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ESCAPE

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ALTER EGO TRIPS

It's time to change your holiday style



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COOL
FOREST
GETAWAYS

DOC HOLIDAY
Top tips for fun
in the sun

Scenic Eclipse in
Hanusse Bay,
Antarctica

THE BIG SWITCH

Defy your travel instincts and you might discover a new passion.
But first, find your holiday alter ego with tips from Andrea Black

Hokkaido





What is your ideal holiday? Think hard, then flip it. Challenge yourself and embrace your travel alter ego by doing something completely different on your next trip.

Remember that *Seinfeld* episode where George Costanza did the opposite of everything he usually desired and found joy? He ordered the opposite lunch (chicken salad on rye instead of tuna on toast) and he boldly asked a woman on a date, something he wouldn't normally do. His life changed for the better.

A new study published in *The Journal of Positive Psychology* found that engaging in activities at the edge of one's comfort zone boosted life satisfaction. Make like George and consider these alter-ego holidays, and come back with a new perspective on life.

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Club Med Kiroro Grand
on Hokkaido, Japan.



South Australia

> FLY EVERYWHERE? GET THE TRAIN INSTEAD

It's not about the destination, it's about the journey. When we look back on flights we've taken within Australia, we might recall which movie we watched or the annoying armrest hog next to us, but nothing else. When you take the train from coast to coast, namely the *Indian Pacific* from east to west (or vice versa), it's a trip you will treasure for life. Incredible scenes unfold out the window – ever-changing landscapes filled with wild horses, emus or camels. Off-train adventures include visiting imposing sandstone artworks in outback New South Wales, and stopping in to Bells Milk Bar, a Broken Hill must. Then there's the Barossa Valley to discover. Perhaps the most fascinating side visit of all is a wander through the almost ghost town of Cook, the "Queen City" of the Nullarbor, population four. This is a journey to savour and, as a bonus, it's much better for the environment than flying or driving. journeybeyondrail.com

> YOU'VE DONE THE UK AND US – TRY A NEW LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Yes, a trip to the US or the UK is always fun but, right now, they're also expensive. Besides, there's so much more of the world to explore. Qantas recently introduced direct flights from Sydney to Seoul in South Korea for the first time in nearly 15 years to meet growing demand. Make the trip even more meaningful by doing a Korean course, such as via the Learn Korean with Eggbum app, and set out to explore all this incredible city has to offer. In the hip Hongdae area, feast on inexpensive Korean barbecue or a bakery treat and then visit a vinyl LP bar (there are many). A wander around Changdeokgung Palace is a must, and there are also flea markets to peruse in nearby Dongmyo. Stay at the Ryse Seoul in Hongdae, a design hotel with a superb rooftop cocktail bar. qantas.com; rysehotel.com; visitkorea.org.au; web.eggbum.net;



