

RESORT TO LAURA MADRID

EXPERT TRAVEL PLANNING

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Dear Loyal Travel Enthusiasts,

WELCOME TO 2021 — we made it! To state the obvious, 2020 was an adventure all its own... and not one we will soon forget! We, our society, our culture, and our very way of life have changed in ways we may not have even discovered yet.

One constant you can count on among all this change is the arrival of my Annual Travel Letter in your mailbox each new year. While my 2020 travels may not have been as far and wide as usual, this year gave me the opportunity to explore the wonders of the world that are a little closer to home through the safety of the range of social-distancing protocols in place across state lines, hotels, brands, restaurants, airports, and planes.

My year began with pre-pandemic excursions to the English countryside, the Caribbean island of Antigua, and ever-charming Charleston. As social distancing measures came into full effect in the spring, my faithful canine companion accompanied me on a road trip up the Mid-Atlantic, where we found repose in the picturesque scenery while carefully respecting each state's safety mandates. Summer drew me West to the open beauty of Utah and Montana, where I enjoyed exploring a few renowned resort properties and our transcendent National Parks. I capped off the year with a highly anticipated stay in The Adirondacks, and finally, a visit to Los Cabos to experience the openings of a few luxury resorts.

Throughout 2020, one travel trend in particular has gained popularity for its escape from the everyday: private yachting. With the privacy and comfort of your family's own vessel and crew, there is truly no better way to experience breathtaking destinations, stay immersed and active in nature, and spend quality time with one another. Detailed consultation between my clients, the captain, chef, and chief steward to create a custom itinerary and menu ensures all your cares are left behind on dry land.

If the past year has instead left you exhausted of downtime and yearning for adventure, look no further! I have reserved eight cabins on the new, state-of-the-art Lindblad National Geographic Resolution, setting sail on an epic voyage to the White Continent of Antarctica in January 2023. My husband, Gil, and I would love for you to join our merry group of explorers!

Finally, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you for standing by me and my team. We hope we have provided genuine advice, tireless assistance, and concise expertise as we weathered a stormy year. I would like to wish you the most rewarding 2021 with much-deserved peace, happiness, health, prosperity, and more than a boatload of good old-fashioned FUN!

Lots of love,

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Laura with the Resort to Laura Madrid Team — Celeste, Holly, and Jacqueline

LAURA'S 2020 TRAVELS: A CRAZY YEAR IN REVIEW

EXPLORING THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

Visiting the English Countryside to tour the pretty villages and handsome hamlets of the Cotswolds is just as inviting in the winter as the
summer. I stayed in the timeless town of Broadway, home to several
hotels of various styles that I love for my clients, including the **Dormy House, Foxhill Manor,** and my favorite, the **Lygon Arms**. Located in
the heart of town within walking distance of shops, restaurants, and
pubs, the Lygon Arms' cozy nooks and crannies are perfect for curling
up fireside during the chilly winter months. Day trips to the many
famous towns of the Cotswolds, including Chipping Campden, Upper
and Lower Slaughter, Cheltenham, and Bath, are essential to any trip
to the region, with each boasting their own markets, pubs, and lush
English gardens. **TIP**: Everyone knows Stonehenge, but did you know
that Avebury, with its extraordinary Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial
sites, is equally fascinating with just a fraction of Stonehenge's visitors?

My next stop was at **Chewton Glen** in Hampshire, on the South Coast of England. In addition to being an ideal pre- or post-destination for those cruising from South Hampton, Chewton Glen is a perfect end to a touring trip of England where families and couples can enjoy all of the activities and relaxations of a top-notch resort. A croquet lawn, full-service spa, outdoor pool, kids' club, and a nature walk down to the beach are offered year-round. **TIP:** Families with young children love the Treehouse Loft Suites, glamping English-style.

My tour of lovely England came to an elegant end at the incomparable **Cliveden House**. This historic property is an exceptional addition to any English itinerary, rife with the sophisticated luxury of bygone times. **TIP**: Located just 20 minutes from Heathrow Airport, Cliveden House is an absolutely wonderful place to spend your last night in England, or even to break up your trip to Asia or Africa.

