

Travel & Cruise



Weekly



keep
dreaming...

a world of extremes



TRAVEL & CRUISE
PROFESSIONALS

70 Glen Osmond Road,
Parkside, SA | (08) 8274 1222

admin@tacprofessionals.com.au

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© Tourism Tropical North Queensland



From the Publisher

Jenny Piper

I am so excited about this week's 'world of extremes' themed edition. The idea came about at our planning meeting for the year, when one of the team suggested – let's look at the extremes of the world. The ideas for what to include flowed with ease – there are just so many places with extremes across our amazing world to travel to. We have only touched the surface. I hope you enjoy our feature which includes the hottest places, coldest places and more.

And we visit the extremities of our own great land – do you know the Northernmost or Southernmost points on our continent? I didn't, but have loved finding out.

We love hearing from you, the readers – please feel free to reach out to us with your thoughts and suggestions for our little mag. You can email us at info@travelandcruiseweekly.com.au. And don't forget to follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** (@travelcruiseweekly) for more stories to inspire those travels.

xx Jenny

<p>EDITORIAL Publisher – Jenny Piper Contributors – Sarah Beyer, Adam Bishop, Bruce Piper, Myles Stedman</p>	<p>PRODUCTION Anna Piper anna.piper@traveldaily.com.au</p> <p>DESIGN Sarah Beyer sarah.beyer@traveldaily.com.au</p>	<p>Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)</p> <p>Travel & Cruise Weekly is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.</p> <p>www.travelandcruiseweekly.com.au</p>
<p>ADVERTISING AND MARKETING Sean Harrigan advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au</p>		



Atacama Desert, Chile

Earning the title of the driest non-polar desert on Earth, the Atacama Desert is also the oldest desert on earth. The hyper-arid plains stretch across approximately 1,000kms between the Andes and Cordillera de la Costa mountain ranges in Chile. Home to landscapes like nowhere else on earth, the moon-like desertscape also has salt flats, active geysers, blue lagoons and oases teeming with life, not to mention the vast expanses of star-filled night sky. The Atacama Desert is barren but beautiful.



For foodies

Can you handle the heat?

Keep Dreaming has formed this shortlist of some of the world's spiciest foods - not so as to mount a challenge to the reader, but on the contrary, to act as a warning if you spot one of these on a restaurant's menu. Consider yourself cautioned, dear reader.

Phall

Considered an even spicier curry than the iconic vindaloo, phall offers its extra kick with a tomato sauce based on either habanero or Scotch bonnet peppers, and even occasionally ghost peppers, which were once identified as the world's hottest chilli pepper. In most Indian restaurants, this will be the hottest dish on the menu.

Sichuan hot pot

Hot pot is a staple of Mongolian cooking, but its hottest variety is that which originates from the southwestern Chinese province of Sichuan. The dish consists of bowls of steaming broth infused with whole Sichuan red chillies & peppercorn that have been heated by a hotplate. In case you were unaware it was hot, diners who have consumed too much Sichuan hot pot have been known to pass out.

Carolina reaper

The heat of the current record holder of world's hottest chilli pepper has been confirmed by the writer of this column, who foolishly attempted to taste one a number of years ago. After signing a waiver accepting my forthcoming liability, just a small amount of a sauce formed from this chilli on the tip of one's tongue resulted in half an hour of tears, and near-constant milk consumption.



Hopes rise for “vax passport”

International travel looks to be a step closer to resuming, after the Government confirmed enhancements to the Australian Immunisation Register which will make it easy to prove that people have received a COVID-19 jab.

Federal Services Minister Stuart Robert yesterday confirmed the MyGov portal and a special Medicare smartphone app would be able to verify details of any inoculations.

“The capability is live now... we are ready for the vaccine rollout,” Robert said.

He also confirmed that the Government was considering

a range of international platforms to facilitate the return to normality, saying “any requirement for borders to open up will require vaccination, and it will require the widespread use of assured certificates”.

On Monday this week, Tourism Minister Dan Tehan said “our hope is that by this time next year we’ll have international tourists back”.

Cruise return on the horizon

Australia and New Zealand’s success in stemming community transmission of COVID-19 “creates the opportunity for a phased resumption

of cruising,” according to Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), which said it will continue to lobby for a carefully managed return for the industry.

