

**FABULOUS FAMILY ADVENTURES!**

**20 TRIPS FOR EVERY TASTE** | **A GLOBAL GUIDE**

# Condé Nast **Traveler**

**TRUTH  
IN  
TRAVEL  
JUNE  
2013**

**CARIBBEAN**

A LITTLE  
PIECE OF PARADISE

**AFRICA**

SENSATIONAL  
SAFARI

**FLORIDA**

DISNEY WORLD  
FOR GROWN-UPS?

**CUBA**

THE BEAUTY  
RIGHT NEXT DOOR

SUN, SEA, GASTRONOMY!

**35**

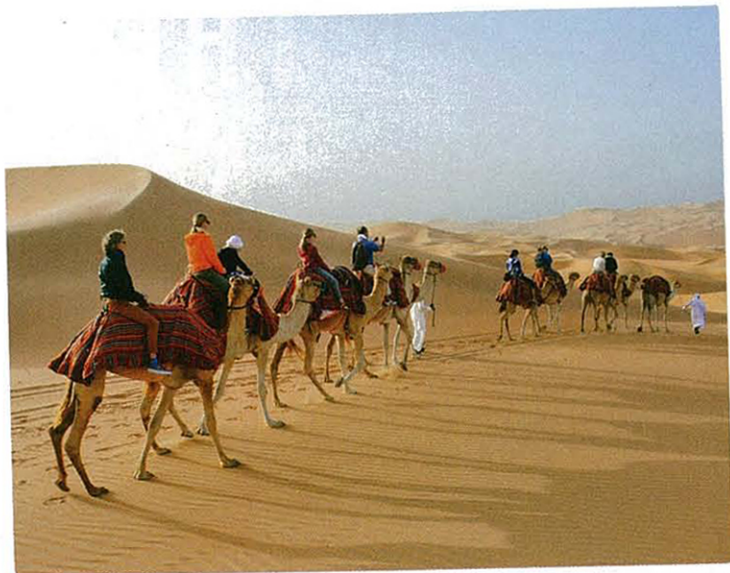
**TOP ISLAND HOTELS  
WITH STELLAR  
RESTAURANTS**

**DESERT DRAMA**  
Rooms at Abu Dhabi's  
Qasr Al Sarab  
resort look out over  
the Empty Quarter.

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# ▶ 20 FOOLPROOF FAMILY GETAWAYS

Trips that are sure to satisfy your huge, hard-to-please, or otherwise challenging family



TYPE 2

## THE FAMILY WITH A TODDLER, A TEEN, AND A TWEEN

**THE CHALLENGE** How to satisfy their wildly different needs?

**THE SOLUTION** On the edge of Abu Dhabi's vast Empty Quarter desert, the **Qasr Al Sarab** resort offers villas with private pools and modern Orientalist suites. Shifting shadows, wind-blown ridges, and silhouetted dunes make perfect subjects for budding photographers; inquisitive teens and tweens can interview the experts at the falconry center about baby birds of prey and desert vipers. For the littlest ones, the desert is the world's largest uninterrupted sand box. There's also mountain biking, horseback riding, and dune bashing in a chauffeur-driven SUV (bring vomit bags, and a wheel-less skateboard base for sand surfing). Camel treks and dune walks are calmer options, and area excursions include a visit to a local sheikh's multimillion-dollar auto collection. Parents looking for some alone time will appreciate the on-call babysitters and kid and teen centers, allowing them to steal a date night with a couple's treatment at the spa followed by dinner and a moonlit stroll across the sands (971-2-886-2088; doubles from \$243).

**THE TIP** Desert temperatures are most comfortable from October through March; November coincides with the Abu Dhabi Art Fair.

**YOU MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER** **Montana's Mountain Sky Guest Ranch**, which balances a dude-ranch ethos with upscale amenities and gourmet food. Bordering Gallatin National Forest and a half-hour from Yellowstone, the 6,000-acre property has 31 rustic cabins and provides child care for toddlers. Yoga, fly-fishing, white-water rafting, and horseback riding are just a few of the activities available (800-548-3392; two-bedrooms from \$3,590 per adult per week, including all activities; children 7 to 12 from \$3,040; children 6 and under, \$2,360; kids are permitted in summer only).

