



September, 2019

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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Featured Traveler: Donald, from Washington, DC

Donald and his husband, Kurt were so much fun to have on our Tel Aviv Gay Pride trip earlier this summer! Read on to learn about Donald's experiences with Zoom Vacations in Israel!

Zoom: Why did you decide to go to Israel with Zoom Vacations?

Donald: Israel was always on our list of places to visit. However, it felt too overwhelming to plan a trip to a country with so much history - How to plan the right balance of culture, great food, sightseeing and relaxation. I had never been on a tour where everything was planned for me. Zoom provided the perfect balance.



Zoom: Did you make new friends on this trip?

Donald: Definitely. It was a great combination of couples and singles from all over the US, plus a fabulous couple from London. I look forward to seeing this group in their native cities and on our next Zoom vacation.

Zoom: You came with your husband. Were you able to get enough alone time, in addition to time spent with the group?

Donald: My husband Kurt and I were able to spend several nights just the two of us having dinner, strolling through the local neighborhoods and going out for drinks at local spots, while at the same time, we always felt part of the larger group.

Zoom: How do you think this trip would've been different if you had done this on your own rather than with Zoom's gay group?

Donald: If we had booked the trip on our own, we would have seen many of the key sites in Israel and we might have had a guide for certain portions of our journey. However, with Zoom, we had one dedicated guide for the entire trip, plus 5 other local guides for the particular day's activities - A spice market guide, a guide to local graffiti artists, one near the Golan Heights, one in Bethlehem and another at Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.

Each had their unique personality, charm and enthusiasm for their particular area of expertise. We also wouldn't have laughed so much or met so many new friends or sang along to the music videos in the luxury van on the way back to hotel.

[Read on](#)

Zoom Thailand

With its dazzling tropical beauty, hidden history, and vibrant food culture, it is easy to see why we fall in love with Thailand over and over. Dig deep into Thailand's incredible cultural diversity by traveling to timeless temples and glimmering pagodas. Seek out local delicacies in buzzing night markets, or relax on a picture-perfect beach.

This tour, combining Zoom insight and local expertise, focuses on arts, food, culture, and history to give you a sense of the Siam that was, the Buddhism that is, and their colorful traditions.

Fun fact: The official name for the city of Bangkok Thailand is 'Krung thep mahanakhon bovern ratanakosin mahintharayutthaya mahadilok pop noparatratchathani burirom udomratchanivetma hasathan amornpiman avatarnsa thit sakkathattiyavisnukarmprasit.' Or 'Krung thep' for

short, meaning City of Angels.

Join Zoom Vacations as we introduce you to the best, most unique authentic experiences Thailand has to offer.

[Read about our trip February 4-14, 2020](#)



Zooming with Bryan A Trip is Not Necessarily a Vacation

A friend of mine is taking a trip to visit his family on the East Coast, and he was mentioning to me that as much as he wants to see his family, he isn't as excited about it as he thinks he should be. He has been pretty exhausted at work, and needs a break, so he doesn't understand his lack of enthusiasm, in this opportunity to get away.

I explained to him what I think is going on, and I see it a lot. He is taking a trip, but this trip isn't a vacation, and there is a huge difference between the two. A vacation is when you get to do what you want, where you want to do it, and when. For the most part, if you don't want to do something during your vacation, you simply don't do it.

A trip to visit family includes all kinds of expectations, commitments, and for some of us stresses with family dynamics. Also, many times when we take trips to visit family, our sleeping accommodations are on a couch, or on a weird bed. We share bathrooms etc. When most of us take a trip like this to visit family, we don't stay at fancy hotels.

If you are one of those people who uses trips to visit family as your vacation, this potentially may not give you the relaxation and recharging that your body and mind desire.

For instance, when I go home to visit family, I enjoy seeing everyone and reconnecting, but I rarely feel re-energized by the end. I stay in a little room in my brother's house, which is next to the room of my teenage nephew who is up until 3 AM every night doing loud teenager stuff. Myself and said teenager share a bathroom which also has its own special challenges, such as the fact that our standards for cleanliness are a bit different.

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Zooming with Joel

Peru, for the Shopper in All of Us

Travel is my passion, as you know if you're reading this article. But what you may not know is that shopping is also one of my passions, not so much at home but when I travel. I especially love shopping in Peru! One of my greatest pleasures when I travel is the anticipation of what I will buy when I get to my chosen destination.

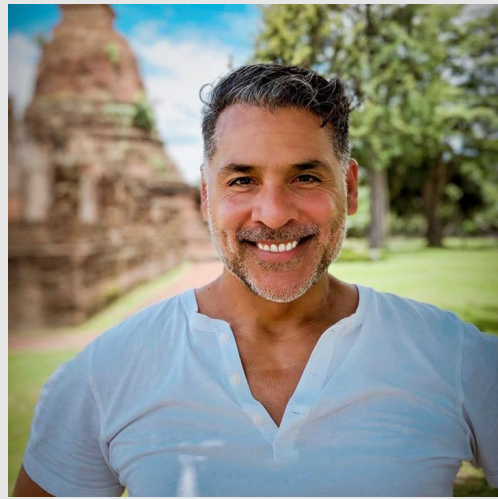
Sometimes, I know exactly what I want. Other times I want to be surprised. There are places around the world where shopping is nirvana and other places where you need not bother (there is nothing to buy). And then there are places that have surprised me. Of all the places I look forward to visiting to buy exactly what I want, Peru is at the top.

For instance, I LOVE anything from Ilaria. The hand-crafted pure silver jewelry and home items are to die for. And at such reasonable prices!

If you are not into jewelry or home goods, there is always baby alpaca or vicuña sweaters, gloves, scarves, hats, throws, socks and the like that will be welcomed by anyone during the holidays or for a special birthday.

My favorite baby alpaca shop is Sol Alpaca. They have a store in every desalination, including the airports. Be sure to buy from a reputable store like Sol Alpaca (you get what you pay for). If the "baby alpaca" prices at the market seem too good to be true, you've probably just bought yourself some "maybe alpaca".

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Egypt 2020: Two Spots Left!

September 26 - October 4, 2020

A tour to Egypt is like a dream come true for many. Some have the love for history while others have the craze to explore the historical wonders of the ancient world.

We have a little secret to share. There are two spots left on our Egypt 2020 trip, and we're holding them exclusively for our Club Zoom members. This trip has sold out year after year, and we want to make sure we held a spot for you.

Imagine sailing on our own private yacht for 4 nights on the Nile, enjoying a true luxury experience like no other. Are you ready to say yes to Egypt? Because Egypt is ready to indulge you with its rare ancient beauty.

[Read about this trip](#)



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