

Condé Nast Traveler

APRIL 2020

SEE THE WORLD IN A NEW LIGHT

GUATEMALA
RAJA AMPAT
NEW YORK CITY
SOUTH AFRICA
ST. BARTS

+ THE BEST TRIP PLANNERS FOR 2020

In Cuba, everything can change at a moment's notice—which is why David Lee of Cultural Cuba always provides his clients up with a private, around-the-clock guide



CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER PRESENTS

The 2020 Top Travel Specialists

Each year we assemble our definitive list of the finest travel experts in the world. These are the pros who whip up life-changing experiences with military precision (in a few cases, they are actual former uniformed officers), and who always have the answers to questions most travelers don't even know to ask—which is why we rely enormously on their insights when reporting stories from around the world. To dismiss them as mere vacation planners would be selling them short: They are the architects of travelers' dreams, able to transform the way each of us sees the world with a single itinerary.

Top Travel Specialists



Sarah Sahel of Maana Travel visits a different part of Morocco each month to stay in the loop

AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Even the most well-traveled among us need a hand in deciphering migration routes and coordinating multi-gen safaris

CENTRAL AFRICA
Mark Nolting
*The Africa
Adventure Company*

Karen Zulauf
Deeper Africa

EASTERN AFRICA
Cherri Briggs
Explore

Linda Friedman
Custom Safaris

Kathy Obbish
*Custom Safaris
& Explorations*

EGYPT
Jim Berkeley
*Destinations &
Adventures*

Rami Girgis
Abercrombie & Kent USA

ETHIOPIA
Will Jones
Journeys by Design

**INDIAN OCEAN
ISLANDS**
Henrietta Loyd
Cazenove + Loyd

Lindsey Wallace
Linara Travel

IRAN AND TUNISIA
Jerry Sorkin
*Iconic Journeys
Worldwide*

ISRAEL
Jonathan Rose
Touring Israel

Susan Weissberg
*Wyllys Professional
Travel*

Joe Yudin
Touring Israel

JORDAN
Jen Barnaby
Wild Frontiers

MOROCCO
Michael Diamond
*Cobblestone Private
Travel*

Mike Korn
Artisans of Leisure

Sebastian Lapostol
Trufflepig Travel

Sarah Sahel
Maana Travel

Alex Wix
Wix Squared

OMAN
Sean Nelson
Oman Expeditions

RWANDA
Ralph Iantosca
Iantosca Travel

“We set up a private tour with the curator of the archives at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem—our clients once held the Dead Sea Scrolls in their hands.”

—Joe Yudin, *Touring Israel*

Go deep into the Arabian wilderness.
It's pristine. It's remote. And it requires lots of on-the-ground support. That's where **Sean Nelson of Oman Expeditions** comes in.

A former member of the Omani military, he specializes in light-footprint luxury mobile camps. He'll set you up on a private beach on the Dhofar coastline, facilitate a trek to the dunes of the Empty Quarter, or send you by camel on an ancient frankincense route with the al-Mahrah tribe. He also gives guests opportunities to contribute to the country's most pressing conservation issues by designing trips that aid habitat preservation for the Arabian humpback whale and the Arabian leopard. “Our clients are increasingly aware of the importance of low-impact tourism,” Nelson says. “It's a trend we welcome.”

SOUTH AFRICA
Ryan Hilton
*Admiral Travel
International*

Ozzy Yerlikaya
Travel Designer

SOUTHERN AFRICA
Dan Achber
Trufflepig Travel

Nick Bay
Your Private Africa

Craig Beal
Travel Beyond

Deborah Calmeyer
Roar Africa

Ramona Cilliers
Go2Africa

Jackie Devereux
Steppes Travel

Ashley Gerrand
Go2Africa

Elizabeth Gordon
Halliday
Extraordinary Journeys

Julian Harrison
Premier Tours

Mary Keet
Go2Africa

Michael Lorentz
Passage to Africa

Anja Naude
Go2Africa

Scott Simpson
Exeter Safari Company

Teresa Sullivan
*Mango African
Safaris*

Chris Wain
Africa Travel

Phoebe Weinberg
Greatways Travel

Nina Wennersten and
Daniel Saperstein
Hippo Creek Safaris

Top Travel Specialists

ASIA

Because how else would you pull off digging for dinosaur fossils in Mongolia or knowing the best restaurants in Myanmar?

