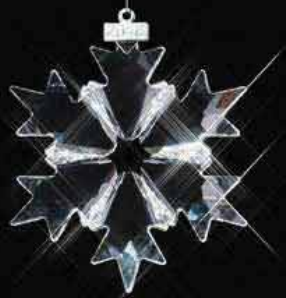


HOLIDAY 2018/WINTER 2019 ISSUE 20

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE ISSUE

affair caviar

DEFINING THE LUXURY EXPERIENCE



Georgia's
Wine
Revolution

To the End
of the World:
ANTARCTICA

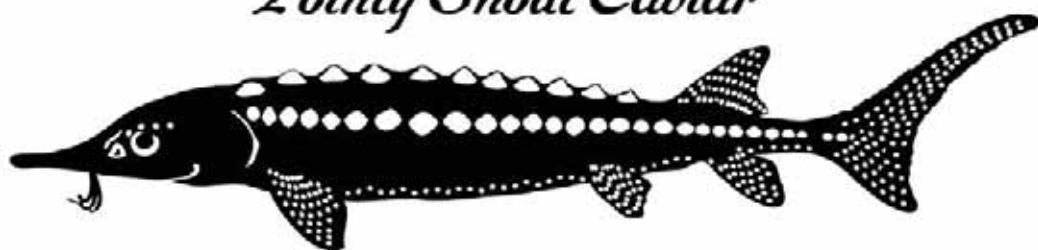
**CELEBRATE
Caviar:**
Hong Kong
to Paris



ROMANCING THE SEAS | ITALIAN JEWELS | WELLNESS DESTINATIONS
JAPAN'S MODERN ART | PRIVATE GLAM HIDEAWAYS | ITALY'S FESTIVE WINES
HOLIDAY SPIRITS: RUM, TEQUILA, VODKA



Pointy Snout Caviar



destinations

REMOTE LANDS

Next-Level Travel



Approached by boat, North Island looks enchanted and romantic. The Herculean task of coordinating a destination wedding held across three of the world's most exclusive resort islands — North Island in the Seychelles, Laucala Island in Fiji and Soneva Kiri on Koh Kood, Thailand — is best entrusted to a professional travel concierge.

Meet the pros who live for curating one-of-kind, wildly luxurious travel itineraries for discerning clients who have big demands (and even bigger budgets).

IT'S A FAMILIAR SCENARIO, EVEN IF YOU'VE LOGGED MANY MILES AS A LUXURY TRAVELER: YOU HAVE A WISH LIST A MILLION MILES LONG, BUT ZERO TIME FOR RESEARCH AND LOGISTICS. Or maybe you've seen everything and want a holiday experience completely customized to your desires and high standards. That's where a travel concierge comes in handy.

One we really love? Catherine Heald, owner of Remote Lands, an ultra-high-end Asia tour operator. Because of her particular *métier* — crafting super-exclusive trips to far-flung locales, from Tibet to Tajikistan and everywhere in between — Heald is in frequent contact with some of the world's most resourceful travel agents. Here's her top 5.



The overwater villas at Laucala are spacious, well-appointed and relaxing (left).

The private jets owned and operated by Remote Lands provide personalized luxury accommodations.

**MICHAEL HOLTZ,
FOUNDER/
CEO, SMARTFLYER**

Known as “Mr. 2A” in the travel industry for his choice seat on every plane, the New York–based owner of SmartFlyer travels constantly, and always stays in the “prezzie” — his term for the presidential suite — to test it out for his clients. Michael recently coordinated an around-the-world wedding hitting three of the most exclusive resort islands in the world: North Island in the Seychelles, Laucala in Fiji and Soneva Kiri in Thailand. For Michael, truly nothing is out of the question. And despite running a global empire of hundreds of elite travel agents from Singapore to Sydney, he always returns my (and everyone else’s) emails within five minutes. Still trying to figure out how he does it.

**MOLLIE FITZGERALD, CO-OWNER,
FRONTIERS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL,**

Based near Pittsburgh with zillionaire clients all over the world, Mollie has a big passion for fly-fishing in places like Mongolia and Scotland, and other sporting adventures. Sourcing uncharted, bucket-list territory for A-list anglers is right up her alley, and she is most comfortable in the wilds of the great outdoors, but is equally at home in the world’s most sophisticated capital cities and no stranger to ultra-luxe resorts. Her specialty destinations include the Maldives, Western Europe, Scandinavia, Morocco, Egypt, Dubai and Oman.

