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Luxury Travel

Travel Agents Reveal Their Favorite Under-the-Radar Vacation Spots

A list from our favorite specialists, who professionally scour the Earth for the next big thing.

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Travel trends come and go, but unlike those in food or fashion, they often move at an iceberg-like pace.

It's why your friends are still telling you to go to Iceland five years after it became a thing, and why you can't stop seeing pictures of blue-and-white Portuguese tiles all over Instagram.

So we turned to the experts at the forefront of the travel industry—either agents you'd hire to help you decide where to go next, or their bosses—to find out what's creeping in on their radar.

These are the places our sources would rather keep secret, if only they were allowed to. Though these are all unspoiled and uncrowded, their obscurity is only temporary. Word is already getting out about destinations such as Puglia—the architecturally-fascinating heel of Italy's boot—which came up again and again in conversations with multiple specialists. And it's only a matter of time before the rest of these vacation spots become the talk of every town.

Get there first, or regret it later

Sarara Tree Top Camp, Kenya



Sarara Tree Top Camp.

Source: The Explorations Company

The Treetops Hotel in Aberdare National Park became an icon, thanks to Queen Elizabeth II, who inherited the throne while vacationing there. But despite its royal connection, the property lags far behind Kenya's coterie of six-star hotels. "Travelers are always asking for the treetop experience," says Africa specialist Teresa Sullivan, a partner at Mango Safaris, but "until now, there have been none of quality." Enter Sarara Tree Top Camp, which opened late last year in the country's northern Matthews Range. "It's an incredible community-owned lodge with spacious tents that are built 17 feet off the ground in the trees," she said. The semi-nomadic Samburu people have turned the area around from a onetime poaching site to a successful conservancy—even inspiring neighboring villages to join them in forming a protected patchwork of 3.5 million acres in northern Kenya. It also offers more in activities than your typical safari does: Guests can spend days tracking lions, of course, but they can also immerse themselves in Samburu culture (with the help of an interpreter) and visit the nearby Reteti Elephant Orphanage.