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- Best Travel Finds of 2006
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## BEST TRAVEL FINDS OF 2006

By sharing their favorite finds for the year—undiscovered hotels and restaurants, outstanding guides, shops and sights worth seeking out—the agents reveal the enthusiasm, curiosity, and sense of adventure that gives them the edge over the competition.

### HOTELS

**France:** "A small boutique hotel in Burgundy—[Bernard Louiseau](#)—with a 3-star Michelin restaurant"

**Scotland:** [Boath House](#)—"a delightful six room hotel with an absolutely wonderful restaurant near Nairn"

**Paris:** [Esprit St.-Germain](#)

**Cambodia:** [Hotel de la Paix](#), Siem Reap

**Sri Lanka:** The new Aman resorts, [Amangalla and Amanwella](#)

**Miami:** [The Setai](#) in South Beach

**Connecticut:** Thomas Henkelman's [Homestead Inn](#) in Greenwich

**Costa Rica:** [Villa del Sueno](#)—"an oasis of Tico charm only 30 minutes from the newly opened Liberia Airport. A terrific alternative to airport hotels"

**New Zealand:** [The Lodge at 199](#), Rotorua

**Morocco:** [Dar Ahlam](#)

### RESTAURANTS

**Austria:** "I found this GREAT restaurant in Salzburg: [Pfefferschiff](#) (Söllheim

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3)..My clients loved it"

**London:** The invitation-only [downstairs casino at the Ritz](#) (150 Piccadilly); [Babylon at the Roof Gardens](#) (99 Kensington High Street); [The Lanesborough restaurant](#) (Hyde Park Corner)

**Estonia:** [Olde Hansa Restaurant](#) (Vana turg, 1) in Tallinn "serves dishes made from 15th-century recipes. Wooden plates and utensils. Very unique and fun!"

**Paris:** "Classic—Papillon restaurant (84, rue St Honoré), menu under 35 Euros; Bistro—Chez Paul (22, Rue de la Butte aux Cailles); Bakery—Poujauran (20, rue Jean-Nicot); Coffee—Verlet (56, rue St-Honoré); Cabarets—Crazy Horse (12, av George V)... still a must !!! Tea Room—Grande Mosque de Paris (2, bis place du puits de l'Ermite) or Institute du Monde Arabe (1, rue des Fossés-Saint-Bernard, Place Mohammed-V)"

**Greece:** Koukoumavlos in Santorini (below the Hotel Atlantis). "I expect this chef to become wildly famous"

**Hungary:** [Malomtó](#) (II. Frankel Leó u. 48) in Budapest

**Ireland:** The pub in the basement of Dublin's [Merrion Hotel](#) (Upper Merrion Street)

**Italy:** "In Umbria a dinner I had at [Vissani](#) (SS 448 Todi-Baschi) in Baschi was the highlight of my year..." Ristorante La Penna (Via della Penna 53), Rome. "The owner/chef prepares amazing dishes and a fabulous soufflé"

**Russia:** Turandot Restaurant (26/5 Tverskoi Bulvar) in Moscow

**South Africa:** [Blues Restaurant](#) at Camps Bay (The Promenade, Victoria Road), Cape Town. De Waterblommetjie (at the Castle of Good Hope) in Cape Town. "The best Cape Malay cuisine in all of South Africa. Cape Malay cuisine is very trendy and everyone is trying to do it, but this is the place to enjoy it"

**Vancouver:** [Bin 941](#) (943 Davie Street)

**Southern California:** "The [Dining Room at Jack's in La Jolla](#) (7863 Girard Avenue) is a high-energy scene that offers a sophisticated atmosphere and impeccable service..."

**New York City:** [Del Posto](#) (85 10th Ave.), "Mario Batali's new restaurant, elegant and amazing"

**South Carolina:** [Fig](#) (232 Meeting Street) in Charleston

**Japan:** "[Michiba](#) (Kanematsu Bldg. 8F 6-9-9 Ginza, Chuo-ku) in Tokyo. He was one of the *Iron Chefs*"

## SHOPS

**Farm shops in England.** "They are popping up throughout the countryside and offer a wide range of local products, often with outlets in London shops"

**London:** "The sales at [Turnbull & Asser](#) each year in January and July"

**Italy:** "The outlets! [Foxtown](#) and [The Mall](#) near Florence"

**Switzerland:** [L'Art du The](#), Lucerne and Lugano

**Paris:** [Le Louvre des Antiquaires](#)

**Chile:** The gift shop at [Explora Lodge](#) in Torres Del Paine

**South Africa:** "Peace River Trading in Cape Town has a fantastic selection of upper-end African fabrics and artifacts"



