

HINTL.

Condé Nast **Traveler**

PULLOUT GUIDE

FLORIDA
NOW!

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

FEBRUARY 2011

Pure Bliss!

4 PERFECT LITTLE ISLES IN
G R E E C E

EGYPT

*SECRET PLEASURES
OF THE NILE*

SCOTLAND

THE SPORTING LIFE

PHOTO SPECIAL

EXTREME HOTELS

*THE WILDEST
PLACES YOU'LL
EVER STAY*

TOP
80
CRUISE
SHIPS



21 HOT ADVENTURES
*HIKE, BIKE, KAYAK, CLIMB, DOGSLED,
SKYDIVE, RAFT, AND MORE!*

EXTREME

FOR THE PULL-OUT-ALL-THE-STOPS PURE ADRENALINE RUSH

Brave the Elements in Mongolia

Explore the boundless Gobi Desert just as Marco Polo and Roy Chapman Andrews did—by foot and by camel. As you spend a fortnight tracing the explorers' footsteps, you'll experience dramatic sand dunes, hidden gorges, and nights sleeping out beneath the stars (**Nomadic Expeditions**: 800-998-6634; 14 days, \$3,330 per person).

259-6753; nine days, \$9,655 per person).

Bush Walk New Guinea

One of the world's epic hikes, the historic Kokoda Trail snakes 60 miles through the rugged Owen Stanley Range east of Port Moresby. The scene of a bloody World War II campaign between a skeleton force of Australian soldiers and thousands of Japanese invaders, the single-file track takes ten days to complete. The hike is led by a historian; nights are spent in camps along the way, and there's plenty of opportunity to meet the locals, who don't get much company (World Expeditions: 800-567-2216; 14 days, \$3,690 per person).

Ice Climb Quebec

Slip on your fleece, strap on the crampons, and clamber up frozen Montmorency Falls, just a ten-minute drive from Quebec City. The 300-foot ascent is considered one of the top ice climbs in North America (Adventure Ecotourisme Québec: 450-661-2225; three-hour excursion, \$160 per person).

Free-fall over Mississippi

If skydiving seems too tame, try a special ops-style High Altitude Low Opening (HALO)



More than 20,000 people take a flying leap over Rio each year.

HANG GLIDING ABOVE RIO

Go bigger, and better, than the Corcovado or Sugarloaf overlooks and get a bird's-eye view of Rio de Janeiro's magic-mountain landscape on a tandem flight with a certified hang-gliding pilot, soaring from Tijuca National Park, an urban rain forest, and alighting on the sands of São Conrado Beach (AirAdventures: 55-21-9843-9006; jumps, \$169 per person).

jump. Don an oxygen mask, bail from a plane at 30,000 feet—an altitude where the landscape below looks like a Google Earth map—and spend the next two minutes falling in tandem with an expert parachutist, who'll pop the silk just a few thousand feet above Mississippi's piney woods (Incredible Adventures:

800-644-7382; HALO jumps, \$3,495 per person).

Track Apes in the African jungle

Uganda and Rwanda represent the last bastion of the mountain gorilla, one of the planet's most endangered animals. Begin your great-ape adventure

in Uganda's Kibale Forest, home to 13 different primate species, followed by two days of tracking gorillas in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park and up the misty slopes of the Virunga Mountains (Mountain Travel Sobek: 888-831-7526; 11 days, \$6,745 per person).

—C.R.C.

Dog days in Norway.



Dogsted Norway

Mush with wolves, reindeer, bears, and lynx high above the Arctic Circle. This expedition through the Scandinavian backcountry navigates pristine forests and snowy mountains as well as frozen rivers and glacial lakes, with overnights at rustic, wood-heated cabins bathed by the Northern Lights (Abercrombie & Kent: 866-

it's safe to say that adventure travel has arrived," says Todd Smith, president of AdventureSmith Explorations, an expedition cruise-ship specialist based in Tahoe City, California.

Enrichment and exoticism aside, adventure travel also begets a sense of accomplishment, whether it's kayaking amid a pod of humpback whales off Point Adolphus, Alaska, or, as Dudunakis did, rolling through Provence without hitching a ride in the company's support vehicle. "It was a challenge not to get in the van," Dudunakis says. "Once I got there and started cycling, I realized that I could go farther than I thought."

Judging from the flood of Facebook status updates, Twitter feeds, and cocktail-party chatter, there's another, equally primal, inspiration: bragging rights. "We're social animals," says Lamoureux, "and we get greater pleasure out of something when we can share it. Think about how much more you'd have to say about an adventure trip than an all-inclusive resort."

"WHEN YOU CAN MOUNTAIN BIKE OR TAKE A KAYAK TRIP OFF A CRUISE SHIP, IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT ADVENTURE TRAVEL HAS ARRIVED"

Apart from bragging rights and proving to themselves that they can move outside their comfort zone, many travelers see adventure travel as a way to both leave less of a footprint and journey more deeply into a destination. "Physically, it just feels good to do something active. Culturally, you get closer to the locals, becoming less of a tourist seeing the destination through the windows of a bus," says Michael Daus, a real estate investor in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, commenting on the four-day horseback trek he and his wife recently made in Bhutan. "You're treading lightly and are more steeped in the place you're visiting. It's very satisfying."

How do you find the adventure and the destination that are right for you? A word-of-mouth recommendation is always a good place to start, as is ATTA's Web site (adventuretravel.biz), which allows you to search by activity or geographic location. But travel pros who specialize in arranging adventure trips stress ▶