



# Ready, Jetset, Go

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE, MEET CELEBRITIES OF THE FASHION GALAXY, COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH MAJESTIC CREATURES OF THE WILD OR DINE WITH PURVEYORS OF INCREDIBLE GOURMET FOOD AND WINE. YOUR OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS WITH LUXURY TRAVEL SPECIALISTS CREATING **BESPOKE GLOBETROTTING EXPERIENCES** THAT TAKE YOU WHERE YOUR HEART LEADS. MARIE WEE REPORTS

**MESMERISING SIGHT**  
Have an adventure of a lifetime riding on elephant back at the private Abu Camp in Botswana



## Conserved luxury Ol Donyo Lodge stands right in the path of seasonal elephant migrations

### The Adventurer's Safari

Safaris will never be the same again after you've done one with Asia to Africa Safaris (A to A), Asia's first bespoke luxury safari specialist. Each and every safari that it organises is unique and customised to each client's interests and budget. "Since we cater to Asia, we can provide for different diet preferences, for example, if you want Asian and Western food on alternate days. We've also offered Indian vegetarian meals. And as women want shopping thrown in, we can always weave in something for them. We've also had clients who are into art, so we've arranged for clients to visit art galleries and artists," says co-founder Jose Cortes, a former banker.

On a horseback safari in the picturesque Chyulu Hills in Kenya, you can get up-close-and-personal with the wildlife and be awestruck by amazing nature in full view, rather than peep from behind the windows of a Land Rover. You'll stay at the luxurious Ol Donyo Lodge, which offers a breathtaking view of Mount Kilimanjaro.

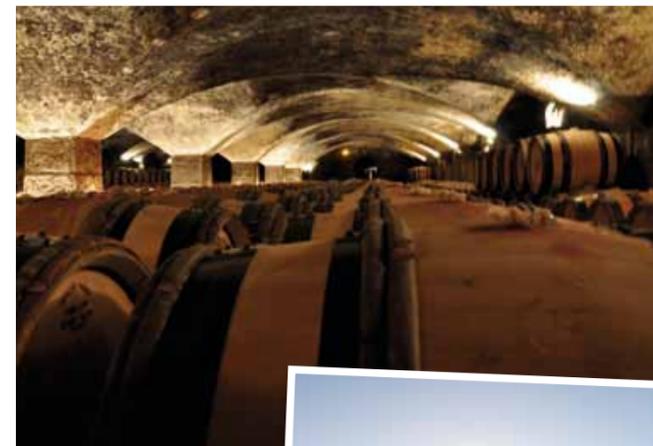
Ol Donyo was first developed as a community conservation tourism project by Richard Bonham to benefit the Maasai natives. Strategically located in the centre of the 275,000-acre Mbirikani Group Ranch, on the slopes of the Chyulu Hills National Park in southeast Kenya, the conserved luxury lodge stands right in the path of seasonal elephant migrations, so you can

enjoy spectacular sightings. Besides tracking animals, you can also indulge in some mountain biking for an adrenaline-filled holiday.

Over at the famous Okavango Delta in Botswana, another package featuring an out-of-this-world elephant-back safari puts you up at the private six-room Abu Camp, which is owned by billionaire and co-founder of Microsoft, Paul Allen. The rooms have a generous dose of chic and luxurious touches. If you think you've done elephant-back riding – those in the parks or zoos of Thailand – this will be a totally humbling and eye-opening experience on the wild elephants of Africa, bringing you in close proximity to lions, leopards and more of nature's magnificent creatures. There are also scenic helicopter flights over the Delta and boating safaris on motorboats or in the mokoro, a traditional dugout canoe. Back at the exclusive Abu Camp, where the Abu Concession is three times the size of Singapore, there will be many opportunities for tranquil moments – each luxurious tent/room comes with a writing desk and a private wooden deck around the lofty fig and jackal-berry trees that shade it.

### On the Gourmand's Trail

The idea of visiting Bordeaux's top chateaux like Margaux and Latour, indulging in gourmet Spanish meals and pintxo at San Sebastian's world-renowned restaurants, as well as white



truffle hunting and wine tasting in Piedmont would sound simply intoxicating to most foodies.

