

MY FAVOURITE DESTINATION



Offered a one-way ticket to anywhere, what's your destination choice? Five more leaders in their fields point us towards their favourite places. Contact the editor if you have a destination to share

PORT NOLLOTH, SOUTH AFRICA



David Dimbleby,
Journalist & Broadcaster

Port Nolloth is on the west coast of South Africa just south of the Namibian border. As a holiday destination this has everything:

Mystery. Glamour. Fine climate. Few other visitors. No beaches. No chic restaurants. No noisy nightclubs. No sights to see. No crowds. No danger of being spoilt. Port Nolloth's business is hoovering diamonds from the sea bed. This dangerous and romantic trade is highly skilled. Converted trawlers are fitted with huge suction engines attached to pipes. These pipes are manipulated by divers

working in fierce currents on the sea bed to suck up diamonds that have come down the river and out to the ocean. The shingle is washed and sifted when it has been piped up on board and if the foray has been successful a few diamonds are found among the debris. The people who do this work are buccaneers - some of great



charm. Visitors are rare and, unless they are suspected of wanting to join in the trade, warmly welcomed. I stayed in a shabby white concrete hotel looking out over the fish factory which gives the air of Port Nolloth its distinctive scent. Not a place where there is any risk of bumping into your neighbours. But as you contemplate the bleak prospect from your lonely window, a fine place to find yourself.



ALTAMIRA MUSEUM, SANTANDER, SPAIN



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The Altamira Museum has set itself a tough target: to bring together contemporary architecture and some of the earliest human art, the Altamira Cave paintings. In addition, the museum tries to harmonise a vital education function with its onerous scientific responsibility for these delicate and precious treasures. Opened to the public in July 2001, this museum not only gives visitors the opportunity to admire bison that were painted



14,500 years ago, but also to enjoy and discover the secrets of the people that lived in the area at that time.

The visit to the permanent exhibition starts with the "new cave" (as the original cave replica is called), followed by 1,000 square meters of exhibition rooms that recover the habitat in which people lived - presenting their life style, conception of art, hunting and folk memory techniques.

All these elements make the Altamira Museum a very attractive destination. But equally important are the 140,000 square meters of meadows and forests that surround it. Visitors can enjoy the nature of the former settlement and admire the mountain landscape too.



NEWQUAY, CORNWALL, ENGLAND



Oz Freire,
Managing Director,
Design Motive

In order to describe my favourite destination I need to rewind my memory some 20 years. My choice is Newquay, the surfing capital of England.

During the early 80's every other Friday we would prepare for the long 7-hour drive from Eastbourne in search of rideable waves (the south coast has never been very reliable!)

For over 5 years we would make all the necessary arrangements: strap our boards onto the car, prepare all our camping equipment and headed West in search of waves (we were never disappointed!) The planning and travelling combined with the anticipation of finding waves made Newquay an exciting destination.

Our visits to the actual town were brief, mainly to stock up with food and visit the odd surf shop (or two). Our immediate requirement was to check out the surf conditions at Fistral



beach where we would surf as much as our bodies would allow us before hunger, exhaustion or exposure (or all 3!) would set in.

Last year I found myself only a few miles from Newquay whilst on a business trip to Cornwall. I hesitated about driving into Newquay as I did not want to erase the fond memories I have had for 20 years. The town had changed a great deal but as I watched the surf rolling in, tucking into a Cornish pasty and drinking a can of Panda cola, I realised that Newquay had not changed a bit!



SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, USA



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Perhaps it's something to do with the fact that my grandfather was a merchant seaman who told me tales of Marseilles, Dar-es-Sallam, Mombassa and Tilbury. It could also be that learning *Cargoes* by John Masefield was one of my favourite homework tasks in primary school. Childhood experiences help shape our dreams,

fantasies as well as our phobias. So as an adult the elusive destination draw for me is the great port city. For me they ooze energy, openness and just a little bit of danger (what's in those containers) I've visited a few: Hong Kong, Cochin, Rotterdam, Kaohsiung, Trieste and Cadiz. But my all time favourite is Savannah. This little jewel is now the fifth largest container port in the USA. You can walk the graceful but funky squares of the historic city but for me the real show is the steady stream of pilot boats taking the huge ships up and down from the ocean. Magic.

It's always good for any city to have a good hinterland. It adds to the allure if you can see, or imagine, where all that cargo is going to or leaving. Take a trip out of Savannah and you're soon



into a distinctive landscape of pines and cotton-fields. And turn on the radio in your rental car and you'll hear some really distinctive and truly memorable local gospel music stations. Geography of nowhere – forget it. Savannah is a somewhere else. It's special.



ZANZIBAR, EAST AFRICA



Santa Claus,
Philanthropist



I hate the snow. My North Pole base leads most observers to assume that it's my choice to look out on relentless sheets of white, only a few elves, reindeer and polar bears for company. But it's not. Necessity is father of that fact. No, when the chimney-and-sleigh work is done, I like to jet off to warmer climes.

Booking a flight on Boxing Day is no mince-pie picnic, I can tell you. Fortunately, I have plenty of foreknowledge of my travel dates.

This year, Mrs Christmas and I have chosen Zanzibar as our Christmas Destination.

This spice island off Tanzania's coast offers many of the holiday attractions which we sun-lovers seek: great food, sun, sand, sea – and superb snorkeling. The island also has links with the folk traditions of



colder climes: I spotted a Lapp Dancing club on my last visit, and will be sure to drop in (through the door) this time.



Of course, such long-distance travel has its worries. Airlines, however secure, are never as comfortable as sleighs and it will be a welcome return in mid-January to greet the reindeer and make a start on planning the next Christmas Eve jaunt.