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ABOUT DENMARK

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WHERE TO GO IN 2018

FROM MELBOURNE
TO MADAGASCAR,
THE NINE
DESTINATIONS
CURRENTLY ON OUR
WISH LIST.



9. MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

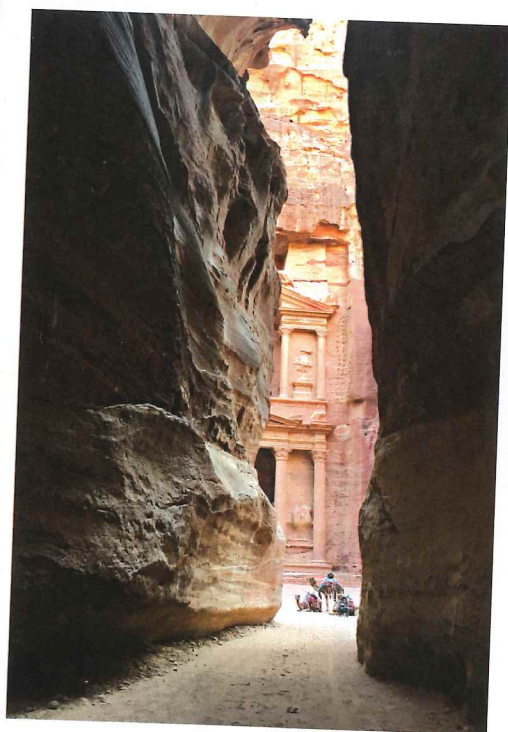
Having long played second fiddle to prettier Sydney, Victoria's down-to-earth capital is poised to become the country's top destination now that live-like-a-local tourism has gone mainstream. Qantas will debut a direct Dreamliner Los Angeles-to-Melbourne flight plan at the end of this year, making it easier than ever to skip to the 'roo.



8.

URUGUAY

Go full gaucho in the choice destination for discerning South Americans that still manages to fly under the radar of international travelers. The small country—around the size of Florida—has a little bit of everything crammed within its borders: vibrant cities boasting cool colonial cores, laid-back beach towns, wine country, and a roaring Carnaval in mid-January that rivals Rio's.



7.

JORDAN

Travel warnings be damned, Jordan is a forward-thinking anomaly locked within the Middle Eastern bloc. Poke around Amman, the metropolitan capital crowned by Greco-Roman temples, then head to the cave-carved ruin of Petra, which—due to diminished tourism in the region—will be largely yours to explore by your lonesome. Hoping to establish it as an adventure-travel destination with international esteem, its tourism board has carved out a 36-day "Jordan Trail" that takes in the very best of the country, from northern Um Qais all the way down to Aqaba on the Red Sea.



6.