I enjoyed some of the most exquisite English cuisine at each of these Relais & Châteaux properties — the sensational dining alone was well worth the journey to the classic English Countryside!

Avebury is part of an extraordinary set of Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial sites.



ANTIGUA'S CHARM AND BRITISH SENSIBILITY: Three Luxury All-Inclusive Island Resorts

Antigua is laid-back yet sophisticated, and offers an escapism that is easy to reach. One of the best things about Antigua is that all of its top resorts are all-inclusive. Now before a well-heeled traveler such as yourself cringes at that description, trust me: no quality is compromised with this indulgent and carefree travel style. I stayed at three very different resort properties: **Curtain Bluff**, **Hermitage Bay**, and **Jumby Bay**. Each are favorites of Resort to Laura Madrid clients, and I am delighted to help you decide which one best suits your needs! Whether you're traveling with your partner, your family, or even your tennis team, the resorts of Antigua Island do not disappoint.

HERMITAGE BAY is exclusive, relaxing, and completely chic, with the warmest, most engaging staff I have yet to encounter in the Caribbean. The views are breathtaking, the accommodations are downright sexy, the food is delectable, the wine selection is above and beyond, and the cocktails are made to impress. While Hermitage Bay is adults-only and unapologetically romantic, families with teens 16 and older are welcome to enjoy this boutique paradise, too.



With my gracious tennis pro at Curtain Bluff, where the pristine courts are oceanside

CURTAIN BLUFF is best described as a charming throwback to a bygone era, and many guests have been coming to Curtain Bluff on a regular basis for years. The recently renovated rooms and suites are either beachfront or up the mountain, with wonderful views of the island below. With the feel of an old-school British island escape, the resort welcomes couples, families, and tennis enthusiasts alike. Curtain Bluff hosts two tennis weeks each year complete with clinics, tournament play, and cocktails. For a more exclusive occasion, I can always book a private tennis event for your team!

JUMBY BAY, PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT: From the airport, it's just a ten-minute drive to the Marina, where guests are whisked aboard the Jumby Bay yacht for an eight-minute cruise to arrive at Jumby Bay Private Island. And what a beautiful and sophisticated arrival it is! Oetker Collection, one of the world's most refined hotel brands, runs the resort and every detail is truly top-notch. Walk, cycle, or golf-cart around the island, and enjoy the gym, spa, kids' club, marina, tennis court, multiple pools, and Jumby Bay's myriad of dining options. Guests

can stay in the resort's rooms and suites or choose from a luxurious range of impeccably-designed villas, available at a variety of price points. Most villas are oceanfront; all include a private chef and house staff to cater to your every need in these expansive homes. I can help select the perfect villa for your family or guests — just ask!

A Mid-Atlantic Road Trip: VA, WV, MD, and NC

The Summer 2020 travel trend for me and many of my clients was to visit familiar gems within close proximity to home. Although I have a passion for worldwide travel, I also pride myself on being the expert on domestic driving trips, and this year was the perfect opportunity to put that expertise to good use. My husband, Gil, and I packed the car with golf clubs and Porter, our chocolate lab, for a journey through the Mid-Atlantic states. Three of my favorites along the way were **Primland, The Inn at Perry Cabin,** and the **Fearrington House**.

PRIMLAND (Virginia)

Primland is the quintessential Blue Ridge Mountain retreat, where accommodations include cottages, treehouses, and suites. Fairway Cottages overlook the 18th Fairway, Treehouses are fantastical studios built above the trees, and Pinnacle Cottages are well-appointed with huge decks and dreamy mountain views.

Guests at Primland are welcome to take in the views or indulge in a myriad of mountain activities. Hiking along one of many Blue Ridge Mountain trails is a must; Primland's vast and varied terrain is perfect for hikers of all abilities. Fitness becomes an immersive experience along the brand new Fitness Trail, made entirely of trees! And the golf is legendary — the 18-hole, all bentgrass, Audubon-certified Highland Course at Primland was carved from the natural mountain landscape and was ranked by *GOLF Magazine* as one of the "Top 100 Courses You Can Play." Bring plenty of extra balls!