The organisation cited the key opportunity to offer “local cruises to locals only” with reduced capacity, social distancing, enhanced medical facilities and extensive coronavirus testing.

Successful cruise restarts in Singapore and Taiwan, as well as initial small ship operations by companies such as Coral Expeditions “already show that local cruising can resume in a carefully managed way without impacting our international borders,” said CLIA MD Joel Katz.

From one extreme to another

After spending holidays at popular local haunts like Bali or Queenstown, many Aussie travellers can be left longing for a need to broaden their holiday horizons. So, here are just a few places we searched far and wide for so you can check them off your slightly more adventurous bucket list, but please do so with 'extreme' prejudice writes Adam Bishop.



Devil's Golf Course in California's Death Valley

It's a dead heat

One of the hottest places on Earth, Death Valley National Park, straddling the border of California and Nevada, boasts a wide range of tourism allures despite its rather inhospitable name. While temperatures throughout the summer months can rage beyond a 40° Celsius average, the dramatic natural landscapes of this scorching American gem are very cool indeed, from its giant craters and impressive mountains, to its crazy sand dunes and stark salt flats.

For a change up, visitors can play a round of 18 on the Devil's Golf Course. Well, it's not actually a golf course but it will provide you with the same exhilaration as a hole in one when you gaze upon this alien-looking environment, bursting with halite salt crystals formed by the minerals of a lake long since evaporated.

Another great spot to check out is the abandoned mining town of Rhyolite on the Park's eastern border, set up in the early 1900s for gold prospectors. When the rush for buried treasure ended, the town was practically deserted within only a few short years and reduced to ruin in the harsh conditions. But there is still much to see here for early 20th century history buffs, such as the chance to examine the term deposits at what's left of the town's only bank, the empty shelves of the old corner store, and the spooky train station with rusted, eroded tracks.

Don't get cold feet!

The second coldest large-scale city on the planet, Yakutsk in Russia's far north-east is no place for those married to life's creature comforts. The coldest times of the year at this Siberian freezer box are between mid-December and early February, so needless to say it's best to ditch the board shorts and singlet tops in exchange for several layers of thermals to even contemplate travelling here.

