



+5 Nonstop flights to distant getaways

Islands

Travel for less
than \$200 a day
to the Caribbean

25 EASY
& EXOTIC
ESCAPES

Find the Secret Beach
of the Bahamas

LEARN TO ENJOY THE SILENCE

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26 FAST & DIRECT ROUTES TO ISLANDS AROUND THE WORLD

We found easy to get to exotic escapes that are less than three hours from the U.S. mainland, or just one direct, nonstop airplane ride away. For example, you can get a nonstop flight to the place pictured to the left, Fiji.

Nicaragua's Fresh Find

28

It's not your typical island, especially because it's a lake three hours from Houston. But it has swordfish, volcanoes and giant toads.



Island adventures, no passport needed

34

Travel to more than five islands without the hassle of flying to another country. These U.S. islands also offer a range of environments and experiences: You can lounge on the typical white sand or enjoy the greenery in more northern locations like Orcas

Island (pictured below).

Travel to Tahiti's Twin

38

It looks like Tahiti, but it's not! You can discover this little paradise too!

Fast, no-stop travel

46

Get on a plane, take a nap, and wake in that faraway paradise you have always dreamed about.

Bali, it's that easy

50

You can truly learn to enjoy the silence in a whole new way.... and in Bali.

Spend less than \$200

57

Six destinations in the Caribbean for less than \$200 a day!

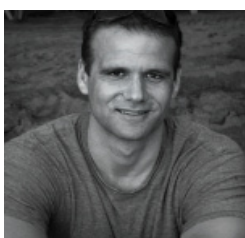


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FROM EDDY PATRICELLI

A DIFFERENT EXOTIC ESCAPE



A two week trip to New Zealand boils down to this hike I begged for. And now, my guide is red-flagging my clothing.

"Didn't you bring anything warm?"

Before us are my pack's contents: a ski coat and pants; sweats and socks.

"No merino wool?" he asks. "Cotton is cold when it's wet."

Wet? Nobody mentioned wet.

A mile into the hike my guide marches us through a river.

My shoes squeak as the path goes vertical. For hours later, a view of Crucible Lake is ours and ours alone. Triumph. And I'm shivering.

For years, I've risked more and traveled farther for greater rewards. This issue offers shortcuts. A Tahiti-like a few hours from Miami (page 38). A colony of elephant seals just a ferry ride from Santa Barbara (page 37). Great escapes right under your nose. Just be sure to keep it warm.

LIVE THE LIFE

in Hawaii



Photos from NakitaAudrey.com , RachelDeBoerbodypainter.wordpress.com & Charlottacarrendar.com

Interview by Brooke Morton

For Her, It's One Big Party

She found the perfect one in the Rainbow State

Chances are, if you RSVP “Yes” to a baby luau on Maui, Rachel DeBoer will be there. The artist, 39, will paint a hibiscus on your daughter’s cheek. Or if you’re feeling playful, she’ll paint you — your whole body if you’re willing. It isn’t just for birthday parties. At corporate events, CEOs become wolves, tigers and robots. “I like to expand people’s ideas of themselves,” Rachel says. Her vision became a ticket out of Los Angeles to see the world. Thailand. India. Austria. Her final stop: Maui. “It called me.”

Q: What’s more fun: kids or executives?

A: The rewards are greater with adults, especially men. One night I painted this guy who was very shy and conservative. I covered his whole head with Day-Glo robot designs. Women flocked to him. People took pictures. He became a centerpiece for the event.

Q: You’ve painted 10,000 people. What about the oops moments?

A: My answer is baby wipes.

Q: But you make mistakes.

A: I’ve learned to be careful with dark

colors around a woman’s jaw line. It can look like a beard. They don’t like that.

Q: Painting yourself — how’s that work?

A: I practice on my body. After 19 years it’s still nearly impossible to keep the lines symmetrical. And I haven’t figured out how to paint my back.

Q: So why does body paint work on Maui?

A: Look at the tattoos. In this culture, they’re worn proudly. They tell a lot about a person’s family clan, their tribulations and if they’re married. It used to be that you weren’t an adult on Maui until you had a tattoo. It was kind of kind of like having a driver’s license. That’s changed some, but body art is still culturally connected.

Q: You’ve also said they’re accepting.

A: When I lived in cities on the mainland, I was always trying to blend in. Here, on this crazy beautiful island. I’m comfortable. I can be my outrageous self.

Q: Outrageous self?

A: Yeah, sometimes that means dressing all in pink — pink tutu, pink wig. That’s

how I meet people. Kids will ask if pink is my natural hair color.

Q: About the luaus, are they a big deal?

A: Celebrating a baby’s survival of the first year? Oh, yeah. Mainland relatives fly in. Families hire dancers and magicians and rent carnival rides. I’ve been hosted by Samoans, Tongans, Chinese, Tahitians and Japanese. Only two things stay the same: I’m the only Caucasian, and you must take a heaping plate of food (or three) home or the family gets mad.

Q: So they’re a little over the top, aren’t they?

A: No way. I’m a party person. I never think any party is over the top.



OTHER WAYS THE BODY SPEAKS

Samoa: Those aren’t bike shorts

Even the governor of Samoa has a pe’a, or a waist-to-knee full-body tattoo that’s dense enough to look like a pair of shorts. The process of applying the black ink can take days, sometimes weeks, to finish.

Thailand: Smiley faces

The sok yant tattoos are meant to protect and bring happiness to the wearer, provided he obeys certain rules. The guidelines often forbid the intake of alcohol, drugs and leftovers, and speaking poorly of mothers is a big no-no.

Off the coast

You can have a variety of island adventures, and without leaving the United States.

ORCAS ISLAND

One hour from Seattle by plane or from Anacortes by ferry, and you've arrived in this North Pacific paradise. This exotic island features a forest, salmon-filled streams, a waterfall, beautiful plant life, and a variety of marine and land animals to spot! -BOB FRIEL

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Only one three-hour ferry ride from Santa Barbara, and you've arrived on this bustling island. In addition to sunbathing, you can go for a hike and try to spot a group of northern elephant seals, California sea lions or northern fur seals squabbling in the sand. -CHUCK GRAHAM

DRY TORTUGAS

It looks like a yard floating in the middle of the ocean, but it is an island and Fort Jefferson, which used to house army deserters and conspirators. It's only 40 minutes by sea plane from Key West, and a perfect place for snorkling. -JW

MOUNT DESERT ISLAND

Part of Acadia National Park, it's a 70-minute drive from Bangor. This island provides the picturesque rocky cliffs and lighthouse photo-op, and a view of Nova Scotia, which is 100 miles in the distance. -JON WHITTLE

GRAND BAHAMA

You can easily visit the "secret" beach on this island, and it's only a one-hour flight from Miami! Completely void of tourist stands, you can enjoy the peace and isolation, but be sure to bring your own food and drinks. -ZACH STOVALL

West nature one plane ride away
HIKE Rocky Beaches fun Explore relaxing Blue Water sea
ferry Wildlife EASY mountains NORTH
ESCAPE sunsets tides SNORKLING
WALK beaches family time swim White Sand NORTH
SWIM kayaking adventure Close to home TRAVEL continental U.S. EASY
beautiful plane SOUTH Wildlife car No passport East
DIVE Tan vacation SOUTH escape one plane ride away
fun plane boating PEACEFUL
oceans fishing Nature Coastal beaches
SOUTH Wildlife TRAVEL car
beautiful plane one plane ride away
exciting Affordable