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Who is at the top of everyone's party guest list (and who's at the bottom...)

MEET GEORGINA BEVAN

SHE LOOKS GOOD IN PEARLS

MILLENNIAL SLOANES

Their habits, codes and mating practices

OOPS, ALL MY CLOTHES FELL OFF!

Which is fine because all you need are the new accessories

JAMES CORDEN'S LA LIFE

WITH HIS ARISTO (YES, REALLY) BUDDIES

THE ONE MONTH GAP YEAR

YOU WON'T SLEEP MUCH BUT IT WILL BE FUN

THE NEW POSH

RULES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



THE NEW GAP YEAR

Paradise is wasted on the young – much better to be older, wiser and richer when you go on your life-changing round-the-world trip. Francisca Kellett meets the five-star dropouts

Did you have a gap year? Did you schlep around India wearing bad clothes and an ill-advised bindi on your forehead, finding yoga and weed and not much else?

Perhaps you went to Australia and drank your way around the Red Continent with a succession of Todds, Shanes and Jasons, returning with a terrific tan and an irritating habit of making every sentence sound like a question?

Or maybe you didn't. Maybe you were too studious/ambitious/anxious to fritter away a year lugging around your entire belongings on your back, eating horrible food and pretending that *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* totally, like, changed your life. But it's not too late. A new breed of smart professionals is choosing to take some time off – four weeks, perhaps, or three months, or even six – to go travelling.

Why? Well, why not? Some do it simply because they can. It's an adventure, yes, but

hotels can be five star, villas epic, staff on hand throughout, and if some of the journey happens to be by private jet, then that's just fine.

'We have lots of City types, hedgefundlers, lawyers,' says Henrietta Loyd of top-end travel operator Cazenove+Loyd. They are often on gardening leave between big jobs and have the money (if not the time), to check out the places they've always wanted to see, with none of the hassle of actual backpacking. Short, sharp gap 'years' have seen a huge leap, with clients often heading off alone for a month and then flying their partners and kids out to join them. 'Latin America is a big hit,' says Loyd. 'Peru and Patagonia – for the adventure, fishing, hiking, riding.' How much do they spend? '£15k, £50k, £80k... how long is a piece of string?'

Others choose that particular, precious window of time when children are at the right age to 'really gain something from the experience', says Philippe Brown of Brown+Hudson, 'but before they become too independent.' He calls them 'legacy' trips

– not necessarily with high-end extravagance at every turn, but travels that are more about spending quality time together. Like the one Charlotte and James Studholme went on, taking their three boys romping around South America. Hugo Burnand and family did something similar: 'We bonded like glue. We'd do it all again in an instant,' he tells me.

'It's definitely a trend,' agrees George Morgan-Grenville of Red Savannah. His clients are frequently between jobs and tend to take their children with them – along with a nanny and a tutor, mind you (the intense experience of travelling as a family is not necessarily the right time to start doing all the food-mashing/bath-time-wrangling/algebra-teaching).

South-East Asia and Australia are popular, Morgan-Grenville says, and families usually base themselves in villas and go on short excursions to explore. 'They often want culture and adventure, and a degree of philanthropy', to expose their children to a world they may

SOUTH-AMERICAN ODYSSEY

The Burnands

Royal/Tatler photographer Hugo Burnand and his family took off for one school term when the children were 10, nine, seven and four. 'Everyone said we were crazy. We took them out of school, closed the studio, rented out the house, gave the pets away and drove to the airport, chucking school uniforms out of the car window as we went,' says Hugo. They romped around South America, lazing on beaches, hiking up live volcanoes, riding horses through rainforests, trekking up Machu Picchu, rafting down rapids and crossing deserts on mules. 'We cried like babies and laughed our heads off.'

not be familiar with. A visit to surf- and eco-haven Nihiwatu on the island of Sumba in Indonesia is a favourite; there, families can engage meaningfully with the local community – without scrimping on pool villas and daily massages. Or for proper do-gooding, grown-up gappers can join projects such as those organised by Global Vision International (GVI). Prada and Chanel model Sigrid Agren, for example, spent a month last year teaching English to young novice monks in Laos. Not your average fortnight necking cocktails on a sunlounger.

