



January, 2020

Welcome to this month's e-newsletter! Thank you for reading and for being part of the Zoom family, opening minds and hearts through travel while having an incredible time doing so.

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness," Mark Twain

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## Pad Thai, Spaghetti Squash Style

Last month we wrote about the cuisine from Thailand and its regional differences. This year we are going to be showcasing dishes inspired by our travels, but tailored for the amateur cook. We hope this inspires you to get in the kitchen, and start the new year off traveling to far off lands via cooking.

In a land as gastronomically diverse and exciting as Thailand, pad Thai is as close as it gets to a national dish. The instantly-recognizable, fragrant blend of freshly fried noodles, tamarind, garlic, chili, peanuts and sometimes vegetables is, for many of us, the ideal introduction into Thai cuisine.

For our Zoom version of Pad Thai, we substitute spaghetti squash noodles for rice noodles, in a nod to our bods in the new year. It has all the hallmarks of your favorite take-out pad Thai — except those spaghetti squash noodles are the star of the show.



## Announcing Zoom Vacations' Tour to India for the Holi Festival

Today, India stands testament to how its glorious diversity exists in complete harmony - showcased beautifully in the many festivals celebrated across the country throughout the year.

Fascinating, colorful, and vibrant, Holi symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. Most important, it marks the end of winter and heralds the arrival of spring, celebrating thanksgiving for an abundant harvest and the fertile land. Holi also signifies the beginning of the new year - a time to renew and revive broken bonds, forge new ones, and bring harmony.

The morning of Holi is literally a riot of colors! People spray colors on each other or smear each other's faces with color. There is plenty of song, dance, and music - enjoyed with traditional Holi sweets and delicacies.

Zoom Vacations promises you the experience of a lifetime - While there are many once-in-a-lifetime things to see and do on this trip, the highlight is celebrating Holi with the royal family of Jodhpur in style. Our endeavor is not only to bring you to India but to also bring India to you!

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## Featured Traveler: Dale from Asheville, NC

Dale and Will joined our tour to Peru in November, and really immersed themselves in the experience.

They traveled as part of our small group, like a mean, green touring machine, learning from the



best guides, eating at some of the best restaurants, and staying at the finest hotels. Dale shared a bit about his experience with Zoom Vacations in Peru.

**Zoom:** What was your favorite part or highlight of the trip to Peru?

**Dale:** Experiencing Machu Picchu for the first time.

**Zoom:** What surprised you about Peru as a destination?

**Dale:** The culinary aspect which has influences of Chinese and Japanese and Peruvian Cuisine.

**Zoom:** Did Machu Picchu live up to your expectations?

**Dale:** We experienced perfect weather and the crowds less than we thought they might be.

**Zoom:** How was the food throughout the trip?

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## Zooming with Joel

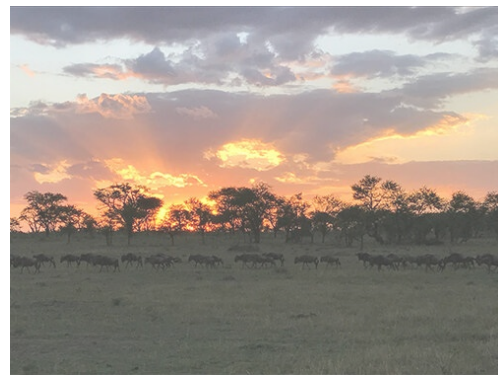
### My Favorite Trip

When I am out and about, and people find out what I do for a living, I always get the following question: "what is your favorite trip?" I always struggle with answering this question, because the truth is that I don't have one, but this answer is such a conversation-stopper. Plus, more accurate than "I don't have one," is actually "all of them." What I realized is that it just depends on the mood that I'm in.

Sometimes all I want is to go on one of our yacht trips in the Caribbean and just enjoy the aqua water, sunshine, great food, and camaraderie. Other times I'm in the mood to explore an area of the world such as [India](#) that is so rich with culture and history.

The trip that has been on my mind lately, is our tour to [Tanzania and Rwanda](#). There is just something about being on safari, that catapults me away from what is familiar, yet puts me in the center of everything that matters. Being in the stillness of the African bush, while watching the circle of life unfold around me, is such a humbling, spiritual experience. And truthfully, this always sounds enjoyable to me.

During our tour in Tanzania, we get to see the Great Migration which is just so spectacular, that words cannot do it justice. Plus, the places that we visit in Tanzania are arguably more rich and wildlife than most other Safari experiences. During our last Zoom Vacations tour to Tanzania our travelers couldn't believe, for instance, the amount of zebras that we saw. It was jaw-dropping.



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## Zooming with Bryan

### My Two Cents on Scents (While You Travel)

I first wrote this article a few years ago, and since then have had more thoughts and realizations about the interesting role that various scents can play in our vacationing. There are many ways to enhance your vacation, and to keep wonderful memories of your vacation fresh in your mind after the vacation is over. Taking photos of your vacation is probably the most familiar example. But, while affective, and certainly something to continue doing, it may not actually be the best way.

Our sense of smell is closely linked with memory, probably more so than any of our other senses. Most of us are able to think of smells that conjure particular memories; the scent of pine evoking Christmas, for example.

One reason this might be has to do with the way our brains process odors and memories. Smells get routed and analyzed through one's olfactory bulb, which is part of the limbic system, the emotional center of the brain. It's closely connected to one's amygdala and hippocampus, brain regions that handle memory and emotion.

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## New For 2020

Zoom Vacations has a number of exciting new experiences we are rolling out for 2020 and 2021. Three that have been getting a lot of excitement are our tours to Turkey, to Russia, and our exciting partnership with the Belmond all-gay train journey from Venice to Paris!

**Selected Highlights from Zoom Russia**  
[September 5-14, 2020](#)

- Accommodations at the Park Hyatt Moscow and the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe
- Unique Welcome and Farewell Dinner events
- Private tours of Moscow and St. Petersburg
- Enjoy a boat trip down the Moskva River.
- Private tour of the Hermitage Museum.
- Private tours of other museums and palaces.
- Enjoy an elegant dinner accompanied with timeless classics from the great Russian composer Tchaikovsky.



**Selected Highlights from Zoom Turkey**  
**October 31 to November 6, 2020**

- Accommodations at two of the best hotels in Istanbul and Cappadocia
- Several Zoom Signature events throughout
- Private tours of Istanbul & Cappadocia
- Yacht cruise of the Bosphorus
- Most meals, with wine included as well
- Hot air balloon over Cappadocia
- Optional post tours



**Train Journey Highlights**  
**November 7-9, 2020**

- One night at the Belmond Hotel Cipriani, Venice
- Gala dinner in Venice
- One night on board the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express from Venice to Paris
- Private Cabins with 24-hour cabin Steward
- Fine Dining aboard - all meals included
- Wine, beer, and soft drinks included with meals
- Spectacular scenery and surprise entertainment
- Optional pre tour to Turkey and post tour to Paris
- We also have the best rates at a 5 star hotel in Paris, for after the train!




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