

# TRAVELLER

JANUARY 5, 2020

ON SUNDAY

SEE  
SCANDINAVIA ON  
OUR EXPERT-LED  
READER TOUR  
P18

## THE TO-DO LIST

OUR TRAVEL WRITERS KICK OFF 2020 WITH THEIR  
RESOLUTIONS, PREDICTIONS AND MORE P14

CHEOP CHEOP HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS P7  
EURO STARS THE CONTINENT'S COOLEST TRAIN STATIONS P9

### NORWAY WINTER WONDERLAND

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# BOARDING CALL



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VIETNAM

**18**  
GREECE

**26**  
NORFOLK ISLAND

## FROM THE EDITOR

What better way for *Traveller on Sunday* to mark both its return, and a brand new year, than by putting some of our expert specialist travel writers right on the spot with their resolutions and predictions for travel in 2020?

Our first cover story of the year is our annual "to-do list" – which we may as well have called the "to-go list" – a snapshot of where we're planning to go and where we want to go, it includes everywhere from hotels and resorts to luxury cruises and rail journeys.

My own to-do list includes co-hosting a couple of our bespoke Traveller Tours, one in Australia and the other in Japan. I look forward to meeting our readers who have secured spots on these trips, which are sure to be enthralling.

So, that makes one *Traveller on Sunday* down for 2020 with another 50-odd to go. On behalf of the team here at *Traveller*, I wish our readers a slightly belated but happy new year with safe and inspiring travels in 2020.



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Because it is important for our journalists to have first-hand experiences, it can be necessary to accept assistance from travel operators. However, we never promise positive coverage in return, and disclose sponsored travel.

We cannot accept or respond to unsolicited submissions.

