



## THE THINKING BEHIND THIS ESOTERIC JOURNEY

### BLACK GOLD - PARADISE LOST: EXPERIENCE ENGENDERS EXPERTISE

Black gold makes the world go round.

Our unique, umbilical dependency on oil gives it a pervasive and fascinating power. Oil not only powered the twentieth century, but its revenues built the modern world as we know it. Petroleum fuels life on our planet whilst simultaneously destroying it; it also shakes the global economy, shapes nations and influences conflict.

*Black Gold - Paradise Lost* narrates the very human story of oil, drilling into its monumental impact and import, as travellers trace the substance's life cycle and history across the Americas and further afield.

*"There is no substitute for energy. The whole edifice of modern life is built upon it. Although energy can be bought and sold like any other commodity, it is not 'just another commodity,' but the precondition of all commodities, a basic factor equally with air, water and earth."* Internationally influential economist, E.F Schumacher, 1964

Here at Brown + Hudson we believe travel means a world more than reinvigorating change of scene. It is an essential extension of our education and part of the search for truths, not accessible from a classroom. *Black Gold - Paradise Lost* is a window into understanding one of the driving forces of the world today.

Crucial and compelling insight, played out against extraordinary man-wrought topography, will take clients deep into a landscape of geopolitical, environmental, commercial, social and futurist concerns.

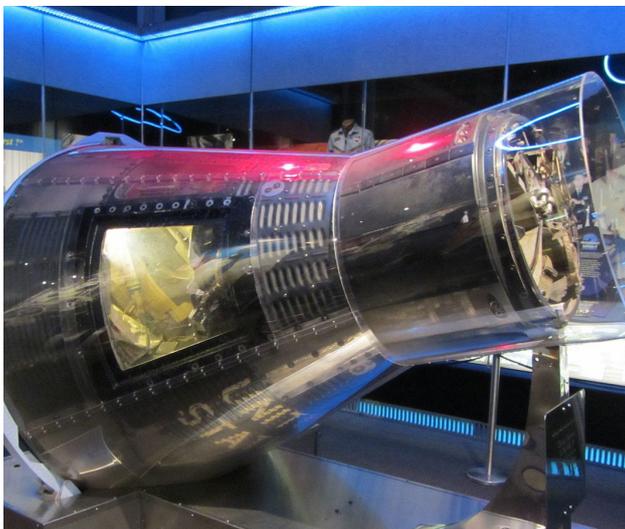
Inspired by the dramatic photography of Edward Burtynsky, as well as tales of adventure and intrigue from clients in the oil industry, we have cultivated an epic journey, with the transformative potential to alter how you perceive your world. Follow the passage of oil covering salient points of interests and beguiling tangents, from below the Texan soil to the tanks of NASCAR race cars via natural ever-burning fire in the Caucasus Mountains and the 18 lane highways of Houston.



For optimum coherence and practicality we have envisaged an itinerary spanning the Americas, but clients have several options to go further afield, expanding their understanding onto a global scale. Indeed, trips can be engineered around any specific destination or focal point, dependent on the client's ambitions. The average person in the developed world consumes 14 barrels of oil in a given year. Join us to find out where it came from.

### EXPLORATION, HISTORY + INDUSTRY: NEW YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, DENVER, OHIO, TEXAS

Before hopscotching a series of American States as you traverse oil's turbulent and extraordinary history, we start you off in the seat of American commerce - New York. Here we will arrange meetings with leading economic thinkers from the ECRI (Economic Cycle Research Institute) who monitor and predict the ebb and flow of money. Find out how oil underpins the world economy, as well as being introduced to conflicting arguments about 'Peak Oil'. These insights will form the backbone of your journey deeper into the heart of black gold.



With engaging historical experts on hand, the coming days are a dig into the origins of oil, reminiscent of prospectors scrambling for black gold in the mid-17th century and beyond. Amid the verdant Pennsylvanian countryside and abundant Victorian architecture of Titusville and Oil City, trace decaying oilfield equipment and old road signs as you unearth the first oil rush, boom and subsequent depression with its chaotic moral dissolution, learning about the "rule of capture" to the tune of Oil Fever Gallop and other popular songs of the era. Juxtapose this window into the past with insight into contemporary (and contentious) innovation, and the first stop in oil's life cycle, in the vibrant city of Denver. Based in the recently redeveloped downtown area with its thrilling art and restaurant scene you will spend a day with the exploration team of a company looking for new reservoirs for fracking, learning about how oil and gas is unlocked from tight oil sands and the processes of oil exploration.



