



RESORT TO LAURA MADRID

EXPERT TRAVEL PLANNING

WWW.RESORTTOLAURAMADRID.COM

HIGHLIGHTS & TIPS FROM 2013

Dear Friends and Fellow Travelers,

Thank you for entrusting me with two of your most important investments — your time and your travel! I'm honored to help exceed your expectations for your milestone trips, weekend escapes, family holidays, and even surprise trips you gift to loved ones. I cherish every opportunity to WOW you with my expertise, worldwide contacts, and special extra value-adds ANYWHERE from Atlanta to Argentina to Australia!

It's been another amazing year with lots of hard work but some very rewarding experiences — all in the name of field research to the many destinations you ask me about. Please enjoy soaking up some ideas for your 2014 bucket list on the coming pages!

Gratefully,

Laura
Laura Madrid

Exhilarated at the Taj Mahal

I finally scratched India off my bucket list in 2013!

What can I help you scratch off yours in 2014?




VIRTUOSO MEMBER.
SPECIALISTS IN THE ART OF TRAVEL

ANSWERS TO MY MOST FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

Favorite Travel Quote:

"When you travel, remember that a foreign country is not designed to make you comfortable. It is designed to make its own people comfortable." — Clifton Fadiman

Personal Bucket List:

Tasmania, Botswana and Colombia

Fun Trip I'm Currently Planning for Clients:

A Ferrari drive through the hills of Tuscany for 15 couples

What Continent Is the Hottest Right Now? South America by far! And watch Central America take off in 2014.

Favorite Hotel I Visited in the Past Year:

La Residencia in Mallorca, Spain (www.hotel-laresidencia.com)

Favorite New Resort I Have Not Yet Been To:

Mukul in Nicaragua (www.mukulresort.com)

Exciting New Hotel Opening in 2014: The Metropolitan on South Beach in Miami, Florida (www.comohotels.com/metropolitanmiami)

Hottest Travel Trend:

Experiential Travel. Many of my clients want to physically explore the land by foot, bike, kayak, or snow shoe and deepen their cultural experience by interacting with the locals in meaningful ways: community service projects or shopping, foraging and cooking with a local family.

Most Important Food City Now?

Lima, Peru. No longer just a stop-over en route to the eco-lodges of the Amazon or the Incan ruins at Machu Picchu, Lima is now home to some of the world's most highly regarded chefs. Definitely worth an overnight!

The Most Elegant Travel Gift to Give a Loved One: A private barge trip down the Canal du Midi **OR** a glamorous voyage aboard an Orient-Express Train

My Clients Travel All Over the World, But Where Do They Live? Atlanta, Ottawa, Shanghai, Sydney, Asheville, Charleston, Charlotte, Green Bay, Los Angeles, Oakland, Palm Beach, Richmond, Seattle, St. Louis

How Do My Clients Find Me?

100% word of mouth from other happy clients! THANK YOU!

TIPS FROM LAURA'S 2013 TRAVELS

JANUARY 2013

INDIA: A Dream Realized

India is sound and color, chaos and peace, tradition and innovation. The world's most populous democracy (nearly one-sixth of all humans live in India) holds a variety of contrasting images, from Kipling-esque visions of spectacular temples and gleaming marble palaces, to far-flung dusty villages where council meetings are held under the shade of a banyan tree.

As a guest of **Oberoi Hotels**, I had the distinct pleasure of dining with Mr. Victor Oberoi (son of the famed hotel company's founder) and his very fun British wife. Seeing India with Oberoi was an experience that simply cannot be described in words, in a most wonderful way. During each hard day, we traveled between cities on dusty and chaotic roadways, elbow-to-elbow in the markets, savoring the Taj Majal, and haggling with shop-owners. And every night, we retreated to the peace and oasis and completely intuitive service at an Oberoi property — an absolute must in maintaining the stamina and patience required in such a dynamic country.

