

BEST TRIPS 2005

THE ULTIMATE THRILL IS GIVING BACK
A Special Report on the New Philanthropy

Outside

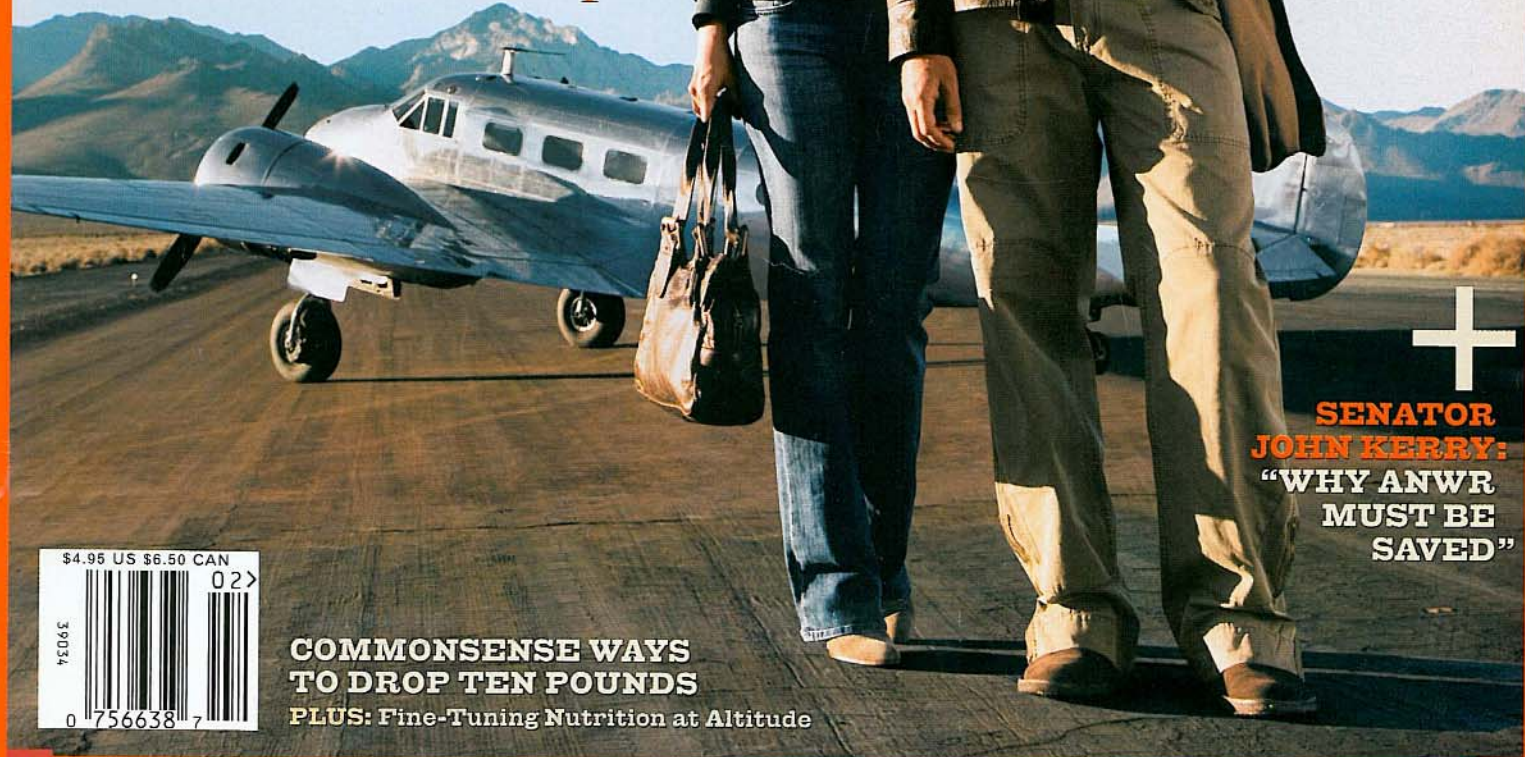
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The Travel Issue

Adventure's New Style

47

Amazing
Journeys
& Dream Escapes



**SENATOR
JOHN KERRY:**
"WHY ANWR
MUST BE
SAVED"



COMMONSENSE WAYS
TO DROP TEN POUNDS
PLUS: Fine-Tuning Nutrition at Altitude

EXCLUSIVE: FIRST CONTACT!
Inside the Dangerous Quest to Find an Undiscovered Primitive Tribe

2005: best trips

THE FUTURE LOOKS WILD

A Preview of 2006 Trips

THE ANTARCTIC→ On this 19-day February whirlwind tour of the Falkland Islands, the South Orkneys, the South Shetlands, Elephant Island, and South Georgia Island, you'll be hanging with the most impressive roster of guides we've seen yet. Reinhold Messner, Conrad Anker, and Caroline Alexander, author of *The Endurance*, will be present, as will a half-dozen top-tier geologists, biologists, historians, and a photographer, all specialists in Antarctica. Oh, and the wandering albatross, king penguins, hundreds of pelagic birds, sea lions, and icebergs will be there, too. Outfitter: Wilderness Travel, 800-368-2794, www.wildernesstravel.com

