

JANUARY 2019

WHY FIJI IS THE
ULTIMATE PARADISE

WHEN DID SAN DIEGO
GET SO COOL?

A WINTER ADVENTURE
IN NORWAY

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

REASONS

LOS CABOS,
SCOTLAND, OMAN,
ISCHIA, VIETNAM &
MORE PLACES
TO GO THIS YEAR

TO

TRAVEL

2019

IN

*The beach at
Six Senses Fiji.*

+ **THE ACTIVE
SIDE OF CRUISING**

TRAVELANDLEISURE.COM

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UPGRADE

TRAVEL SMARTER: FIVE WAYS TO HAVE YOUR BEST TRAVEL YEAR EVER



Forge Global Connections

Travel clubs have existed for decades, but new operations are demonstrating fresh approaches that reflect a generational shift toward experiential travel. From exclusive dinners and tech innovations to socially conscious programming and swank co-working spaces, these four truly raise the bar. **By Hannah Walhout**

PRIOR

Drawing on a network of contacts built during his days as a travel editor, Aussie expat David Prior, along with co-founder Marc Blazer, plans bespoke travel, group trips, and members-only events. Input from local artists, artisans, and thought leaders ensures that every trip fulfills modern travelers' desire for out-of-the-ordinary excursions and transformative interactions. Upcoming itineraries include a culinary weekend in an Emilia-Romagna estate with the team behind the lauded restaurant Osteria Francescana in Modena, Italy, and viewing of the next solar eclipse this July from the company's camp in Chile's Araucanía region. *prior.club*; annual membership \$2,500 (credited toward travel fees); trip prices vary.

Members of travel club Prior float down the Narmada River in India before releasing candles as part of a local ritual.

LIFE HOUSE

These hotels—the first of which just launched in Miami, with more coming to Brooklyn and Los Angeles—developed a proprietary app that encourages deeper immersion. Guests can chat with others who will be in town at the same time, as well as with locals who can offer insider tips or organize meet-ups. The app's forthcoming algorithm will also match guests who stay in Life House's hostel-style shared suites based on personal preferences—and let them exchange messages before bunking together. *life-house.com*; doubles from \$159.

EATON WORKSHOP

Founder Katherine Lo has made it her mission to create a community-based, social-justice-minded hotel brand. The result? A pair of art-filled properties in Hong Kong and Washington, D.C., that serve as hotels, social clubs, and members-only co-working spaces. Besides providing room and board, each location hosts free community events and artists' residencies. Additional properties are in the works for San Francisco, Seattle, and Toronto. *eatonworkshop.com*; memberships from \$400 per month in D.C. and \$320 per month in Hong Kong; doubles from \$152.

ONDA

Fans of bundled-access programs like ClassPass (for fitness) and Priority Pass (for airport lounges) will find a similar approach with this newcomer. Patrons have access to a growing alliance of more than 100 sites, from workspaces at NeueHouse, in Los Angeles, to stylish private clubs like the Stack, in Cape Town. Another perk: global gatherings and purpose-driven events for members, by members. *ondalife.com*; annual memberships \$80 per month (\$64 per month for age 30 or younger); three visits to members' clubs, three visits to co-working spaces, and three visits per health club.



After a visit to the ancient Indian fort city Mandu, Prior members gather to eat breakfast.



LITTLE LUXURIES

Know When It's Worth It to Pay a Premium

In certain instances, there's real value in spending a bit more money to save time, eliminate a pain point, or elevate an aspect of the travel experience. *By Eric Rosen*

Clear Even if you're already enrolled in TSA Precheck or Global Entry, you'll likely find this expediting program useful, especially if you're a frequent domestic flier. Kiosks at a growing number of U.S. airports (26 and counting) verify a person's identity using biometrics (e.g., fingerprints and iris scans), allowing travelers to head straight to the actual bag scanners without waiting in line. The service is also rolling out at large entertainment venues, such as Los Angeles's Dodger Stadium and New York's Citi Field. A free one-month trial means you can test it out before committing to the annual fee. *clearme.com*; \$179 per year.

Global Airport Concierge

This VIP service, found at more than 700 airports worldwide, can arrange expedited security, escorts to lounges and gates, fast-tracked immigration, dedicated baggage porters, and executive car service to make your arrival or transfer that much smoother. *globalairportconcierge.com*; prices vary by location and service.

Silvercar by Audi Users can skip the usual counters and lines at self-service kiosks by

unlocking cars with an app. The brand has vehicles at 25 U.S. airports, plus five in-town locations, and each rental comes equipped with free 4G LTE Wi-Fi, GPS, and Sirius XM radio. You can also add extras like car seats and, in Denver and Salt Lake City, ski racks for no additional charge. The service recently began offering convertibles. *silvercar.com*; from \$49 per day.

ExpertFlyer The site's free search engine lays out your options for award travel and upgrades for all flights on your departure date on a given airline. Premium membership allows for unlimited queries and other perks, including real-time flight-availability alerts so users can snap up open premium seats before other travelers. *expertflyer.com*; \$99 per year or \$10 per month.

Award Wallet Plus Tracking points balances across nearly 700 airline, hotel, and credit card programs is a breeze with the free Award Wallet app. The Plus package includes faster account updates and compiles data on users' balance history and credit card spending to help maximize point earning and usage. *awardwallet.com*; \$30 per year.