



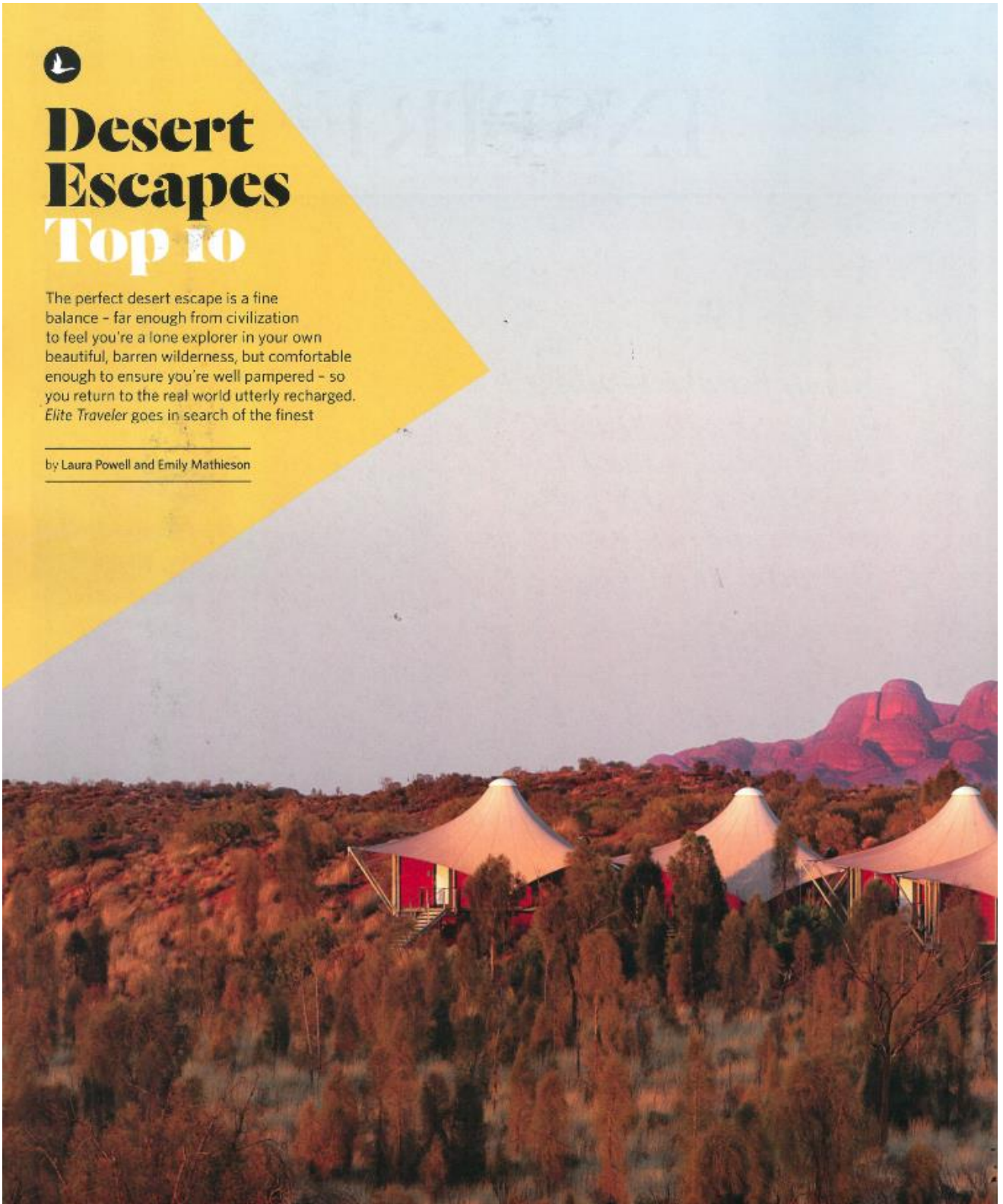
# Desert Escapes Top 10

The perfect desert escape is a fine balance – far enough from civilization to feel you're a lone explorer in your own beautiful, barren wilderness, but comfortable enough to ensure you're well pampered – so you return to the real world utterly recharged. *Elite Traveler* goes in search of the finest

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by Laura Powell and Emily Mathieson

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## Sossusvlei Desert Lodge

NAMIB DESERT, NAMIBIA

Tucked away in a sandy in the foothills surrounding the NambiRand Nature Reserve, this camp (owned by andBeyond hotel group) is a lesson in eco-friendly architecture. Built with bone, slate, glass and stone, it is filled with wooden sculptures, sand rock paintings and chandeliers made of twigs. The 10 villas each have a sitting room and veranda looking out at the windswept landscape. This can also be viewed from the swimming pool, which is filled from an underground spring.

**Standout service** The outdoor terrace with views of the floodlit waterhole frequented by oryx, springboks, jackal and hyenas, is possibly the best al fresco dining venue in Africa. Ask chef Belinda Kavendji to serve the springbok fillet with juniper sauce.

**Special amenities** Wine cellar, outdoor shower and a fireplace with every room. Telescope for guest use and an astronomer who can visit any time of night to explain star constellations.

**Room to book** Rent the lodge and all 10 villas. Take suite two for yourself – it has a slightly wider angled view of the desert.

**Contact** Paolo Lillo, lodge manager, +27 11 809 4300, andbeyond.com

**Price** from \$8,000 per night for exclusive use



If you're arriving by private jet, make use of Sossusvlei's private runway. It also has three Land Cruisers and three Land Rover Defenders for guest use.

