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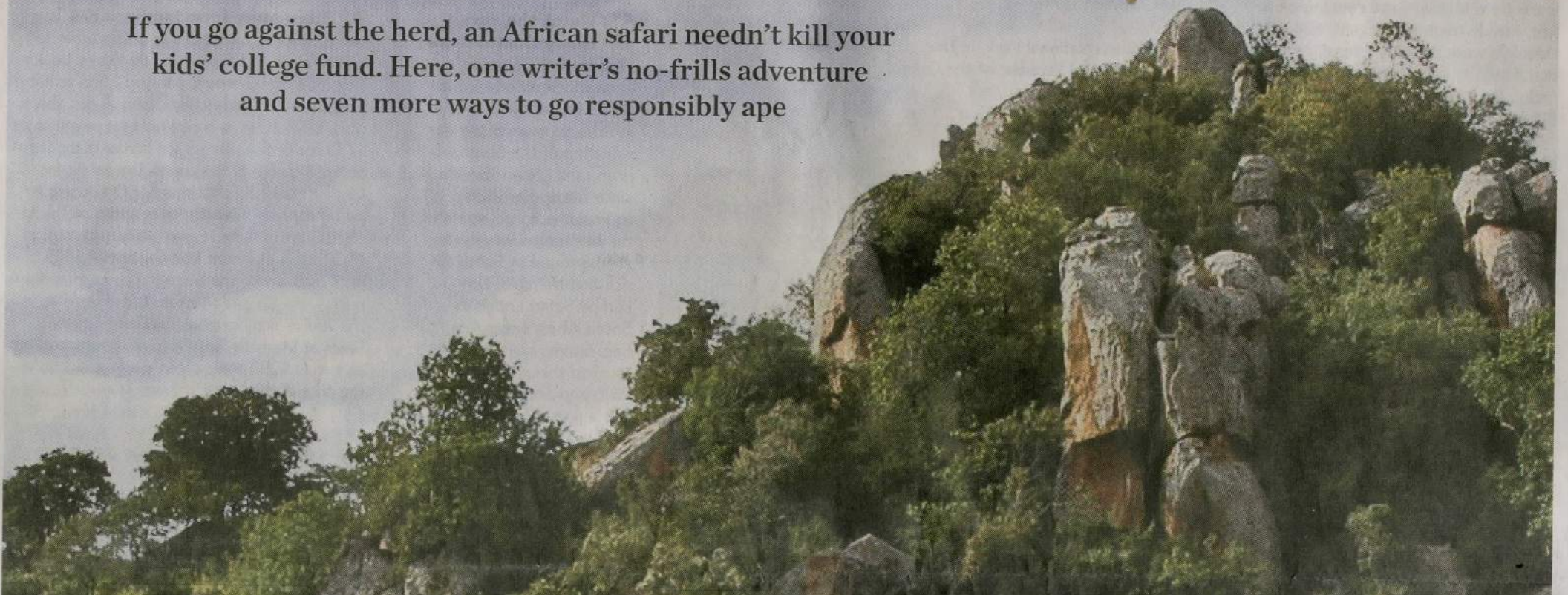
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Friday - Sunday, October 21 - 23, 2016 | **W1**

## AFFORDABLE Where the Wild Things Are

If you go against the herd, an African safari needn't kill your  
kids' college fund. Here, one writer's no-frills adventure  
and seven more ways to go responsibly ape





# A new era of luxury – how the empowered creative-class value independence over loyalty

As the new generations arrive into adulthood and bring with them new technology, the luxury travel industry finds itself facing a strange new world. Vacationers have become adventurers. Smarter, more demanding and more empowered - loyal customer status and a consistent brand experience have been thrown unceremoniously from the window of a refurbished 1950s Pullman, and in their place, an endless desire to find new ways to travel, new places to explore and more meaningful relationships with their hosts. Where loyalty points and programs once ruled the roost, modern affluent consumers are less concerned with rewards, and increasingly focussed on independence.