**COVER** The dining room at Anantara Desaru Coast, Malaysia.

**PHOTO:** Adam Bruzzone See page 20

# COOK ISLANDS ON SALE

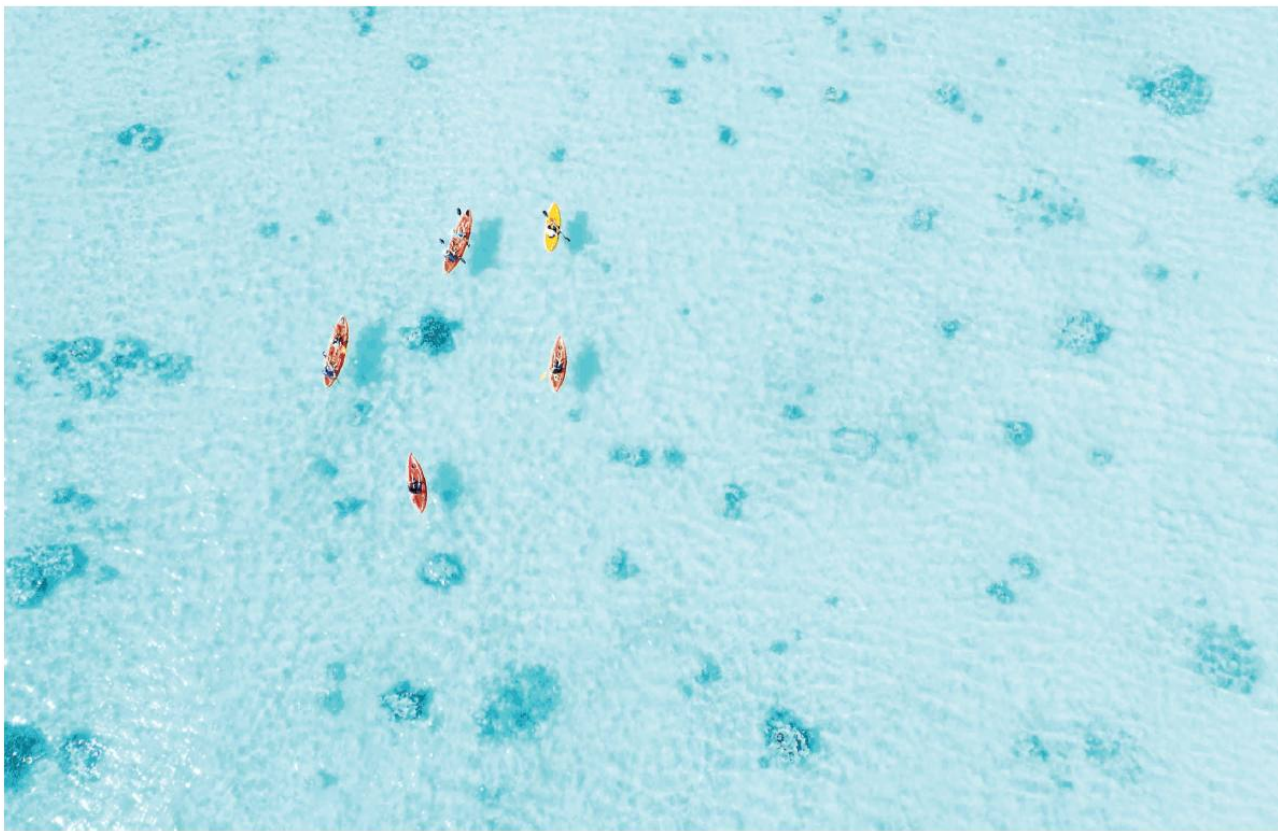
**AIR NEW ZEALAND**

## FLY RETURN SYDNEY TO RAROTONGA DIRECT

<p><b>ECONOMY</b> SEAT RETURN PP INCLUDING TAXES</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">FROM \$529*</p> <p><small>TRAVEL 24 JAN - 24 FEB 3 - 9 APR 11 - 23 APR 25 APR - 26 JUN 2020</small></p>	<p><b>PREMIUM ECONOMY</b> RETURN PP INCLUDING TAXES</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">FROM \$587*</p> <p><small>TRAVEL 06 MAR - 7 MAR AND 24 JUL - 12 SEP 2020</small></p>	<p><b>BUSINESS PREMIER™</b> RETURN PP INCLUDING TAXES</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">FROM \$1089*</p> <p><small>TRAVEL 24 JAN - 9 APR 11 - 23 APR 25 APR - 26 JUN 24 JUL - 12 SEP 2020</small></p>
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**Book now at [airnewzealand.com.au](http://airnewzealand.com.au) or visit your travel professional.**

\*Sale ends midnight AEDT 29 Jan 2020. Offers applies to select return airfares booked from Sydney to Rarotonga. Travel on direct service between Sydney and Rarotonga is available on Seat, Seat + Bag, The Works, Premium Economy and Business Class airfares. Travel periods apply. Offer is valid on operating service NZ60161 between Sydney and Rarotonga only. A non-refundable service fee of AUD\$30 per person per one-way journey applies to Contact Centre bookings. Paying for your booking with a charge, credit or debit card incurs a percentage based fee that differs by card type. Baggage Allowances: For Economy class, Seat + Bag and The Works airfares your first checked bag up to 23kg will be free. Premium Economy passengers are entitled to two checked bags up to 23kg each and Business passengers are entitled to three checked bags up to 23kg each, with additional charges applying for additional bags. Bags can be pre-purchased prior to travel online via Manage Bookings or by phoning the Contact Centre (see rates and terms and conditions), or alternatively for a higher rate at the airport. Passengers purchasing Seat Only fares are not entitled to checked baggage, and must upgrade to Seat + Bag to be entitled to one checked bag up to 23kg. Applicable fare rules apply. Offer correct as at 02 Jan 2020. Prices may fluctuate due to exchange rate and tax movements. New deals may be released at any time. Airfares may be extended. Seats are limited and may not be available on all flights. Fares are available until sale ends or until sold out. Customers who purchase Air New Zealand tickets will be contacted by email with the conditions of sale. Standard Air New Zealand Conditions of Carriage, Fare Rules and Waivers, Terms & Conditions apply.



# TALKIN' ABOUT A RESOLUTION

It's a hard job, but the Traveller team are happy to step up so they can tell you what's hot in 2020.

It would be quite reasonable to presume our travel writers have left few places unvisited, scarcely any sights unseen and barely any cuisines unsampled. But each new year sees a renewed curiosity, with yet more corners of the planet still to conquer. Then there are all the places to which they'd love to return.

Places constantly change – they acquire a brilliant new museum, train ride or hot restaurant, or just a nostalgic glow.

Whatever the case, we hope that in presenting their annual travel “to-do lists” our writers also inspire you, or remind you of a bucket list as yet un-tackled, a destination you've never considered, or help you come up with your own travel musts for 2020.

## THE HOTEL FIEND JULIETTA JAMESON MY NEW YEAR'S TRAVEL RESOLUTION IS

not to open any tiny amenity bottles. Single-use plastic is a frontline environmental disaster, and while those little singles are being slowly replaced with large refillables, most hotels I stayed in in 2019 still had them.

