

THE  TIMES

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Your children can't add up

You only talk about sex
when you're drunk

Your men don't know
how to behave

You wear nighties
in bed



WHAT WE FRENCH REALLY THINK ABOUT YOU BRITS

By Muriel Demarcus

PLUS

Travel special
50 things to do
before you die

28 Fly above the fairytale castles of Bavaria
Germany's 19th-century "mad king", Ludwig II, built palaces to rival Louis XIV's in Versailles, and 200 years later inspired Disney. For a fairytale view of the Linderhof Palace, Neuschwanstein and Herrenchiemsee, fly in a balloon to see his fantastical creations from the air. A 90-minute ride for 2 costs £166. bavaria-ballon.de

29 Rejuvenate in Geneva

The seven-day Better Ageing Programme at La Réserve in Geneva, £3,300, is not just supervised by doctors, nutritionists and fitness instructors, who use science to test your body and ascertain what it needs; it is also beautiful: modern, luxe, light and overlooking Lake Geneva. Rooms are an additional £300 a night. lareserve.ch/en/the-spa

30 Live like a cowhand in Montana

The Ranch at Rock Creek, in spectacular Montana wilderness, has been a working cattle ranch for more than a century. Expect clay shooting, horse riding, biking, hiking and fishing in the summer, as well as skiing and skating in winter. All-inclusive rates start at £517 per person per night. Accommodation is in spacious wooden villas or canvas tents with five-star comforts – including barstools topped with cowboy saddles. theranchatrockcreek.com

31 Meet Santa in Finland

The Arctic Circle, just above Rovaniemi, is where Santa has set up his Finnish home – and where children can visit the bearded, red-suited man, tell him their wishes, send a postcard with a North Pole stamp and then meet up to 50 Arctic creatures in the Ranua Zoo, from polar bears to Arctic ravens. A three-night package starts at £588 per person. After a night at the private log cabin Bear's Den, there are husky rides and a trip to the reindeer farm the next day. luxurybeyond.com

32 Dive with whale sharks

From April to June, the world's biggest fish converge on the Unesco-protected Ningaloo Reef in Western Australia, coming so close to the beach that you can paddle right up to them. Stay at the barefoot luxury Sal Salis (£410 per night all-inclusive), where you camp on the dunes with no one else around. salsalis.com.au

33 Dance with the Gnaoua

Every year in June, hundreds of traditional Gnaoua musicians converge for the World Music Festival in the white-walled coastal town of Essaouira in Morocco. Most gigs are in the square or on the beach, so the whole town becomes filled with sound: a hypnotic

30. LIVE LIKE A COWHAND IN MONTANA



The Ranch
at Rock Creek

mix of Haitian and Brazilian melodies, African beats and Islamic chants that few can resist dancing to. Stay at the chic Villa Maroc (rooms start at £75 a night).

festival-gnaoua.net; villa-maroc.com

34 Take children on safari in South Africa

An ideal combination for first-time safari-goers is Ant's Nest in the Waterberg (no lions or elephant, but there are horses, so you can trot around; £160 per person per night and £103 for the kids), followed by Jaci's Safari Lodge in Madikwe (from £170 for adults and £74 for children aged 5 to 12; four-year-olds and under go free), which has the Big Five (lion, leopard, buffalo, rhino and elephant).

waterberg.net; madikwe.com

35 Ski in Aspen

The little town where America's millionaires jet in to ski and snowboard has remained remarkably unblingy. The slopes are wide, the snow is powdery and deep, and skiing is hassle-free thanks to ski concierges who store, dry, clean and transport equipment between slopes overnight, so you can make straight for the après-ski attractions without any distractions. Stay at the historic Hotel Jerome (rooms from £400 a night), with its famous J-Bar (where cocktails were disguised with ice cream during Prohibition).

hoteljerome/aubergeresorts.com; scottdunn.com

36 Party with Indian folk-lovers

Every October, groups of musicians from all over India descend on Jodhpur, playing on ramparts, in ornate palace rooms and on platforms on the edge of a mountain in a wild, colourful celebration of traditional folk music. The place to stay is in safari-style tents in the maharajah's fort, which is closed to crowds at night, leaving it blissfully free for you to explore on your own. A seven-night package

to Rajasthan (including flights and four nights at the fort) starts from £2,150 per person. jodhpurriff.org; greavesindia.com

37 See tigers in Rajasthan

Thanks to poachers and the insatiable Chinese demand for tiger bones for traditional medicines, there aren't many of these magnificent animals left in the wild. A good place to see them is Ranthambore. If you can stretch to it, stay in the smartest glamp site, the Oberoi Vanyavilas (from £550 per night), where staff look immaculate in cream outfits and coloured turbans.

oberoihotels.com/oberoi_vanyavilas/

38 Luxuriate in colonial splendour

Singita Sabora Tented Camp, on a 130,000-hectare private reserve in Tanzania, is where Middle Eastern princes and Hollywood stars go for safaris, *Out of Africa* style. Its canvas-walled rooms are littered with Persian rugs and antiques; the food is gourmet and served on silver; there's a stable of horses for crossing the plains; and masseuses to soothe muscles after a hard day. If you're lucky, the wildebeest migration passes by here; if not, they'll whisk you off by plane or helicopter to see it. A seven-night package (including flights and transfers) starts at £6,495 per person.

AfricaTravel.com, 020-7843 3500

39 Venture into the tribal heartlands of Ethiopia

Ethiopia is still home to ancient tribes who have had little contact with the Western world. Simoon Travel runs small specialist group tours into Southern Ethiopia to meet little-seen tribes and witness their traditional way of life once a year with prices starting from £3,300 for two weeks (full board, including flights). Accommodation is basic – but with such stunning sights around, who cares?

simoonttravel.com