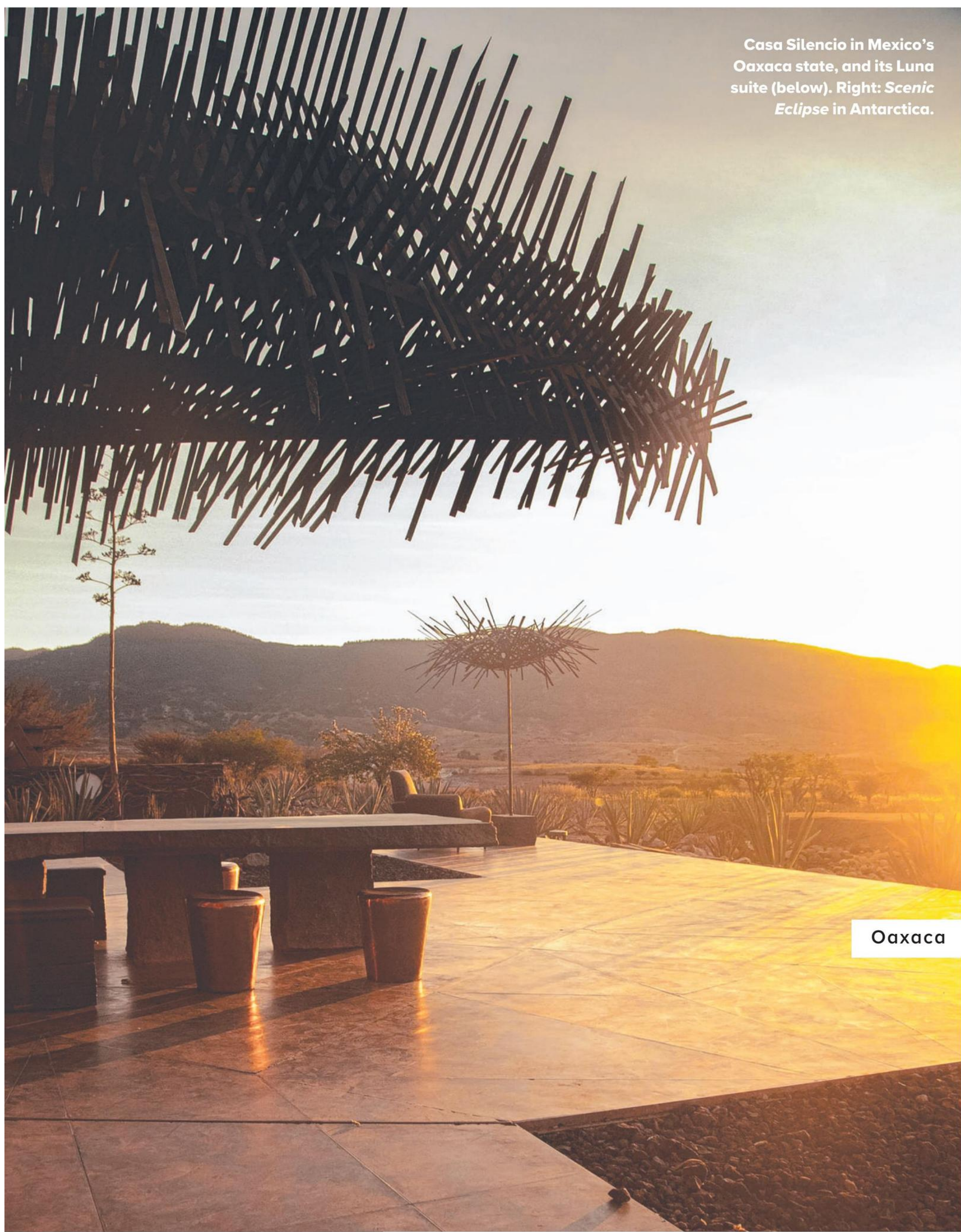
From top: *Indian Pacific* passing Lake Hart and one of its Gold Cabins; "The Grey Stuff" dessert on the *Beauty and the Beast* menu at Luke's Kitchen; The Wilmot Bar at the Kimpton Margot; a room at Ryse Hotel Seoul.



Seoul



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Casa Silencio in Mexico's Oaxaca state, and its Luna suite (below). Right: *Scenic Eclipse* in Antarctica.

Oaxaca



Sydney



Antarctica

> **DON'T GO FAR - TAKE A CITY STAYCATION AND SEE A SHOW INSTEAD**

Sure, camping under the stars is incredible, but it takes a lot of preparation. So why not mix it up with a family city stay for a fun night seeing other types of stars? Right now in Sydney, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* musical has opened at the Capitol Theatre. To celebrate, the official hotel partner, Kimpton Margot, has launched a three-course *Beauty and the Beast*-inspired pre-theatre dinner and cocktail menu at its house restaurant, Luke's Kitchen, from 5pm every Tuesday to Saturday. It has had a bit of fun with the menu, offering dishes such as fish à la Belle and "The Grey Stuff". The Kimpton Margot's Wilmot Bar also serves themed cocktails après-show. kimptonmargotsydney.com; capitoltheatre.com.au

> **LOVE TO VISIT CELLAR DOORS? LEARN TO DISTIL MEZCAL INSTEAD**

Those who love checking out bars and cellar doors when on holiday can take it a step further in luxury. In Mexico's Valley of Xaaga, about an hour's drive from Oaxaca City, a new boutique hotel is housed on a sprawling working distillery owned by the El Silencio mezcal brand. Among agave-studded valleys at Casa Silencio guests can take a deep-dive into the process of distilling mezcal. From chopping up agave to touring the fermentation and distillation areas, distillers guide guests through the entire production process. Afterwards, the tasting room awaits, followed by a five-course dinner at sunset, then cocktails around the fire under the desert stars. On site, there are six two-storey suites constructed from rustic rammed earth, reclaimed Oaxacan timber and tiles. casasilencio.com