**CRAIG NATTRESS,
FOUNDER/DIRECTOR,
NATTRESS + COMPANY**

Craig once called me from Toronto, where he’s located, with a request for his client, one of Europe’s wealthiest families with a net worth over \$12 billion. They would be in Southeast Asia with their 300-foot mega-yacht, and wanted extraordinary experiences that were inaccessible to mere mortals. Furthermore, the mega-yacht has its own helicopter allowing them to easily pop up to Bangkok for a special dinner with a celebrity chef, or take over a major Buddhist temple for a private blessing. Creativity and outside-the-box thinking are prerequisites for excelling with Craig’s exclusive brand of client, whom he handles brilliantly, whether he’s planning a polar bear safari in the high arctic, a bike trip in Vietnam or a culinary ski adventure in Italy.

**DANA WHITE, OWNER,
LEAD EXPLORERS**

Over the past five years, Dana has planned a dozen round-the-world adventures and over 100 family trips, including an epic one that got her hooked on travel — in 2010, she and her husband pulled their four kids out of school for a full year to tour 31 countries on all seven continents. With Dana, the more countries you’re visiting, the better, as she’s a master at devising itineraries that take you from one world to another and pack in experiences that appeal to all ages. She recently created a program that hits 23 countries and involves such experiences as being a panda keeper for the day, hot air ballooning in Myanmar and diving the Great Barrier Reef, while also nailing the timing for an Antarctic expedition, celebrating Holi in India and the wildlife migration in Kenya and Tanzania.

**SHAWNA HUFFMAN OWEN,
OWNER,
HUFFMAN TRAVEL**

Huffman hails from the old-line Midwest family who manufactured the famed Huffy bicycles we all grew up riding. After earning her MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, Shawna spent 15 years as a high-flying management consultant before abruptly switching gears to become an elite travel agent specializing in designing upscale vacations for families. With offices in Chicago and in Dayton, Ohio, Shawna has grown her client base to include a well-known designer whom she helped source fabrics for during a trip to India; wellness gurus who wanted to connect with the local traditions of the Inca while in Peru; and a Scottish family who set up a reunion on a remote island, complete with Highland games and a fireworks display.

No Scrooge here! Holiday decorations and a little holiday cheer is offered in each of the 54 suites at Hôtel Plaza Athénée.

THE PLAZA ATHÉNÉE, PARIS



PHOTOS: ©FRANCIS ARMIAND

THE HÔTEL PLAZA ATHÉNÉE, AWARDED A PALACE DESIGNATION IN 2012 AND LOCATED ON PARIS' GOLDEN TRIANGLE BETWEEN AVENUE MONTAIGNE, AVENUE GEORGE V AND THE CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES, is making holiday dreams come true with spectacular Christmas holiday decor, including a 1,000-square-foot ice-skating rink in a fairy-tale fir tree forest setting.

This theme of this year's decor is the hotel's signature red. The building's lobby features giant Christmas trees starring Gustave, Plaza Athénée's much-loved teddy bear. The hotel's five restaurants, its Dior Institut spa, classy cocktail bar, 154 rooms and 54 suites — all sparkle with luxury; excitement's in the air and on the menus.

On December 24, the magic of Christmas begins at the art deco-inspired Relais Plaza brasserie with a festive menu served to live

musical performances. (290 euros /US \$330 per person excluding drinks, or 420 euros /US \$475 per person drinks included. From 7 p.m. Dress code: formal.)

For New Year's Eve, Alain Ducasse au Plaza Athénée, the hotel's magnificent three-Michelin-starred dining room, designed by Patrick Jouin and Sanjit Manku, is the setting for a New Year's Eve haute cuisine feast created by Monsieur Ducasse, Romain Meder and their brigade. And yes, Denis Courtiade — recently awarded the Prix Mauviel 1830 for best maître d'hôtel/restaurant director — will be orchestrating the dining room. (1,200 euros /US \$1,360 per person, or 1,500 euros /US \$1,700 per person with additional wine pairings. From 7:45 p.m. Dress code: formal.)

At Le Relais Plaza, dinner will be served with live music and a DJ. (530 euros /US \$600 per person, or 700 euros /US \$800 per person with additional wine pairings. From 7 p.m.)

Celebrations go on long into the night (from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m.) at the achingly chic Le Bar, with a menu featuring designer cocktails, mocktails and flowing flutes of Champagne Alain Ducasse.

