

✧ TRAVEL SOLO – BUT NOT ALONE

With 70 percent of its guests travelling solo, adventure tour operator Wild Frontiers has introduced a new collection of tours with them in mind. From walking amid the natural beauty of Georgia's Caucasus Mountains to exploring the epic summits of Pakistan, they will only comprise nine to 12 participants, which means people can benefit from independent travel, but with the opportunity to make friends with like-minded people. To boot, the company continues to prioritise responsible tourism leaving a positive impact on both the people and places they visit. As founder Jonny Bealby says: 'Once they have tried a solo trip with us, they all wish they'd done it sooner! I don't see solo travel as a trend at all, but rather as an evolution of the way we all approach travel.' wildfrontierstravel.com



The ESCAPIST

Lauren Ho selects the best effortless adventures, with the planet in mind



✧ CATHAY PACIFIC GOES VEGGIE

Teaming up with Hong Kong-based plant-forward restaurant, Veda by Ovolo Hotels, airline Cathay Pacific is now offering a menu of curated plant-based dishes on select premium economy and economy long-haul flights departing from Hong Kong. From Kerala-style coconut curry with mushrooms, red bell peppers and cumin rice to the roasted vegetable tagine with halloumi cheese and pearl couscous, the dishes take their cues from Veda's vibrant and flavourful menu. Ovolo Hotels is the first hotel brand to globally commit to a vegetarian-led offering. cathaypacific.com; ovolohotels.com

✧ TRAVEL AS A FORCE FOR GOOD

As the trend for sustainable, conscious travel continues to grow, Beyond Green – a global portfolio of planet earth's most sustainable hotels, resorts and lodges – has teamed up with luxury adventure tour operator Nomadic Expeditions for its four new itineraries. Part of the brand's Plan Your Trip programme, where you can book complete itineraries or create your own custom adventures, each meticulously crafted journey can take travellers to Mongolia, Bhutan, Nepal and India. The perfect partnership that draws on Nomadic Expeditions' expertise, while underscoring Beyond Green's commitment to making travel a force for good. staybeyondgreen.com; nomadicexpeditions.com



PHOTOS: KLEINBERG; STUDIO UNFOLDED; GETTY



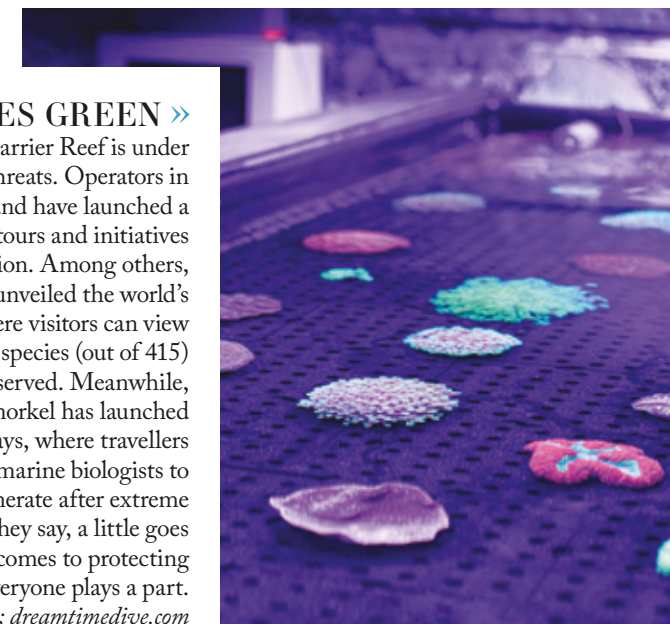
« A FOODIE TOUR OF JAPAN

Home to the iconic Mount Fuji, the Japanese prefecture of Shizuoka has recently launched a series of new ecotourism experiences focused on supporting the small, independent producers of green tea, wasabi and soya beans. From learning the art of calligraphy using matcha green tea 'ink' from leaves that would otherwise be discarded during the manufacturing process, to learning about the 270-year-old cultivation process of wasabi, directly from the local producers (Shizuoka is the producer of more than half of all wasabi grown in Japan) the region has made it a breeze for responsible travellers to delve into the local community and help preserve their age-old traditions. exploreshizuoka.jp



