

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHORS

WALLY & AMANDA KOVAL

FOREWORD BY WES ANDERSON

ACCIDENTALLY WES ANDERSON

ADVENTURES





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POST OFFICE AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Tierra del Fuego National Park, Argentina | c. 1997
Photo by Accidentally Wes Anderson, CAP

Standing proud at the base of Tierra del Fuego National Park, at the southernmost tip of Argentina, is the Post Office at the End of the World. A vision of corrugated metal and wooden piles, this shanty ships postcards and parcels from the last stop in the Americas before plunging toward Antarctica. At your service is Carlos de Lorenzo, a septuagenarian, mustachioed postal officer who found his way to Ushuaia after a career as a teacher in Buenos Aires. Carlos settled on the tiny island of Redonda—about 2 kilometers from shore—and took up a job at their post office, which was stationed there until 1997. Today, Carlos works at this post office back on the Argentinian mainland but still lives on his isle ten

minutes off the bay. He is also the self-proclaimed prime minister of the “Independent Republic of Redonda.” He and his two sons are the only residents of the fifty-hectare micronation he founded and calls home. This anarchist state is bound by one rule: “Do what you want, as long as you respect others.” Indeed, do what you want when you visit here. But consider sending a postcard with a coveted seal from one of the most remote places on the planet, using a stamp commemorating Prime Minister Carlos’s 1948 birth. If you’re feeling especially worldly, pursue a passport stamp from Redonda.



TELEFÉRICO DE ORIZABA

Orizaba, Mexico | c. 2013
Photo by Arely García Chama

Orizaba, Mexico, is a designated Pueblo Mágico (meaning it has been recognized by the Mexican government for its “magical” qualities). Visitors are drawn to its colonial buildings, cultural preservation, and Cerro del Borrego, a peak reached by this family of bright, outgoing *teleféricos*, or cable cars. The maiden voyage embarked in 2013. American, Colombian, and locally trained engineers worked together to design and construct what is now one of the highest, smoothest, and most vibrant cable-run lifts in Mexico.

One of these multicolored cars takes you on the half-mile journey from the river-adjacent Plaza Pichucalco to the top of Cerro del Borrego in just under six minutes. If you reach Cerro del Borrego on a weekend in May, be sure—or prepared—to admire costumed locals re-creating a late-nineteenth-century military battle, dressed in full attire as vivid as the cable car that brought you there.

THIS IS ANTARCTICA

ADVENTURES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD

Photos here and page 322 by Accidentally Wes Anderson and Marjorie Becker, CAP

In 1911, led by a squad of sled-pulling super-dogs, Norwegian Roald Amundsen, forever fascinated with polar exploration, embarked on the ultimate winter...vacation? He and his team braved treacherous, freezing terrain and other Antarctic terrors to become the first humans to reach the South Pole.

Their daring escapades tread a path for other explorers, scientists, and adventurers to acquaint themselves with the windiest, coldest, driest continent on Earth. But first they had to get there.



ANTARCTICA

1. THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Between the base of South America and Antarctica's South Shetland Islands flows a 600-mile-wide stretch of water where the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans meet. This powerful convergence of seas is in the middle of the shortest route to the bottom of Earth. If you're prone to seasickness, you will meet with it here.

For at least two days without sight of land, you will endure the strongest ocean currents in the world, gale-force winds, and waves that can reach as high as 60 feet. "Are we there yet?" Not quite.

Unless you have military clearance, scientific expertise, strong wings, or the last name Bezos or Musk, the Drake is a required route and rite of passage

for anyone with their headlamps aimed at the frozen bottom of Earth.

Curiously, this massive confluence can shift without warning from the calm, flat rippling waters called the "Drake Lake" to its ferocious twin, the "Drake Shake," a turbulent ride that assaults ships and seafarers from all sides.

But upon reaching the Antarctic Peninsula, you're met by a wonderland: sparkling glaciers, boisterous birds waddling in tuxes, and the euphoric sight of solid ground. Plow forward despite the ice in your eye-lashes—there's much to discover.



