

Escape Travel | Culture | Adventure

Take a break from civilisation with a spectacular far-flung trip, says **Caroline Eden**

Hit the hut in remote Peru

INTREPID explorers now have a new hideaway to escape to in the middle of Peru's Lake Titicaca. Suspended on the edge of a rocky bluff, Amantica Lodge is a three-hour boat ride away from the mainland but the journey is definitely worth it. Decorated with local textiles, the hideaway offers extensive lake views, a distinct indoors-outdoors vibe and loads of natural light. During the day, it's all about isolated hikes across the island, trying your hand at fishing and kayaking out to meet locals who still dress in traditional clothes and speak the Aymara language.

Latin America travel specialists Last Frontiers has a tailor-made 14-day Classic Peru trip that includes a one-night stay at Amantica Lodge as well as a train journey aboard the Andean Explorer to Cusco, a visit to Machu Picchu, the Sacred Valley, Lima and Colca valley with its traditional Andean villages.

From £3,690 per person, including flights, lastfrontiers.com



Regain control and go remote

Biking in the bush

THE latest addition to New Zealand's expanding Nga Haerenga (National Cycle Trail) is the Old Ghost Road, a 50-mile off-road route through South Island's wild Buller Gorge. Zigzagging through remote bush, the trail follows in the footsteps of long-departed miners and track builders and passes several ghost towns, mountains and deep river gorges. It takes around three to four days to complete. Don't expect any hotels along the way but you will find huts to bed-down in at night.

It's not an easy route but it is rewarding as John Lightwood, managing director of New Zealand specialists Silver Fern Holidays, says: 'The Buller's Maori name is Kawatiri, meaning deep and swift. The first settlers – gold miners –

found the gorge almost impossible to negotiate, and today's mountain bikers will find it a real challenge, but well worthwhile.'

Silver Fern has a 21-day tailor-made active South Island trip combining a four-day ride on the Old Ghost Road with other trails on the South Island and some well-deserved down-time in the Abel Tasman National Park, Queenstown and Hanmer Springs.

From £2,950, excluding flights, silverfernholidays.com

Become a castaway at your island getaway

DOCASTAWAY – the first travel company in the world to specialise in holidays to remote desert islands – knows a thing or two about far-flung getaways. One of their most extreme options is Indonesia's Amparo Island, a place fit for true Robinson Crusoe types only. To take on this island you'll need to be able to handle



Walia watching: From your luxury mountain lodge observe Walia ibex

extreme challenges – possible storms, heat, lack of food – and

the prospect of being entirely alone, without guides.

This is extreme survival, so you'll have to build your own shelter and hunt for food – coconuts, hermit crabs and fish – although you can carry some supplies with you. Paradise sunsets and stories to last a lifetime await those brave enough and who can commit to a minimum stay of five nights.

From £110 per night docastaway.com

Beast way to see Ethiopia

IF gentle walking and wildlife encounters followed by a snazzy sundowner sounds more like your kind of thing then check into Ethiopia's new Limalimo Lodge. Hidden in the spectacular Simien Mountains National Park, the lodge squats on top of a dramatic escarpment, with views to the

lowlands 1,000m below. Wildlife abounds in the high plateaus and valleys of the lowlands. You'll see Gelada monkeys, Walia ibex, eagles, vultures and, if you're lucky, the Ethiopian wolf.

Two local mountain guides are behind the project and the lodge is built in the traditional way with rammed earth, wood and thatch. The 12 en-suite rooms are spread over ten hectares so there's plenty of space and privacy. This is an exciting way to experience African wilderness with a luxury edge.

From £155 per night, limalimolodge.com

Trek out Colombia's mountain trails

COLOMBIA oozes adventure. Here, you can find yourself retracing the steps of pirates in Cartagena one day and following far-off mountain trails the next. The best way to appreciate the wilder corners of this colourful country is to walk it.

This year KE Adventure Travel has a new 15-day twin-trek trip combining the soaring Eastern Cordillera range with the lower foothills of the lonely Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta on the Caribbean coast. The adventure kicks off in Bogota, then put your walking boots on and head to El Cocuy to explore its rugged valleys and the peaks of the Colombian Andes. Afterwards, there's a short flight north to trek in to Teyuna, or the Lost City, rich with ancient Tayrona culture.

From £2,555, including flights, keadventure.com