RESORT
TO LAURA
MADRID
TIP

India: Pack your patience and sense of humor. And when in doubt, refer to my favorite quote listed on the previous page!

FEBRUARY 2013

PUERTO RICO: Deliciously Dorado

The Reserve — the new ultra-luxurious brand within The Ritz-Carlton portfolio — at Dorado Beach in Puerto Rico celebrates a bygone era at the site of the former Rockefeller estate. This magnificent resort appeals to travelers seeking a gorgeous Caribbean beach without the hassles of customs and immigration. If you're accustomed to paying for a club or suite at a luxury property, you'll love the extra-large guest rooms with giant indoor and outdoor bathrooms; many rooms have private plunge pools on the patio or rooftop. Golf is challenging, the spa is one of the most beautiful I've seen, the food is terrific and the beach is stunning. The four-bedroom original Rockefeller home is the resort's top accommodation and very special for a family getaway, wedding or big birthday!



No resort has guest rooms any closer to the beach than The Reserve

RESORT
TO LAURA
MADRID
TIP

The Reserve at Dorado Beach: While the property is indeed expensive, there is nothing else like it with no passport required.

MARCH 2013

TELLURIDE, COLORADO — Keeping it Real in T-Town

When selecting a ski haunt, I prefer to hunker down with the locals, breathe some history, and feel like I have truly arrived at a small town with soul rather than a contrived ski resort. Of course I also seek

modern lifts and gondolas, unique and varied terrain, breathtaking mountain vistas, and creature comforts such as a ski concierge, well-run kids' ski schools, and a lively après ski scene. While there are several great Western towns in the U.S. Rockies, Telluride is an 1800's mining town with a wholesome organic vibe and 2,000 acres of world-class powder skiing.



Historic Telluride and the San Juan Mountains

Element 52 is a sleek condominium property run by Auberge Hotels and Resorts (think Auberge de Soleil, Esperanza, Calistoga Ranch, and Palmetto Bluff), so accommodations are lovely. It's perfect for families or groups who want to be in town with ski in/ski out access, but who also seek creature comforts: fantastic beds, top-of-the-line kitchens, a superb fitness center and spa, outdoor hot tubs, ski concierge, and an adorable ski funicular just for guests. The posh units range from 2-5 bedrooms.

RESORT
TO LAURA
MADRID
TIP

Telluride: Stay in Telluride Town — it's about as authentic as a ski village gets, and is home to all of the good restaurants and markets. However, if you're not a seasoned skier, stay up at Mountain Village, which offers easy access to the ski school.

APRIL 2013

TURKS AND CAICOS: Where To Find the Powder White Sand

With non-stop flights from many East Coast destinations, The Turks and Caicos Islands have always been a perfect solution if you're seeking exceptional sand and water experiences with relative ease. I stayed at three terrific yet completely different properties that are highly requested so I can better help you determine which would best be suited for you:

Guests at **Amanyara** are well-traveled and seek great design, exceptional service and accommodations. They're happy to enjoy dining and activities on property, rather than having easy access to town. They want a peaceful and sophisticated vibe, wonderful cuisine and understated elegance.

Guests at **Gansevoort** include successful young professionals, many from NYC, as well as couples looking to have fun, girls and guy's get-away weekends, and families with older kids who want to be part of the scene. These guests prefer to be in the thick of it rather than in a remote or secluded setting.

Guests at **Parrot Cay** include high-powered executives seeking an escape, couples wanting romance and relaxation, families with kids who desire a beautiful, natural place to play — definitely those wanting to focus on wellness and healthful living.

RESORT
TO LAURA
MADRID
TIP

Turks and Caicos: Beyond being an incredible beach getaway, **Parrot Cay** offers a range of Asian-inspired, bespoke wellness programs and tasty organic Shambhala cuisine.

MAY 2013

BLACKBERRY FARM in Tennessee: Gone Fishing!