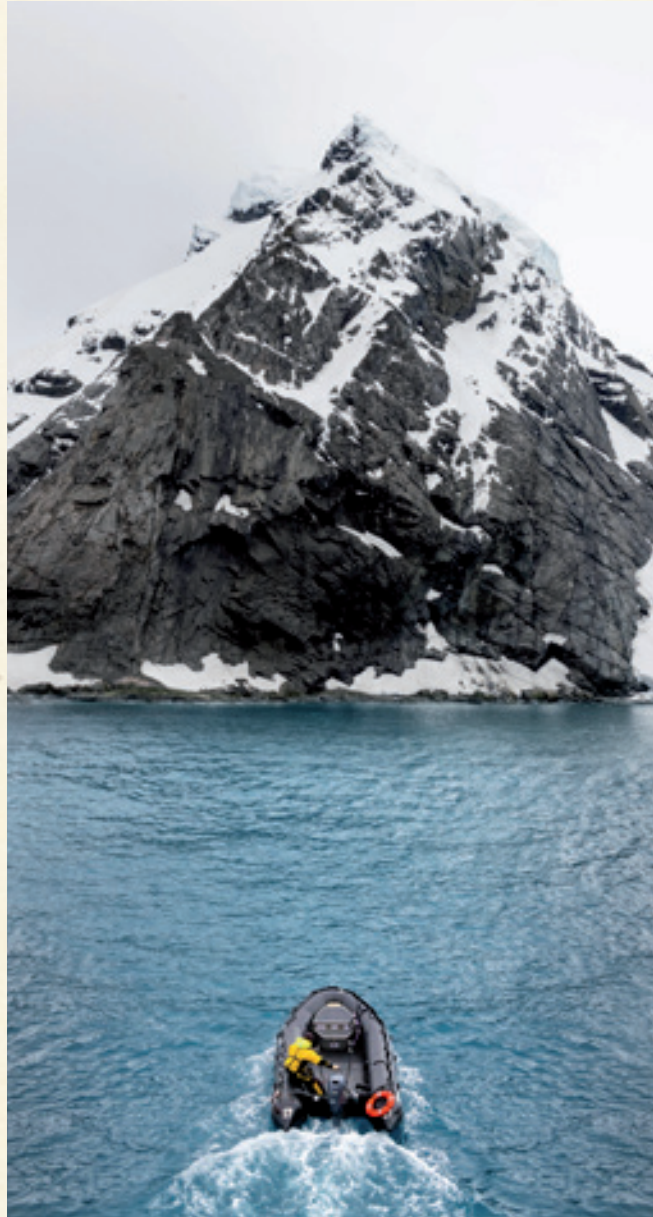


2. ELEPHANT ISLAND / POINT WILD

In 1916, British explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew of twenty-seven suffered a terrifying ordeal after their ship, the *Endurance*, became lodged in an icebank. For eight months the icebank served as the unelected navigator of their impaled vessel, but the men were ultimately forced to abandon ship, lest they sink along with her. They boarded tiny lifeboats that delivered them to refuge at the edge of a glacier on the south of Elephant Island. The nightmare was far from over.

Shackleton and a select few ventured blindly to seek help, as the rest of the crew endured unimaginably harsh conditions—using lifeboats as shelter and surviving off seals and penguins for four and a half months. (FOUR AND A HALF MONTHS!) From then on, the small, rocky spot was known as Point Wild—named not merely because of the ordeal but also to honor Frank Wild, who was left in charge of those left waiting.

Finally, a smoke signal appeared offshore. It wasn't a mirage but Shackleton himself. He had miraculously made it to a whaling station on South Georgia Island, borrowed a tugboat from the Chilean government, and returned to save the crew. He called from the craft, "Are you all right?" to which the men replied, "All well."