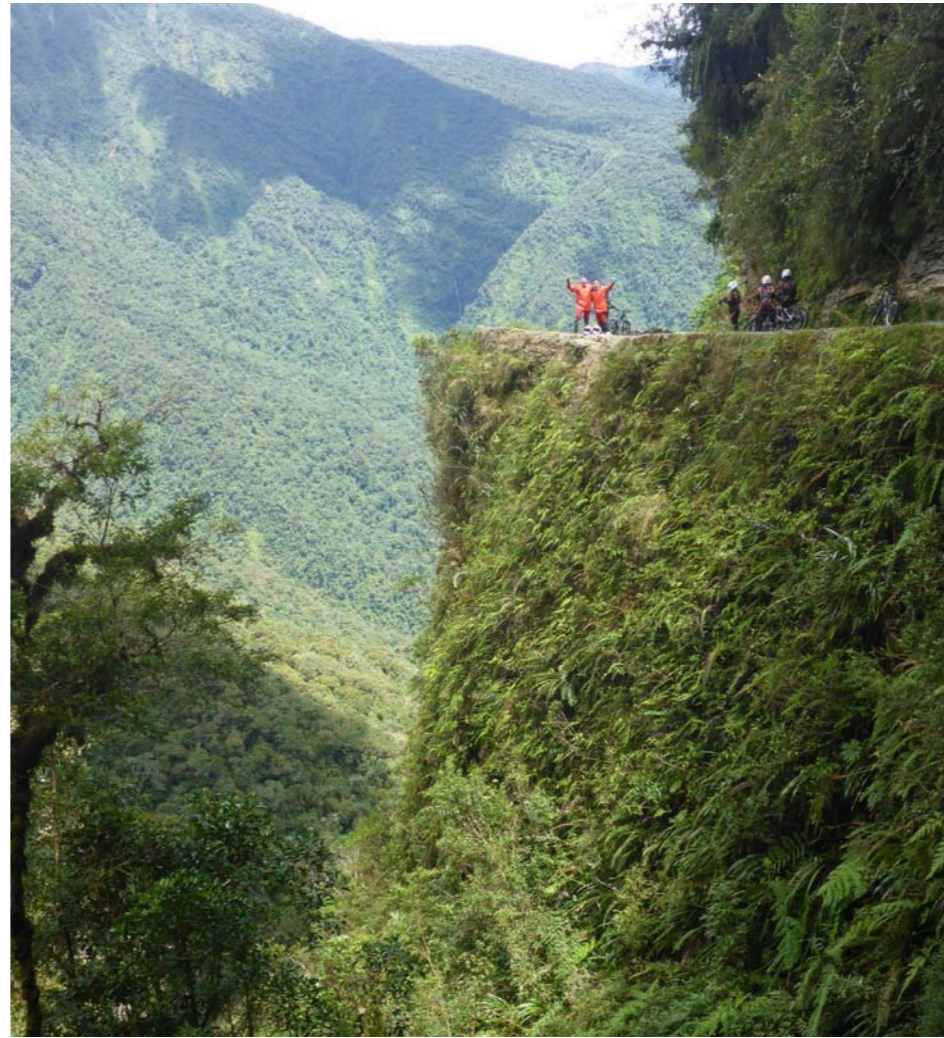


From top: Death Valley National Park in the United States has a range of landscapes

Rhyolite is a ghost town in Death Valley.

Visit the Kingdom of Permafrost in Yakutsk, an underground cave system with ice sculptures showing local life ©Alex Cheban





Clockwise from top left: Yakutsk is one of the coldest cities in the world.

Yungas Road is one of the most dangerous roads in the world, with frightening drop offs.

Take a cable car even higher than La Paz to El Alto for stunning views of the city.

Baku's colourful skyline isn't the only reason to visit the lowest lying capital in the world ©Abbas zade656

For travellers who don't think they're high enough in La Paz already, they can jump aboard a cable car tour of the city. The ride takes tourists to the high-altitude district of the city called El Alto, a location that provides sweeping panoramic views of the city, so it's definitely worth the trip. Another spot to view La Paz in all its glory is the Killi Killi lookout, where you'll truly feel on top of the world.

No need to set your sights any higher

Azerbaijan has lifted its international profile quite considerably in recent years, hosting globally popular events such as The Eurovision Song Contest in 2012, The European Games in 2015 and various reputable Formula One motor races. But despite being a rising star on the global stage, Azerbaijan's bustling city of Baku is in fact the lowest lying capital city in the world. So, if you're after a holiday that can really throw 'down' some serious action, this might be the next destination for you.

Tourists here are dazzled by the Baku's nightlife, with the idiosyncratic streetscapes lighting up with an array of bright colours when the sun goes down, with the famous Flame Towers the centrepiece of this unique daily light show. This trio of structures really defines Baku's skyline, replicating the flames of natural gas, for which the country is well endowed as a lucrative export. The structures themselves are also a hot destination, housing a 250-room Fairmont hotel as well as a major shopping precinct.

Visitors can also take expert-led tours of the iconic nightlife of Baku and sample some of the street food along the way, like some tasty gutab, a pancake-type dish stuffed with delicious ingredients like spinach, cheese, pumpkin and meat.

So, forget aiming high for your next trip, aim a little lower and explore this hidden gem instead.



But despite its truly frosty climate, Yakutsk is home to a number of weird and wonderful tourist attractions that reflect this icy city's unique character. One of these is the Kingdom of Permafrost, an elaborate maze of tunnels dedicated to understanding more about the local people and culture. The unusual cave system features a range of ice sculptures depicting local lifestyles, as well as walls and ceilings encrusted with intricate snowflake patterns.

Visitors here can also sleep on an ice bed (grab a thick quilt) and even have a swig of premium vodka from glasses sculpted from the ice. Other pursuits in this shivering wonderland include the Mammoth Museum, featuring some of the world's most impressive Ice Age fossils. The centrepiece is a fully constructed skeletal system of the woolly mammoth surrounded by a cast of other creatures that call this frozen part of the world home, such as bears and wolves.

What's the weather like up there?

Boasting the tag of the city with the highest elevation in the world at more than 3.5km above sea level, the Bolivian capital of La Paz is teeming with Latin American history inside its plethora of museums and ancient streets.

