

HEALTH AND SAFETY ABROAD: ARE YOU COVERED?

TRAVEL + LEISURE

40 SECRET BEACH HIDEAWAYS

BELIZE
ITALY
CALIFORNIA
FRANCE
COSTA RICA
FLORIDA
MEXICO
JAMAICA
+ MORE

2010
DESIGN
AWARD
WINNERS

WIN A TRIP!

ENTER THE
WORLD'S BEST
SWEEPSTAKES
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MARCH 2010 TravelandLeisure.com

NEW!

THE LIFE LIST
TELL US YOUR
PLACES NOT TO MISS

STRATEGIES

On safari with Ker & Downey, at Sanctuary Baines' Camp, in Tanzania.



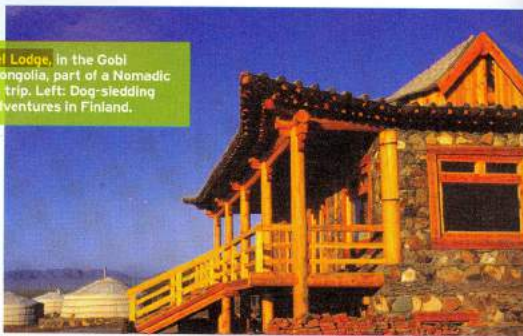
T+L'S TOP 33

ADVENTURE OUTFITTERS

Active outdoor trips often require the guidance and expertise of a travel specialist. But which one? T+L contributing editor and fearless outdoorsman **Jeff Wise** has surveyed the field to create the ultimate directory of adventure outfitters around the globe, each listed with our favorite trip. **PLUS** What to ask before you book, emerging destinations, and more. And introducing T+L's Life List: trips not to miss.



Three Camel Lodge, in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, part of a Nomadic Expeditions trip. Left: Dog-sledding with Gap Adventures in Finland.



Gather seafood and edible plants along the California coast. 800/509-3954; adventureout.com; August 12–15; four days from \$425.

Gap Adventures

This large, fast-growing outfitter aims to provide intense experiences on a budget. Small groups use local transportation and guides to maximize authenticity and reduce expense. **T+L TRIP PICK NEW** Finland Winter Activity Week and Igloo Village. Go dog-sledding, then relax in a log cabin or an igloo. 800/708-7761; gapadventures.com; March 13–18; six days from \$2,999.

Myths & Mountains

Asia and South American trips that connect with local cultures in creative ways, such as taking part in shamanic rituals in Ecuador and visiting Khmer temples at dawn. **T+L TRIP PICK** Motorcycling the Ho Chi Minh Trail from Hanoi to Saigon on a 250 cc bike. 800/670-6984; mythsandmountains.com; March 8–24; 16 days from \$6,595.

Wilderness Travel

Since its founding in 1978, this adventure company has developed a vast range of trips, including a line called WT Expeditions: rugged, one-off explorations dreamed up as the particular passions of individual guides. **T+L TRIP PICK NEW** Tibet: The World's Highest Trek. A WT Expedition on the Tibetan plateau, ascending to a base camp within 8,000 feet of Everest's summit. 800/368-2794; wildernesstravel.com; July–August departures; 30 days from \$9,295.

REGIONAL SPECIALISTS

Aracari

Peruvian-owned and -operated boutique firm offers trekking outings with access to Andean regions of Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia. **T+L TRIP PICK** Handcrafted Peru. Visit Inca ruins and artists' workshops as you travel the length of the country. 312/239-8726; aracari.com; year-round departures; 16 days from \$7,499.

Journey Mexico

Founded seven years ago by a young American couple, it focuses on Mexico's cultural and natural heritage. **T+L TRIP PICK** See Turtles and Whales. View gray whales and help weigh, tag, and release endangered sea turtles in conjunction with the Ocean Foundation. 800/513-1587; journeymexico.com; April 3–10; eight days from \$2,495.

Journeys by Design

Will Jones spent 25 years in six African countries before returning to the U.K. to open a shop dealing exclusively with the continent he knows best. **T+L TRIP PICK** Origins of Man Safari. Tour the Great Rift Valley with legendary paleontologist Richard Leakey. 212/568-7639; journeysbydesign.com; June–September departures; seven days from \$8,490.

Latin Excursions

In-depth, culturally rooted trips to Patagonia, the Pantanal, and the Amazon basin. **T+L TRIP PICK** Wild Beaches of Brazil. Take a Land Cruiser expedition along the northern Atlantic coast, then visit pristine Fernando de Noronha island. 866/626-3750; latinexcursions.com; May–October and December–March departures; 14 days from \$5,000.

Nomadic Expeditions

Camel and horse trekking in remote, mountainous western Mongolia, with many nights spent in traditional felt tents with wood-burning stoves. **T+L TRIP PICK** From Yak to Kayak. Paddle across pristine Lake Hövsgöl, then travel to the Gobi for saddle time atop two-humped Bactrian camels. 800/998-6634; nomadicexpeditions.com; June–July departures; 13 days from \$3,735. +

EMERGING DESTINATIONS: WHERE TO GO NEXT

ADVENTURE OUTFITTERS ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THE NEXT UNDER-DISCOVERED SPOT. HERE'S WHERE THEY'RE HEADED.

The Balkans A sense of Old Europe authenticity can be found here in spades, along with a stunning Mediterranean coastline. This year Classic Journeys introduces Dalmatian Coast Family Journey. June 27–July 3; seven days from \$3,995.

Marshall Islands Uncrowded waves are the appeal here, halfway between Hawaii and Australia. This winter, EpicQuest takes serious surfers on its trip Marshall Islands. March departures; 13 days from \$5,545.

Iran In the wake of the presidential election and

mass protests in Iran, Americans' perceptions of the country have changed markedly. Geographic Expeditions reports a 300 percent increase in registration for its tours there, such as Iran North to South. Year-round departures; 11 days from \$3,945.