3. DAMOY POINT

This humble structure, packed in snow, was built by British researchers in the 1970s. With the weather in Antarctica fluctuating as drastically as it does, the hut served as a halfway point for scientists en route to research stations farther south, hence its nickname as the world's most southerly waiting room. With enough beds here to house fifteen adventurers, groups would wait for weeks at a time for the weather to improve—consuming books, playing board games, or etching poems into the wall. The menu was entirely canned—from bacon to banana pudding. But one recent discovery shed light on the drinks menu.

In 2010, conservationists found Ernest Shackleton's stash of booze beneath the floorboards of the polar explorer's abandoned hut (not unlike this one). Among several crates of whiskey and brandy were three bottles of rare, nineteenth-century scotch sloshing around. A century of subzero temperatures had not frozen the liquor. They remain unopened, with the exception of one.

Distillers chartered the bottles to Scotland and, using a syringe, withdrew just enough to reformulate the lost recipe, then created fifty thousand new bottles. A percentage of the proceeds went to the Antarctic Heritage Trust, and the original bottles were returned to Shackleton's hut to preserve the era's legacy.

The waiting hut at Damoy Point was not the site of any scientific epiphanies but became essential to research that would affect the entire world. Teams have passed through on the way to making discoveries like the hole in Earth's ozone and other crucial findings about our climate. The hut was retired in 1993, with a grateful nod to modern aviation and meteorology—which rendered a waiting room unnecessary. But the historic importance of the shed is still recognized. Today, it's a museum with a caretaker. Introversion is a likely prerequisite for the role; a taste for whiskey also wouldn't hurt.



4. DECEPTION ISLAND / WHALERS BAY

Though steamy, you wouldn't want to get too comfortable in this variety of natural hot spring. Just south of Point Wild is the aptly named Deception Island. Shaped like a C, the island's natural harbor, Whalers Bay, is actually the crater of a volcano that spends *most* of its time sleeping underwater.

The nearly mile-long stretch of beach is littered with the remains of its formerly active whaling and research station. Whalers Bay was startled by successive eruptions in the late 1960s yet is typically considered a "safe" harbor. If an eruption does occur, seismic monitors pepper the coast, enabling the ship to offer you a generous six-minute warning to get the hell out of there. So no matter how enticed you are by the large oil barrels or other dilapidated artifacts on shore, don't stray too far from your ship.



5. DANCO ISLAND



Unlike the massive Antarctic terrain or the enormous blue skies above, Danco Island is notably small—just 1 mile long. Sitting at the end of the Errera Channel, the relatively tiny space is home to 1,600 breeding pairs of gentoo penguins. While exploring, make sure not to tread so deeply as to create accidental traps for the island's abundance of very cute penguin pals. These holes tend to be filled in by a grumbling guide following behind, accustomed to visitors being so gob-smacked by the lookout view that they forget to cover their tracks. This is especially the case when minke and humpback whales make a surprise appearance, or when their songs can be heard off the shore of islands like Danco.

The trouble with an Antarctic adventure is that it ends too soon. Any brief survey through these islands and locales—their stark icebergs, protective glaciers, snow cliffs, unexpected volcanoes, storied research facilities, and startlingly abundant wildlife—is just scratching the surface of what the seventh continent holds.

However homesick you might be among the penguins, it's hard not to wonder if you'll ever be back to the base of Earth, bearing witness to the scope of its sky. The greater anxiety, however, is a little more urgent. Because on the path toward the comforts of home, you'll have one more rendezvous with the Drake.





TERMUNTERZIJL

Groningen, the Netherlands | c. 1660

Photo by Barbara Makkes

Within close proximity of this red wooden cabin are sheep, the town dike, a large windmill, and more sheep, all cuddled together in the delightful village of Termunterzijl. This tiny coastal village appears to be straight out of a postcard, bearing charming traditional Dutch architecture and functional buildings that have developed alongside the Ems river.

The town's claim to fame(?) is its unique lock

system—a fancy contraption that controls the canals' water levels, saving the land from being flooded over.

Life in Termunterzijl moves at a leisurely pace, and is recognized for its serene and easygoing vibe. Many consider both the village and its log cabins as hidden gems of the Netherlands—though this particular gem, if hiding, is doing so in plain, positively red sight.



