

Anne Tyler's search for normality

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THE WEEK

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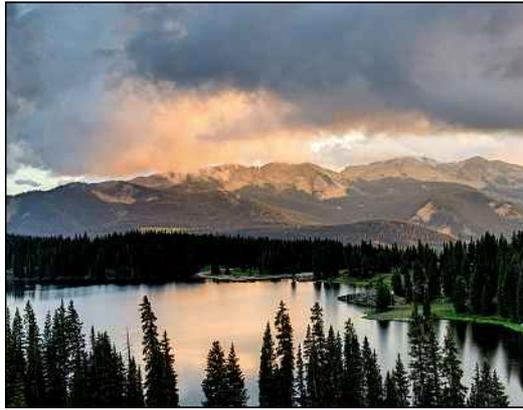
Storm Donald Europe feels the blast



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This week's dream: learning to fish in the Rocky Mountains

The appeal of fly fishing can baffle the uninitiated, but devotees talk about it in near-mystical terms (for the poet Ted Hughes, it provided a sense of "communion" with "the whole living world"). To try it in grand surroundings, says Georgia Grimond in *The Daily Telegraph*, head to Colorado's Taylor River Lodge. Cradled in a steep-sided canyon far up a little-used road, this "exceptionally peaceful" cluster of low timber buildings opened this year under the auspices of Eleven Experience, an American travel company that combines "extreme adventure" with "the comfiest of accommodation". Guests receive expert instruction in the sport at a trout pond surrounded by "a cathedral of conifers", releasing any fish they catch immediately back into the water.



Colorado: conifer-fringed ponds and snow-tipped ridges

the sense of frustration can be intense. But the rhythm of casting, drawing the fly back and casting again can also induce deep "contentedness" (at least in such a glorious setting) – and by the time you've caught a fish, felt its "silken scales and huge strength" as it struggles in your grip, and sent it weaving off into the water again, chances are you'll be "hooked".

But if you're not convinced, try combining fishing with a stay at the same company's Scarp Ridge Lodge, an "impeccably designed" five-bedroom house with a saltwater swimming pool in the town of Crested Butte. Activities there include stand-up paddleboarding, hiking, mountain biking and, "for the intrepid", a chance to climb (with professional guides) to the 2,715-metre summit of Crested Butte mountain, which commands spectacular views of the "snow-tipped" ridges all around. *Eleven Experience* (00 1 970 349 7761, elevenexperience.com) has a seven-day trip from £2,885pp, excluding flights.

Casting a fishing line is a delicate business – you must "present the fly with the touch of a feather" – and quick reactions are needed should a trout bite. Beginners are bound to lose most, and

Hotel of the week



White, São Miguel, Azores

Occupying two 18th century summer houses by the sea, this stylish new hotel is the best in the Azores, says Condé Nast Traveller, and the first to do justice to the stark beauty of this volcanic mid-Atlantic archipelago. Driftwood is used "to dramatic effect" in its nine suites and single villa, which have polished concrete floors and exposed stone walls. Bedrooms open onto a flagstone terrace with a heated infinity pool, a "sheltered breakfast corner" with a roof of reeds and a firepit. The restaurant serves good food in local style, and there's even a yacht available if you fancy "island hopping or dolphin spotting".

Doubles from £175. 00 351 296 249 153, www.whiteazores.com.

Getting the flavour of...

A remote Moroccan oasis

A "brilliant green gash" on the edge of the Sahara in southern Morocco, the oasis of Tighmert is a peaceful place to escape from the country's more touristy corners, says Alice Morrison in the FT. Seventeen kilometres long and only four wide, it is occupied not by Berbers or Arabs but Sahrawis, literally "people of the desert", who have their own language, and a social code "with hospitality at its core". Their low red-clay houses sit among vegetable gardens and pomegranate groves, and there's a small museum that explains their traditional way of life. Combine a trip there with a stay at one of the region's luxurious kasbah hotels, and visit nearby Amtoudi too, where ancient forts sitting atop huge rocks look like ships "run aground in the desert". *Contact Epic Morocco* (020-8150 6131, epicmorocco.co.uk) for a bespoke itinerary.

Hiking in the Faroes

Isolated in the Atlantic between the Shetlands and Iceland, and ruled from Denmark, the Faroes hit the headlines last year when a local restaurant, Koks, won the archipelago's first Michelin star. But the islands are as joyous a destination for walkers as for foodies, says Tim Ecott in *The Sunday Telegraph* – like "the best of the Lake District", but with more sea views and none of the crowds. Hiking with a guide is a good

idea because there's no "right to roam" on private land, and the public paths are not all well marked. There are hundreds of peaks to scale, but also easier coastal walks, such as that to Trælanípa, the 150-metre-high "slave rock" from which the Vikings used to throw old or disobedient slaves into the sea. *Reika Adventures* (00 298 267900, www.reika.fo) can organise guided walks and climbs.

A glorious beach in Yorkshire

It has no cocktail lounges or Rick Stein restaurants, but the little Yorkshire town of Filey and its five-mile sweep of "glittering sands" work the sort of seaside magic that "turns you into a kid again" – making it the winner of this newspaper's British beach of the year 2018, says Chris Haslam in *The Sunday Times*. With an elegant seafront promenade, Filey has long been the area's most genteel coastal resort, counting Charlotte Brontë and Frederick Delius among its admirers – but it's not short of fish and chip shops or arcades either. However, its chief appeal remains its natural setting: the beach itself, above which the town sits in glorious isolation, and the low, wild headland to the north of the town, where peregrine falcons swoop among "screeching" flocks of seabirds. *The stylish ("but definitely not hipster") Downcliffe House Hotel* has doubles from £140 b&b (01723-513310, downcliffehouse.co.uk).

Last-minute offers from top travel companies

RHS Garden Wisley break

Explore the seasonal delights of the garden during a relaxing 3-night stay at The Talbot Inn. From £276pp b&b, with a 3-course dinner. 01905-792801, www.greatlittlebreaks.com. Arrive 24 August.

Four-star Dubrovnik

The Grand Hotel Park, on the Lapad peninsula, is 100 metres from the beach. A 5-night stay costs from £559pp b&b, including London flights. 020-8475 7671, www.holidaygenie.com. Depart 24 August.

Tropical Sri Lanka

The Club Hotel Dolphin, Waikkal, by Negombo Beach, offers 6 nights, all-inclusive, from £870pp, including Birmingham flights. 0800-144 8127, www.awayholidays.co.uk. Depart 2 September.

Brisbane to Cairns

Zip over dunes in a 4x4 and sail on a yacht during a 10-day tour. Accommodation and several meals from £1,007pp, excluding flights. 0333-321 0099, www.statravel.co.uk. Depart 25 September.