## MY DREAM HOTELS DESTINATION FOR 2020 IS

Edinburgh, Scotland. Tourism authorities are



not that this wonderful country, in equal parts wild and cool, needs additional razzmatazz. It's especially attractive for me as it's where Red Carnation Hotels is opening 100 Princes Street, replicating the boutique atmosphere of the brand's Hotel 41, one of London's finest. See [redcarnationhotels.com](http://redcarnationhotels.com)

## THE MUST-VISIT HOTELS DESTINATION FOR 2020 WILL BE

Paris. A dazzling array of five-star stays is on the slate for 2020: J.K. Place, a Bvlgari, the LVMH-owned Cheval Blanc, Monsieur George (with interiors by Anouska Hempel) and, 30 or so kilometres down the road, a hotel on the grounds of Versailles. See [en.parisinfo.com](http://en.parisinfo.com); [jkplaces.com](http://jkplaces.com)

## THE ONE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE I REALLY WANT THIS YEAR IS

to immerse myself in contemporary Jerusalem as part of a wider exploration of this ancient holy city as 2020 marks the 10th anniversary of the opening of Mamilla Hotel by the world-renowned Israeli architect, Moshe Safdie (who designed the Changi Jewel). See [lhw.com](http://lhw.com)

## MY FEARLESS PREDICTION ABOUT THE BIGGEST TREND FOR HOTELS IN 2020 IS

In the same way we are being asked to tell housekeeping when we want to re-use towels and sheets, some mid-price hotels are offering incentives, such as loyalty points, in exchange

## THE RESORT LOVER SHERIDEN RHODES MY NEW YEAR'S TRAVEL RESOLUTION IS

to explore emerging island and coastal spots in Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Mauritius.

## MY DREAM RESORTS DESTINATION IN 2020 IS

The Maldives. I'm keen to see the reimagined COMO Cocoa Island, which reopens this month on the South Male Atoll, with a renewed focus on holistic wellness. A third of the island is occupied by the COMO Shambhala Retreat. I also want to tick off the all-inclusive Pullman Maldives Maamutaa and Raffles Maldives Meradhoo. Raffles' first Maldivian resort on the remote Gaafu Alifu Atoll has been built to straddle two private islands and boasts a marine biologist, a spa, a sunset-facing pool bar and a marine butler service. See [comohotels.com](http://comohotels.com); [accor.com](http://accor.com); [raffles.com](http://raffles.com)

## THE MUST-VISIT RESORTS DESTINATION FOR 2020 WILL BE

Fiji. The island nation will be celebrating 50 years of independence in 2020 and the Fijians really know how to throw a party. Turtle Island celebrates its 40th anniversary;



makeover, also turns 50; Sofitel Fiji Resort has unveiled a raft of updates and the Pullman Nadi Bay Resort and Spa has also opened. Kokomo, Six Senses Fiji and Vomo, which boasts a new Rocks Beach Club with infinity pool, are also at the top of my wish list. See [turtlefiji.com](http://turtlefiji.com); [accor.com](http://accor.com); [kokomoislandfiji.com](http://kokomoislandfiji.com); [sixsenses.com](http://sixsenses.com)

## THE ONE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE I REALLY WANT THIS YEAR IS

to explore abandoned 14th-century villages in the Atlas Mountains and take a horse-drawn carriage through an oasis of date palms at the new Anantara Tozeur Resort in Tunisia. See [anantara.com](http://anantara.com)

## MY FEARLESS PREDICTION ABOUT THE BIGGEST TREND FOR RESORTS IN 2020 IS

that sustainability will remain paramount. Resorts will embrace waste reduction and plastic reduction, carbon emission compliance and move to reduce their footprint to meet the growing expectations of conscious travellers.

## THE FOODIE BEN GROUNDWATER MY NEW YEAR'S TRAVEL RESOLUTION IS

to regret nothing when





Clockwise from main: Drifting in the pristine waters of Indonesia's Bawah Reserve might float your boat; Portree in Scotland; Turtle Island, Fiji; Raffles Maldives Meradhoo.

excellent cuisine. There are plenty of people who think it's insane to pay to eat at a fine-dining restaurant, and crazy to travel to a country just to eat the food. But it's all about priorities, and doing what makes you happy.

**MY DREAM FOODIE DESTINATION FOR 2020 IS**

Thailand. There's so much about real Thai food that I don't know or properly understand, so much that's local and unique and that goes far beyond the pad thais and green curries with which most of us are familiar. This year I want to delve deep into the country's regional specialties. See [tourismthailand.org](http://tourismthailand.org)

**THE MUST-VISIT FOODIE DESTINATION FOR 2020 WILL BE**

Spain. Already you can see Spain's culinary influence around the world: in the proliferation of wood-fired cookery; in the explosion of fine-dining creativity; in every small plate of food you're ever served. Now it's time for travellers to venture to the source, to the country that is home to seven of the World's 50 Best restaurants and boasts 11 eateries with three Michelin stars. Whet your appetite by heading to [spain.info](http://spain.info)

**THE ONE FOODIE EXPERIENCE I REALLY WANT THIS YEAR IS**

to learn to make pasta in Rome. I can already make pasta dishes - I can throw together a rigatoni carbonara - but I rarely make pasta, and this year that is going to change. I'm planning to utilise a month-long stay in Rome in the early part of 2020 to begin a journey into the sometimes secretive and slightly intimidating world of pasta-making.