Food & Wine Trails' epicurean tours span the Napa and Sonoma Valleys in Northern California to South America, and Australasia to most of Europe. Its co-founder Larry Martin is not only a food lover and a wine collector, but also a Northern California regional governor for international food advocacy organisation, Slow Food. The tour company is renowned for its wine travel programmes, having scored a hat trick as *Condé Nast Traveler's* World's Top Wine Travel Specialist from 2008 to 2010, and the French 2011 Best of Wine Tourism award.

Food and Wine Trails' tours include exclusive cooking classes, visits to artisan food purveyors, shopping at fresh markets and various wine cruises organised by local sommeliers, winemakers, and wine and food writers around the world. For high-end wine tours, their insider contacts can get you into top wineries that are closed to the general public or given only limited access, says Martin. And, as wineries are typically located in remote parts of the world where poor signage could get you lost faster than you can say "cheers", you'd appreciate not having to drink and drive. Better yet, if you discover a particular preference along the way, your local expert guide would be able to change your itinerary en route so you can discover more of that type of wine.

A six-day Piedmont food and wine tour, for instance, includes a personal escort by a popular cookbook writer, visits to a 12th-century Cistercian abbey where premium rice is grown, white truffle hunting in Alba (this tour is organised once a year at the height of white truffle season), a luncheon with a Contessa, and a sampling of the best Barolo and Barbera wines. How's that for a tastebud tickler? **17**



**BEST OF THE CROP**  
FROM TOP  
Taste wine at the most exclusive wineries with Food & Wine Trails

### ADVENTURE, TATLER-STYLE

The concierge for the rich and famous, Quintessentially Travel's tagline boasts that it offers "access to the inaccessible", with itineraries full of impressive stories that you can continue to tell for generations. With all the exciting options that Quintessentially offers, you may be tempted to want it all, so the concierge drew up an Ultimate Global Getaway just for *Singapore Tatler*. Rather than offer a buffet of everything, Quintessentially handpicks just two to three of the most incredible experiences in each country for this package, with each leg ranging from two to three days. There's also a dash of Hollywood-style adventures designed for you in good humour – think a private desert challenge in the format of a Dakar rally in Morocco; and Indiana Jones-style treasure hunting in Jordan, followed by a rescue of "hostages" in market places to gain access for a special dinner.

Start your trip on a high as you paraglide over the plains near Buenos Aires in Argentina, then learn tango from a master. Next, travel in style to Brazil with Quintessentially Aviation's helicopter as you enjoy wine tasting on-board with a wine expert. On arrival, you'll visit Brazil's National Park, Lençóis Maranhenses, which is famous for its gorgeous turquoise lagoons amidst the desert. You'll also get to go on a tranquil cruise winding along the great Amazon River (below left) on a private yacht while dining on a feast.

Then, be whisked off on a private jet to Morocco – where you can pretend to be a Dakar rally driver for a day, journey through the Sahara dessert on a camel caravan to Timbuktu (right, top), and pick up a trick or two about cooking Tuareg food.

Although the next stop is Rome, Quintessentially certainly wouldn't recommend you do as they do. Instead, take in the majesty of the legendary Colosseum from a bird's eye view on a helicopter, and go behind the scene into the laboratory of Bulgari, where its jewellery, watches, skincare and perfumes are made.

After this, Quintessentially zeroes in on the Champagne region in France. This is where your inner oenologist can be set free – with a cellar master to guide you along, be treated to a rare vins clairs tasting of the base wine before the bubbles form, after which you can go on to personalise your own blend. In the next two years, you will continue to receive updates about your champagne's evolution and eventually get to enjoy it two years later.

Before the last stop, you'll get to go on a desert adventure in Jordan, and fly over to Mount Everest for a calming, spiritual end to the tour in Nepal at the Tengboche Monastery (below right), and Bhutan.

But, of course, the world is your oyster at Quintessentially – with this global getaway as a reference, you can pick and tweak from the itinerary, or ask for anything else up your alley.



**IN THE WILD**  
CLOCKWISE  
FROM TOP LEFT  
View the elephant migration up close and personal at the Ol Donyo lodge; get close to nature on horseback at the picturesque Ol Donyo; a luxurious and chic lounge at the Abu Camp