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BHUTAN'S ULTIMATE TREK

INTO THE HEART OF THE HIMALAYA

BY KIRA SALAK

ADVENTURE

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COSTA RICA

Silent Gr

Eco-luxury breaks new gro



(they were built on raised pla private plunge pools, high th meals; elsilenciolodge.com). T sonal eco-concierges who ca nearby 8,871-foot Poás volcano (\$45 per person), a birding amble along La Promesa Waterfall trail (\$30 per person) in search of the long-tailed, iridescent green quetzal—revered by the Aztecs as a symbol of goodness and light—as well as the old standards: horseback riding, rafting, and kayaking. But El Silencio's playlist includes something few resorts can match: solitude in unspoiled nature.

► **MUST-DO:** To trade the highland hush for a few days of crashing waves, hop a 45-minute flight from San José to the Osa Peninsula (\$222 round-trip; natureair.com), where dirt tracks lead through jungle to hidden surf breaks and perfect beaches that haven't become construction sites—yet.

MORE LUXE OUTPOSTS



PERU

The Amazon Queen

Taking high-end upstream

■ EXPLORING THE HEADWATERS of the Amazon has never been a pleasure cruise: Few boats are capable of making the trip, and riverside lodging is virtually nonexistent. Enter the new M/V *Aqua*, a 130-foot, 12-suite expedition ship now navigating the flooded rain forest of northern Peru in style (\$1,950 per person for four days, including meals; aquaexpeditions.com). "We designed it as a floating base camp staffed with expert naturalists," says Aqua CEO Francesco Galli Zugaro. Small skiffs take passengers deeper into the five-million-acre Pacaya Samiria National Reserve for face time with the locals: pint-size tamarins and pink river dolphins.

suites keep watch over a private 500-acre reserve.



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Goodbye Kitty, Hello Zen

Old-style endures outside Tokyo

■ FLASHING NEON AND 24-HOUR pachinko parlors typify Japan's modern scene, but enclaves of the country's ancient Shinto heritage still exist beyond city limits. Among them is Myojinkan Ryokan, a traditional inn just three bullet-train hours from Tokyo (\$296, including meals; ryokan-collection.com). The 77-year-old refuge rises from terraced rice paddies on the edge of Yatsugatake National Park and accesses a web of trails that wind up the slopes of Honshu Island's North Alps. From the Setsugekka Onsen, one of Myojinkan's four natural hot springs, the only bright lights blinking at night are directly overhead.

PHOTOGRAPHS, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF SERGIO RUCI/EL SILENCIO LODGE & SPA; COURTESY OF AQUA EXPEDITIONS; JTB PHOTO/ALAMY; MICHAEL DEYOUNG/CORBIS; MAP BY STEVE WALKOWIAK