PARADISE GOES GREEN »

It's no secret the Great Barrier Reef is under pressure from multiple threats. Operators in Tropical North Queensland have launched a series of new sustainable tours and initiatives with a focus on reef education. Among others, the Cairns Aquarium has unveiled the world's first living coral biobank where visitors can view and learn about the 181 species (out of 415) the facility has so far preserved. Meanwhile, Dreamtime Dive & Snorkel has launched a series of Reef Recovery Days, where travellers can participate in assisting marine biologists to help coral rebuild and regenerate after extreme weather systems. As they say, a little goes a long way and when it comes to protecting the reef, everyone plays a part. cairnsaquarium.com.au; dreamtimedive.com



« TAKE IT SLOW IN AMSTERDAM

Visitors to Amsterdam can relax and take a break for the city lights at De Durgerdam, a stylish new countryside hideaway that has just launched a series of 'slow' bike routes together with local bike guide Roos Stallinga. From meandering through tranquil villages, marshlands and open fields, to exploring the lesser-known parts of Amsterdam Noord and Oost on the hotel's fleet of electric and non-electric Veloretti bikes, the routes – accessible via QR code – are the perfect accompaniment to this laid-back 11-room hotel, which is housed in a restored 17th-century building. From €305. dedurgerdam.com

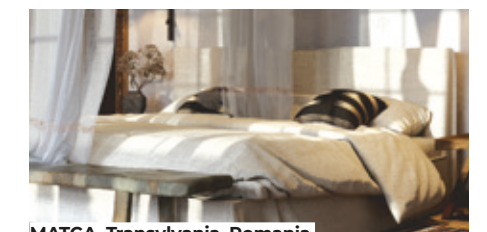
FIVE HOT NEW OPENINGS



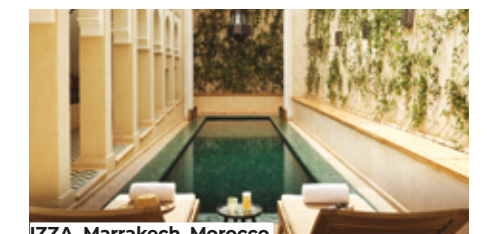
THE BOTREE, London, UK
London's newest five-star hotspot with 199 rooms, including 30 suites. A new social hub with bars, two restaurants, a live music club and a boutique screening room. From £660. thebotree.com



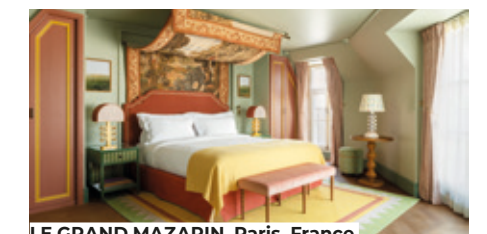
TRUNK(HOTEL) YOYOGI PARK, Tokyo, Japan
Located in Shibuya, this 25-room property unfolds with a clean Japanese-Scandinavian sensibility, and includes a restaurant and a rooftop pool with a lounge. From \$404. yoyogipark.trunk-hotel.com



MATCA, Transylvania, Romania
Transylvania can now be explored from this hotel overlooking the Bucegi and Pietra Craiului mountains. With 16 rooms over two farmhouses, and ten villas. From €254. matcahotel.com



IZZA, Marrakech, Morocco
Known as a 'House of Friends', this is inspired by the 1960s counterculture of spiritual escapism, with seven riads inside the city's Medina. From €160 B&B, inc transfers and treatment. izza.com



LE GRAND MAZARIN, Paris, France
Designed by Martin Brudnizki in his signature maximalist style (think colour, texture, pattern), this Accidentally Wes Anderson, 61-room hotel is set to be a star. €690 B&B. legrandmazarin.com ■