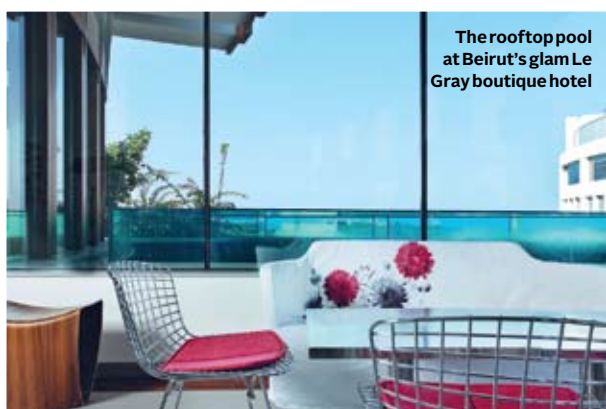


The dream list

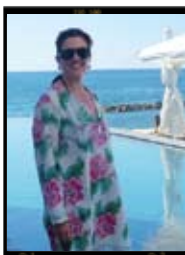
Star-gazing in South Africa, kissing giraffes in Kenya, getting off the beaten track in Bhutan... Get ready to make some unforgettable new memories this year

Edited by LISA JOHNSON



The rooftop pool at Beirut's glam Le Gray boutique hotel

Saska Graville, deputy editor, Red



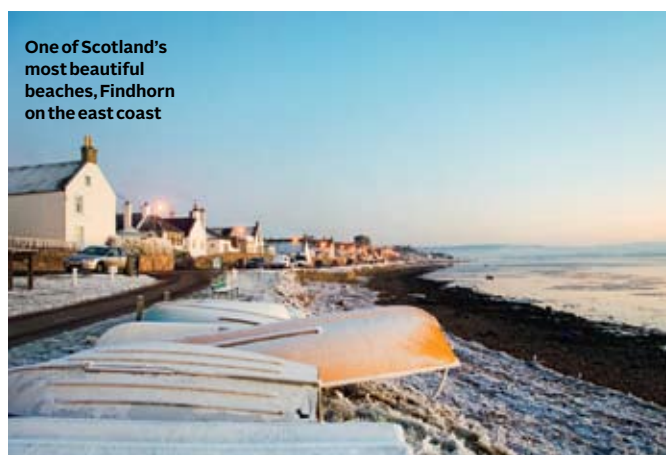
NEW DISCOVERY Beirut. It's only a four-and-a-half-hour flight away, but a different world entirely. There's still some tension, including soldiers on the streets, but it's a glossy, cosmopolitan city, with incredible history and extremely glam locals. Stay at five-star boutique hotel **Le Gray** (campbellgrayhotels.com). The rooftop pool is gorgeous.

OLD FAVOURITE I can't stay away from **Westcroft Guesthouse** (westcroftguesthouse.co.uk) in **Cornwall**. It's wonderfully relaxing, right on the sea's edge over the water from Plymouth. Owners Sarah and Dylan are the ultimate hosts: you're likely to find yourself next door in The **Devonport Inn**, having a drink with them and their two English Pointers. **STANDOUT MEMORY** I lived in Sydney for 10 years and do an annual return visit. Last year, I tagged on a trip to **Byron Bay** and stayed at **The Byron at Byron Resort & Spa** (thebyronatbyron.com.au). Early morning yoga by the pool and boardwalk strolls through the paperbark trees were unforgettable. **ON THE LIST FOR 2012** I've heard great things about **The Pig** (thepighotel.co.uk), the sister hotel to Lime Wood in the **New Forest**, and I'm looking forward to visiting **The Plough at Lupton** (theloughatlupton.co.uk) in the **Lake District**.



Kirsty Hathaway, editor, Beach Tomato

NEW DISCOVERY Siquijor Island in the central **Philippines** had me hooked the minute I set foot on it. It's known for its mystic traditions, and its caves and reefs offer some of the best diving and snorkelling in the country. **The Firefly Cove Resort** (fireflycoveresort.com) is simple, clean and friendly. **OLD FAVOURITE** As a Scot, I'm biased in thinking **Scotland** has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. I spent many magical childhood holidays in **Findhorn** on the east coast, now famously home to a spiritual community. Stay at one of the holiday cottages on the nearby **Cawdor estate** (cawdor.com). **STANDOUT MEMORY** Sitting round a beach bonfire, gazing at the stars in **Nature's Valley, South Africa**. Even in a country blessed with incredible beaches, this vast expanse of white sand, stretching from the ocean to a lagoon on the Garden Route, is special. I stayed at a cute b&b, **Nature's Valley Guesthouse** (hikershaven.co.za). **ON THE LIST FOR 2012 Song Saa** (songsaa.com) off the **Cambodian coast**. I like going where few have trod before, and this luxury eco-resort, opening in February on a pair of islands in the otherwise undeveloped **Koh Rong** archipelago, is just the place. Visit beachtomato.com >>



