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ANDBEYOND GUEST EXPERIENCE TRENDS IN 2018

November 2017

“Travel has evolved from the adage of taking only photos and leaving only footprints,” says &Beyond CEO Joss Kent. “The wild places of this world need us to do better than that. Now it’s about taking memories and leaving a legacy.”

Travellers who take much less and give much more

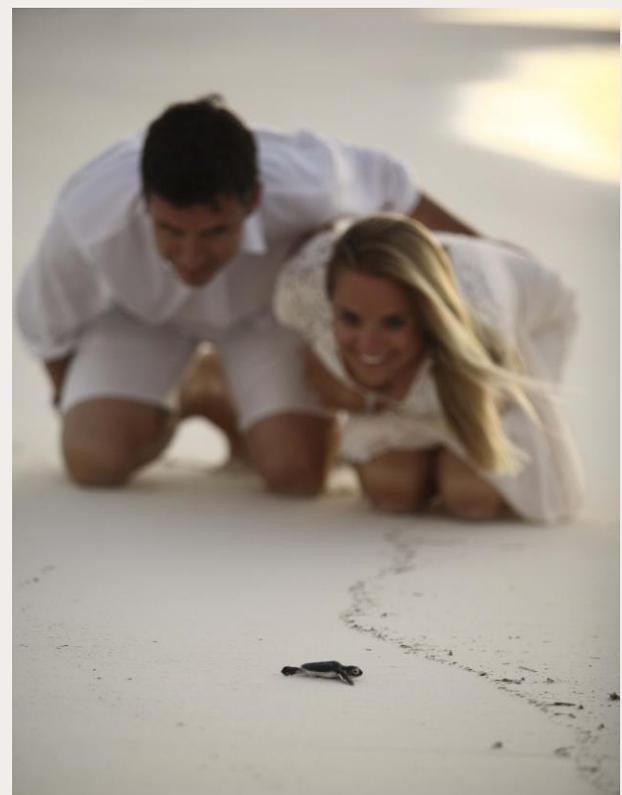
With a more aware breed of traveller looking towards responsible luxury travel, lodge design is rapidly evolving. “We are focusing our energy and time on trying to make sure that we build sustainably but, at the same time, don’t lose the creative edge that differentiates our guests’ experience,” says Kent of the many infrastructure developments that &Beyond has planned for 2018. The wide range of lodge refurbishments recently launched by the company, including &Beyond Phinda Rock Lodge in South Africa and &Beyond Nxabega Okavango Tented Camp in Botswana, as well as the many plans for the coming year, from the rebuild of &Beyond Phinda Homestead to the launch of the new &Beyond Tengile River Lodge, showcase the wide range of design that the company’s portfolio encompasses. At the same time, &Beyond makes sure that sustainability is an entrenched part of the design process. The company believes that less is often more and emphasises the field experience that its rangers, guides and hosts offer over opulent lodge design.

“The game lodge of the future has a light footprint and uses 100% renewable energy,” says Kent. “It uses no plastic, has a zero carbon offset, a sensitive ecological footprint and a sensitive design, with a strong sense of place. It is small and community centred. Conservation and voluntourism activities form part of the daily routine and many more activities are offered, such as walking, cycling, canoeing and riding. This is what we are hoping to work towards in our future plans.”

“Whatever direction travel takes in 2018, sustainability will be at the absolute core of everything,” says Kent.

Guests who want to get their hands dirty

“Participative experiences are proving every more popular,” adds Kent. Companies such as &Beyond have been breaking down the barriers and including guests in the activities that take place behind the scenes in terms of conservation and community. For example, &Beyond offers guests to its reserves in South Africa the opportunity to get involved in [elephant collaring](#) and rhino notching, both activities that are necessary in monitoring wildlife populations when faced with the growing threat of poaching. At &Beyond



Mnemba Island and &Beyond Vamizi, where turtle nests are identified and carefully protected, guests travelling at the right time of year can [safely escort hatchlings to the sea](#). At &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve, depending on the need in the reserve, guests can participate in a procedure that limits the size of lion litters. All such endeavours strictly have the welfare and care of the wildlife and land in mind.