GHANA→ On March 29, 2006, the west coast of Africa is the place to be to witness the total solar eclipse, an eerie, extraordinary event. On this trip, you'll visit numerous tribal villages in southeastern Ghana, walk a scary suspended rope bridge in Kakum National Park, and, on day eight, watch the total-eclipse show from a high plateau. NASA astronomer Laurance Doyle will be on hand to answer your science questions; anything else, you can discuss with the elders from nearby Abutia Teti village. Outfitter: Tusker Trail, 800-231-1919, www.tusker.com

NUNAVUT/NORTHWEST TERRITORIES→ It's hard to get more remote than this: The Kuujjua River traverses the high Arctic plain on Victoria Island, a landmass with only two villages. Over 16 days in July, you'll canoe approximately 150 miles of Class II-III whitewater, among caribou, white wolves, musk ox, and not a soul but your expedition mates. Outfitter: Equinox Wilderness Expeditions, 604-222-1219, www.equinoxexpeditions.com

ALASKA→ Your new luxury tented base camp for spying grizzlies at the foot of Mount Iliamna overlooks sweet, juicy berry bushes where the big beasts love to feast. Between hiking, mountain-biking, rafting, and kayaking forays on the Kenai Peninsula, recuperate in a lounge chair and watch one of the greatest shows on earth. Outfitter: Outer Edge Expeditions, 800-322-5235, www.outer-edge.com

SWITZERLAND {2005 WINNER}

Cycling Camp

DIFFICULTY
● ● ● ● ●
→ Strenuous

PRICE
\$6,500

This first-of-its-kind European offering is the ultimate two-wheeled fantasy: On this nine-day trip, there'll be seven days of personalized training in Aigle, at the International Cycling Union's new ultramodern World Cycling Center (WCC), and in surrounding alpine terrain. With your coach, seven-time world track champion and Frenchman Frederic Magne, you'll train on the WCC's state-of-the-art 200-meter wooden track and on daily rides ranging from 25 to 75 miles.

Base camp is a Victorian-style four-star hotel on Lake Geneva's eastern shore. From there, ride along Rhone Valley roads and into the Vaud Alps, with views of the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc providing inspiration as you grind up legendary mountain passes. Out-of-the-saddle luxuries include thermal spas, private wine tastings, a trip masseur, and regional specialties like *saucisson Vaudois* (local sausage).

HIGH POINT→ Cranking up the famous hair-pin turns of the Grimsel and Furka passes before hopping the cable car to the top of 9,603-foot Eggishorn Mountain for a view of Europe's largest glacier, the Aletsch.

LOW POINT→ Trying to avoid too much pinot noir at the farewell dinner, knowing there's a timed 91-mile race in Bulle—the Pascal Richard Cyclosporitif—still to come.

TRAVEL ADVISORY→ High-altitude climbs combined with August heat can mean easy dehydration, so keep the fluids coming.

OUTFITTER→ Velo Classic Tours, 212-779-9599, www.veloclassic.com
WHEN TO GO→ August

PORTUGAL

Kayaking the Douro River

DIFFICULTY
● ● ● ● ●
→ Easy

PRICE
\$3,590

On this 11-day flatwater float on the Douro River from Quinta das Aveleiras to Peso da Régua, through northern Portugal's fertile port-wine region, you'll paddle three to five hours daily, stretching out with afternoon hikes across golden-terraced hillsides. In the

fall, glide through the grape harvest, feasting on *feijoada* (bean-and-meat stew) and the ruby-hued regional wines (you can pick tinta amarela grapes off the vine from the seat of your kayak), staying at manor houses and 18th-century blue-tiled *quintas* (wine estates).
OUTFITTER→ Explorers' Corner, 510-559-8099, www.explorerscorner.com
WHEN TO GO→ June, September

ITALY

Sicily and the Aeolian Islands by Sea

DIFFICULTY
● ● ● ● ●
→ Moderate

PRICE
\$8,950
and up

The intimate 32-passenger *Callisto* is your luxurious floating hideaway on this nine-day sail through Italy's southern islands. Begin with an architectural tour of Palermo's 11th-century splendors, then set sail for the sun-blasted Aeolian Islands, seven volcanic spurs north of Sicily. When you're not scuba-diving, snorkeling, and swimming in tucked-away coves or hiking up a live volcano, lounge at Lipari Island's San Calogero, the oldest-known spa in the Mediterranean, or take a siesta deckside, grappa in hand.

OUTFITTER→ Butterfield & Robison, 888-596-6377, www.butterfieldandrobison.com
WHEN TO GO→ July

BRITAIN {NEW}

Hiking Hadrian's Wall

DIFFICULTY
● ● ● ● ●
→ Moderate

PRICE
\$3,495
and up

Follow the winding route of Hadrian's Wall on Britain's newest long-distance trail. The Roman-era engineering feat stretches for 70 miles along the Scottish border, connecting two coasts. Start in Bowness-on-Solway, where the wall meets the sea on the west coast, and hike eight to ten miles a day through a magical landscape little changed in 2,000 years: lush hills, heather-covered moors, and rolling dales pocked with deep forests. En route, explore Roman forts, archaeological sites, and the bird-rich tidal estuary of Budle Bay. Your guide, Peter Goddard, has hiked the area for more than 30 years and is a local-history buff, as you'll learn over family-style dinners at country B&Bs.
OUTFITTER→ Wilderness Travel, 800-368-2794, www.wildernesstravel.com
WHEN TO GO→ July