**MY FEARLESS PREDICTION ABOUT THE BIGGEST 2020 FOODIE TRAVEL TREND IS**

that it will be less about the meals and more about the experience. Fine-dining is great, Michelin stars are wonderful, but these don't necessarily connect you to a place, they don't help you feel its passion and understand its

experiences similar to the one I enjoyed in Fes, Morocco, last year: a private cooking lesson in a home via Airbnb Experiences.

**THE PLANE SPOTTER MICHAEL GEBICKI MY NEW YEAR'S TRAVEL RESOLUTION IS**

to save money by flying budget airlines and use some of the savings for a seat upgrade. Most travellers on budget airlines sit in the lowest-cost seats, but pay for an economy-class seat upgrade and you'll often score empty seats on either side, and a decent bed when you need to stretch out.



**MY DREAM DESTINATION FOR 2020 IS**

Krakow, Poland. On the banks of the Vistula, at the confluence of East-West trading routes, a mercantile city since the Middle Ages, former seat of the Polish kings and one of the few Polish cities not completely devastated by the Nazi occupation, Krakow is rich in memories, its palaces transformed into hotels, burghers' houses into chic cafes. See [poland.pl](http://poland.pl)

**THE MUST-VISIT DESTINATION FOR 2020 WILL BE**

Berlin, a cauldron of innovative ideas and brilliant art and architecture, a vibrant and exciting city that plays by its own rules, and because the city's Brandenburg Airport is finally scheduled to open late in 2020 - just eight years late. See [visitberlin.de](http://visitberlin.de); [berlin-airport.de](http://berlin-airport.de)

**THE ONE AIR-TRAVEL EXPERIENCE I REALLY WANT THIS YEAR IS**

**10 PROBLEMS TO FIX IN 2020**

**OVERTOURISM**

Venice, Barcelona, Prague and Europe's other favourite cities are flooded with visitors, and while authorities fret and wring their hands, they do nothing lest they pop the tourism bubble and the cash it brings. The solution is simple. Charge admission and watch the crowds evaporate.

**LACK OF CONSUMER PROTECTION FOR AUSTRALIANS**

Your flight is delayed for several hours, or the travel agent you booked with suddenly declares bankruptcy and you're left without a buck - and there's no comeback. Australian travellers have only a fig leaf of consumer legislation to protect them compared with their counterparts in Europe and North America.

**CROOKED E-VISA SITES**

Deceptive e-visa websites masquerading as the real thing look every bit like the official sites they purport to be, but all they do is add an extra layer of costs. Google could halt their game in an instant - but they advertise, and that's a revenue stream for the search giant.

**AIRLINE CARBON OFFSET SCHEMES**

These schemes are aimed at eco-conscious flyers looking to offset the environmental impact of their flights, but remediation accounts for less than 2 per cent of all aviation industry emissions. Tree planting and forest conservation projects are favourites for airlines, but the benefits are debatable.

**CAR HIRE RORTS**

Show up late for your booking, get talked into an upgrade, buy all the extra insurance you probably don't need, hire a kid's car seat or a GPS and whammo, the cost of your hire car, which seemed reasonable

when you booked it, sprouts wings. The industry's modus operandi is to offer a low base-cost and pile on the extras later.

**DYNAMIC CURRENCY CONVERSION**

When settling a bill with a card overseas, it's now common to be asked if you want to pay in Australian dollars. If you accept, you are charged an inflated exchange rate that costs you more, with the difference benefiting the merchant and the dynamic currency exchange facilitator.

**AIRCRAFT CERTIFIERS ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL**

Deprived of the expertise and the resources to carry out rigorous safety certification, the US Federal Aircraft Administration has delegated much of the task to Boeing, with a none too surprising outcome.

**AUSTRALIA'S GREAT AIRPORT PRICE GOUGE**

Enormous parking and taxi fees, huge rental charges for retail space - Australia's airport operators make a tonne of money for their owners and passengers pay the price. The corporations that own these facilities operate as a monopoly, with government unwilling to rein them in.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE COSTS FOR SENIORS**

As the candles on the birthday cake increase so too do travel insurance premiums. To cater for the broad spectrum of health conditions among seniors, we need policies geared to needs and priced accordingly.

**UNCLE SAM MORPHS INTO BIG BROTHER**

Apply online for a non-immigrant visa to visit the US and you must provide details of social media accounts over five years as well as telephone numbers, email addresses and international travel details.