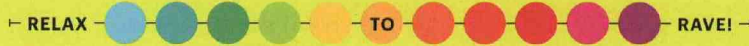


Better Living on a Scale From...



BLISS INDEX

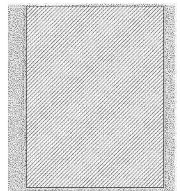
BY JENNIFER BARGER
ILLUSTRATION BY
JAMES TAYLOR

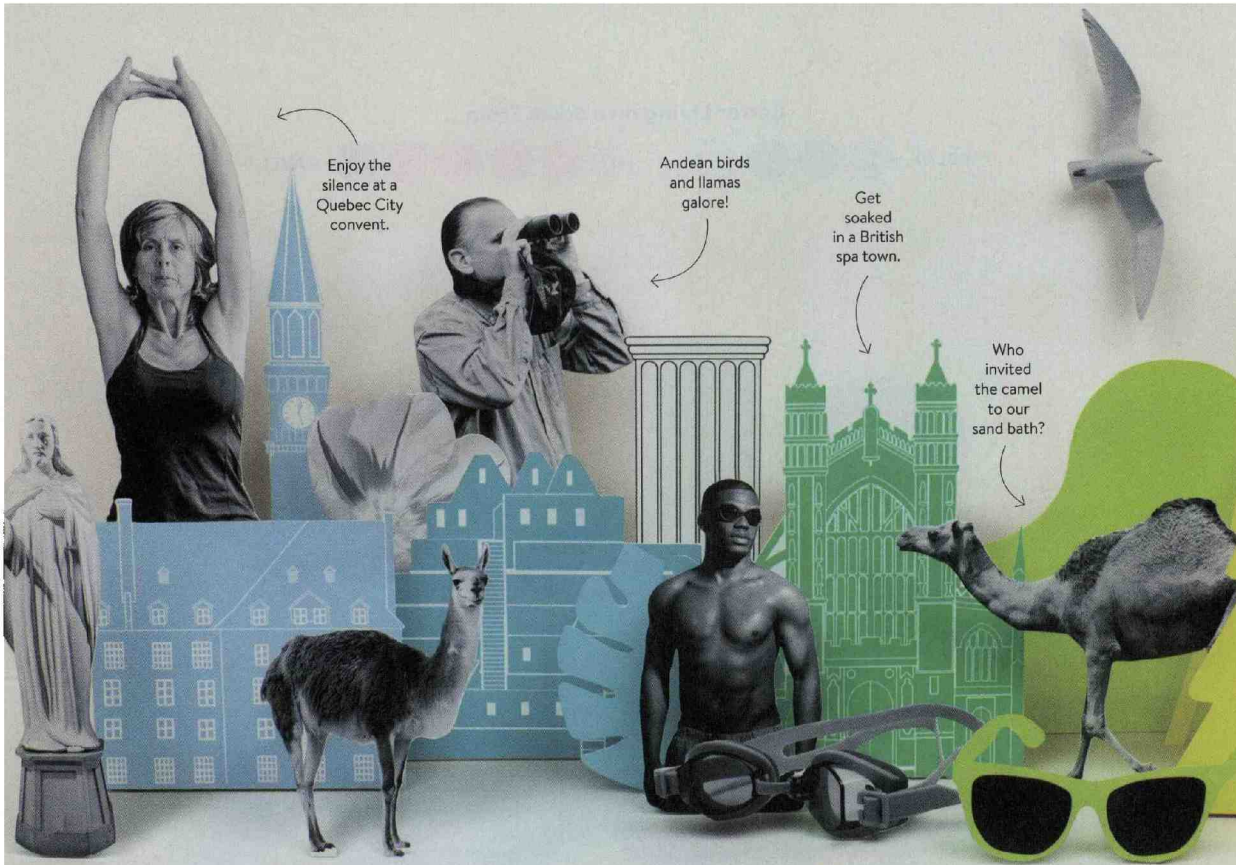
11

Experiences
that Provide
a Mental
and Physical
Reboot



AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2016 65





1

COOL CLOISTER

QUEBEC CITY, CANADA

Recently opened in the heart of Old Quebec, Le Monastère des Augustines offers the serenity of a convent but with options for yoga and scrapbooking thrown in. The 65-room wellness retreat is partly housed in the restored cloister of the Augustinian Sisters, health care pioneers who founded here, in the 17th century, the first hospital in North America outside of Mexico. monastere.ca/en

2

Honor Your Mother

AGUAS CALIENTES, PERU

Before journeying up to the Inca ruins on Machu Picchu, give your mother a call. Mother Earth, that is. At traditional "payment to the Earth" rituals at Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel (one of the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World), a shaman helps guests honor Pachamama (Mother Earth) by burning a gift-wrapped package that includes coca leaves, a llama fetus, sweets, and confetti. The two-hour ceremony pays tribute to the *apus* (mountain gods). "I'm not a spiritual person, but when the shaman bundled things together and put them in the fire," says Noa Artzi-Weil, who participated in the ritual this year, "I was moved." natgeolodges.com

3

TAKE THE WATERS

BATH, ENGLAND

This British town's mineral-rich geothermal waters are purported to increase endorphins and reduce joint pain. The Celts and Romans wouldn't have used those exact words to explain their attraction to this area centuries ago, but they might still feel at home at the new Gainsborough Bath Spa, with its Doric columns and mosaic tile. www.thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk

4

Decompress in the Desert

MERZOUGA, MOROCCO

Think of it as a sand bath. During the sweltering months of July and August, blue-turbaned Berbers dig bathtub-size holes in the ochre Sahara sand, wait for the grains to heat up in the sun, and then bury customers up to their necks. Participants stay in the ground about 10 minutes, and afterward are wrapped in blankets for an hour and rehydrate with tea. The sweaty sauna-like treatment soothes muscles. Most hotels in the area, including the castle-like Ksar Merzouga, can organize a *bain de sable*. ksar-merzouga.com/en