TYPE 3

## THE FAMILY WITH TESTY TEENS

**THE CHALLENGE** What do you do with kids who hate being distracted from their digital toys?

**THE SOLUTION** Whether North Island or South Island, **New Zealand** has the high-adrenaline adventures to pry kids' eyes away from their electronics and get them to see that family time can be fun. Nothing will get their attention like a big Maori *pōwhiri* welcome at **Blake House**, including warriors wield-

TYPE 1

## THE BIG FAMILY ON A SMALL BUDGET

**THE CHALLENGE** Finding a place where a family of six can stay comfortably without breaking the bank.

**THE SOLUTION** Mexico's sunny, sleepy **Sayulita**, 30 miles north of Puerto Vallarta, is a fishing village of white-washed houses and serious whitecaps that draw surfers from all over the Americas. The Tigre Surf School offers 90-minute lessons for \$50 and practically guarantees you'll get up on a wave. Lazier sorts can build sand castles on the beach or just nurse a cerveza and watch the waves roll in. In town, pull up a bar stool with the other salty dogs at **Mariscos Purillo's**, where the taco fillings will be whatever the fishermen hauled in that day. There's also yoga, Pilates, and bars with live bands for after you've left the children for the evening with a sitter. The oceanfront two-bedroom guest house at the **Teitiare Estate** sleeps six and has a kitchen and laundry, as well as maid service daily, hidden gardens, and tucked-away daybeds perched above the lapping waves of the Pacific (347-289-5026; two-bedroom house, \$400 per night).

**THE TIP** The lowest rates are from the beginning of May through

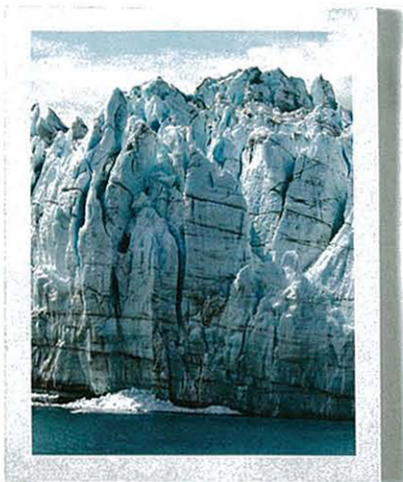
October, although high season adds just \$100 a night.

**YOU MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER** While hotel rooms in **Mau** can run \$1,000 a night, the **Honua Kai Resort**, on the island's sunny south shore, has two-bedroom units for as little as \$250 a night. Each is outfitted with all the mod cons, and guests can take their pick of five pools and activities such as biking down a volcano, snorkeling, and submarine and zipline tours. Grocery stores are a short walk away if the family wants some home cooking (book through Expedia or vrbo.com).

Abu Dhabi's Qasr Al Sarab resort borders one of the world's largest deserts.

Leaping into the drink along Sayulita's Pacific coast.





Shipboard view of Alaska's Glacier Bay National Park.

ing ceremonial weapons. At this luxury wilderness retreat in the heart of a 16,000-acre North Island estate, parents can sleep in the main lodge while teens spend the night in the tented Safari Camp, although everyone's days are spent together outdoors (64-7-384-2080; from \$740 per person, all-inclusive). On the South Island, Queens-town is the hub for extreme sports, including bungee jumping, jetboating, and white-water rafting. The **Heritage Apartments** have three bedrooms, so everyone can have some alone time (64-3-450-1500; \$350 per night). For real-cool-parent cred, take them on a chopper flight with Ahipara Luxury Travel over the glacier-scoured mountains and valleys of Fjordland National Park, whose landscapes starred in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (64-3-447-3558; flights from \$1,000). **THE TIP** New Zealand's summer (November through March) is ideal, but New Year's fills up quickly.