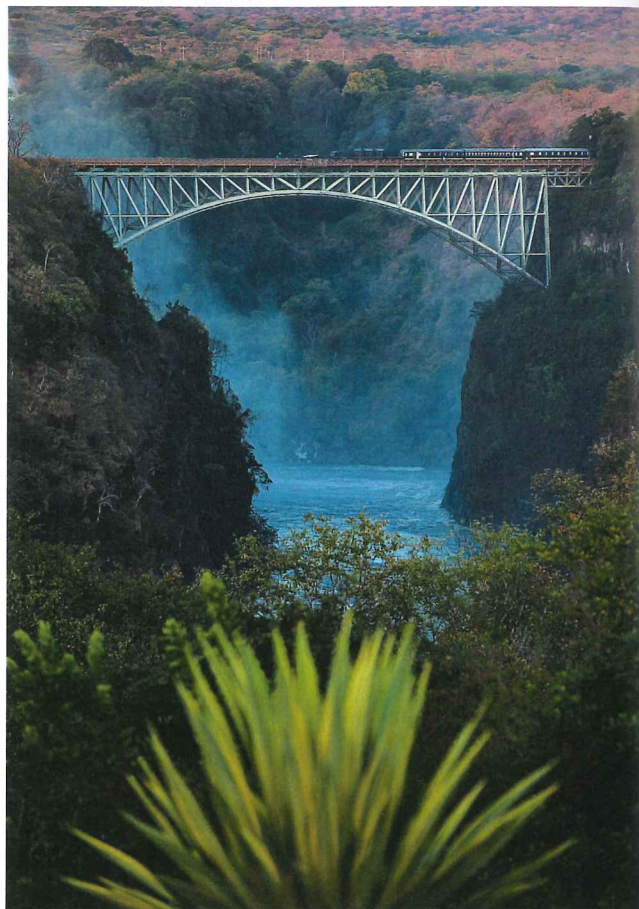
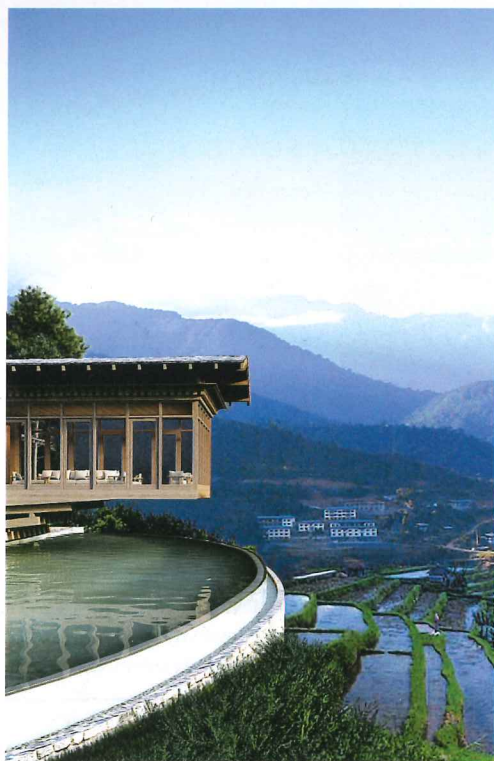
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

No longer the little city that could, Indy is blossoming into a true cultural contender that stockpiles accolades—like inclusion in Zagat's Hottest Food Cities—year after year. Low rents equal high reward when it comes to daring new projects dedicated to increasing the quality of life for locals and encouraging visitors to come hang out for a weekend or a week. Even West Elm has selected the state capital as the locus for one of its first trademarked hotels, turning an old Coca-Cola bottling facility into a haven for design.

5.

