

Action Asia

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PHOTO SPECIAL

TIPS, TRICKS & TECH

Karakoram glacier trekking

Paddling the Fitzroy

Biking Kham backroads



Action Diver

Annual dive holiday supplement

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ANTARCTICA

The Emperors next door

THE LARGEST PENGUIN SPECIES IS THE dapper, tuxedo-wearing Emperor. With their comic waddle and sociable personalities, they are the obvious focal point of a nine-day trip to the southernmost reaches of Earth. Fly in on a ski plane to the Weddell Sea, part of the Southern Ocean with a permanent ice shelf to the south. Landing near the rookery, camp is set up and you are able to explore the cold

but majestic landscape, and get your first glimpse of those imperial animals. Guides will lead hikes closer to the colony to get pictures, although they will try to make sure the animals are not disturbed. Still, travellers often find themselves getting a personal call in their tents from these curious creatures. Take this rare chance to get to know Emperor penguins at www.naturalworldsafaris.com.



SOUTHEAST ASIA

Bensley bonanza

THOSE WANTING A LAVISH AND QUIRKY excursion may look no further than The Bensley Trail, a two-week journey around Southeast Asia that brings guests to four resorts designed by iconic architect Bill Bensley, known for his high-profile projects that combine modern world-class opulence with local aesthetics.

In Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, you will be immersed in local culture, sampling the spectrum of gastronomy, culture, history, nature and physical adventure. Each destination and each Bensley creation has its own story to offer, whether it is in a beautiful natural setting or a bustling city like Bangkok, while you are pampered with comforts befitting brands he has designed for which include Rosewood, Shinta Mani and Intercontinental.

Highlights include an evening spent at Bensley's home and a private tour led by the architect himself of his latest riverside project. Each guest or couple will have their own car, driver and guides for the trip, with a portion of proceeds going toward local communities, and conservation and sustainability projects. Experience this once-in-a-lifetime itinerary at www.remotelands.com/special/bill-bensley

PHILIPPINES

Sulu sails and surf

AMANPULO RESORT, PART OF THE AMAN luxury group, launched a Kite & Surf Centre earlier this year for its 25th anniversary. The tropical retreat encompasses the entirety of Pamalican island in the Sulu Sea, where the new centre enjoys favourable northeasterly winds on its eastern coast. Peak season is mid-October to March, when wind speeds average 15-35 knots – a range ideal for kiting no matter if you are a complete newbie or an established pro. Amanpulo's centre is manned by professional kitesurfing instructors including Paula Rosales, one of the best in Asia, and lessons include reviewing footage of each session caught with stabilised waterproof cameras.

The Sea Sports Hut is the base for other adrenaline-inducing, water-soaked activities including Hobie cat sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding, pedalboarding, Seabob fun and more.

For slightly slower-paced adventures, the resort also offers snorkelling expeditions, fishing trips, boating to Manamoc Island and sunset cruises. Check it all out at www.aman.com