Other activities are in abundance and include tree climbing, disc golf along a mountain trail, stargazing, tomahawk throwing, sporting clays, archery, recreational terrain vehicle explorations, mountain biking, and sport shooting of live game. Primland hosts several events throughout the year for which I can provide details to those who are interested!

I enjoyed Primland's breathtaking mountain views at every turn along the course.



THE INN AT PERRY CABIN (Maryland)

As one of the most popular destinations on Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, St. Michaels is home to the world-class Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, fun shops, a winery, some outstanding restaurants, and of course, the glorious **Inn at Perry Cabin** — a destination in itself!

Leisure activities abound: biking, croquet and bocce, kayaking and paddle boarding, tennis, swimming, fitness classes, and spa. The Links at Perry Cabin is a picturesque golf course well-suited to walk or play, but you haven't truly visited this corner of the country until you've spent an afternoon boating. The Inn at Perry Cabin has its own marina and a fleet of yachts for guests to enjoy daytime sailing excursions.



Porter and the other well-behaved canine guests approve of Perry Cabin!

THE FEARRINGTON HOUSE INN (North Carolina)

Located on a historic farm just outside of Chapel Hill, The **Fearrington House Inn** combines the luxury and charm you would expect from a Relais & Châteaux property in a pastoral setting. Featuring 32 uniquely designed rooms and suites paired with a destination celebratory dining experience, Fearrington is the perfect place to stay while capping off a road trip, touring the area's universities, or conducting business in the Research Triangle. Additional inclusions for guests include a fabulous gourmet breakfast at The Fearrington House Restaurant and the indulgent Taylor Fladgate Ruby Port and housemade chocolates at turndown! Fearrington is truly the perfect venue for lovers of good food, fine wine, and excellent service.

TRIPLE CREEK RANCH: Montana's Adult Glamping Retreat

Located in the Bitterroot Mountain Range of the Montana Rockies, **Triple Creek Ranch** is a fully-inclusive adult playground! Active travelers can play as hard or as little as they please, while enveloping themselves in a romantic setting with inimitable scenery and a wide variety of wildlife. Choose from the one-, two-, or three-bedroom private cabins or luxury ranch homes. All come equipped with wood-burning fireplaces, indoor and outdoor setting areas, and hot tubs. Triple Creek offers the ideal balance between rustic and luxurious — it is glamping with a Montana state of mind.

Your room rate includes an endless array of on-ranch activities: hiking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, fly-casting, archery, sapphire panning, tennis, trail running, mountain biking, fat-tire snow biking, skiing, dog sledding, fishing, cattle driving, cross-country horseback riding, and trap shooting, just to name a few. Off-ranch activities are equally enticing — we drove to Idaho for a gorgeous day trip of white-water rafting on the historic and scenic Salmon River.

For many, the all-inclusive Relais & Châteaux dining experience is an experience in itself. Menus are delivered nightly to your room so you can plan the next day's culinary journey. Jeans and boots are welcome in the dining areas, and the all-inclusive dining experience includes three meals a day, packed lunches and snacks, and delivery to your cabin. A full bar and tantalizing wines by the glass are also included with your stay. For dedicated oenophiles, a massive wine cellar with award-winning premium vintages is also available at an additional cost.

Triple Creek is a memorable place, even for a long weekend getaway. Equally suited for adults seeking an escape or a full family (ages 16+) vacation, its size also makes it an ideal scene for an exclusive birthday celebration takeover or a swish corporate retreat. Resort to Laura Madrid is glad to help make your Montana adventure above and beyond, either as a standalone stay or as an add-on to a National Parks trip. Glacier, Yellowstone, and Grand Teton are all within driving distance of Triple Creek Ranch; Zion, Arches, and Bryce are only a short flight away.



Gil and I enjoyed some friendly archery competition at Triple Creek Ranch.

UNBELIEVABLE & UNPARALLELED UTAH

Utah's National Parks have got to be some of America's most beautiful treasures! With a landscape lifted straight out of a daydream, each of Utah's five National Parks offer mind-blowing geological formations and more active adventuring than even the most rigid of schedulers could fit into a week. Nonetheless, we toured Zion, Bryce, Arches, and Canyonlands (sorry, Capitol Reef, but you are a reason to return!). Even car rides through this part of the country are a spectacular sight.