During my privileged opportunity to visit this culinary mecca in the Great Smoky Mountains, I spent quality time with the James Beard award-winning chef as well as the master gardener, butcher, baker, jam lady, chocolatier, cheese-maker, forager, restaurant manager, sommelier, the events and operations teams, and countless other artisans who blend their unique talents to create one of the very best hotels in the country — **Blackberry Farm**. If you're not a lover of fine food and wine, this is likely not the trip for you. However, if you're interested in exceptional culinary experiences, the farm-to-table movement and rare wine offerings, then Blackberry Farm is a MUST on your gastronomic bucket list!



Orvis-rated fishing at Blackberry Farm

Blackberry Farm: Weekends sell out far in advance, and summer and fall are peak so book early! If you're seeking a "deal," mid-week during the winter or spring are still a WOW! If you just want to get in the door, the Estate Rooms will do, but if you plan to spend time in your room, the Cottages are worth the splurge!

JUNE 2013

ST. LUCIA — A Naturally Relaxed Island Paradise

If you love the Caribbean but want a bit more than just a beach vacation, might I recommend St. Lucia? This naturally stunning island offers lush vegetation, volcanic mountains, superb snorkeling, and genuine hospitality. The famous Pitons are not hard on the eyes either! Split your stay between Cap Maison in the North and Jade Mountain overlooking the Pitons. You'll love each of these two distinct island experiences, which will balance out your pocket book since they're at different price points.



The Pitons from Jade Mountain, St. Lucia

St. Lucia: Splurge for the helicopter ride up north to Cap Maison and the boat trip down South to Jade Mountain — it's much more fun than a road trip!

JULY 2013

SPAIN WITH THE FAMILY — Seville, Mallorca, Barcelona, Rioja, San Sebastian, and Pamplona

We spent a month exploring Spain for the third time as a family. Maybe it has something to do with having the surname *Madrid*, but Spain NEVER disappoints! I'm always surprised how many times my friends and clients, who return to France and Italy time and again, have yet to discover Spain. It is rewarding on so many levels. If running with the bulls, tapas bar-hopping, flamenco dancing, Andalusian horses and lovely beaches appeal, then call me to set up your personalized itinerary!

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID TIP

Spain: Mallorca is a must, not just an "add-on." This large island in Spain's Balearics has tiny towns, dreamy farm estates, and sophisticated restaurants featuring the island's bountiful produce and seafood. The rural countryside pairs beautifully with the chic maritime lifestyle, making Mallorca one of my all-time favorite destinations!



Playing in San Sebastian, Spain

AUGUST 2013

VIRTUOSO TRAVEL WEEK, LAS VEGAS: Shopping For Travel



This annual week-long pilgrimage to Las Vegas allows me to re-connect with sales directors, general managers and owners of the very best and most special hotels and products from all over the globe. I can ensure my clients are always expected and welcomed because of my ongoing relationships with the world's top hoteliers, tour operators, guides, cruise lines, and active adventure companies. Even if you are joining a small group on a Backroads Cycling trip, a Tauck Tour Group, or a Micato Safari, I leverage my buying power and relationships to ensure you are better taken care of than if you booked your reservations yourself.

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID TIP

Laura's Virtuoso Perks: Even if you know exactly where you want to go and what you want to do, I can guarantee you'll have a highly elevated experience when Resort to Laura Madrid makes your arrangements. Try me and you'll see!

SEPTEMBER 2013

CYCLE THE WORLD

Though I did not personally travel in September, I sent many clients to explore the world from the seat of a bicycle. You don't need to be a champion rider to tackle the Dolomites, the Pyrenees, the Alps, or the Rockies, as every destination offers easy, moderate and challenging options, always with the comfort of a support vehicle and staff to ensure the details are handled seamlessly. September is the perfect month to cycle those destinations that are just too hot during the summer — Puglia, Sicily, or Greece? Or stay closer to home to watch the leaves turn in Maine and Vermont, or participate in the harvest in California's Wine Country. We have relationships with the very best cycling operators in the business who ensure not only a safe riding experience, but an incredible meal and charming inn to reward you at the end of each day. There's no better way to immerse yourself in the life of a region, to explore hidden corners and appreciate nuances while enjoying the benefits and enormous satisfaction of traveling under your own power.