**YOU MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER** Northern Thailand's Anantara Golden Triangle Resort & Spa has an on-site elephant camp where guests learn to "drive" these intelligent behemoths with a series of gentle commands, then clamber atop their necks for a trek through the bamboo forest and to help their mahouts bathe them along the riverbank. Off-site options include longtail boat rides on the Mekong River and hill tribe handicrafts and food (local specialties like stir-fried crickets are sure to thrill even the most jaded) at Chiang Rai's sprawling Night Market (66-53-784-084; doubles from \$1,200).

TYPE 4

**THE EXTENDED FAMILY**

**THE CHALLENGE** How to satisfy the elders, the youngsters, and everyone in between.

**THE SOLUTION** An Alaskan cruise aboard Holland America Line's *Zuiderdam*, a medium-size ship (1,916 passengers) that's easier for seniors to negotiate than the growing number of massive vessels sailing today. For

grandparents, cruise expert Linda Hall recommends a mid-ship Neptune Suite on the Rotterdam deck (deck 7), which has a large sitting area, a spacious veranda, and floor-to-ceiling windows—all the better to take in the scenery and sunsets. The seven-day cruise has three ports of call—Juneau, Ketchikan, and the historic Gold Rush town of Skagway—and also visits Glacier Bay National Park. Aboard the *Zuiderdam*, there's a kids' club for ages 3 through 12, and teens can practice yoga, hip-hop, or mocktail mixology. Excursion options include a helicopter flight to a glacier for a dogsled ride or a picturesque journey aboard the White Pass Railway, which traces the original Klondike route into the Yukon (877-932-4259; seven-day cruises from \$2,349 per person).

**THE TIP** During the summer, the ship sails from Vancouver, British Columbia, up the sheltered Inside Passage, avoiding nausea-inducing heavy seas.

**YOU MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER** A private villa in Los Cabos, Mexico, which offers plenty of space, exclusivity, and loads of active options. At the One&Only Palmilla, the 4,000-square-foot *Villa Cortez*—with vaulted sitting and dining areas, four bedrooms (each with a private patio and bathroom), and a cozy one-bedroom casita—overlooks the Sea of Cortés and is a ten-minute drive north of Cabo San Lucas. Abutting the Jack Nicklaus-designed Cabo del Sol Golf Course, the villa is just a short stroll from the beach and water sports. The less mobile might enjoy a day sail or a whale-watching cruise during the December-through-April calving season. With an enormous patio, infinity pool, hot tub, and outdoor fire pit and

grill, the villa is also well equipped for doing nothing more than catching a breeze. The best weather stretches from mid-November through May, and remember: Cabo is a popular spring-break destination for thousands of college students (866-829-2977; villas from \$1,336 per night).

TYPE 5

**THE FAMILY WITH A CANINE KID**

**THE CHALLENGE** Finding a place that understands why you can't leave Fido (or Fifi) at home.

**THE SOLUTION** Carmel, California, has a perfect Mediterranean climate, a dramatic coastline, and world-class golf courses. It also has dozens of restaurants and nearly as many hotels and B&Bs that are pet-friendly, like the **Carmel Mission Inn**. Well-behaved pups can go on two-hour walking tours to take in Edward Weston's photo studio, poet Robinson Jeffers's log cabin, and Doris Day's Cypress Inn. The town has a pet spa and, since this is California, a canine listener and healer. Five miles east of Carmel, Garland Ranch Regional Park has dog trails through open savanna and oak woodlands. In the evening, pet owners congregate at Carmel Beach, where your pooch can frolic off-leash on the white sand and in the pounding surf (800-348-9090; doubles from \$220, plus a onetime \$35 pet fee).

**THE TIP** Late summer has the year's driest, warmest weather, and the Monterey Jazz Festival kicks off in late September.

**YOU MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER** Rio de Janeiro, where Brazil's famed

A sunset soccer match on one of Rio's pet-friendly beaches.