Insightful tours with &Beyond's community development partner, Africa Foundation, give travellers a [glimpse into the rural communities surrounding &Beyond's lodges](#), prompting many to get involved in projects aimed at improving education, healthcare and access to water, as well as the development of local businesses.

"We must conserve, we must protect and we must create economic shared value with the communities that depend on the wildlife areas that we influence for their livelihood", continues Kent.

Explorers who travel deeper

Time-poor travellers continue to look for immersive and authentic experiences. &Beyond has introduced a set of Small Group Journeys to cater for this need. The journeys are designed to cater for specific interests, such as

- Photography on [East Africa Photographic Expeditions](#)
- Off-the-beaten-track experiences that would otherwise be prohibitively expensive such as [tracking the elusive snow leopard](#) in the far north of India
- Access to top experts in areas as diverse as politics and conservation, as well as the world's best guides in order to deliver impactful, educational and life-changing experiences on [&Beyond's Private Jet Expeditions](#)
- Experience the very best of Botswana - the renowned Chobe National Park, the glorious Savute, awe inspiring Okavango Delta and the dramatic Nxai Pan National Park. On a comprehensive and interpretive private, set-departure [Botswana Mobile Camping Expedition](#)
- Discover fresh and fiery new flavours, gain enlightenment from sacred shrines and temples, and fall in love with kaleidoscopic India on [&Beyond's Eat, Pray, Love journey](#)
- In South America, &Beyond's Land Rover Journeys include a selection of privately guided road trips off the beaten track in Chile and Argentina. Highlights include visits to conservation projects, white water rafting, private visits to boutique wineries, scenic flights over the Chilean fjords and many more

Travel not to escape, but to enrich

Wellness is an increasingly larger part of travel. "People are travelling not to escape their daily lives but to enrich them and this includes looking after their personal wellbeing," explains Kent. "Tours such as the meditation and yoga focused retreats that we offer in India are becoming popular as



travellers look to invest in themselves. These days the luxury travel guest is someone who wants to be offered a glimpse of the world through different eyes, while also being completely pampered in the process.”

2018's destinations to watch

As travellers look towards the path less travelled, &Beyond has great expectations for many of the destinations that it offers.

- “**Bhutan** is a country that offers an incredibly special travel experience and we have big plans for the future there,” comments Kent.
- After a few years of hardship, the future also looks bright for **Kenya**, where the company will be relaunching the fully refurbished &Beyond Bateleur Camp in the Masai Mara in March 2018.
- &Beyond also has great hopes for **Chile**, where 17 national parks are soon expected to be linked in the ‘Route of Parks’, creating an exceptional wilderness haven in the country.
- Keep an eye on the ever growing food scenes of Buenos Aires, Lima, Santiago and Mendoza.

“Luxury is about authentic experiences,” says &Beyond CEO Joss Kent, “this plays directly to our strengths, as our company model has always been to embrace the soul of each iconic destination through delivering interpretive experiences, meticulously planned by our travel experts and delivered by finely trained guides.”

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ABOUT &BEYOND

&Beyond is one of the world’s leading luxury experiential travel companies, designing personalised high-end tours in 15 countries in Africa, five in Asia and four in South America. We also own and operate 29 extraordinary lodges and camps in Africa’s iconic safari and island destinations. In addition, &Beyond operates small group, set-departure expeditions throughout Africa and Asia. This enables us to positively impact more than 9 million acres of wildlife land and 2 000 kilometres of coastline.

Established in 1991, &Beyond takes exceptional care of our guests in order to make a difference; our commitment to sustainable responsible travel, conservation and community empowerment has been globally recognised with multiple awards over the years. We offer warm local hospitality and sublime natural luxury that combine with interpretive natural experiences, led by highly-skilled guides and rangers.

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ABOUT AFRICA FOUNDATION

Founded in 1992, Africa Foundation has built up a highly successful track record in empowering and enriching the lives of communities living adjacent to conservation areas, specifically in the areas of healthcare, education and enterprise development. It is a registered trust, tax exempt and non-profit organisation, supported by the Africa Foundation UK and Africa Foundation USA, as well as &Beyond, lodge guests and other donors. To find out how you can personally contribute to similar projects, please visit www.africafoundation.org.za.