



# TRAVEL

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Which way to America? La Palma's Roque de Los Muchachos provides fresh perspective



## Up, up and away

Chris Leadbeater visits La Palma and discovers a treasure trove of hidden spaces. Plus – from family fun to sand and surf, we reveal which Canary Island will deliver the perfect holiday for you

The clock has ticked past 9pm, the sun is long gone behind the ridge-line, and the Faro de Punta Cumplida is standing alone in the dark. I can see it in the distance as I approach the top end of the east coast of La Palma, its beams straining the upper flank of the land mass – intermittently illuminating the hamlet of La Fajana, then dispatching it back to blackness.

Alas I am late, having tarried too long in the island capital Santa Cruz – and I

am as grateful for the position-fix the lighthouse provides as any ship at the mercy of the swells.

Even with its guidance, I struggle to locate the turning off the LP-1 highway. And when I do chance upon it, the road down is determined to be of no assistance to a stranger. It is defiantly steep, unevenly surfaced, and a shape-shifter with mischief in mind – breeze-block walls, there to shelter the precious banana crops that cover this portion

of the shore from the wind, looming suddenly in my headlights.

The ocean does not seem to be in a welcoming mood either. When I finally identify the driveway and pilot my hire-car to the door, I can hear the ocean thrashing behind the building; a wild animal loose in the fields.

Only when I wake the next day do I see that I'm further out on a limb than I had realised.

The Faro is a gorgeous exercise in

renovation, its base structure transformed – via the visionary labours of German lighthouse renovators Marc Nagel and Tim Wittenbecher, and Spanish architect Olympia Isla – into three suites of luxury accommodation. Opened as a boutique retreat in March 2019, it is a thing of wonder – soft beds, designer kitchen, a pool to the rear. But the reason it still turns up to perform its

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# Wrap up a world of excitement

It's been a tricky year for holidays, so cheer up the thwarted traveller in your life with a destination-themed gift, says Aisling O'Leary

## FRANCE



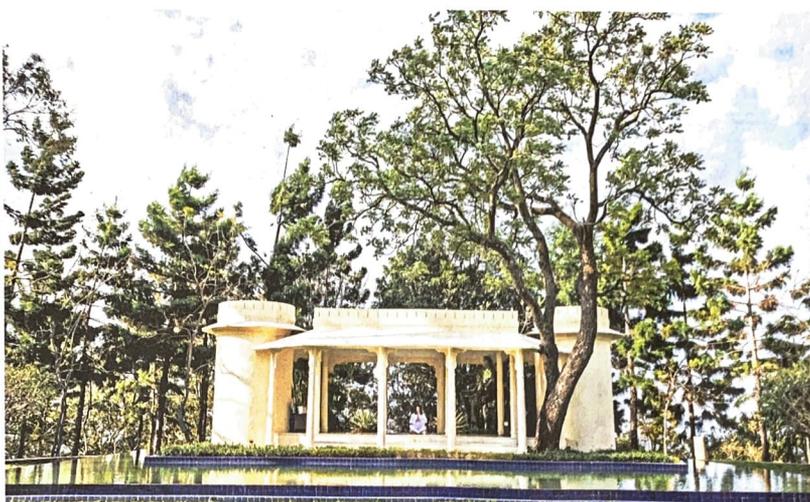
### Cuvee Privée vine adoption

Know a Francophile who didn't get that annual trip to the vineyards? Give them the gift of vines. Cuvee Privée is offering an annual subscription that includes one or six bottles from the recipient's own vines plus a certificate of adoption. When the chance arises to cross the Channel, the subscriber can go visit the winemaker in person. From £140, [cave-privée.co.uk/en](http://cave-privée.co.uk/en)



### Joseph silk satin Doriane dress

Pandemic or no, the French will always be known for their innate sense of style. And for anyone wishing to emulate that, this elegant dress from Joseph is exactly the way to do it. Pair it with some knee-high boots for some Charlotte Gainsbourg cool. £695, [joseph-fashion.com](http://joseph-fashion.com)



## INDIA



### Ananda Spa Himalayas Maui Rituals

Get a flavour of one of India's award-winning Ayurvedic spas. Ananda in the Himalayas, with its virtual Wellness Bliss package. It would be remis not to accompany it with a gift set from Maui Rituals. £46; [anandapsa.com](http://anandapsa.com); £19; [mauirituals.com](http://mauirituals.com)

As we might not be able to visit Ananda Spa now, but its online sessions are the next best thing



### Cricket bat

Improve your game with this bat from Indian brand TON, used by England cricketer Jonny Bairstow. Also, now that the ICC Men's T20 World Cup has been postponed until late 2021, all the more reason to start planning a trip. £199.99; [depercricetonline.com](http://depercricetonline.com)

## NEW ZEALAND



### Master & Dynamic x Away headphones

That rail trip from Auckland to Wellington would have been perfect podcast time - and can be one day. These retro noise-cancelling headphones have up to 24 hours' battery life and crystal-clear sound. A percentage of proceeds goes to MusicCares in support of its Covid relief efforts. £479; [masterdynamic.co.uk](http://masterdynamic.co.uk)