One of Scotland's most beautiful beaches, Findhorn on the east coast



New discoveries create lasting impressions. LEFT: Shepherd's hut Molly Dishwasher, Tunbridge Wells RIGHT: Blood-red sunsets in Mozambique



Memories are made of this. FROMLEFT: Foraging for mussels in the West Highlands; Kirsty Hathaway in Nature's Valley, South Africa; and kissing giraffes at Giraffe Manor, Nairobi



Adventures to jump into. FROMLEFT: Areias do Seixo Beach hotel, near Lisbon; Engadin Valley in St Moritz; and Lisa Johnson in snowy West Highlands



Tranquil retreats for pure indulgence. FROMLEFT: Italy's Cilento Coast; Siquijor Island in the Philippines; Hotel Crillon Le Brave, Provence



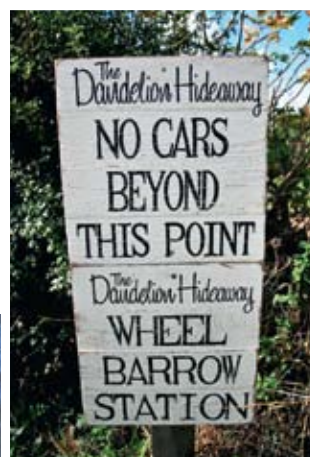
Jane Anderson, editor,
101honeymoons.co.uk

NEW DISCOVERY The serene side to **Ibiza**. **The Giri Residence** (thegiri.com) is a designer hideaway with a bijou spa in pretty **San Juan** in the north; new The Giri Café offers rustic dining with panache; and Casa Vilda Marge (casavildamarge.com) is a charming affordable alternative outside the village. I also chilled out big time with an outdoor yoga session beside **Salinas Beach** in the south, offered through Ibiza Retreats (ibizaretreats.com).

OLD FAVOURITE St Barts. You don't have to break the bank on accommodation. This being a chichi French island, even the cheapest hotels – doubles from around €130 to €200 per night (around £113 to £174) – are special: try the **Hotel Le Village Saint Jean** (villagestjeanhotel.com), or newly restyled **Normandie Hotel** (normandiehotelstbarts.com). Go early summer for low-season rates, but before hurricane season.

STANDOUT MEMORY Ordering a Victorian-style gin fizz cocktail at The Booking Office Bar at London's beautifully restored **St Pancras Renaissance Hotel** (marriott.com), then boarding a first-class Eurostar carriage for the scenic journey to **Avignon** and a half-hour drive to the magical **Hotel Crillon Le Brave** (crillonlebrave.com).

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 New **Niyama** (niyama.com) in the Maldives, with its underwater nightclub. **The Belgraves**, the new Thompson Hotel (thompsonhotels.com) in London's Belgravia. And the safari-meets-shabby chic experience at **The Dandelion Hideaway** (thedandelionhideaway.co.uk) on the Leicestershire/Warwickshire border, which is opening a sixth, couples-only tent.



Feeling adventurous? Take a hot-air balloon trip in Kenya



Mary Wiles,
make-up artist

NEW DISCOVERY Catskills, upstate **New York**. I stayed with my boyfriend in a secluded woodland cabin, where deer grazed in the grounds (rent something

similar through ahousearoundthebend.com). We rummaged through second-hand stores and antique shops in quaint **Andes** and stopped for delicious cupcakes at Tay Tea (taytea.com/tayhome/). Their blended teas are incredible – the bestseller is called Better Than Sex!

OLD FAVOURITE Palm Springs, California. I've stayed everywhere, from the Holiday Inn to the glamorous **Parker Hotel** (theparkerpalmsprings.com) and have so many amazing memories – of casino-themed fancy-dress parties, a shoot in Frank Sinatra's former home... This year, I took the cable car to the top of the mountain and went from one climate to another in a matter of minutes.

STANDOUT MEMORY A Kenyan odyssey: kissing giraffes at **Giraffe Manor** (giraffemanor.com) in **Nairobi**, seeing the elephant calves at the David Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage (sheldrickwildlifetrust.org), singing with Maasai and hot-air ballooning at dawn (from Governor's Camp, governorscamp.com). And finally, a plane, coach and boat trip to **The Funzi Keys** (thefunzikeys.com) off **Mombasa**, where we ate breakfast on a sand bar. An unbelievable trip.

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 Sydney, Australia, to visit relatives and friends (my brother lives in Manly) and do yoga. I also want to visit **Fraser Island**, north of Brisbane – stay at **Kingfisher Bay Resort** (kingfisherbay.com).