Great travel companions can really make an adventure fun!

Our drives ranged from two to five hours on each leg of our journey, and the stops we made were well worth the travel.

Our first stop: **Zion National Park**, home to the sublime and beautiful Narrows, Canyon Overlook, a petrified forest, a desert swamp, countless springs and waterfalls, and luscious hanging gardens boasting all manner of wildflowers and wildlife. Zion has quickly become a popular destination for National Park enthusiasts, and it's easy to see why—it is a wilderness preserved, full of the unexpected.

Then it was on to **Bryce Canyon**: smaller than Zion and famous for its otherworldly and outstandingly unique geology, consisting of horse-shoe-shaped amphitheaters carved by the elements from the eastern edge of the Paunsaugunt Plateau. Erosion has molded the colorful limestone of the Claron Formation into bizarre and picturesque shapes.

While the majority of clients I send to Utah are families, the state makes for one heck of a trip for adults, too — especially when you slot in a stay at the luxurious, dramatic, one-of-a-kind **Amangiri!** The calm perfection of this all-suite property midway through our trip was the ideal antidote to our energetic adventure through Utah. With just 45 accommodations spread out over 600 acres of natural beauty, guests essentially enjoy a private oasis. Each suite features an outdoor lounge and fireplace with expansive desert views; some with a private pool or rooftop terrace. The awe-inspiring vistas, intuitive service, and hand-crafted cocktails and cuisine are delightful after hiking through the National Parks. Included in your rate at the Amangiri are daily fitness classes (yoga, Pilates, boxing, and desert hikes) as well as all of the glorious meals and snacks, which feature seasonal offerings inspired by the culinary heritage of the Navajo and American Southwest. A superb wine program complements the daily changing menus.

Camp Sarika, a new tented retreat, is just a short hike from Amangiri and offers a back-to-nature experience in the desert heart of Utah. The camp's cluster of ten canvas-topped pavilions, each with its own plunge pool, centers on a shared lounge, restaurant, and pool area — a perfect retreat to take over for a multi-generational family reunion or a birthday celebration not soon forgotten!

"I would like to say thank you for your help in arranging this trip. It was wonderful. Please know that both Emy wife? and myself will not think about travel without you. Thank you so much." - Ricks.

Our adventure continued at **Arches National Park**, home to more than 2,000 of its namesake remarkable sandstone arches. Openings range from three feet to the towering 306 feet of the Landscape Arch. Dizzying spires, fins, and balanced rocks pepper the Park, creating a fascinating assortment of landforms in such a relatively small area.

Sorrel River Ranch is about 25 minutes outside of Moab, and provides a relaxing base from which to experience the surrounding area. Cabin studios with kitchenettes are situated on the banks of the Colorado River, and dining and evening s'mores make for a pleasant respite after a day of exploring the Parks.

Canyonlands National Park is a unique destination full of spires, arches, buttes, rivers, and most spectacular of all, vast canyons. This Park is divided by the Green and Colorado Rivers into The Needles, Maze, and Island of the Sky districts, each offering its own expansive scenery and feeling of solitude. Beautiful vistas and overlooks have kept visitors in awe for many years, as Canyonlands is still an untrammeled and quiet mass of canyons that often appeals to the more rugged of hikers, four-wheel drivers, and mountain bikers.

This magical journey through Utah will be hard to beat, yet I am sure we will be back. There is still so much we have yet to see, and after any time spent there, it's clear that America truly IS the beautiful!



Arches National Park provides one idyllic photo opportunity after another.

CHARMING CHARLESTON

Every time I make it back to the coastal city of **Charleston, South Carolina**, I find myself asking, "What took me so long?!" and when I leave, I make a mental note to return soon. Delectable food, rich history, ornate gardens, friendly people, and obvious charm aside, it's always Charleston's hospitality and good-time-guaranteed approach of the industry professionals that sets the city apart. On my most recent visit, I was able to visit three of the hottest hotels in town: **Hotel Bennett, The Dewberry,** and **Zero George Street Hotel**.

