

# A FAR

WHERE TRAVEL CAN TAKE YOU AFAR.COM #TRAVELDEEPER

# THE FUTURE

**BIG IDEAS  
THAT WILL  
SHAPE  
YOUR  
NEXT TRIP**

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**AUSTRALIA  
GO FAR  
BEYOND  
THE  
EXPECTED**

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SEE WHAT  
YOU'VE  
BEEN  
MISSING**

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**LOS  
ANGELES  
A NEW WAY  
TO STAY  
UP LATE**

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THE CITY  
THAT DOES  
SUMMER  
RIGHT**

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# OF TRAVEL



# Surprise Is the New Luxury

THE 2015 TRAVEL VANGUARD



## THE DREAM WEAVER

**PHILIPPE BROWN**, founder of outfitter Brown + Hudson, argues that where you travel isn't really the point.

**HOW ARE YOU SHAKING UP TRAVEL?** "We plan trips starting with the *why* you are choosing to travel rather than the destination. Where you go might be a surprise; some people don't want to find out until the day before takeoff."  
**AND HOW DO YOU DO THAT?** "We start with an in-depth interview that reveals your passions and motivations. People tend to travel because they want something

that isn't present where they are. We discover what that is, then find a destination that can fulfill it. We tap our global network of locals, experts, and dignitaries to concoct behind-the-scenes experiences and meetings with interesting characters. [See the Iceland itinerary on page 54.] Then, we reveal the trip in an unusual way: maybe a hardcover book delivered by courier or a

soliloquy performed during a play's intermission."  
**WHY ARE PEOPLE RESPONDING TO THIS?** "Many travelers are now craving authenticity, not packaged tours. The success of Airbnb demonstrates this. People also want a trusted voice to help guide them: There are a gazillion sources of travel inspiration, but standards may be vastly different. Our trips match the traveler."



## AN ANNOTATED GUIDE TO AN AWE-INSPIRING TRIP

The challenge: She needed rest, he wanted adventure, they both craved culture. Philippe Brown shares how he tailored a surprising Iceland trip to a couple's quirks.

### DAY 1

Meet guide Ingolfur Brunn, a former policeman who climbs mountains and flies an ultralight

#### THE IDEA

"Holly needs a slower pace, yet she's married to Zac, who leaps tall buildings in a single bound. It's a balancing act, to be sure."

#### THE PAYOFF

"Brunn took Zac ice-climbing on the Vatnajökull glacier, while Holly soaked in healing waters near lava fields."

### DAY 2

Coffee with producer Leifur Dagfinnsson, who shot the Icelandic scenes in *Die Another Day*

#### THE IDEA

"When we learned Holly and Zac were James Bond diehards, someone remembered *Die Another Day* was filmed here."

#### THE PAYOFF

"We persuaded Dagfinnsson to meet Zac and Holly, who spent a morning getting the lowdown on how he pulled off the scenes."

### DAY 3

Arrive at a majestic 1,800-seat concert hall known for its incredible acoustics

#### THE IDEA

"Holly loves to play the piano, so we arranged for her to perform at the iconic Harpa Concert Hall in Reykjavik."

#### THE PAYOFF

"Holly had no idea. She was ushered onstage to the piano, where she played to an audience of one: Zac."

## EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Four ways hotels, outfitters, and even Disney are stepping up the spontaneity.

1

### UNPACK A NEW LOOK

**St. Regis** will load up your room's closet with a **Neiman Marcus wardrobe assembled** just for you. Keep the Alexander McQueens you love, leave the rest.

2

### DIGITAL FAIRY GODMOTHER

**Disney's MagicBand** e-bracelet alerts staff to your arrival, works as a credit card, and soon, could **zap you a free ice cream voucher** if you've waited too long in line.

3

### CHILEAN SURPRISE PARTY

Every room at the **Awasi Patagonia** resort comes with a guide who can arrange surprises like, say, a hike in Torres del Paine National Park **capped by a spontaneous lunch**.

4

### IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS

You may find a **book by a favorite author** or a **box of pastries** left on your nightstand by the attentive staff at the new **Grand Amore Hotel** in Florence.



## Selfies No More

El Camino is here to capture your vacation bliss.

» Imagine you're on vacation in Nicaragua. You leave all devices (phone, camera, GoPro) in your room and spend the days surfing, shopping the craft markets, and feasting on shrimp tacos. Yet every morning, you wake up to photos from the day before. You catching a wave. You on the prow of a catamaran. The whirl of colors that is a Nicaraguan craft market. That's the idea behind **El Camino**, a new **outfitter that sends a photographer on its group trips so you can revel, unplugged**, yet still post a dynamite #humblebrag to Instagram. "Every morning, we sit around the breakfast table and relive the past day," says cofounder Katalina Mayorga. "You get these beautiful images of yourself actually enjoying your vacation." Picky about what goes in your feed? "Some people are uncertain at first, but after seeing how well the first images come out, even they say, 'Oh, I really don't need to take my own photos.'"