BHUTAN
Brent Olson
Geographic Expeditions (GeoEx)

CAMBODIA AND LAOS
Andrew Booth
AboutAsia Travel

Andrea Ross and April Cole
Wild Frontiers

CENTRAL ASIA AND CAUCASUS
Zulya Rajabova
Silk Road Treasure Tours

CHINA
Sarah Keenlyside and Sam Braybon
Bespoke Travel Company

Mei Zhang
WildChina

HIMALAYAS
Sanjay Kumar Saxena
Nomadic Expeditions

INDIA
Tanya Dalton
Greaves India
Bertie and Victoria Dyer
India Beat

INDONESIA
Diane Embree
Bali Barong Tours

Melissa Matthews
Red Savannah

Christopher Wilmot-Sitwell
Cazenove + Loyd

JAPAN
Nancy Craft
Esprit Travel and Tours

Laura Hagler
Global Basecamps

Rebecca Mazzaro
ATJ—Asia Transpacific Journeys

Amy Tadehara
Inside Japan Tours

Duff Trimble
Wabi-Sabi Japan

Andres Zuleta
Boutique Japan

MONGOLIA
Jalsa Urubshuraw
Nomadic Expeditions

MYANMAR
Tyler Dillon
Trufflepig Travel

Max Horsley
Arakan Travel

NEPAL
Toni Neubauer
Myths and Mountains—A Wild Frontiers Company

PAKISTAN
Jonny Bealby
Wild Frontiers Travel

SILK ROAD
Paul Craven
Steppes Travel
SOUTHEAST ASIA
Sandy Ferguson
Asia Desk

Catherine Heald
Remote Lands

Denis Pagé
Longitude 80

SRI LANKA
James Jayasundera
Ampersand Travel

THAILAND
Dan Fraser
Smiling Albino

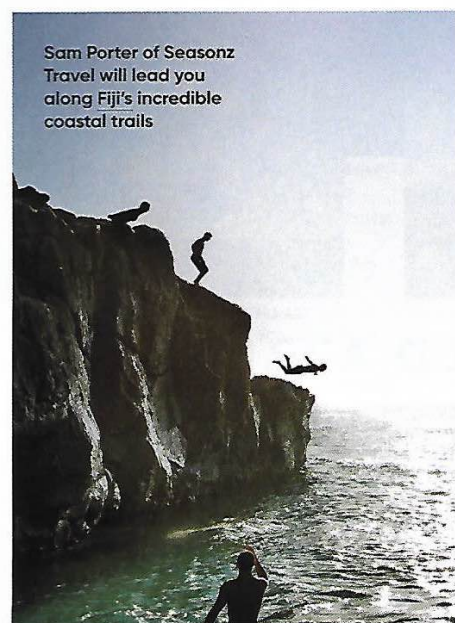
Pedro O'Connor
Epic Private Journeys

UZBEKISTAN
Dilfuza Isomovna
BTLES Uzbekistan Tours

VIETNAM
Nathan Lane
Butterfield & Robinson

“On a recent research trip to Bhutan, we discovered a forgotten hiking trail that leads to the temple of Chorten Nebu, right by the secret Kabji Hokatsho Lake. There wasn't a single other soul in sight.”

—Christopher Wilmot-Sitwell, Cazenove + Loyd



AUSTRALIA AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Our roster of experts have a direct line to the region's top pros specializing in everything from diving and windsurfing to off-the-grid hikes

AUSTRALIA
Drew Kluska
The Tailor

Stuart Rigg
Southern Crossings

NEW ZEALAND
Sarah Farag
Southern Crossings

Donna Thomas
New Zealand Travel

SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS
Kleon Howe
The Art of Travel

Sam Porter
Seasonz Travel

The islands of the South Pacific are closer than you think.

That's something **Kleon Howe** of **The Art of Travel** says he often has to remind his clients. "French Polynesia is just eight hours from the West Coast; the Cook Islands, nine; Fiji, 10," he says, adding that it's easier than ever to get to these islands now that they're accessed by four major airlines. Another point to consider: the overwater bungalow. "When you're booking one, always ask what's underneath it. Some people are surprised when they find sand, not water."