On January 1, hail New Year's Day with a Champagne and brunch buffet, served in a private room, from noon to 2 p.m. (185 euros /US \$210 per person, 85 euros /US \$100 for children under 12), or an à la carte lunch available at Le Relais Plaza from noon to 2.30 p.m.

Do taste the fantabulous all-white "Yule log" created by Angelo Musa and Alexandre Dufeu — the Plaza Athénée's award-winning pastry chefs. The white, snow-covered conifer trees are made with Madagascar vanilla cake, crispy biscuits, cream and mousse, frosted with white chocolate, and served with the chefs' spin on traditional mendiants — candied fruit, pistachio, orange rind and chocolate cookies. Sublime!

HÔTEL PLAZA ATHÉNÉE, AVENUE MONTAIGNE :
Reservations on: 00 33 (1) 53 67 65 97 or
Noel.HPA@dorchestercollection.com
dorchestercollection.com/en/paris/hotel-plaza-athenee/

The lobby tree features Gustave, the hotel's much-loved teddy bear.

'Tis the season

Here's the perfect atmosphere for Parisian Christmas celebrations.

by Margaret Kemp





Odyssey of Discovery

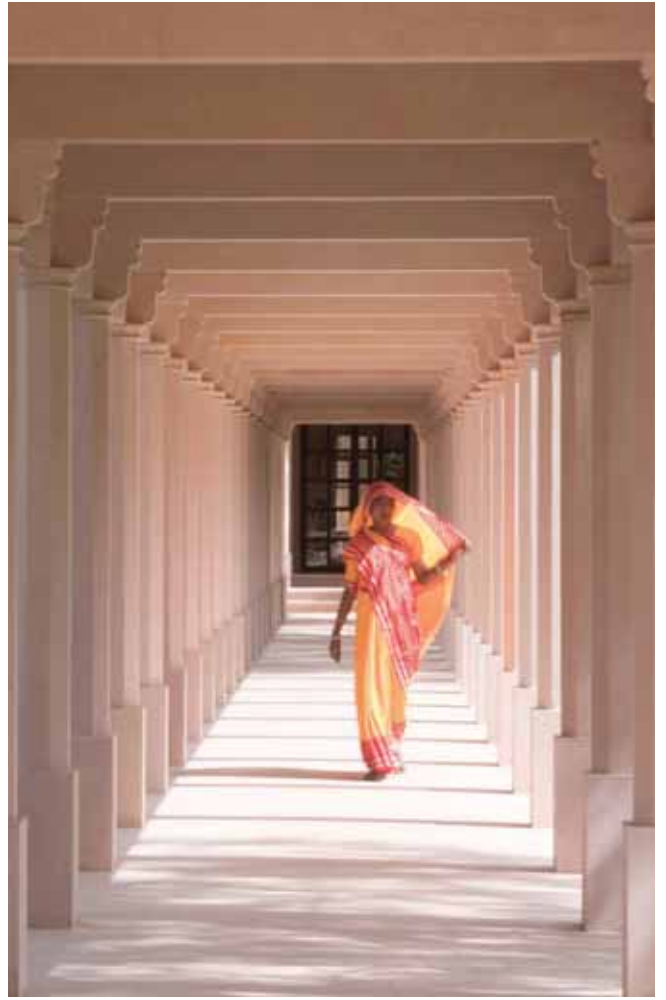
Take luxury travel to the next level with an exclusive private jet itinerary from Aman and Remote Lands that captures the essence of four unique destinations. by Nick Walton

(Clockwise from far left): The tented suites at Aman-i-Khás redefine glamping; the architecture of Amanyangyun in Shanghai incorporates traditional buildings saved from destruction; colonial stylings at Sri Lanka's Amangalla; the library at Amangalla is a popular retreat at the resort; dusk reaches the peaks surrounding Lijiang, home to China's Amandayan; contemporary Chinese fare at Amanyangyun.

Aman Hotels, Resorts & Residences was among the pioneers of the private jet itineraries, and the group's indulgent 17-day Aman Private Jet Expedition (October 12–28, 2019) to India, China, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, operated in conjunction with luxury travel company Remote Lands, marries world-class accommodation and dining with exclusive cultural insights and the convenience of a private Airbus ACJ 318.

Smart travel is all about exploring with the right people and the right guidance. Your remarkable journey with Aman and Remote Lands begins in vibrant Shanghai, home to the new **AMANYANGYUN**, a 100-acre resort on the city's outskirts that's been painstakingly built from preserved Ming and Qing dynasty-era cottages. The resort is home to Aman's largest wellness enclave, so once you've toured the tree-lined streets of the city's French Concession, enjoyed a gourmet lunch high above the city, explored the colonial architecture of the Bund, and visited the galleries of the dynamic M50 art district, you can retreat to the spa for a signature massage or an invigorating session in the Russian banya.