Nick Newbury,
co-founder, Original Travel

NEW DISCOVERY The salt marshes of north **Norfolk**, either side of **Blakeney Point**. It's possible to visit over a sunny August bank-holiday weekend and find oneself on five-square miles of deserted golden sand, windscreens of cars twinkling in the distance. Take a house party to **Cley Windmill** in **Cley-next-the-Sea** (cleywindmill.co.uk).

OLD FAVOURITE Denmark. My mother was Danish and my first holiday, aged one, was with my grandparents on the beaches of Denmark's north coast. Last year, we took our one-year-old son to the magical island of **Fyn**. I highly recommend stunning

Falsled Kro (falsledkro.dk). **STANDOUT MEMORY**

Taking the children to the **Engadin Valley** near **St Moritz**. We fed sheep, milked cows and took a corkscrewing train ride up a mountain, then came back down by sledge – a five-mile, descent through a stunning snowscape. Stay at the **Giardino Mountain Resort** (giardinohotelgroup.ch) – the revamped Chesa Guardalej – in Champfèr. **ON THE LIST FOR 2012 Montenegro** – they say it's the



Great for entertaining children: Engadin Valley, St Moritz



new Croatia and I want to see it before they start saying Albania is the new Montenegro. Boutique hotel **Forza Mare** (forzamare.com) is receiving tip-top reviews from Original Travel clients. Visit originaltravel.co.uk

Sarah Walter, founder,
style-passport.com



NEW DISCOVERY **The Hay Festival** (hayfestival.com): 12 spring days of intellectual

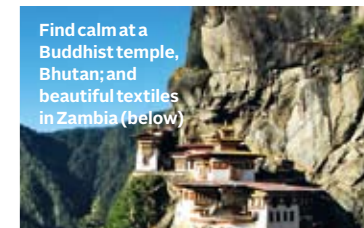
stimulation in beautiful country on the **Wales-Herefordshire** border. Book the large wooden table at **The River Café** (wyevalleycanoes.co.uk/rivercafe) in advance, and eat mussels and pasta overlooking the River Wye. You can stay on a b&b basis, too.

OLD FAVOURITE Zambia. My good friend, Gillie Lightfoot, lives outside Lusaka on Sugarbush Farm, where she sells textiles and crafts through her store Jackal & Hide (jackalandhide.net). Sit on the terrace with a glass of Mosi beer and soak up the sounds and smells of Africa. Stay at **Eight Reedbuck Hotel** (tribehotels.co.zm) in **Lusaka**, and one of Robin Pope Safaris' houses or camps

(robinpopesafaris.net) in the **Luangwa Valley**.

STANDOUT MEMORY Being driven through **Bhutan** with my husband for seven hours through jungle, mountains and hidden villages. One minute we were in the clouds, the next surrounded by rice fields and ancient Buddhist temples. It was both terrifying and exhilarating. Stay at **Amankora** (amanresorts.com).

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 Argentina. I've always wanted to experience the countryside as the locals do – on horseback. Travel with Exsus (exsus.com) and stay at **Estancia Huechahue** (huechahue.com) in northern **Patagonia**.



Find calm at a Buddhist temple, Bhutan; and beautiful textiles in Zambia (below)

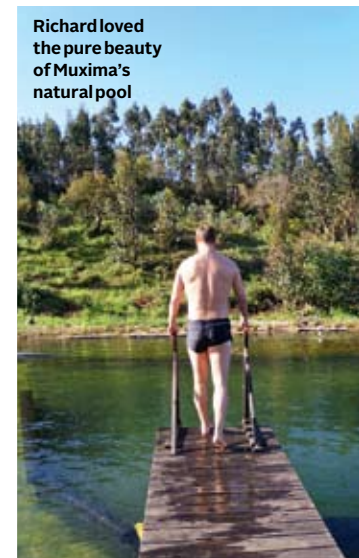


Richard Hammond,
founder, greentraveller.co.uk

NEW DISCOVERY South west **Portugal**. I was en route to the Canary Islands (by ferry from Portimão) and needed to stop over. **Muxima** (muxima-montesferreiros.com) is a former farmstead-turned-eco-friendly-chic guesthouse, among eucalyptus trees, with a natural pool.

OLD FAVOURITE Corsica. With its mountainous interior, white sand and turquoise waters, it's the most compelling island in the Med. Go by ferry from Marseille or Nice, then take the train from Ile Rousse, Calvi or Bastia through the mountains to Ajaccio. And Hôtel Monte d'Oro (monte-oro.com) – a quirky but classy end-of-the-century hotel at Vizzavona – is on the train line. **STANDOUT MEMORY** A night in a dome at **Fforest Camp** (coldatnight.co.uk) in **Cardigan**, south west Wales – glamorous camping, but without the fuss. My girlfriend and I had a blissful night's sleep beside a wood-burning stove and awoke to a panoramic window view of lush green countryside.

