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Eight unmissable travel experiences for 2018

DECEMBER 21, IN [TOP PICKS](#)

If one of your New Year's resolutions is to travel more, you're not alone. Alongside eating more healthily, exercising more regularly and seeing friends and family more often, it's one of the most popular promises we make each year.

To help get your 2018 off to a good start, we've rounded up eight of our top travel experiences.

Argentina

1. Go horseback swimming in the Iberá Wetlands



Journey into Argentina's spectacular, untamed wetlands region astride a trusty, trained horse. Accompanied by knowledgeable gauchos, you'll gallop across shallow streams and slip into the natural pools and lakes to swim alongside your powerful steed. With beautiful landscapes and a dizzying variety of wildlife to see along the way, this is a travel experience like no other.

Our five-night [Horseback swimming in the Wetlands](#) itinerary is one of our most popular Argentina tours, staying at boutique properties and restored *estancias* throughout the journey.

Madagascar

2. Head into the jungle to see wild lemur



Madagascar's largest species of lemur, the Indri, thrives in the tropical rainforests of [Andasibe National Park](#). Its loud, plaintive call can be heard from miles away, and it shares its home with a further 11 species of lemur. Following trails that weave through the dense forest, you'll also be able to spot a host of native bird species, reptiles, beautiful orchids and ferns, and hidden waterfalls.

After exploring the verdant rainforests of the east coast, head south for some well-earned relaxation. [Manafyfy Beach & Rainforest Lodge](#) sits on its own tranquil, gold-sand beach. If you're ready to see more of Madagascar's wildlife, a visit to the [Mandrare River Camp](#) will allow you to take guided walks into the species-rich forests that flank the Mandrare River.

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South Africa

3. Drive the Garden Route

Sheer cliffs, sheltered bays, pristine rivers and frontier towns – South Africa's Garden Route is one of the world's most beautiful coastal drives. The route hugs the dramatic southern coast, linking Mossel Bay in the west with Storms River in the east. Between June and November, migratory whales can be spotted from the shore, and there are stunning places to stop along the way – don't miss Knysna Lagoon, Plettenberg Bay or the verdant forests of Tsitsikamma.

Cape Town is an ideal place to start your self-drive adventure. We recommend a few days exploring the city, staying at the elegant [Table Bay](#) on the historic V&A Waterfront. At the end of your Garden Route adventure, why not fly north for a few days of relaxation, and exploration, at Pilanesberg National Park? The impressive [Palace of the Lost City](#) is an ideal base for guided safaris of this malaria-free reserve, which receives fewer tourists than many of South Africa's other game parks.

Atlantic Canada

4. Explore Iceberg Alley off the coast of Fogo Island

Newfoundland's largest offshore isle, Fogo Island sits at the edge of the wild North Atlantic. The rugged, windswept landscapes and dramatic coastline here offer surreal and unexpected beauty. The island sits midway along the Labrador Current, which brings with it giant icebergs that have calved from Arctic glaciers further north. The towering icebergs are impressive enough from the shore, but to really appreciate their sheer size and majesty, you'll need to get a little closer.

Following a knowledgeable guide, board a sturdy kayak and paddle out into the frozen waters. Gazing up at these incredible ice formations from water level gives you a sense of scale that is quite literally breath-taking.

New Zealand

5. Ride the rapids on a river rafting trip

It's no secret that New Zealand is an adrenalin-lover's dream destination. You can do a bungee jump after breakfast, go snowboarding before lunch and finish the day rafting over white water. And while the latter is often seen as an extreme sport, there are lower-grade rivers across the country that are perfect for beginners and families.

On New Zealand's North Island, the Tongariro River is a great place to try your hand at white water rafting. Led by an expert, you'll paddle over gentle rapids which run through steep-sided canyons and meander through lush, fern-filled forests. Stay at the [Huka Lodge](#), which is perfectly positioned for a day trip to the best sections of the river.

Spain

6. Discover Ibiza's authentic side

Having held the title of Europe's dance mecca for decades, Ibiza is beginning to shake off its reputation as a party island. Of course, in some of the livelier resorts you'll still find the famous nightclubs and crowded bars, but you don't need to travel far to find a completely different side to the White Isle.

In Ibiza's interior, tiny villages and walking trails are ripe for exploration, offering island views from a different perspective. The island's coastline is among the most beautiful in the Balearic Sea, dotted with hidden coves and sandy beaches. Located on peaceful Talamanca Bay, the [Nobu Ibiza](#) is one of our favourite new hotels on the island, and an excellent base for your holiday here. A short boat ride to the south of Ibiza, the tiny island of Formentora is another jewel in Ibiza's crown. This laid-back idyll is fringed with wide beaches, crystal-clear water and sleepy harbours.

Chile

7. Sleep beneath the stars in the Atacama Desert

Atacama's otherworldly landscape of geysers, lunar valleys and salt lakes makes for a glamping experience like no other. One of our favourite properties in the region, the Alto Atacama Lodge offers guests the chance to stay in a luxury tented camp in the heart of the desert.

As the sun sets, you'll enjoy a freshly prepared feast before settling beside the crackling camp fire with a glass of fine Chilean wine. Your personal guide will point out the constellations and visible planets as you gaze up at the brilliant sky, which is among the clearest anywhere on Earth. When it's time for bed, curl up beneath soft blankets and fall asleep to the sight of shooting stars overhead.

Bali, Indonesia

8. Explore Ubud by bicycle

Away from the boisterous resorts of Bali's southern coast, the traditional village of Ubud enjoys relative solitude in the island's forested interior. Hiring a bike to explore its stone-cobbled streets and surrounding paddy fields is one of the best ways to get around.

Dodging the cheeky macaque monkeys that venture from the forests in search of food, you'll cycle past bustling markets, crumbling temples and stall holders selling their wares. Stop to visit an art gallery or two, before picking a table at a traditional *warung* for a lunch of satay, suckling pig and a cold Bintang beer. We recommend staying at the [Capella Ubud](#), an ultra-luxurious retreat surrounded by dense rainforest and paddy fields on the outskirts of the village.