PÚFA

Reykjavík, Iceland | c. 2012

Photo by Louis Gilliland

Over the past few decades, Iceland's capital of Reykjavík has devoted resources to developing architectural works that reflect its burgeoning cultural strides. Among dozens of newly built landmarks is Thufa—or Púfa, as it's locally known—an art installation that looks like a curiously placed, 25-foot-high knoll.

Púfa was designed in 2012 by an Icelandic artist, as the result of a competition set up by a fish factory beside the site. The resulting mound is a nod to Iceland's traditional rural houses, which are often covered with insulating turf.

Outside, a narrow pathway invites viewers up to the summit while inside, a spiral staircase offers an ascent to one of Reykjavík's coolest observation decks. Atop, you are greeted with a view of the

skyline and surrounding harbor. Don't presume the unique aroma is coming from the water, however.

Crowning the grass is a small wooden shed, the likes of which have been used for centuries across Iceland for drying fish. The structure is barred to prevent the unlikely theft of its contents; the gaps also let in the requisite salt air off the Atlantic, thereby preserving the dangling goods. A glimpse inside reveals the sight of dried fish heads, a staple of an Icelandic diet.

All told, this eye-catching monument is worthy of the intrigue and attention it receives. Ascending it is akin to stepping up to a capsule, where art, history, and fish heads collide. If you are able to reach the top, prepare to feel like the king or queen of the hill... but maybe a little bit queasy.



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CAPE BYRON LIGHTHOUSE VIEWFINDER

Byron Bay, NSW, Australia | c. 1901

Photo by Clarice Cho

Cape Byron Lighthouse sits perched like a boss on the eastern Australian coastline of Cape Byron. The vantage offers an epic perspective of the sparkling Pacific. Such a jaw-dropping sight deserves a bit of extra magnification through this borderline-huggable viewfinder.

Getting to it is an adventure in and of itself—one

that involves hiking up the Cape Byron Walking Track, surrounded by wildlife. Once you are safely atop, guides are present to share its history: the maritime mayhem that made it necessary, its concentric six-wick kerosene burner, and how the structure has managed to maintain its status as Australia's most powerful, still-active lighthouse.

→

AORAKI/MOUNT COOK NATIONAL PARK

Canterbury, New Zealand | c. 1953

Photo by Frida Berg

Maori folk legend has it that Aoraki, a celestial being and favorite son of Rakinui, the Sky Father, embarked on a boat ride with his brothers. They hit rough waters and their canoe tipped over. When the brothers climbed on top of it, the raw, bitterly cold south wind turned them to stone. Their canoe became the South Island, while the peaks of the Southern Alps were each named for the brothers, including the mighty Aoraki, the tallest mountain in New Zealand.

The first Europeans to see that mountain were presumed to be members of Captain James Cook's crew during his 1770 voyage. Captain Cook, with his renowned ego, immediately named the mountain after himself. Aoraki's title wasn't officially restored until 1998, when the mountain was given its double moniker.

Names aside, the mountain has always been a focal point for global climbers and explorers. Visiting it helped Sir Edmund Hillary develop his skills while preparing for his conquest of Mount Everest. In other words, it's no joke. But Aoraki/Mount Cook also appeals to more sedentary travelers, as it's well-known as a brilliant spot for stargazing. Such visitors will find plenty of satisfaction with the smaller trails and encounters with kea—playful mountain parrots—among other winged alpine socialites.

This van seems headed for mountaineering purposes. And who knows? Considering their boat and the prevalence of the mountain's origin legend, this heartstring-puller of a vehicle may also be on a mission to turn their canoe into an island.





NO PASSPORT REQUIRED

Join us on a visual adventure to every continent, exploring the most stunning and unusual places on the planet—more than two hundred new destinations for your travel bucket list. Inspired by the cinematic world of Wes Anderson, this collection of phenomenal photographs, idiosyncratic characters, and surprisingly true tales will send you on adventures big and small.