Personal growth, a cerebral work out, and lasting social impact are high on the modern traveller's agenda, and with Generation Z looking beyond the price as a sign of luxury, to what they're actually going to get for it, luxury operators are racing to create exceptional experiences that speak to personal passions, help customers explore the things they love more deeply, and real-world experiences of the global issues we all care about. So how are hotels and luxury travel experiences responding to the new role that travel plays in the lives of today's creative class? And where does the industry stand on the apex of experience vs amenities?

At ILTM each year the movers and shakers of today's high-end travel industry gather to explore new experiences and new trends emerging onto the luxury scene. This is where an understanding of the new breed of luxury travellers takes shape, and where the World's most exciting travel itineraries are born.

## Once in a lifetime ephemeral events

Show someone a magical rift into another world and they're likely to be your friend for life, say Iceland experts, Nine Worlds.

Named after the nine homeworlds found in the cosmology of ancient Norse mythology, Nine Worlds offer completely customised, tailor-made trips to Iceland and Greenland that explore all nine realms, as unified by the Norse creation myth. Expect to see the magical Aurora Borealis and journey across glaciers taking in geysers, volcanos and hot springs, complete with luxury personal service 24 hours a day. The experience of going nine holes in the midnight sun will stay with you forever. Luxury like this comes at a price, but it will be worth it.

## Nomad is the new normal

Forget your traditional idea of camping. Even 'glamping' doesn't compare. This is Ultra-camping and when you're being guided by The Ultimate Travelling Camp (TUTC), some of India's most spectacular and picturesque settings are the destinations. Ultra-camping with TUTC will destroy your preconceptions of a life under canvas and reinforce your most romantic and sensory mind-pictures of India's remote cultures and landscapes. Luxury camping expeditions are one way to immerse yourself more fully into the dramatic scenery, the ethereally beautiful landscapes, and the colourful cultures of a destination, and when the caravan picks up and moves on, you roll with it to the next destination.

## The rise of responsible travel

Millennials are conscious consumers. They care about their impact and they care about their experience. With a wealth of choice for luxury travel planners and agents, ILTM profiles brands like Inkaterra, who since their establishment in 1975 have pioneered ecotourism in Peru, sharing cultural and natural values through authentic travel experiences. The brand works with a holistic approach, generating added value in rural areas and producing scientific research for biodiversity conservation, education and the sustainable development of local communities.

## The union of art and beauty

A new commitment to enrichment and the fulfilment of educational goals has given rise to renewed interest in studying the classics. The Four Seasons Hotel Florence is an art aficionado's dream. Formerly a Renaissance palace and convent, the hotel is covered with stunning restored frescoes, bas-reliefs, stuccoes and silk wallpaper that date back five centuries. The lobby courtyard, which is now enclosed, is a standout with 12 bas-relief sections illustrating classical and mythological tales. And a lush 11-acre garden—the largest private garden in the city—is dotted with intriguing sculptures. If it's meaning you're searching for, why not put yourselves in the hands of Michelangelo, Giotto, and Donatella?

When it comes down to it, what helps any company create good business is a willingness to go above and beyond for their clients. In today's luxury landscape, it's perfectly acceptable to expect your travel advisor to scratch an itch for a character building experience that goes way beyond making sure there's a bottle of champagne waiting for you when you arrive. Loyalty these days is about a two way relationship between client and customer, and though the expectation of modern travellers and ways of communicating with them have changed drastically in this new world of ours, it's no surprise that individuality, personalisation and old fashioned hard work trumps points, rewards and programs for today's travellers.

**These and other emerging trends for the luxury travel industry will be debated at International Luxury Travel Market – ILTM. Luxury Travel agents and designers wishing to be considered for accreditation to ILTM 2016 (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> December in Cannes, France) should visit [www.iltm.com](http://www.iltm.com) for further information.**