Those who want a little more adrenaline in their holiday though might want to take on the city's Yungas Road, referred to ominously as the "world's most dangerous road". Tour operators run bike tours along this thin, 60km wedge of pathway carved into the side of a mountain and boasting a frightening 3.5km descent. Those brave enough to look over the ledge are able to take in some of the most amazing views on the South American continent, but be careful, at least 18 cyclists have died on this stretch since 1998 so no wheelies or skids please!

Four things

Australia's continental extremities show off the natural beauty of our country.



©Tourism Tropical North Queensland

Northernmost point – Cape York

Atop the Cape York Peninsula is the titular headland, and target of many a driving holiday from states near and far. The best time to visit Cape York and its 180-million-year-old rainforest is the cooler months (June through October), and be sure to hit up the promontory's "big three national parks" – Jardine River National Park, Kutini-Payamu National Park, and Rinyirru National Park. However, don't expect to Insta-document your "trip to the tip" – Queensland's final frontier has limited cell reception and limited and/or expensive pay-for-play wi-fi.

Southernmost point – Bishop & Clerk Islets

One of the most difficult parts of Australia to get to, Tasmania's Bishop & Clerk Islets are within the Macquarie Island Nature Reserve, and are teeming with fascinating ecology, such as the Macquarie shag, and the black-browed albatross. The islets are hard to access, with ferries leaving from the larger Maria Island, and a park pass being required to access, but your reward is great. Once arriving at the islets, you'll almost be as close to Antarctica as you are to mainland Australia.



©Maria Island Walk/Great Walks of Australia



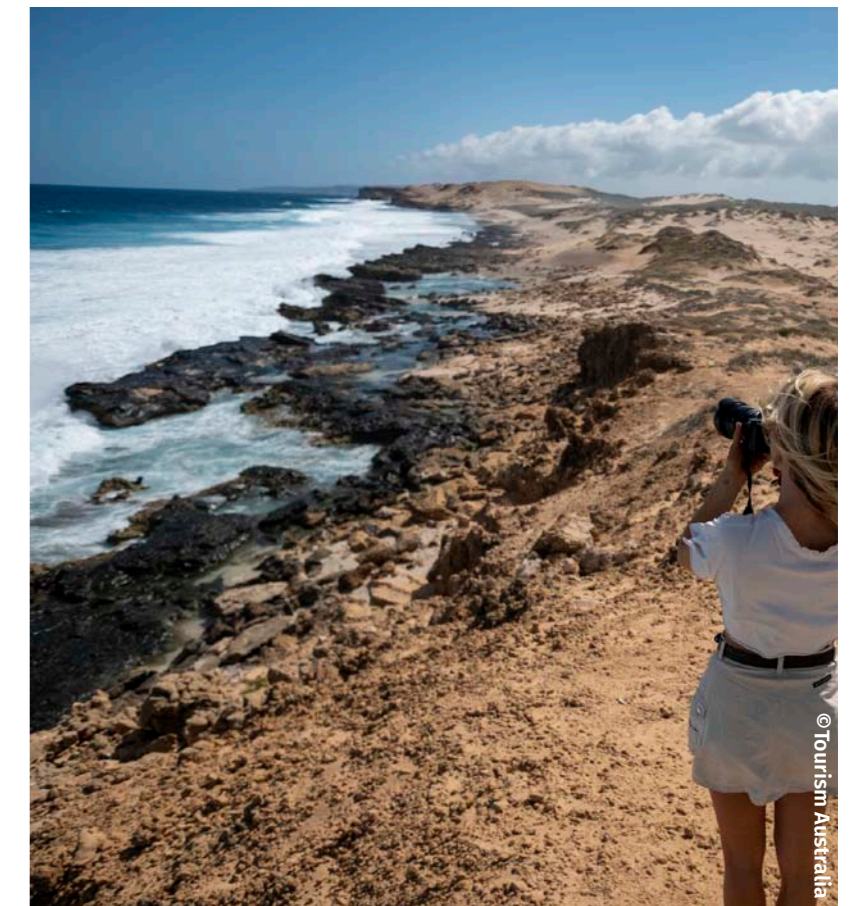
©Zach Sanders

Easternmost point – Balls Pyramid

Everyone knows Cape Byron as the easternmost point of mainland Australia, but Balls Pyramid, one of Australia's very few former volcanoes, is the country's true eastern extremity. Lying 20 kilometres off the coast of Lord Howe Island, Balls Pyramid is 562 metres high, and is the tallest volcanic stack in the world. It is surrounded by rough seas, making approaches difficult, but once there, you are in for some of Australia's most remarkable diving, featuring schools of rainbow runners, amberjack, marlin, dolphins, and turtles.

