

TRAVEL TALK: IDEAS FOR WHERE TO GO

by Chase Binder

Bud and I like to plan ahead so we booked our 2020 trip back in October of 2019 (read on to find out where!). But once the new year arrives, I always like to check our destination against the “recommendations of the year” selected by travel icons like the New York Times, Conde Nast Traveler, Forbes, Travel & Leisure and others.

For one thing, I like to see if we’ve already visited the cities and countries they pick. Do I agree they are worth it? I also like to see what “new” places they’re recommending... should we add them to our list? And, of course, I enjoy seeing their rationale—what’s the thinking behind each list?

The New York Times created a list of 52 destinations for 2020 using the interesting and thoughtful criteria of “sustainability and the pull of history.” They pondered the effects of climate change, overtourism and who actually benefits from the dollars the tourists generate. The top ten out of 52 spots include Washington, DC, Greenland, the British Virgin Islands, Sicily, Tokyo, Salzburg and a few more esoteric destinations. Visit www.nytimes.com to peruse the full list. It’s great fun to try and divine the rationale for each selection, then read their pitch. You’ll find an appealing balance of remote locations like Lesotho and Kuala Lumpur, closer-to-home places like Asheville NC and Austin TX, and off-the-beaten path places like Krakow, Poland and Molise Italy. I counted up and Bud and I have been to just 19 of the suggestions, leaving plenty of picks available.

Like the New York Times, Travel & Leisure Magazine offers an expansive list—50 destinations. But unlike the Times’ themed approach, they look at tourism statistics, new hotels and restaurants, new flight routes and the recommendations of industry professionals. You’ll find surprises like Oklahoma City and Caesaria in Israel as well as old favorites that might have new appeal like our own Boston, Costa Rica and Hawaii’s Big Island. Visit www.travelandleisure.com for their full list of 2020 recommendations. I was surprised to find that Bud and I have been to about half of the Travel & Leisure destinations. Lots of room to add to our list!

Such extensive lists can provide



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hours of armchair travel fun—it certainly does for me! But you might prefer a shorter list. If so, Conde Nast Traveler www.cn-traveler.com has a top 20 list for 2020. Their selections are based on industry experts and a wide range of traveler surveys as well as old fashioned research. Interestingly, they also dive deeper into certain themes and create lists focus on geographic regions (sunny beaches, far flung places), special interests (exciting excursions), calendar-centric needs (looking for compelling spring travel options) and more. Copenhagen, Jamaica and the Chilean Lakes District are highlighted, along with the Dead Sea and Guyana and much, much more.

This year I perused Forbes list too—another 20 for 2020. They keep the selection process fairly simple by assigning the task to their travel editors. After all, these are the folks who eat, sleep and drink travel news! Visit www.forbes.com to see the results—an eclectic combination of near and far (Lake Powell and Cape Town) and remote and not so remote (Rwanda and Palermo).

So...looking at all the recommendations, some destinations popped up on more than one list. Sicily, Rwanda, Chile, Japan, Guyana, Arizona and North Carolina, among others. Some destinations Bud and I can recommend from personal experience — Austria, South Africa, Montenegro and Istanbul come to mind. Some generally piqued my interest—the Canadian Arctic (but that would be a “no” for Bud!), Ireland’s Galway, Morocco, Bolivia and Greenland.

I also found a few particularly appealing specific destinations right here in the USA. Asheville, NC, (www.exploreasheville.com)

made three lists for its natural mountain beauty and visitor-friendly ambiance. That’s moving to the top of our list! Maine’s Tops’l Farm (www.topsfarm.com) creates a Maine woodland/coastal glamping experience that reminds me of our luxury African safaris. They even allow dogs in one of their accommodation options, so that’s a brand-new addition!

Alas, these dream spots will have to remain just that, at least for a time. Our 2020 destination is already on the books—Florence, Italy. I didn’t find it on a single 2019 or 2020 list, but Tuscany has been a “must return” since our 25th wedding anniversary trip in 2010. Happily, the idea appealed to several tried-and-true travel pals, and we’ve booked a lovely villa just north of Florence for late May. More about how we found the perfect villa next month!

Meantime, I still love powering up my laptop, pouring a cup of coffee or a glass of wine and losing myself in someone else’s idea of a great travel experience. **Try it!**

JOHN E. RICH, III



John “Jack” E. Rich
Named to
President’s List at
Merrimack College

Jack Rich of Bow, has been named to the president’s list at Merrimack College for the fall semester of 2019.


He is the son of John E. Rich, Jr. and Jean Zoubek Rich of Bow.

Jack is a sophomore majoring in Civil Engineering with a minor in Mathematics.


TRAVEL SHOW

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