partnership with the Royal Albert Hall, they may also enjoy exclusive behind-the-scenes access to this iconic venue.

For a truly unforgettable evening, elevate your guests' stay with a private in-suite recital by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This bespoke performance transforms their suite into an intimate concert hall. Other signature experiences include the Sparkling Royal Experience, featuring a private visit to Kensington Palace, a VIP session with a royal jeweler, and an after-hours tour of the Crown Jewels with champagne in The Jewel House.

Culinary workshops, bespoke museum visits, and traditional afternoon tea in the Park Lounge round out a stay that's rich in British heritage and adventure.