In Cleveland, Ohio hear of the rise of one of the world's most influential and wealthy families – the Rockefellers - and the advent of Standard Oil, as you visit the many landmarks of their hometown. Skipping state again to Texas you will see Spindletop, the site of the first 'gusher' in 1901, as well as speaking to researchers at PETAX (the petroleum extension and academic centre of oil and gas at The University of Texas). The last stop on this leg is Houston – an exciting metropolis and home to over 5000 energy firms. Ogle at highways, nine lanes wide a side and pick-ups with 8 litre engines, as well as kicking back after the rigorous start to your journey. Explore the downtown and Museum districts with options to hit up a rodeo and visit NASA's Space Centre.



### FURTHER AFIELD: AZERBAIJAN

In the footsteps of Marco Polo who wrote of Azerbaijan's "oil fountains" in 1264, this is one of the oil industry's birthplaces, with a history drenched in the fortunes and tribulations of the black stuff. As well as its early history you will explore the connection between oil and the Soviet Union, after the Bolshevik revolution of 1905. Visit the country's vast and alien looking Azeri oil fields, whilst based in the oil-rich and dynamic convergence of East and West that is Baku.

An opulent city itinerary will take in wonders such as a Fire Temple nestled in the suburbs and the sinister memorial to spy, Richard Sorge. Take immersion in the subject to another level with a bath in crude oil at the Naftalan spa – a therapy that originates from the 6th Century BC. Travelling up into the remote Caucasus Mountains to the ancient village of Xinaliq, you will hike to the hidden natural fire vents of Ateshghah, guided by local shepherds.



### FURTHER AFIELD: ABU DHABI, UAE

For those wishing to experience a Middle-Eastern OPEC (Intergovernmental group - the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) destination as part of the itinerary we would recommend adding a visit to the dazzling Abu Dhabi, UAE. This tiny emirate with an equally miniscule indigenous population holds 9% of the planet's oil reserves and is the prime choice for experiencing the excesses of its revenues, whilst witnessing the extraction process: ride the world's fastest roller-coaster and stay in one of the most extravagant hotels we've ever experienced – The Emirates Palace, set in 85 hectares of immaculately landscaped garden.



### REFINERIES + PRODUCTION: ALBERTA, CANADA

Having seen how oil is extracted in Texas, you will fly to Alberta, Canada for the next leg in the cycle – refineries + production – which will be investigated in tandem with taking a cold, hard look at the environmental impact of our energy consumption. The expensive and damaging process of refining tar sands and disastrous Fort McMurray wildfire that raged throughout May this year, puts the area at the forefront of global warming concerns.

Based out of Calgary, clients will discover the Athabasca oil sands, meeting Friends of the Earth ambassadors, at the forefront of campaigning against the destruction of the Boreal forests. For a balanced picture they will also have the chance to meet a representative of TransCanada to discuss why the company is protesting the blocked proposal of Keystone XL – a pipeline that, they argue, would create jobs and improve the US economy without significant environmental damages. To see how tar sands fit into the larger Canadian activist movement, meet scholars



involved with the Leap Manifesto – a radical call for environmental stewardship based on respect for indigenous communities.

Next up is an extensive exploration of the labyrinthine refineries and the processes that convert bitumen into what powers your hatchback – all explained in laymen terms. Whilst in Alberta, you can also visit the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations Uncle Fred Youth Elders Lodge. This is an opportunity to chat with members of the K'ai Taile Dene about how they hunt and fish their traditional lands. You can also take part in cultural activities that have been central to their way of life for generations.

There will be the chance to take a breather from the densely educational nature of the journey and reflect on the environmental concerns you have been exposed to, whilst trekking in Alberta's breath-taking landscape.

