

[TRAVEL TREND]

Epicurean Adventures

Pairing gourmet food and wine with outdoor adventure renders travelers satisfied.



It used to be that there were culinary tours, and there were adventure tours, and “nary the two shall meet.” But as the adventure travel niche starts to mature, hybrids are popping up all over the globe.

Take ROW Adventures, an Idaho-based company that’s been planning and guiding adventure travel since 1979. This fall, owner Peter Grubb rolled out his first international food-focused trip, combining local gourmet with hiking, making stops along Croatia’s Adriatic coast by yacht. Grubb decided to include Croatian cuisine when he realized how excited the yacht crew was about the relationships they’d developed with local growers and fishermen. “I started thinking we should do more with this on our trips,” Grubb says. “Tourists drawn to outdoor adventure want a more authentic cultural experience when they travel. They want to really get out there, to get into a place. Immersion in local food and wine is just one more way to provide that. Besides,” Grubb adds, “who doesn’t love extraordinary food?” —Jayme Otto

1 Hiking + Haute Cuisine

Traverse fields of lavender, wander through centuries-old grape vines, and trek the craggy limestone mountains of Croatia’s Adriatic coast, knowing a meal of authentic old European cuisine awaits. From oysters to suckling pig, and from thyme-infused olive oil to Plavac Mali, a dense red wine, each dinner features the best of that village or island’s gastronomy.

www.rowadventures.com

2 Fly Fishing + Vineyard Hopping

Spend a weekend exploring southwest Idaho’s high mountain lakes and streams, or lowland desert reservoirs, and you’ll find trophy cutthroat trout, browns, and brookies, as well as a tight-knit community of wine makers and grape growers. Taste pinot gris, malbecs, syrahs, chardonnays, cabernets, merlots, and tempranillos, all while dining with the vintner.

www.idahowinerytours.com

3 Sea Kayaking + Island Cooking

Camp in safari-style tents on islands in Mexico’s Sea of Cortez, and kayak one of the best whale-watching destinations in North America at the Loreto Bay National Marine Park. After a day on the water, relax, snorkel, or take a yoga class on the beach before your one-hour session with a chef who shows you tricks for Baja-style tapas and tropical martinis.

www.seakayadventures.com

4 Whitewater Rafting + Mountain Brews

Raft rapids ranging from mild to wild on Oregon’s Rogue River, set in a forested canyon with plenty of warm-water pools for floating, rock jumping, and swimming. Each evening, brewers from the Double Mountain Brewery turn the campsite into a taproom, pairing craft beer with fresh, organic food.

www.rafttherogue.com/rogue/double-mountain

[OUTTHERE]

Make Like an Eskimo

The Inuit of northern Canada were onto something when they invented the igloo. Sturdy and windproof, the snow-packed walls trap air and provide insulation, which makes igloos a toasty winter camping option. Body heat alone can warm one to T-shirt temps, and, from the inside, even a raging blizzard isn’t a threat.

Not excited about the chilly leg-work required to build an igloo of your own? Josh Butson, owner of Telluride Alpinism, can help. Butson has been fashioning igloos above Telluride, Colorado, for six years. After a day of backcountry skiing or snowshoeing in the San Juan Mountains, you can cozy up in one of his comfy circular abodes as part of his company’s High Mountain Luxury Adventure. Butson and his crew cut hard-packed blocks from high-mountain snow and lever them into a spiral that narrows to a domed ceiling. Each igloo, with three-foot-thick walls and diameters ranging from 7–15 feet, takes up to a week to build.

In Butson’s igloos, beds are a tower of foam pads topped with inflatable mattresses that make for a cushy night’s sleep—and prevent body heat from melting the snow. Prices start at \$300 per person (for groups of three or more) and include a guide, snowshoes or skis, gear transport, sleeping gear, three gourmet meals per day, and the igloo.

—Jayme Otto