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 I'd like to rail and sail to the **Balearics**: take the train hotel from Paris to Barcelona, catch the ferry to Mallorca and cycle into the hills of the north. Stay at **Casa Bougainvillea** (casa-bougainvillea.com). See greentraveller.co.uk/plan-your-journey >>



Richard loved the pure beauty of Muxima's natural pool



Experience night-time glamour at Niyama, Maldives

The wilds of Alentejo, Portugal
LEFT: Chic style at The Zetter Townhouse



Ben Cooper, *travel editor, Redonline.co.uk*



NEW DISCOVERY The Zetter Townhouse (redonline.co.uk/travel/book-places-to-stay/the-zetter-townhouse) in London's Clerkenwell. I didn't think the original Zetter could get better, then they open Bistrot Bruno Loubet (where I had my best meal for a long time), followed by a new sister hotel.

OLD FAVOURITE I moved to southern Spain last year, so reacquainted myself with **Granada** – sampling tapas in the Realejo district, listening to flamenco at El Tabanco del Tío Gregorio, and weekends to the fabulous **La Almunia del Valle** (redonline.co.uk/travel/book-places-to-stay/la-almunia-del-valle) in the **Sierra Nevada**. **STANDOUT MEMORY** Scrabbling around on the hot, steep scree slopes of **Borges** and **Almáchar** in **Andalucía**, Spain, watching Muscat grapes being harvested by mule (stay at **Palacio Blanco**, palacioblanco.com, in **Vélez-Málaga**). And lying in bed at **Istanbul's A'jia Hotel** (redonline.co.uk/travel/book-places-to-stay/a-jia-hotel), looking out at the Bosphorus. **ON THE LIST FOR 2012** As much 'staycationing' on the **Iberian Peninsula** as possible. The wilds of **Spain's Extremadura** and **Portugal's Alentejo** regions are definitely calling: I'm particularly keen to check out the **Hospederia Convento de la Parra in Badajoz** (laparra.net).



Lisa Johnson, *contributing travel editor, Red*

NEW DISCOVERY Shepherd's huts. My latest crush is **Molly Dishwasher** (mollydishwasher.com), which stands in a field of deer on a stud farm outside **Royal Tunbridge Wells**, and comes with a kitchen/shower room, bluebell-filled woodland and optional barbecue boxes. Grilling halloumi kebabs on a balmy spring evening with my sister and three-year-old niece was great fun.

OLD FAVOURITE **Mozambique**. Its wild beauty and dramatic history are never less than mind-blowing – whether you're canoeing through a mangrove, watching a sunset from a dhow, or wandering through a ghostly ruin that was once a Portuguese governor's summer palace. Stay at **Coral Lodge 15.41** (coralodge1541.com).

STANDOUT MEMORY Foraging for mussels with my boyfriend on a snowy seashore in the **West Highlands**, and eating them in front of a wood-burning stove at **Callakille** (wildernesscottages.co.uk), a gorgeous crofter's cottage in **Applecross**.

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 I'd like to see **Malawi**, perhaps during the Lake Of Stars music festival, then chill out at barefoot luxury eco-lodge **Nkwichi** (mandawilderness.org). And go cycling round the **Ile de Ré** off the west coast of France – the new **Villa Clarisse** (villa-clarisse.fr) looks beautiful. *Book your stay at Molly Dishwasher and Callakille at Redonline.co.uk*



Nikki Tinto, *co-founder, i-escape.com*

It's hard to resist the unspoilt beaches of the Scilly Isles



NEW DISCOVERY **Areias do Seixo** (i-escape.com/areiasdoseixo.php), a stunning eco-design beach hotel half an hour north of **Lisbon**. Locals will take you foraging for seafood, or try the 'plot-to-plate' experience, working in the organic gardens and kitchen.

OLD FAVOURITE **The Isles of Scilly**. I've been for the past four years with my husband and daughter and have never felt more relaxed than in one of **Tresco's** beach houses. There are no cars, unspoilt beaches and a fabulous spa for rainy days. Stay at the **Flying Boat Club** (i-escape.com/flyingboatclub.php) or **Sea Garden Cottages** (tresco.co.uk).

STANDOUT MEMORY Mid-June on the **Snaefellsnes Peninsula**, western **Iceland**, walking across the lava fields in the midnight sun. The landscape is otherworldly and our heads were filled with tales of ghosts. The setting of **Hotel Budir** (i-escape.com/hotelbudir.php) is unbelievably magical.

ON THE LIST FOR 2012 **Italy's Cilento Coast** (Amalfi without the crowds), staying at a gem like **La Locanda della Donne Monache** (i-escape.com/la-locanda-delle-donne-monache.php), near historic **Maratea**. And **Casa Cairucu** (i-escape.com/casacairucu.php), a remote but stylish eco house on **Brazil's** Emerald Coast, a boat ride from **Paraty**. 🇧🇷