

Best of the blogs

Here are extracts from our three favourite blogs this month. If you'd like to share one with us, tweet @NatGeoTraveller with #NGTUKblogs



EXPLORING MOMBASA

storiesmysuitcasecouldtell.com

Mombasa was full of life. You could almost feel it pulsing: chaotic, messy, loud, and exuberant. Whether it was the clamour of tuk-tuk horns and calls to prayer, or the whiff of warm, raw meat mingling with curry powder, Mombasa made itself known. Colour caught my attention among the damp, dilapidated old buildings that hinted at former glory days. Over-ripe bananas in a hand-drawn cart. Geometric patterns and bright hues on a headscarf.

CROSSBONES GRAVEYARD, LONDON

traveldarkly.com

Cross Bones is the final resting place for those once considered the dregs of society. Although its exact age is a bit hazy, it was referred to as a 'single woman's churchyard' (read: prostitute) in the 16th century, and by the 18th century was known as a burial ground for paupers, until its closure in 1853. It was only with the digging involved in the extension of the Jubilee line in the 1990s that Museum of London archaeologists excavated the crowded graves.

YOGA RETREAT: BLUE OSA, COSTA RICA

pointsandtravel.com

Birds flying high in the sky are of stunning colours. Macaws, I think. I can't seem for the life of me to get a photo of a single one of them as they soar. Actually, they run in pairs and someone told me if you see three of them together, then two of them are the parents and the third one is their baby. I think that's sweet. I sit and stare on the tropical grassy grounds and wonder, "Why I am here?" I find a wooden bench and stare.

KATE RUSSELL



Snow time to travel

If you're planning a winter sports trip there are some essential websites to help you find the best location. In theory, you could ski at any one of 6,000 or so resorts in 75 countries, so to help narrow that list down, Welove2ski (welove2ski.com) has put together some great guides and resort overviews, plus gear round-ups.

Once you've cut down your options, the Ski Club of Great Britain site (skiclub.co.uk/skiclub/skiresorts) has a tool for comparing destinations, including family-friendly features and snow reports for over 250 resorts. There's also information on indoor UK snow centres, plus exclusive Ski Club member discounts and offers.

You can avoid hopping from site to site to find facilities like transfers to sleepy mountain villages by using GoEuro (goeuro.com). This shows your best transport options from door to door, including flights, trains and local buses, in your own language and currency. Eco-warriors heading to the mountains can check out SnowCarbon (snowcarbon.co.uk), which has the best Alpine resorts reached entirely by train.

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ON SCREEN: MY OLD LADY

Paris stars as the setting in this feel-good directorial movie debut by prolific playwright and screenwriter Israel Horowitz about an American (Kevin Kline) who inherits a crumbling French apartment and finds an unexpected resident (Maggie Smith) and her daughter (Kristin Scott Thomas), the reluctant love interest.