

## So you're looking for an adventure?

By LYSA ALLMAN-BALDWIN | 2/25/2016, 5:48 p.m.



The number of female solo travelers is growing exponentially, and many destinations and organizations are either significantly reducing, or eliminating altogether, the traditional single supplement charges that made solo travel more expensive. LYSA ALLMAN-BALDWIN PHOTO

As older generations continue to live longer and in better shape, younger generations actively seek to push new boundaries. Overall, people are becoming more travel savvy, while "adventure travel" has become one of the fastest growing segments of the industry.

Whether it's cycling through the European countryside, cruising to the Antarctic Circle, helping to build a sustainable community in a third-world country, backpacking solo across the U.S. and everything in between, travelers are looking for something deeper—and often far beyond—the road less traveled.

Following are a few adventure travel ideas, according to the folks at Exodus Travels, a leading adventure tour operator for over 40 years, to get your wanderlust plans underway.

### EXTREME WELLNESS HOLIDAYS

According to Exodus Travels, "physically demanding and mentally challenging adventures that focus on extreme biking and trekking" are replacing relaxing in a wellness retreat, embarking upon a yoga getaway or luxuriating at a magnificent spa. For some, a "wellness concept" is more focused on an adrenaline rush than one that encourages a slow and steady heartbeat.

### CONSERVATION SAFARIS IN AFRICA

Just in time for celebrating 50 years of independence, Botswana is seeing a surge in wildlife and environmental conservation safaris. For better or worse, it appears that all of the publicity surrounding the senseless killing of Cecil the lion has placed more focus on the importance of saving our world's animals. As a result, these types of adventures are becoming more and more popular here and in other places around the world.

### A NEW FUTURE FOR CUBA

Although most of the world has been able to travel to Cuba for decades, the country is just now opening up for Americans, who have been by and large prevented from doing so. As such, tourism is becoming one of Cuba's biggest industries with a great deal to offer travelers. From wine tasting in the hilly regions, to one-on-one cultural exchanges in people's homes, to architectural tours highlighting the island's magnificent structures, you will find it here.

### A DIFFERENT TAKE ON 'THE JUNGLE BOOK'

It's no secret that the hottest movies often inspire people to travel to the exotic locales where they were filmed. Such is the case with visiting the animals and jungles of India as a result of the latest film adaptation of the classic book by Rudyard Kipling, "The Jungle Book." The country's safari parks and preserves, including places like Bandhavgarh, Pench and Kanha and national parks, are becoming hot travel tickets.

### BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

Dogsledding, nighttime skiing, experiencing the Northern Lights, sleeping in an ice hotel and other unique thrill-seeking activities are among the adventures to be had during the cold winter months. Add to that the fact that the rates are generally cheaper and the crowds a lot smaller than in the warmer months and you've got a new slew of adventurers willing to brave single-digit thermometer readings to experience something exciting and new.

### A DIFFERENT VIEW OF IRAN

Like Cuba, Iran's borders have been opened to the world in a new way beginning in 2015, which is attractive to many travelers who want to learn more about this country other than what is portrayed in the news.

According to Exodus Travels, "The world's finest Persian architecture and historic sites, bustling bazaars, artistic masterpieces, mind-blowing cuisine and hospitality steeped in ancient traditions promise an extraordinary adventure."

### EAST MEETS WEST

Lookout Western Europe, your neighbors to the east are starting to steal a little of your thunder! Not because you are any less fabulous, but because there is a great deal of fabulousness to be had in places such as Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic, just to name a few. Their respective historical sites, cultural offerings, gastronomic adventures and jaw-dropping scenery offers a great deal for the adventure traveler.

### LADIES ONLY

Not only do the women of the house do most of the family travel planning, but they are also—for a wide variety of reasons—taking these plans on the road—alone. Female solo travel is growing exponentially, and many destinations and organizations are either significantly reducing or eliminating altogether the traditional single supplement charges that made solo travel more expensive. This coupled with better safety measures (for all travelers) at hotels, on tours and so forth makes traveling alone for women much more appealing.

### TAKE THE DAY OFF

Believe it or not, many companies are finally recognizing the value and benefits of allowing their employees to take sufficient time off. Among them are increased productivity, higher energy levels and outside-of-the-box creativity. With more time to travel, in particular, according to some studies, embarking upon regular overseas vacations, employees are stretching the boundaries of the types of trips they might ordinarily take if only given a short amount of time.

### ALONE AGAIN, NATURALLY

Well, not quite, but self-guided trips that combine the carefree ease of guided group travel with the independence of going it alone are on the rise. Among the advantages are the ability to simply set your own dates and allowing travel companies who specialize in this area to take care of planning your route, booking your lodging and other details depending on the type of trip.

### YOU GET TO DEFINE 'ADVENTURE'

It's important to remember that adventure travel is whatever you decide it is. Driving further than three hours from your house may be an "adventure" for you. The same goes for eating a different type of food than that which you are accustomed. For Oprah and best bud Gayle, it was camping in Yellowstone National Park sans the creature comforts of a plush hotel bed and a hot shower. The main idea is to get out there and live.

For more Adventure Travel news, destinations, tour operators, resources and more, in addition to Exodus Travels ([www.exodustravels.com](http://www.exodustravels.com)), check out Adventure Travel ([www.adventure.travel](http://www.adventure.travel)), Total Adventure (<http://totaladventure.travel>), World Expeditions ([www.worldexpeditions.com](http://www.worldexpeditions.com)) or Intrepid Travel ([www.intrepidtravel.com](http://www.intrepidtravel.com)), among many other organizations.

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