### GEOPOLITICAL BY-PRODUCTS: VENEZUELA

For a very current snapshot of the way oil affects global politics we head south, homing in on the effect of the 'resource curse' that has blighted the colourful and characterful country of Venezuela. Having the largest reserves in the world has not played out well for the local people, with hyperinflation and the resulting hunger, civil unrest and potential political collapse making the country a victim of misfortunes that began with oil. Brown + Hudson will ensure all safety and security measures are met and you will witness history in the making.

Based out of Maracaibo on the shores of its stunning lake where much of the country's oil production is based, meet a host of fascinating insiders, from local activists and journalists to economic thinkers. Learn how charismatic Chavez nationalised the previously foreign-run oil companies diverting investment to the poor, but removed expertise and created an economy dependent on resources. See the effects of dropping oil prices under Maduro, where they have hit the hardest, and decipher American interests in the region. Clients will leave the country with an appreciation for its warm people, natural beauty and first-hand experience of front-page news.

### CONSUMPTION + ENTERTAINMENT: LOS ANGELES

Next up we raise the pace, turning your eyes to the consumption of oil, a commodity used to make everything from antifreeze to parachutes. Opting for an adrenaline-fuelled window into America's obsession with the automobile, what could symbolise burning energy for entertainment better than NASCAR? Speed freaks have the ultimate experience at Fontana's Auto Club Speedway, heading to the tracks and getting behind the wheel with a winning Sprint Cup Series driver. Heading back to LA, we





leave the oil below ground for the duration of the day and have our trip planners tailor activities best suited to your group, showcasing the best of this sometimes baffling city.

### THE FUTURE OF ENERGY: CALIFORNIA

As a Saudi oil minister once said ““The Stone Age did not end for lack of stone, and the Oil Age will end long before the world runs out of oil”. Having already heard persuasive economic, social and environmental arguments for the move from fossil fuels to renewable, clean energies, now’s the time to explore alternatives. To finish this American oil odyssey, you will look to the future. Oracle of all things energy, Daniel Yergin’s latest book ‘The Quest’ is an optimistic look at innovation in the industry, which he believes will always step up to the challenge of providing the energy we need. We too have opted to end on an optimistic note, exploring the most viable alternative energies and radical new business plans for the democratisation of energy.

Staying in California and heading to Tesla’s HQ in Palo Alto to learn about the solutions offered by the Powerwall battery, you will then tour a series of forward-looking Silicon Valley technology and energy start-ups. Learn what the future of energy looks like from the guys working on it now, culminating at PARC – the pioneering ‘Breakthrough Business’ who work as consultants to breed innovation.



### FURTHER AFIELD - E-WASTE AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY: CHINA

Though the *Black Gold – Paradise Lost* itinerary can be neatly wrapped up in the crucible that is Silicon Valley, for the adventurous learner, we strongly recommend extending the trip to China. Surpassing the US as the world’s fourth biggest producer of black gold, this year the country is predicted to also overtake America in crude oil imports.

The course of the journey will have taken clients to some overwhelmingly gargantuan industrial landscapes, but little can prepare you for the sprawl of Guiya – the world’s largest electronic waste site. A graveyard of human consumption, the toxic environment and poor workers’ conditions make it a contentious and glaring example of man’s destructive nature.

From this regressive exploitation of people and the planet, the journey ends with a feat of engineering on the epic scale of China’s famous Great Wall. See the astonishing wind farms (some as large as England) that researchers predict would be sufficient to meet the vast country’s electrical demands by 2030. Finally, the mighty Three Gorges Dam is a sight that will blow the mind. Costing a whopping \$37 billion dollars and forcing the relocation of 1.3 million people, environmentalists are seriously concerned about





the project's ecological impact. As always experts will be on hand to provide you the information you need to weigh up whether the hydroelectric power generated is worth the environmental and human cost.

*Black Gold - Paradise Lost* is one example of our stimulating new travel concept: **Esoterica**. An adventure of a new sort, tailored for questioning and curious travellers who desire to return home with the long-lasting memento of knowledge.

Beyond the literal cycle of oil and processes of production and use, this journey is a porous learning experience, providing a prism through which to consider wider environmental, political and social ideas and issues. Brown + Hudson's meticulous approach to research, teamed with their passion for rich travel narratives, give us a unique aptitude for tailoring extraordinary educational journeys around any given topic, from aviation to oranges. Let us fill the gaps in your knowledge, with experiences that engender expertise.