BHUTAN

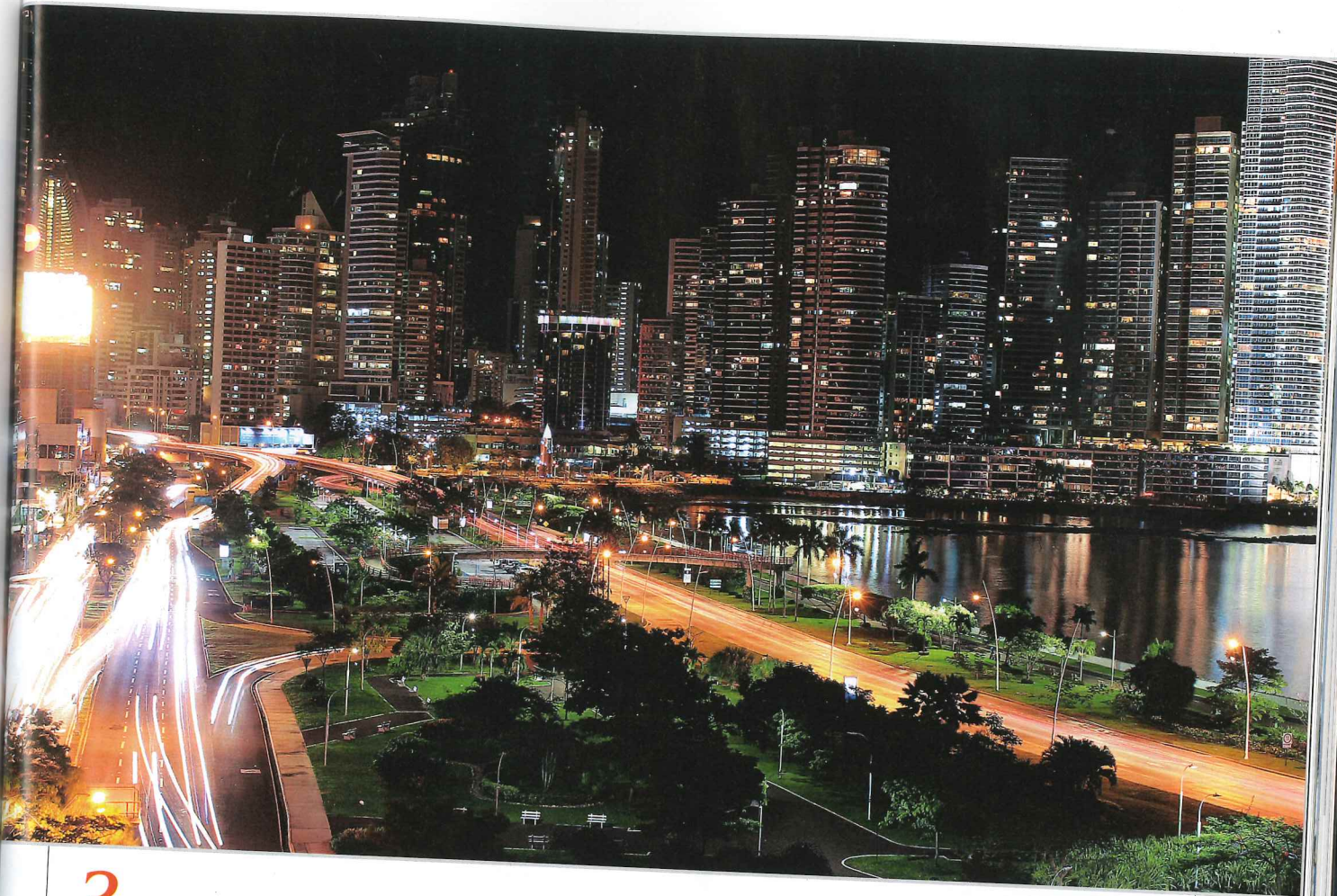
The country that coined the term “gross national happiness” is a serene alternate universe where words like “meme” and “Kardashian” are met with a collective “huh?” Strict tourism sanctions have long limited the number of travelers into the Himalayan kingdom in order to carefully preserve the pristine mountain enclave and its unique culture. Following in the footsteps of luxury heavy hitters Aman and Como, the Asia-based Six Senses will unveil five satellite resorts in Bhutan in 2018, each steadily paced outward from the capital, Thimphu.



4.

SOUTH AFRICA

The recent opening of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, the continent's most robust collection of contemporary art, confirmed Cape Town's cultural aspirations, and pairs perfectly with its suburban wine lands. Johannesburg, too, is editing its gridiron, with places like Maboneng and Braamfontein bending their reputation into something more coveted and current. Retreat to Jamala Madikwe, which, according to Deborah Calmeyer, founder of luxury operator Roar Africa—is the only gay-owned and -operated safari lodge on the continent. Rodney, the manager, proffers a different kind of animal-watching experience. His property is situated in the heart of the Madikwe Game Reserve, which teems with wildlife; scores of elephants visit the lodge daily for slurps from the nearby watering hole.



3.

PANAMA CITY, PANAMA

Sure, warm-weather weekends in Miami are fun, but consider Panama City the next time you need a city-and-sea escape. With direct flights from a number of American cities, it's never been easier to reach Central America's most cosmopolitan nexus. Besides being the national capital of the region's fastest-growing economy, its old town, the Cartagena-esque Casco Viejo, is a veritable warren of boutique digs and rooftop lounges.



2.