5

WALK ON TREETOPS

UPSTATE NEW YORK

Get a bird's soaring perspective on the Adirondacks via the new Wild Walk, an elevated, bridgelike boardwalk, ranging from two to four stories high, that winds through the forest canopy. Along the way, visitors get a peek at surrounding mountains, lounge in a human-size spider web, and play in a twig tree house. wildcenter.org

6

Yoga Mash-ups

MONTANA AND SWITZERLAND

Yoga classes are flowing off the mat. In winter, Montana's Ranch at Rock Creek (one of the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World) offers "snowga." Participants cross-country ski or snowshoe up to higher mountain elevations, then—with boots and snowshoes on and skis off—practice warrior and mountain poses in the snowpack, which is sticky enough that mats aren't necessary. At the historic Gstaad Palace in the Swiss Alps, "woga" classes take place in a heated pool where instructors hold yogis up during seated positions so they're never fully submerged. natgeolodges.com, palace.ch

7

MOUNTAIN HIGH

LABRADOR, CANADA

Fly-fishing expeditions and backcountry camping are just some of the natural stimulants in Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve. Now the largest park in Eastern Canada, the 4,131-square-mile wilderness is co-managed by native Innu tribes, who also run Park Lake Lodge, which can only be reached via seaplane. Guests there bunk in rustic rooms and when they aren't trying to land the big one, they can take part in Innu-led craft lessons, such as learning how to make hide boots. parklakelodge.com

8

Two-Wheel Safaris

SOUTH AFRICA AND SWAZILAND

Safarigoers use cycling legs, not jeeps, on African Bikers' small-group tours, which pedal past zebras, hippos, and impalas amid the dramatic granite peaks and soothing grasslands of the Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary, in Swaziland. Daily rides range from 11 to 37 miles and cruise through Zulu villages and Kruger National Park in South Africa, and along the Indian Ocean shoreline. Get out of the saddle for visits to crafts collectives and Durban's Indian spice market. africanbikers.com



9

HEAVENLY HIKE

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

The 64-mile Great Ocean Walk meanders through deserted beaches and the Otways rain forests, before ending in view of the offshore limestone stacks known as the Twelve Apostles. Hikers might spot kangaroos, wallabies, or whales. Do the whole trail in about a week (there are campsites along the way), or just portions via a guided trip. visitgreatoceanroad.org.au/greatoceanwalk

10

Waves of Wellness

SUMBA ISLAND, INDONESIA

Surfers travel the world in search of those adrenaline-inducing perfect waves. At Sumba Island's Nihiwatu resort, fronting the Indian Ocean, "there's a juxtaposition of trade winds, swell direction, and distance from storms," says part-time surfing instructor Terry Simms. "It creates some of the smoothest and most undisturbed swells in the world." Experienced boarders tackle Occy's Left, a barreling, long left break; beginners can take lessons using rental equipment. Guests can stay in thatch-roofed villas that mimic traditional Sumbanese houses. nihiwatu.com

11

DANCE AT DAWN

MULTIPLE CITIES

Daybreaker, a series of early a.m. raves launched in New York, brings booze-free yoga and DJ-fueled dance parties to nightclubs. The clean fun can be found in London, Paris, Washington, and soon, Shanghai and Hong Kong. They're powered by green juice and fair-trade coffee. "I love that you see all shapes, ages, and sizes dancing and smiling," says D.C. fan Deepa Venkataraman. dybrkr.com

D.C.-based writer and fashion stylist JENNIFER BARGER can be found on Twitter and Instagram at @dcjnell.

PAGE 65: LIUPCO/GETTY IMAGES (BICYCLE); NERTHUZ/GETTY IMAGES (TELESCOPE); FIZKES/GETTY IMAGES (YOGA); MIKHAIL ABRAMOV/SHUTTERSTOCK (LOWER PEONY); OLEGGANKO/SHUTTERSTOCK (UPPER PEONY); JOAKIM LEROY/GETTY IMAGES (STONES); SOLEG/GETTY IMAGES (SEAGULL); REBIUS/GETTY IMAGES (AIRPLANE). PAGE 66: LE MONASTÈRE DES AUGUSTINES (STATUE AND YOGA); JACKP/GETTY IMAGES (GUANACO); JAMES TAYLOR (TULIP); COURTESY INKATERRA (BIRD-WATCHER); YSBRAND COSLIN/GETTY IMAGES (SWIMMER); TEREX/GETTY IMAGES (GOOGLES); KAN-OKSAK DETS-ONAI/GETTY IMAGES (CAMEL); SOLEG/GETTY IMAGES (BIRD). PAGE 67: GURUXOOX/GETTY IMAGES (SNOWGA); LECHHENGRAND/GETTY IMAGES (FLOATPLANE); EDSSEL QUERINI/GETTY IMAGES (FLY FISHERMAN); BURAZINI/GETTY IMAGES (GIRAFFE); PRAPASSONG/GETTY IMAGES (ZEBRA); 4X6/GETTY IMAGES (BICYCLIST). PAGE 68: NO LIMIT PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES (HIKER); BRIAN MCCENTRENS/SHUTTERSTOCK (BOOTS); 4X6/GETTY IMAGES (SURFER); CHORALE MILES/DAYBREAKER (DANCING WOMAN); OPOLJA/GETTY IMAGES (DISCO BALL); ANDREW RAUNER/DAYBREAKER (YOGI'S STRETCHING).