Then there are those who feel the need to recombobulate, like Caroline Marten, who wanted to escape the grief of losing her parents and the strain of doing up her family's estate, Ingoldisthorpe Hall (mountamelia.com), in Norfolk, with a family journey to India. She decided to share a place she'd been to many times before – which takes us to yet another demographic: well-travelled people whose children have left for university and who would like to return to their original backpacking stomping grounds (perhaps minus the weed and literary pretensions). Greaves India, for example, organises mammoth, top-end specialist India tours for those who want to go back again and again, often for months at a time.

Others still take advantage of attractive round-the-world air deals, like Rufus and Jingo Palamountain, who jetted off around the world in first class. Frances Geoghegan of Cleveland Collection sends clients on similar four-to-five-week global gambols – they usually spend £20,000 to £25,000 each.

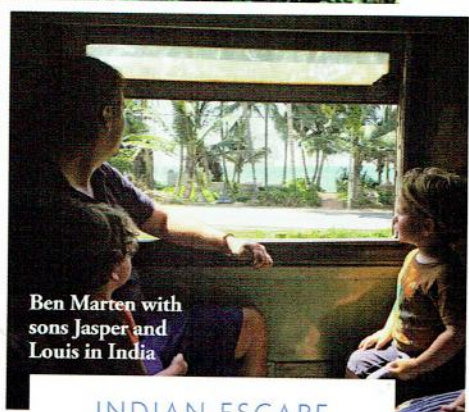
So why wait? Go on, off you go – you're older, wiser, better off. Now's the time to do it, and without the bindis and backpacks. Todds, Shanes and Jasons, though, are optional. □

STEAL THE IDEA

These companies can organise a similar mammoth 'gap year': clevelandcollection.co.uk, greavesindia.co.uk, lastfrontiers.com, redsavannah.com, cazloyd.com, brownandhudson.com, gadventures.co.uk, journeylatinamerica.co.uk



The Burnand family crossing the Rio Madre de Dios in the Amazon Basin, Peru



Ben Marten with sons Jasper and Louis in India

ROUND-THE-WORLD EXTRAVAGANZA

Rufus and Jingo Palamountain

The couple decided on a two-month round-the-world tour with British Airways and One World Alliance, flying first class most of the way, and business when first wasn't available. They wanted to see countries that neither had been to before – South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil – plus 'circumnavigating the globe sounded cool'. The highlights? 'South Africa's Blue Train, Iguazu Falls and Trancoso in Brazil, and road trips into the unknown...'

INDIAN ESCAPE

Caroline Marten, her husband Ben Woods and their three children

Caroline and Ben relocated for six weeks to Kerala, India and Sri Lanka with the kids (aged seven, five and three). They banned phones and screens, went leopard-spotting and elephant-washing, swam in the sea, played board games and had a thoroughly wonderful time. 'It put everything back into perspective,' says Caroline, who'd love to do it every year. 'It was a detox – we did yoga every day, didn't drink, and I gave up smoking.' The lack of childcare was 'exhausting, but made the experience what it was'.



LEFT, JINGO PALAMOUNTAIN ON KANGAROO ISLAND, AUSTRALIA. RIGHT, FLYNN STUDHOLME IN TRANCOSO, BRAZIL

MEANINGFUL MOMENTS

Charlotte and James Studholme and their three children

Charlotte and James travelled around South America for six months with their children (aged 13, 11 and eight). 'We wanted to build up a reservoir of shared memories,' says Charlotte, 'before our eldest was too old to want to spend that much time with us, and when the youngest was old enough to get real value from it.' The toughest parts were often the best: living with tribes in the jungle, getting lost in mangroves at dusk and swimming with turtles and stingrays in the Galapagos. 'We'd do it again in a heartbeat – everybody seems keen on Iran, Japan and Burma.'