MALTA

Named the top destination for LGBT travelers by the Rainbow Europe Index, Malta is now getting extra attention: Its main city, Valletta, will be 2018's European Capital of Culture. Chockablock with enough heritage sites to give Italy a run for its money, the island nation's relaxed beachside vibe has long lured continental Europeans. Situated at the crossroads of Mediterranean trade, mainland Malta is a fascinating mosaic of Roman, Byzantine, Arab, and Latin influences, and will easily fill a long weekend of exploration. It's also worth checking out its baby brother Gozo—by 2020, the Maltese government hopes to transform the scrubby sea bump into a self-sustaining "eco island." And don't miss Comino, a car-free island surrounded by cerulean snorkel-friendly waters.



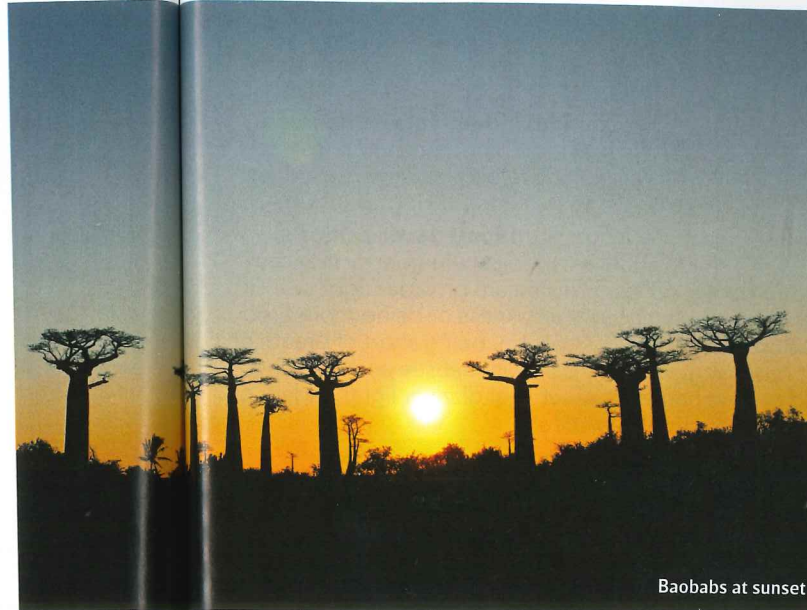
Wild beaches in Northern Madagascar



A chameleon in Andasibe



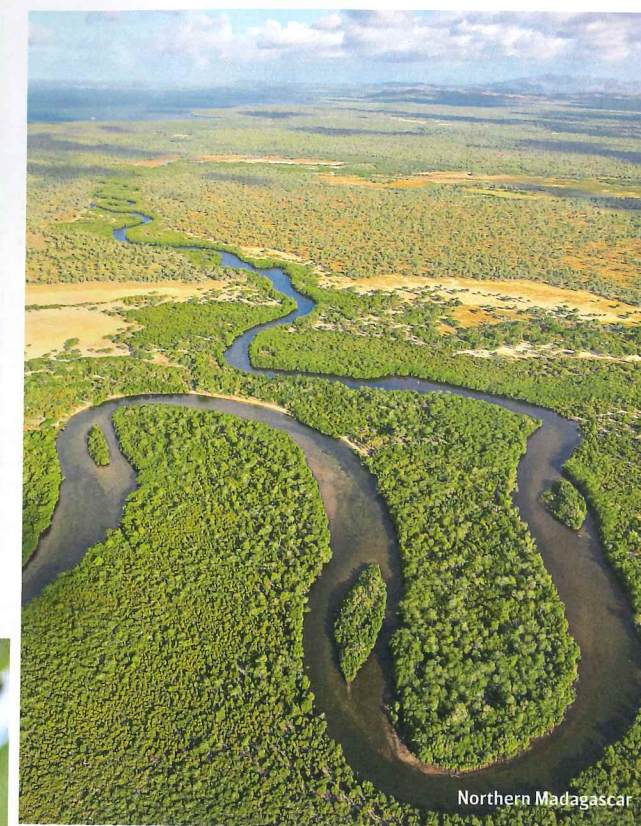
Miavana



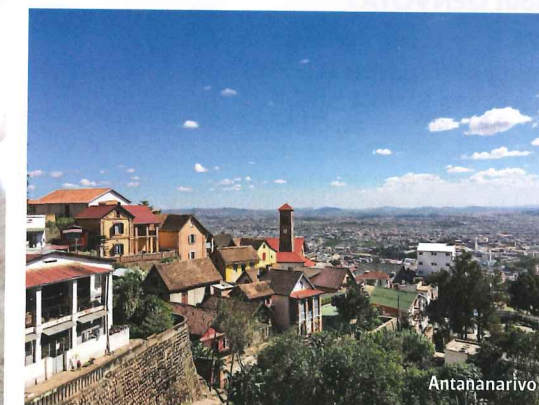
Baobabs at sunset



Miavana



Northern Madagascar



Antananarivo

1. MADAGASCAR

Long before humans roamed the earth, Madagascar was one of the first pieces of terra firma to tear itself away from the supercontinent of Gondwanaland. And ever since, the isolated island has been an enticing cauldron of curiosities—an explorer's delight, bubbling over with countless ecological anomalies. Commonly called the "eighth continent" due to its sheer volume (it's around the same size as Texas) and distinct environment, Madagascar continues to surprise scientists with a parade of new

species regularly emerging from the primordial forests.

The majority of international flights arrive in the nation's capital, Antananarivo—a Malagasy word meaning "the place of a thousand," as it was here, several centuries ago, that a king gathered all of his soldiers in an attempt to unify the island's disparate tribes. Today, the metropolis tumbles across a series of pronounced hills, sprawling all the way to the rice fields along the horizon. It's well worth spending a day in town to discover the *haute ville* (high town) with its royal palace, gabled churches, and aristocratic *trano gasy* homes based on British colonial architecture. Stay at the Pavillon

de l'Emyrne, an Addams Family–esque mansion built during the apex of French colonialism.