Westernmost point – Dirk Hartog Island

Nestled within the Shark Bay World Heritage Area, Dirk Hartog Island is no stranger to tourists. Western Australia's largest isle features a range of spectacular accommodation, such as eco lodges, ocean villas, and a variety of camping styles. Offering great fishing, steep cliffs and secluded beaches, Dirk Hartog is also frequented by private boat, and if you want to take your own vehicle to the Island, a privately operated barge is available from March to October, departing the westernmost point of contiguous Australia, Steep Point.



©Tourism Australia

Keep your cruising dream alive

World cruises often appeal to those who want to explore the world, but don't want the hassle of packing and unpacking, navigating airports and train stations, or want to maximise their time overseas.

The world's longest cruise

The title for the world's longest passenger cruise has been up for grabs for a while now. Viking Cruises was taking a shot at it in 2019/2020, with a whopping 245-day cruise that visited six continents, 51 countries and 112 ports. The attempt would have set a Guinness World Record for the longest continuous passenger cruise, and the cruise was more than halfway through its itinerary when the pandemic hit and caused the journey to be aborted.



It's not as long as 245 days, but for travellers who can't resist the lure of the sea, Oceania Cruises' 2023 Global Expedition takes 218 days sailing from Miami to New York, and visits more than 33 countries and 96 ports. Guests will experience exotic cities, coastal villages, soaring mountains and breathtaking islands, enjoying the full spectrum of delights that this world can offer.

Oceania's world cruise includes a number of overnight stays in ports, so you don't feel like it's a complete whirlwind, but

instead get a couple of days to explore each unique destination. The cruise itinerary also includes a first for the cruise line, heading to Antarctica to sail Admiralty Bay, Paradise Bay and Half Moon Island.

The cruise departs from Miami on 28 December 2022 onboard *Insignia*, which underwent a full refurbishment in 2018, replacing everything from floor to ceiling in each suite and stateroom, and refreshing the public spaces. Prices for the World Expedition cruise start at \$73,420 per guest.

Pub quiz

- Which Indonesian island is unfortunately known for its many critically endangered species of animal?
- What is larger: Kakadu National Park or Switzerland?
- What constellation is featured on the state flag of Alaska?
 - Orion
 - The Big Dipper
 - Southern Cross
 - Scorpius
- Ben Thanh Market is located in which city?
- Which city in New Zealand features many streets named after rivers in Scotland?
- What major Asian city is set in the Klang Valley?
- Which African country, the continent's oldest continuous democracy, is long-thought to be the least corrupt?
- In the latest, mid-pandemic Henley Passport Index, what country occupies the top spot, issuing the world's most powerful passport?
- Machu Picchu was built in which century?
- Which country has been the largest producer of coffee for the past 150 years?

