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Travel + Leisure's annual survey of readers' favorite hotels, cities, airlines, U.S. national parks, and more.



A view of the Atlantic from a villa at Kamalame Cay, a private-island resort in the Bahamas-the No. 1 resort hotel in the Caribbean, Bermuda, and the Bahamas as voted by T+L readers in the World's Best Awards (page 71).

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Reader Larry Graves photographed the oldest part of Zagreb, Croatia.

ON THE COVER THE MOONLIKE ROCK FORMATIONS AT SARAKINIKO BEACH DRAW VISITORS TO MÍLOS, GREECE-THE NO. 1 ISLAND OVERALL IN THIS YEAR'S WORLD'S BEST AWARDS (PAGE 71). PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCO ARGÜELLO.

Letter from the Editor



Jacqui exploring the beach on Kiawah Island, South Carolina, Below: A sundowner at Finch Hattons, a tented camp in Tsavo West National Park, in Kenya.

OU MIGHT be thinking it's the wrong month. The World's Best Awards-in October?

Traditionally, we have published the results of our annual reader survey in August. But this year was a little different, to put it mildly. We made the decision to launch our survey two months later than usual, giving you extra time to travel and, in turn, vote for your favorite airports, cruise lines, hotels, safari outfitters, and more. This shift also gave businesses a chance to get back on their feet. With travel booming close to home, we added a few more domestic categories, including top U.S. national park. Our readers responded by voting in record-high numbers.

The 2021 results are a testament to the travel industry's resilience under enormous strain. Nearly two years into the pandemic, there is still much we don't know about COVID-19. But we do know that some parts of the world

have struggled more than others. I've seen this unevenness firsthand, having spent two weeks this past July in Kenya with Roar Africa (roar africa.com). All of the safari lodges I staved at followed strict protocols. Americans were there, but the lodges were not full-a stark shift for a nation where tourism is typically responsible for 10.4 percent of GDP.

Use these lists as a global resource. Study the names of the companies and destinations. Then imagine the faces behind each of the winners. They are too numerous to count.

The No. 1 hotel in the world this year is Mahali Mzuri, a 12-tent safari lodge in Kenya's Masai Mara ecosystem. When I wrote a congratulatory note to the general manager, Wilson Odhiambo, he replied that the news of the win was coming at a welcome time for his team, and he would be honored to see me at the lodge someday soon. Cheers to that.



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FROM MY TRAVELS

I'll be sharing more details of my Kenya trip soon-but first. a few notes on my U.S. adventures. For vears, friends with kids had told me how much they loved the Sanctuary at Kiawah **Island Golf Resort** (kiawahresort.com: doubles from \$740). which was voted this year's No. 1 resort in South Carolina, The sense of spaceboth in the lobby. with its Lowcountry landscape murals and soaring ceiling, as well as on the wide, empty beachput my shoulders down an inch or two. Also on the list: the Inn & Club at Harbour Town (seapines.com: doubles from \$419). at Hilton Head's Sea Pines Resort, home to the Smith Stearns tennis academy for youth. I happened to run into tennis legend Stan Smith on the court, and my life felt complete. Up north, I checked in to the elegant, couples-focused **Chanler at Cliff Walk** (thechanler.com; doubles from \$1,175), in Newport, Rhode Island, which has chic yurts for outdoor dining, and a new wine garden in partnership with Italian vintner Ca' del Bosco, I flew there with Tradewind Aviation (flytrade wind.com), a private charter company that is now offering scheduled flights to Newport to

keep up with the

high demand.

NO. 1 RESORT HOTEL IN THE CARIBBEAN The overwater spa at Kamalame Cay, in the Bahamas. You, our discerning readers, will often plan your next adventure before the one you're on has even ended. Your love of exploring the world has helped sustain the travel industry during these tumultuous times, and as the world began to reopen, you were among the first to get back out there. Your insights on those trips—and on your pre-pandemic journeys, tooinformed these rankings of the World's Best hotels, islands, tour operators, U.S. national parks (a first!), and more. Cheers to you, to the winners—and to brighter days ahead.