The highly anticipated **HOTEL BENNETT** has arrived in high-style, and it has quickly made a name for itself. Everything about this distinguished hotel on historic Marion Square exudes indulgence, from the designer pedestal tubs to the luxury bedding. Still looking for more? King's Club accommodations offer exclusive VIP treatments, including dedicated concierge service and presentation throughout the day of the chef de cuisine's food and beverage creations. An enticing rooftop pool, several distinctive dining experiences, and a delightful spa keep guests well-entertained when they're not exploring charming Charleston.



Rosé Champagne and oysters at Cammelias Ladies' Champagne Lounge at Hotel Bennett

THE DEWBERRY captures the reserved luxury that is a hallmark of Charleston's culture, all in the setting of the "Southern Reimagined" modern makeover given to the mid-century federal building. The 154 sophisticated accommodations are retro and refined, with wallpaper and hardwood floors accented by plush leather settees and custommade, king size, cloud-like beds. If you appreciate fine bathtubs and open floor plans, the airy Charleston Flat Corner suites are for you! Here, you'll find French food with a Lowcountry twist at Henrietta's Brasserie, and an eccentric rooftop lounge at the Citrus Club. The Spa at the Dewberry is the perfect cocoon after a classic, boozy, Charleston lunch.

Zero in on Southern-chic living at ZERO GEORGE STREET HOTEL. Three early nineteenth-century buildings centered around a private courtyard have been impeccably restored with a modern sensibility to house the hotel. Enjoy a glass of bubbly at an unusual check-in in the kitchen before settling into one of 16 luxe suites, some of which open to wide piazzas and each featuring heart-pine floors, high ceilings, and period millwork. No two rooms or suites are identical; be it a shared porch, balcony, larger bathroom, fireplace, or greater privacy, each comes equipped with its own unique charm. Cruise Charleston's cobbled streets on a complimentary bicycle before the daily wine and cheese pairing; locally sourced, hyper-seasonal cuisine is the hallmark of this foodie favorite restaurant. And since the front desk is located where the daily menu is conceived, receptionists are always in the know about what the day's delicacies will be!

Dining in Charleston is always an affair to remember! We had superb meals at **Magnolia's** and the bar at **167 Raw** for lunch, and enjoyed dinner at **The Ordinary**. There are never enough meals in the day to get through my list of must-eat restaurants in Charleston!



Adirondack rusticity, exquisite food and wine, and five-star service converge at The Point

THE POINT: Saranac Lakes in New York's Adirondacks

Known for its decades-long tradition of pampering in-the-know jetsetters, **The Point** boasts a Forbes Five-Star setting and service, Relais & Châteaux cuisine, charm and character in abundance, and the rustic, laid-back air of an Adirondacks Great Camp. The eleven cozy, lakeside cabins juxtaposed with twice-weekly black-tie communal dinner parties set the stage for an enchanting experience.

The Adirondack Great Camps are grand, fanciful log mansions built by Gilded Age magnates — think Vanderbilts and Astors, Guggenheims, and Rockefellers — who yearned for wooded retreats of extravagant yet rustic comfort along the rugged lakeshores of upstate New York. The Point offers a welcoming place to unplug (wi-fi is intentionally very limited) and enjoy uninterrupted relaxation. Nature sets the tone and provides the backdrop for seasonal activities; I visited in late fall but each season holds its own appeal. Boating on Saranac is a must! The Point has a fleet of pristinely-kept vintage boats for you to venture out, either with your captain or on your own. Winter or summer, nautical adventures are always a joy — and of course, everything is included!

The beautiful terrain around The Point can be traversed by several color-coded trails. Ours led us to Camp David, a secluded forest retreat with a wood-burning stove and a roaring fire. A bottle of chilled burgundy, a crisp and tangy caesar salad and a savory bouillabaisse was delivered for our lunch. Now that's what I call roughing it right!