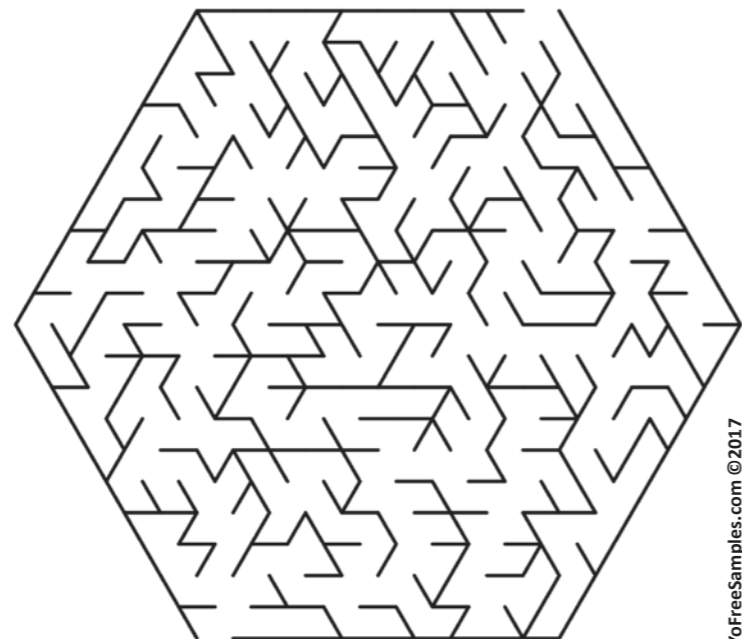
Icon under a microscope

This landmark is iconic and easily recognisable when you see the whole picture, but can you identify it from this small portion of the image? Each year approximately 6 million people visit this spectacular rock formation, which has developed over the past 6 million years as a river cuts through the rock and exposes more.



A-maze-ing

Can you find your way through this maze? Start at the top right corner and finish in the bottom left.



YoFreeSamples.com © 2017

Pub quiz

- Which island hosts the site of the first European settlement in the Americas?
- The Sekotong Peninsula is found on which island?
 - Lombok, Indonesia
 - Ko Samui, Thailand
 - Phu Quoc, Vietnam
- What is the most populous city in Brazil?
 - Brasilia
 - Sao Paolo
 - Rio de Janeiro
- Dane Jorn Utzon designed what famous Australian landmark?
- Which is larger: Kakadu National Park or Tasmania?
- In which country would you find the Alligator Rivers?
- Bayview is an affluent suburb in which Australian city?
- Walsh Bay in Sydney Harbour stretches between which two peninsulas or 'Points'?
- Did the Melbourne Cup get shorter or longer when Australia adopted the metric system?
- The Corinth Canal connects which two bodies of water?

Sudoku

BEGINNER

The aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Numbers can only be used once in each row, column & 3x3 box.

	2	1	6		9	4		
3	5			1	4			6
7				3				
	1		3	7			4	2
4								7
2	6			4	1		5	
				6				1
1			8	9			2	4
		4	1		3	8	9	

www.sudokuoftheday.com – visit them and get a new Sudoku every day!

Seen it at the movies

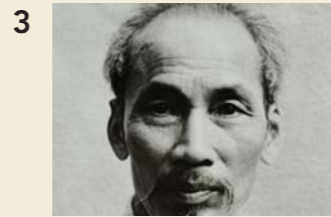


Venice in Los Angeles is a vibrant resort town boasting a bustling mix of shopping, surfing and artistic expression. But its streets were not showing off their best and brightest side in this film starring Jake Gyllenhaal shot in 2014, a bleak and twisted tale exploring the dark side of crime journalism. Can you name the movie?

Pick the nation

Countries have unique geography, ethnicities and cultures which come together to often form very distinctive symbols.

Based off the four different symbols and famous faces, see if you can figure out which country they represent.



Where in the world?



This building has remained an icon of the city it is located in since it was opened in 1907. The building houses a hotel and luxury condos over 21 storeys. Its architecture was inspired by French Renaissance chateaus and was designed by Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, with the building made of marble at the base and white brick in the middle storeys, with a mansard roof. The building is designated a National Historic Landmark and has appeared in numerous books and films. Do you name the name of this hotel and where it is located?

Unscramble

How many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.

U	D	U
L	D	A
E	N	T

Good – 20 words

Very good – 30 words

Excellent – 40 words

NOTE: We've used Chambers Dictionary to decide what words are acceptable.

New Year word search

A	U	L	D	L	A	N	G	S	Y	N	E	F	T	C
G	G	N	R	I	N	S	U	R	M	F	G	R	X	E
W	J	N	S	E	I	E	A	H	I	L	A	I	T	L
I	T	V	I	N	S	D	W	R	I	B	P	E	H	E
Y	R	H	G	N	N	O	E	Y	O	Q	W	N	G	B
K	T	I	R	E	N	W	L	H	E	V	G	D	I	R
T	N	R	L	K	O	I	O	U	L	A	H	S	N	A
G	C	A	A	R	H	T	G	M	T	M	R	Z	D	T
T	C	H	K	P	Y	Q	W	E	N	I	D	G	I	I
S	V	S	J	E	L	B	L	O	B	X	O	O	M	O
A	Q	I	N	W	O	D	T	N	U	O	C	N	V	N
O	H	D	J	A	N	U	A	R	Y	Z	Z	Z	S	R
T	Y	O	Y	L	I	M	A	F	L	M	X	Z	S	B
S	G	B	T	S	H	B	M	J	W	Y	G	Y	V	I
H	M	L	X	O	X	R	C	X	P	W	X	G	K	Z

See if you can find these words. They are hidden horizontally, vertically and diagonally, forwards and backwards.