## ADVERTISING

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**Thailand:** Shopping village and spa in [Mandarin Oriental Hotel](#), Chiang Mai

## GUIDES AND TOUR COMPANIES

**World:** "[Absolute Travel](#)...they are amazing to work with. They can turn on a dime for a client mid-trip if necessary...I love them and so do my clients"

"Tie: [Exeter International](#) and [Absolute Travel](#)"

**Europe:** [European Connection](#)

**Berlin:** [Guenter Friedenberg](#)

**Ireland:** [Dublin Hop On Hop Off Tour Bus](#)

**Italy:** [Spirit of Places](#): "*Secret Routes of the Palazzo Vecchio* in Florence; *Musica in Maschera* musical performances in Venice; and the olive oil and wine tastings on the Amalfi Coast." [J&J Services](#) for guides and chauffers. In Rome: [Alan Epstein](#)

**Moscow:** Nina Zonina, professor of English literature, St. Petersburg State University

**Turkey:** "[Sea Song Tours](#) in Istanbul ...Karen Sefer, the owner, is well connected in Turkey, and she has great access to things that the ordinary tour company doesn't have"

**Canada and Alaska:** [Entree Canada](#)

**Latin America:** Claudio Vidal of [Fantástico Sur](#); Chile Carlos Gomez of [Costa Rica Expeditions](#); [Ladatco Tours](#) Luis Segura of [Trogon Tours](#) in Argentina; [A & K](#), Santiago, "especially Sara, the most knowledgeable, interesting, and kind guide"; [Via Venture](#) for active travel in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

**Sri Lanka:** "[Tea Trails](#) offers hiking from colonial house to colonial house through the lush, green tea fields was a fabulous way to enjoy the scenery and interact with the local culture...The homes are quaint little 4-6 bedroom British colonial plantation homes with rich wood floors and antiques and the staff is very warm and inviting"

**Australia:** [Epic Expeditions](#) run by Brad Horn; Australia Yacht Rental: [Outback Encounter](#); [Oz Dive](#), (SCUBA)

**New Zealand:** [First Light Walking Tours](#), "an excellent 3-day hike from Queenstown"; [Seasonz](#) run by Sam Porter

**East Africa:** [Africa House Ltd](#), Nairobi, run by David Sugden; [Classic Africa Safaris](#), Entebbe, Uganda

**India:** [Peirce and Leslie](#), run by Shonali Datta

## CRUISES

**Clipper Cruise** with [Valor Tours](#) "WWII commemorative cruise tour to Solomon Islands including Sydney, Australia; Port Moresby, Bougainville, and Rabaul in Papua New Guinea; Guadalcanal; and Guam. Truly outstanding"

## SIGHTS

**Bangkok:** "A private tour of the Prasart Museum, a private collection of Thai antiques from around the country. Set in beautiful gardens, it is one of Thailand's best kept secrets"

**Kyoto:** "I was thrilled to see its [award-winning train station](#), a destination in itself. The outstanding building comprises a station, hotel, 13-story department store, museum, theater, numerous shops, restaurants, food courts, tea salons, etc." [Samurai Movie Land](#) (*Toei Uzumasa Eigamura Movie Museum*)

"My favorite find this year was [Tasmania](#). I traveled there with my family for Christmas and New Years. [Cradle Mountain Lodge](#) at Christmas is truly a treat—its own wine cellar, cozy cabins, excellent hiking...I fell in love from the time my plane landed"

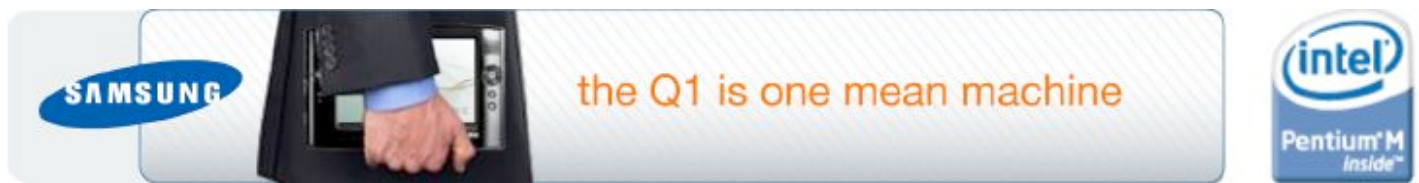
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