LUXURY IN LOS CABOS

I am fairly certain that there is no other destination in the Americas with more luxury resorts than Cabo. Forget everything you might think you know about Mexico, and trust that Cabo is one of the most sophisticated destinations we can easily reach for stunning beauty, nature, service, cuisine, and relaxation. Some Resort To Laura Madrid client favorites (and mine!) include the One & Only Palmilla, Auberge Resorts' Chileno Bay and Esperanza, Rosewood's Las Ventanas al Paraiso, Waldorf's The Resort at Pedregal, and Montage Los Cabos.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts has been notorious around the globe in identifying and creating destinations, so it's no surprise they took the lead in anchoring Costa Palmas, an exclusive new development featuring world-class golf, a huge yacht marina, a private airstrip, and multi-million dollar homes. (An Aman resort is also under construction in the area). Located an hour north of the airport on the virgin Sea of Cortez on the East Cape, the Four Seasons Resort Los Cabos at Costa Palmas is the ultimate place to easily retreat and be socially distant — huge rooms and suites, multiple pools for seclusion, and miles of soft white sandy beaches. With tennis, golf, basketball, spa, fitness, and of course, flawless dining and service that exceed your expectations, couples and families could not find a better escape to nourish the soul and soak in the warmth of Mexico than this exquisite property. Four Seasons has set the standard worldwide for taking care of both guests and employees safely during COVID-19. I can highly recommend Four Seasons Resort Los Cabos at Las Palmas.



A gorgeous sunset over the fabulous Four Seasons Resort Los Cabos at Las Palmas

While in Cabo, I also had the distinct pleasure of visiting the classic and exceptional **Las Ventanas al Paraiso**, a Rosewood resort. I can assure you that after 20 years, they are at the TOP of their game. **Montage Los Cabos** is another newly opened gem that has rightfully already earned a Forbes Five-Star for both the hotel and spa. I am delighted to discuss the nuances of each of these wonderful properties. My job is to help you select the perfect haven for your escape!

"If you are planning to travel, I have to STRONGLY recommend that you contact Laura Madrid. I never thought I'd use a travel service/agent because so much is available on the internet. But you are missing out! She finds the best guides, the most unique experiences, does all the work and, as I learned today, can save you a ton of money!"—Steven R.

CHARTER A PRIVATE YACHT!



There are thousands of yachts globally, and we're here to help guide you to your perfect vacation home at sea. Sail, Motor, Traditional, Modern? Let us help you decide! Budgets range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 depending on the size, amenities, crew, and season.

Whatever you are after, there is a yacht out there. Whether you would like a fast-flying sailing superyacht to race in a regatta, an explorer yacht to tour uncharted waters, a yacht large enough for the entire family, or a glamorous classic vessel, there's a boat out there that will be the right match for you and your party.

A yacht charter vacation provides you with total luxury, privacy and security. Imagine your charter yacht as a floating villa, staffed with crew trained to discreet and attentive five-star standards, as well as a chef with culinary skills acquired from the world's top restaurants. Unlike a resort, you don't have to share the staff (or the spa tub) with anyone else. Your vacation will be carefully tailored by the yacht's captain to meet and exceed all of your expectations. For yachting tips, an explanation of APA, or simply some sample itineraries, contact me!

YACHTING LIFE CALENDAR

Caribbean/Bahamas/The Keys

SEASON: Year Round **FEATURES:** Crystal blue waters, fishing

West Mediterranean

SEASON: June — September

FEATURES: Culture, Shopping, Party, scenery

East Mediterranean

SEASON: June — September

FEATURES: History, Ruins, Castles, Culture

New England

SEASON: May — September

FEATURES: Quaint Towns, U.S. History, Fishing

Southeast Asia and Pacific

SEASON: October — April

FEATURES: Diving, Culture, Clear Blue Waters

Off the Beaten Path — Southeast Alaska, British Columbia, Antarctica, Galapagos, Patagonia

SEASON: Varies

FEATURES: Adventurous!









WHERE IS YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE?

If any of the destinations mentioned in this newsletter or from years past are on your travel wish-list, I invite you to read my complete recap of each destination and check out the photos on my blog at **www.lauramadridtravel.com**. Or simply contact me to organize your perfect trip! I always appreciate your calls as well as your referrals —they are truly the biggest compliment you can give me and my team!

VISIT www.ResortToLauraMadrid.com - BLOG www.LauraMadridTravel.com - FACEBOOK ResortToLauraMadridTravel