Cycling in Chianti

CONTINUED >

OCTOBER 2013

CHILEAN PATAGONIA: Journey to The End of the World

I had traveled on business to Santiago before and loved it, but this time I wanted to understand more. I enjoy experiential travel immensely and if I can see the land not as an observer, but as an active participant, this is a draw to me. However, for those who know me well, I'm an intrepid traveler just as long as there is spectacular food, creature comforts, and a cozy bed at the end of each day. The **Explora lodges** of Patagonia, Atacama and Easter Island have been providing just this type of pioneering experience for 20 years in Chile. Horseback riding with the gauchos, trekking majestic mountains, cruising the lakes, and listening to the streams — all while surrounded by some of the most beautiful glaciers in the world.

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID TIP

Pre- or Post-Patagonia: Spend some time in Santiago in the Bohemian Lastarria neighborhood, take a day trip out to the historic port city of Valparaiso, take on the slopes in Portillo, or visit some of Chile's exceptional wine regions. If you do Patagonia, you will want to come back for Atacama and Easter Island — mark my word!



Explora Lodge in Torres del Paine National Park

Champagne at my private beach at **Amanyara** in Turks and Caicos

PHONE
+1 404-502-9191

EMAIL
laura@resorttolauramadrid.com

WEB
www.resorttolauramadrid.com

FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/resorttolauramadridtravel

TWITTER
@ResortToLaura

BLOG
www.lauramadridtravel.com

NOVEMBER 2013

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, Demystified

Having traveled to 60 countries but never the Dominican Republic, I knew I needed to see what all the hype is about. My mission was to discover two sides of this nation that I hoped existed — the authentic Dominican experience as well as properties that will appeal to the sophisticated traveler. I am glad to say that I found both! My voyage started along the La Samana Peninsula, a gorgeous two-hour drive from Santo Domingo Airport, renowned for its majestic waterfalls, secluded beaches, tropical forests, untouched mangroves in Los Haitises National Park, and the Republic's Whale Sanctuary, where thousands of whales are in plain view during winter months. La Samana, and specifically Las Terrenas, offers some terrific, casual residential-style properties for groups of friends or families who don't have a big budget but seek an authentic experience.



Santo Domingo, a Caribbean capital with history and culture

If you prefer something more luxurious, allow me to recommend two excellent resorts: **Eden Roc** in Cap Cana is the first Relais & Chateau property in the DR, offering gorgeous stand-alone villas, a terrific beach club, and the Punta Espada Golf Course. **Tortuga Bay** in Punta Cana, directly on the beach, offers traditional, elegant villas designed by Oscar de La Renta, and features butler service to meet you at the gangway of your arrival flight, whisk you through customs and immigration to the resort, and back again.

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID TIP

Dominican Republic: Are you looking for an authentic, off-the-beaten-path experience? Ask me if the bohemian town of Las Terrenas in the Samana Peninsula is for you!

DECEMBER 2013

Ready for Another Star-Studded Year Ahead!

It's been an incredibly busy and rewarding year! I've had the chance to inspect so many places and share this valuable insight with my clients.

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID TIP

December: Plan now for 2014, especially if you are travelling at peak times (i.e., President's Day, Spring Break, Summer or Christmas) as the early bird really does get the worm! With crowds flocking to Brazil for the World Cup, we need to plan early for Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay!

◀ If you enjoyed reading about my 2013 travels, check out my blog!

For in-depth updates on all my trips, please follow my blog at www.lauramadridtravel.com

And if there is something that is on your bucket list, I say, "Seize the Day!" I am here to help you achieve your travel objectives this year. I always appreciate your call as well as your referrals!