Book your driver and guide with Mango African Safaris, and hit the "road" (and we use that term lightly) as you venture deep into the island's interior. The Andasibe region, around a four-hour car ride from the capital, is the perfect introduction to Madagascar's trademark wildlife: Around a dozen species of lemur (of which there are more than 100 on the entire island) glide and leap above your head, and a delightful assortment of fluorescent chameleons snooze on branches as you navigate through tangled thickets of vines and trees.

Hop on a prop plane to the coastal city of Morondava for Madagascar's ultimate experience: the overland trek to the ancient Tsingys, jagged stone mounds shaped like alien toothbrush bristles. Never has Emerson's journey-not-the-destination quote rung so true: The daylong drive from the sea up into the interior involves fording two throbbing river veins by placing your vehicle on catamaranned canoes, and cruising through rural villages like Belo Tsiribihina, which—oddly—has one of the best restaurants in the entire country, Le Mad-Zébu. Although the Tsingys are the endgame, most travelers count the passage through the plains of thousand-year-old baobab trees as the highlight of their

trip. There's something rather emotional about hugging a living being that has been standing tall since the time of the Vikings.

For those who can, it's well worth tacking on a beach coda at Miavana, the newest addition to the short list of private island escapes in the Indian Ocean. Built by Time + Tide, a recently branded co-op of sustainable safari initiatives, the property sits on the islet of Nosy Ankao, just off Madagascar's northeast corner, and features 14 oversize villas outstretched along its mustard-tinged sand.

And while hoteliers continue to compete for top dog in the Seychelles and Maldives, Madagascar's first true luxury-hotel endeavor has a slightly different point of

view: accessing the beauty of the greater region through helicopter safaris to enhance the experience beyond the usual sea-and-sand respite. A short hop connects guests to several distinct ecosystems, including patches of pristine jungle and stark desert where more Tsingys—this time tinged in blood-red hues—pop straight out of the scorched earth. A stunning house reef loops itself around Nosy Ankao as well, and, farther out in the deep, guests can scuba through a seemingly unending network of never-before-explored coral cliffs and gardens, proving that there's still plenty of Madagascar that has yet to be charted and explored.

—BRANDON PRESSER