

LUXE LIST: LAVISH SAVINGS ON 15 LUXURIOUS TRIPS

From the travel experts at
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TRAVEL

SUMMER 2009

Smart Luxury

SPOTLIGHT
**THE
NEW
NEW
YORK**

A REINVENTED
GOTHAM COMES
OUT ON TOP



PERFECT WEEKEND
PORTLAND
MAINE'S MECCA FOR
FOOD AND DESIGN

OFF THE PATH
WALES
ANCIENT CULTURE,
RUGGED BEAUTY

+
DEAL BULLETIN
SPEND LESS ON
STATESIDE HOT SPOTS

VOLUME 4 / ISSUE 3





■ Top Ten

One-of-a-Kind Camping Trips

Luxurious digs in the woods are nothing new, but lately tricked-out yurts and deluxe canvas tents have popped up all over North America and Western Europe. Some take it over-the-top (fireside butler, anyone?) while others go relatively bare-bones. All emphasize getting close to nature—just not too close for comfort.

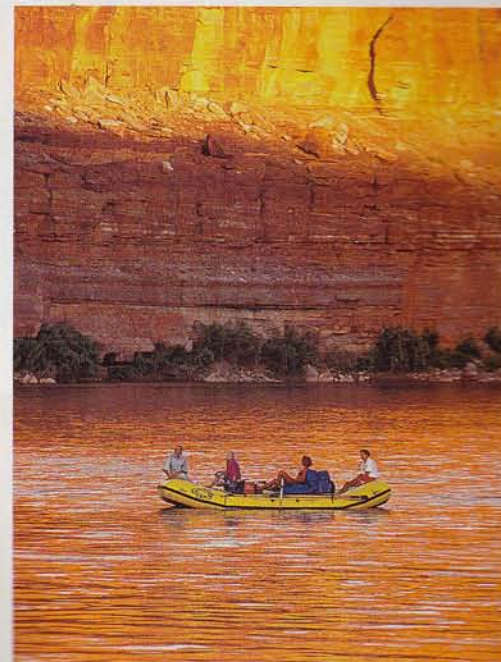
BY BECCA BERGMAN AND J. GABRIEL BOYLAN

A cedar cabin at El Capitan Canyon in California



10 Cataract Canyon River Rafting, Utah

♥ Tear through some of the country's most challenging Class III and IV rapids at the point where the Colorado and Green rivers collide. Then climb ashore for wine and hors d'oeuvres amid the stunning wilds of Canyonlands National Park. Such is the agenda on Abercrombie & Kent's six-day Cataract Canyon rafting trip, which starts in Moab and ends on Lake Powell. The guides take care of every detail, from setting up tents large enough to stand in (and the cots inside) to serving dinner on linen-covered tables. They'll even rig up a portable shower out of paddles and water warmed by the sun. During the float, which includes plenty of placid water, rafters pass red cliffs soaring up 2,000 feet from the riverbanks. On shore, the guides lead hikes to petrified forests, Pueblo ruins, and ancient petroglyphs. The grand finale is an exhilarating return flight in a little plane traversing the Canyonlands to Moab. *From \$2,295/person, all inclusive (excluding airfare); May 11 to August 15; abercrombiekent.com*



FROM TOP: The Resort at Paws Up offers six tents nestled in a dense pine forest. Rafting through Cataract Canyon in Utah includes navigating rapids as well as pleasant drifting.

8 The Resort at Paws Up, Montana

▲ The Blackfoot River once served as a vital thoroughfare for Native American tribes. It later brought explorers (notably Meriwether Lewis), miners, loggers, and homesteaders to the surrounding valley and Garnet Range. Those settlers are gone, and the pine forests have risen again, but the river still draws the intrepid. Now they come for epic horseback treks and stellar fly-fishing (this region provided the inspiration for *A River Runs Through It*) along with luxurious camping. Paws Up offers secluded Big Timber cabins and even a historic farmhouse. The best option: the 270-square-foot tents. These come with a full range of features and services, from custom-made beds to private butlers who can whip up tentside meals. After a full day of horseback riding or fly-fishing, visitors can unwind in a hot tub, indulge in a spa treatment, and savor a simple but tasty dinner, such as Rocky Mountain trout sautéed with fresh herbs. Then they get to snuggle between 300-thread-count linen sheets. Mr. Lewis never had it so good. *From \$725/night for two, all inclusive (with airport transfers); June 1 to October 31; pawsup.com*

9 Treebones, California

Nearly every large campsite in the legendary Big Sur area sports at least one yurt, usually a vestige of its hippie days and showing its age. Treebones, however, keeps its yurts stylish, comfortable, and up-to-date. They sleep two to four guests and are furnished with queen beds, chairs or sofas, and soft quilts and linens. French doors open onto redwood decks, most overlooking the ocean. If camping in a classed-up yurt seems too tame, opt for a stay in the "human nest," a jaw-dropping, thatched, open-air structure created by local artist Jayson Fann that fits two. Dinners in the main lodge incorporate fruits and vegetables grown on-site. Treebones even offers a Work & Stay program for those wishing to tend and harvest the gardens. Guests can also dine al fresco on the lodge's deck, where cocktails are served alongside fine views. The staff can easily arrange hiking, birding, ocean kayaking, and whale-watching tours. A masseuse is on call for in-yurt spa treatments. For maximum privacy, request yurt No. 15 or 16. *Oceanview yurts from \$180/night open year-round; treebonesresort.com*