### Critically Endangered Socks

For the person who didn't get to go and see rare Maui dolphins in New Zealand this year, help boost their dwindling numbers instead. Proceeds from these socks, by Critically Endangered Socks, go directly towards whale and dolphin conservation. £12; [criticallyendangeredsocks.com](http://criticallyendangeredsocks.com)



### Aegaeon Christmas hamper with signed book

You can get to Crete this year, thanks to the head chef of London restaurant Moritz. Regional delicacies from her home town and treats from her debut cookbook *Aegaeon* (hello anchovy and olive butter) help you bring a Cretan touch to your home. £15; [marianalivouliakis.com](http://marianalivouliakis.com)



### Von Norten candle

Evoke those balmy evenings by an olive grove with Von Norten's Mediterranean Fig and Olive candle, handmade in England. Funds go to One Tree Planted and Rainforest Action Network. £40; [vonnorten.se](http://vonnorten.se)

## AUSTRALIA



### 'Places We Swim Sydney' book

Transport yourself to the capital of New South Wales via its pools, beaches and waterfalls. From iconic destinations to hidden local spots, *Places We Swim Sydney* will give you more than 50 swims and walks within two hours of the city. We particularly like the tips from locals for that real insider feel. £17.33; [wordery.com](http://wordery.com)



### Aesop 'The Lore Collector' gift set

Give your wash bag a dash of Australia with this Melbourne-founded skincare brand. Its seasonal gifts pair a work of literature with the products, downloadable as an eBook. We love the Lore Collector, which includes geranium hand wash, hand balm, body wash and body balm. £77; [aesop.com](http://aesop.com)

## GREECE

## USA

## ITALY



### Italicus

Enhance your aperitivo hour with what was once the drink of kings. Italicus, based on a 17th-century recipe, can be brought up to date by serving it over prosecco and ice, with an olive or two. The bottle alone is a delight to add to the bar cart. £29.95; [thehighlifeexchange.com](http://thehighlifeexchange.com)



### Strazanti postbox pasta

Serve up a slice of Sicily with the Strazanti sisters' Il Piccolo Pacchetto, aka The Little Parcel. With its pasta sauces, pasta and other ingredients, you can follow recipes for delicious dishes ranging from pistachio pesto to pasta alla norma. £27; £30; [strazanti.co](http://strazanti.co)



### Groundtruth Rikr backpack

Anyone who had a Yosemite hike planned for this summer (and hopes to go next year) needs this backpack made from 120 recycled bottles. With multiple pockets, a laptop opening and a camera bag, you're all set. £283; [groundtruth.global](http://groundtruth.global)



### Malbon Golf cover

For the golfer in the family who didn't get that trip to the PGA tournament this year, jazz up their tee time with this driver headcover. Golf got cool in 2020, with participants almost doubling, so best to keep the clubs looking smart. £55; [malbon.com](http://malbon.com)

## MOROCCO

## JAPAN



### Dryrobe

The surf still awaits in La Source, but changing anywhere is less of a faff with this waterproof Dryrobe. With its oh-so-soft lining, it's a chic and comfortable way to hang out on the beach post-surf. £150; [dryrobe.com](http://dryrobe.com)



### My Luxe hammam towel

There is nothing like a hammam spa in Morocco - but this My Luxe hammam towel will do. Fast-drying, it packs up small and doesn't let you down on chic-factor. A valuable addition to any traveller's suitcase. £28; [myluxehammamtowels.com](http://myluxehammamtowels.com)



### Maru Adventurer Performance Edition

Track your climb up Mount Fuji with this fitness tracker. Stay connected with global two-way messaging, location tracking and SOS functions. For the luxury adventurer in the family. £1,389; [buy.garmin.com](http://buy.garmin.com)



### Nan-Ban antique Japanese tea cups

Stay at home for your own tea break. Nan-Ban are not only excellent in terms of comfort, but the materials used ensure you will be well insulated when walking on difficult wet terrain. £220; [adidas.co.uk](http://adidas.co.uk)

## SPAIN



### Annie B sherry tasting kit

In addition to marking the 500th anniversary of Ferdinand Magellan's voyage on behalf of the Spanish king, this year saw Spain tap further into its maritime past when historic winery Gonzalez Byass revived the tradition of ageing sherry at sea. This sherry tasting kit from Annie B will help you get to grips with this increasingly popular drink - and you can arrange a class with the certified sherry educator herself. £17.50; [anniebpa.in.com](http://anniebpa.in.com). Private Zoom Zoom Tasting sessions cost £20 per session. £25 for a group of 10 (private Sherry Fiesta requires seven days' notice)



### Terrex Free Hiker Cold Rdy hiking boots

That postponed pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago will definitely need some high-grade hiking boots. These from adidas Terrex are not only excellent in terms of comfort, but the materials used ensure you will be well insulated when walking on difficult wet terrain. £220; [adidas.co.uk](http://adidas.co.uk)

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