AULDLANGSYNE
BEGINNING
CALENDAR
CELEBRATION

COUNTDOWN
FAMILY
FIREWORKS
FRIENDS

JANUARY
MIDNIGHT
NEWYEAR
PARTY

RESOLUTIONS
SINGING
SYDNEYTOHOBART
TOAST

Whose flag is this?

This country was part of a region ruled by others but became independent in 1823. The newly-independent region's flag was blue and white stripes, with the national coat of arms in the centre and even after the five countries that made up the federation became independent, this nation continued to use the original flag. Do you know whose flag this is?



Make it at home

In the lead up to Easter we're celebrating chocolate recipes from around the world



Belgian Chocolate Mousse

Belgium's chocolate heritage dates back hundreds of years. Belgium is particularly known for the praline: chocolates with all sorts of wonderful fresh fillings. This is VisitFlanders own chocolate mousse recipe, of course the secret is in using Belgian chocolate. Enjoy!

Ingredients

170g bittersweet or semisweet Belgian chocolate, chopped
170g unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
160ml dark-brewed coffee
4 large eggs, separated
2/3 cup, plus 1 tablespoon sugar
2 tbsp dark rum
1 tbsp water
Pinch of salt
1/2 tsp vanilla extract

Method

Fill a saucepan one-third full with hot water and heat it, and in a bowl set on top, melt together the chocolate, butter and coffee, stirring over the barely simmering water, until smooth. Remove from heat. Fill a large bowl with ice water and set aside. In a bowl large enough to nest securely on the saucepan of simmering water, whisk the yolks of the eggs with the 2/3 cup of sugar, rum, and water for about 3 minutes until the mixture is thick, like runny mayonnaise. (You can also use a handheld electric mixer.) Remove from heat and place the bowl of whipped egg yolks within the bowl of ice water and beat until cool and thick. Then fold the chocolate mixture into the egg yolks. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites with the salt until frothy. Continue to beat until they start to hold their shape. Whip in the tablespoon of sugar and continue to beat until thick and shiny, but not completely stiff, then add the vanilla. Fold one-third of the beaten egg whites into the chocolate mixture, then fold in the remainder of the whites just until incorporated. Don't overdo it or the mousse will lose volume. Transfer the mousse to a serving bowl or divide into serving dishes, and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, until firm.

Puzzle answers

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Pub quiz: 1 Sumatra, 2 Switzerland is twice as large, 3 b) The Big Dipper, 4 Ho Chi Minh City, 5 Invercargill, 6 Kuala Lumpur, 7 Botswana, 8 Japan, 9 15th century, 10 Brazil

Icon under a microscope: Grand Canyon, Arizona, USA

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Pub quiz: 1 Hispaniola, 2 a) Lombok, Indonesia, 3 b) Sao Paulo 4 Sydney Opera House, 5 Tasmania, by about two-thirds, 6 Australia, 7 Darwin, 8 Dawes Point and Millers Point, 9 Shorter, 10 Gulf of Corinth and Ionian Sea

Seen it at the movies: Nightcrawler

Sudoku:

8	2	1	6	5	9	4	7	3
3	5	9	7	1	4	2	8	6
7	4	6	2	3	8	5	1	9
5	1	8	3	7	6	9	4	2
4	9	3	5	8	2	1	6	7
2	6	7	9	4	1	3	5	8
9	8	2	4	6	5	7	3	1
1	3	5	8	9	7	6	2	4
6	7	4	1	2	3	8	9	5

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Where in the world: Plaza Hotel, New York, USA

Pick the nation: Vietnam

Unscramble: addle, adult, anted, auld, dale, dandle, date, dated, daunt, daunted, dead, deal, dealt, dean, delta, dent, dental, dual, dude, duel, duet, dune, eland, lade, laded, laden, land, landed, laud, lauded, lead, lend, nude, tend, tuned, undated, undead, undue, undulate, UNDULATED

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Whose flag is this: Nicaragua

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