You'll see a different side of China as you jet west to high-altitude Lijiang and **AMANDAYAN**, a sublime retreat perched above the winding lanes of the city's UNESCO-recognized Old Town that takes its name from



the Sanskrit for *peace* and the city's 13th-century name — Dayan. Designed in traditional Nakhi architectural style, Amandayan is housed in a series of small buildings, each encircling a peaceful courtyard. After exploring the cobble streets and canals of Old Town, the Mu Mansion — the beautifully re-created palace of the Nakhi leadership — and the towering peaks of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, you'll return to intimate Nakhi cuisine, served on Amandayan's secluded Tea House terrace.

In the hermetic Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, you'll encounter two remarkable Aman lodges at **AMANKORA**. Thimphu Lodge is a 16-suite enclave wreathed by blue pine forests at the heart of Thimphu Valley, where guests will explore the Pangri Zampa Lhakhang — a monastic astrological school — and the collection of the national library, home to more than 10,000 religious texts, before joining Dasho Sangay Wangchuk, a prominent Bhutanese businessman, and his wife, Chimi, the sister of the king, for an intimate dinner during which you'll learn about Bhutan's transition toward modernity.

At the 24-suite Paro lodge, you'll have the chance to stargaze from the Roof of the World, explore the Paro Dzong — the Fortress on a Heap of Jewels — which once guarded over this vital valley, and receive a blessing for your onward journey conducted by a tulku, a reincarnated lama, before tackling the steep trail to Taktshang Goemba, or the Tiger's Nest, perhaps the world's most famous monastery. Your efforts will be rewarded with spectacular valley views and an intimate cocktail celebration held in the Paro Lodge's courtyard.

Jet south and west to delve into the majestic heartland of India with a visit to **AMANBAGH** in Rajasthan, the land of the kings. Located in the lush Aravalli Hills, this palatial retreat boasts architecture inspired by the Mughal dynasty and offers easy access to the famed "Pink City," Jaipur; the world-renowned Hawa Mahal, or the "Palace of the Winds", built in 1799 by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh; and the Johri Bazaar, famed for its silversmiths. There's also time for a visit to the mesmerizing Amber Fort, and to explore Lake Manasarover aboard a Kashmiri-built shikara boat.

From ancient kingdoms to something a little wilder, travel south to Ranthambore National Park, a former royal hunting ground that's now one of India's most important tiger sanctuaries. Intimate **AMAN-I-KHÁS** is a sublime wilderness camp featuring just 10 luxurious tents, each boasting soaring Moghul-styled canopies. Each day you'll delve into the park on two guided wildlife excursions in search of tigers, leopards, hyenas, sloths, crocodiles and shy chital deer.

Your final destination is the Indian Ocean island of Sri Lanka, home to two breathtaking Aman properties. Start in UNESCO World Heritage site Galle, a former Portuguese fort town that's been an important trading center for centuries. Garden-wreathed **AMANGALLA**, which sits within the ramparts of Galle Fort, features just 10 beautifully appointed "chambers," many with views of the estate's 200-year-old gardens. It's an ideal base from which to explore the fortifications, visit the collections of colonial weaponry at the Galle National Museum, or shop for locally mined sapphires and rubies in the many local boutiques.

Finish your odyssey at **AMANWELLA**; located on a pristine beach outside Tangalle, the resort features modernist design by notable Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa, with spacious suites offering guests mesmerizing views and access to private plunge pools, the perfect antidote to days spent bartering in the early-morning Tangalle Market, and exploring the estate on an Evening Village Nature Walk in search of monkeys, mongoose and migratory birds.

Along the way you'll enjoy seamless transfers, insightful guides and world-class in-flight hospitality thanks to the Remote Lands' experienced team, as you meet like-minded adventurers in the refined surroundings of your home in the skies. ✪



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF AMAN RESORTS

(Clockwise from far left): Guests at Lijiang's Amandayan will learn about the region's rich tea heritage; Amankora overlooks one of Bhutan's most historic valleys; the timeless elegance of Rajasthan is captured at Amanbagh; the spices of the Maritime Silk Road, on offer at Amanwella; Sri Lanka is increasingly popular among affluent travellers; the "Palace of the Winds" in Jaipur.