> **INSTEAD OF A TROPICAL CRUISE, TRY A POLAR ADVENTURE**

If your idea of a cruise is basking poolside in the sun, maybe a cocktail in hand and dropping in at island destinations in the overcrowded Med or the South Pacific, why not try the opposite and book a once-in-a-lifetime expedition cruise to Antarctica instead? Consider going in style on a *Scenic Eclipse* discovery yacht, as featured in the TV series *Maritime Masters: Expedition Antarctica*. Prepare to take incredible photographs on the two Zodiac excursions each day, plus take the chance to go above and below with helicopter and next-generation electric submersible tours. Both *Scenic Eclipse* yachts will spend the Antarctic season (November 2023 to February 2024) taking expeditioners to many of the most remote regions of Antarctica, including the rarely visited Weddell Sea and Ross Sea. And, yes, you can still sit poolside - there are indoor and outdoor heated plunge pools. scenic.com.au

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Istanbul



Clockwise from top:
Istanbul on the banks of
the Bosphorus; a concrete
bathtub in a studio at
Basalt in Orange (below);
hiking in the snow at
Club Med Kiroro Grand;
a sandal workshop
with Rome Cavalieri.

Orange



> SCARED TO TRAVEL ALONE? TAKE A SOLO WOMEN'S TRIP

Wave the family goodbye and set off on a solo adventure, and you won't be alone. It's a growing trend – Google searches for solo travel have quadrupled since 2020.

Intrepid Travel is offering an incredible women's expedition trip to discover the rich history, culture and landscapes of Türkiye. On the 12-day journey, you can discover the country through the lives of the women who live there. A highlight includes exploring the grand Topkapi Palace on a guided tour learning about the Sultanate of Women – a period when wives and mothers of the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire exerted extraordinary political influence.

There's also a chance to stay at Nahil Guest House, a unique lodging in the Armenian quarter of Istanbul run by women developed so women can collectively generate income in the tourism sector. The journey ends by relaxing in a hammam and learning about this ancient women's ritual. The first departure will be 28 October 2023. intrepidtravel.com/au

> HEAD FOR THE HILLS, NOT THE CITY

Sure, big-city hotels offer fabulous restaurants, bars and spas but you can get that out in the country with the bonus of discovering the source of incredible cuisine and wines to match. In the food basket of Orange in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales you can immerse in luxury among a verdant cherry orchard at Basalt.

Orange has built a reputation for fine food and cool-climate, high-altitude wines – it's home to hatted restaurants and more than 40 wineries. The three architecturally designed studios at luxe stay Basalt are made of rammed earth and feature an internal wood fire and outside fire pit, a concrete bathtub with a bi-fold window for a view and a kitchenette. You can order pre-delivered meals from local catering and bakery favourite, Racine and there's also a complimentary mini-bar packed full of local products. Plus, you'll get a guided tour of the cherry orchard. basaltorange.com.au

> LOVE TO FLY AND FLOP? GET UP AND LEARN A NEW SKILL

Don't waste precious Italian holiday time sitting by the hotel pool or on the beach; you can do that here. Dreams of visiting ancient ruins and fine Italian eateries can come true with a visit to Rome, with the bonus of learning a new skill. The Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Resort, offers a Made in Italy by You program, including the opportunity to craft a pair of shoes or sandals in a workshop led by Le Mastro, an Italian shoemaker. Under the tutelage of a skilled expert, you can design and create their own leather sandals to take home with you, along with new more insight into the art of cobbling.

More into headwear? Rome Cavalieri also offers a workshop in crafting a fedora hat at Antica Manifattura Cappelli, a workshop established in 1930. romecavalieri.com

> FORGET THE SAME SUMMER BEACH HOLIDAY AND GO SKIING IN JAPAN

A natural instinct is to book a family beach stay during Christmas holidays. Why not change it up and make the yuletide season truly memorable with a white Christmas skiing in Japan instead?

On the island of Hokkaido, skiers and snowboarders will know, the powder is soft and the runs aren't crowded. This December, a new Club Med resort opens. The all-inclusive Club Med Kiroro Grand offers direct access to a ski domain with 23 courses for all levels and pristine off-piste ski slopes across both the Asari and Nagamine mountains. Novices are catered to and ski and snowboard lessons are included with every stay and are tailored to all age groups and skill levels. After a day of skiing, soothe muscles in the traditional Japanese onsen complete with a cedar-wood sauna, and a hot-stone room. If Christmas is not an option, there's plenty of time – the ski season here runs until May. clubmed.com.au



Scan the code to see the favourite destinations of 11 pro travellers.