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Adventure Travel News: Wildlife Photos, Cuba Travel and More



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Polar bears romp near Churchill, Manitoba in Canada. Photo courtesy of Lori Ann Martin via [Wildlife Photo of the Day](#)

named [Wildlife Photo of the Day](#) offers a single stunning image of some of our planet's most amazing creatures on a daily basis. Visitors can also elect to have a digest version of those images [sent to their email](#) each and every week, or even submit some of their own photographs for display on the site. Photos so far have included wolves, polar bears, cheetahs, and other fantastic animals, each more spectacular than the last.

A weekly round-up of the latest news, commentary, and deals from the world of adventure travel.

Website Hosts World's Best Wildlife Photos

Earlier this week [Natural Habitats Adventures](#), working in conjunction with the [World Wildlife Fund](#), announced the launch of a new website designed to spotlight the best wildlife photography from around the world. The aptly

U.S. Travel Ban to Cuba Begins to Loosen

One of the biggest news stories from the end of 2014 was the thawing of relations between the U.S. and Cuba, a country that has been under a crippling embargo for more than 50 years. Today, the Obama administration has taken a large step forward in improving those relationship further

by [loosening travel and trade restrictions between the two countries](#). Under new regulations, Americans can now use credit cards in Cuba, and U.S. companies can export their goods – including computers, smartphones, and other technology – to the Caribbean country as well. General tourism is still banned for now, but travelers who are authorized to visit Cuba (journalists, researchers, educators, etc.) will no longer need to apply for a special permit to enter the country. Additionally, travel agents and airlines are now able to book travel directly to Cuba too, which means it may be only a matter of time before we can all board a plane to Havana.

Terrorism Concerns Prompt U.S. to Issue Worldwide Travel Alert

Concerns over increased terrorist activity around the globe have prompted the U.S. State Department to [issue a worldwide travel alert](#) this week. Recent terrorist activity in France, Australia, and Canada have caused some to believe that these groups are targeting the global travel industry and are looking to cause disruption across the globe. While no specific threats are mentioned in the alert, travelers are encouraged to be extra vigilant with their personal safety and security.

Get The Inside Scoop on a Cruise to Cuba

Speaking of traveling to Cuba, this week [AllThingsCruise.com](#) is hosting a series of blog posts written by Canadian travel journalist [Barbara Ramsey Orr](#). In those posts, Barbara is sharing her experiences with her first cruise to the Caribbean country with a company called [Your Cuba Cruise](#). The Canadian cruise line offers a seven-day tour that circumnavigates the island, making various ports of call along the way. Barbara is posting her thoughts on that experience, which is sure to become a very popular option for American travelers in the near future.

***New York Times* Shares 52 Places to Go in 2015**

Are you still looking for suggestions on where you should travel to in 2015? Then perhaps the [*New York Times*](#) can help. The "paper or record" has offered up its [annual list of 52 places to visit](#) in the year ahead, with plenty of outstanding suggestions for readers. Amongst the destinations that the *Times* recommends are Milan, Italy; the Elqui Valley in Northern Chile; and Durban, South Africa. Other places earning the not include Medellin, Colombia – a rising star in the travel world – and Zimbabwe, a country that was once meant to be avoided, but has had a travel renaissance. Each selection is accompanied by a brief paragraph explaining why that particular site made the list, as well as an outstanding photo or animated GIF showing off the location further. One of my favorite places on the planet – [Yellowstone National Park](#) – managed to earn a much deserved mention, coming in at the fourth spot overall on the list.

Win an African Safari or Tour of Angkor Wat

[Adventures Within Reach](#) is kicking off 2015 with a fantastic trip giveaway. The adventure tour company is giving away a 5-day safari in Tanzania and a 4-day tour of Angkor Wat in Cambodia. To enter go to [this page](#) and fill in your personal details. The contest runs through February 28.

Take an Extraordinary Journey to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Luxury safari travel company [Extraordinary Journeys](#) has an amazing tour scheduled for 2015. The six-day trip takes adventurous travelers into the heart of the newly re-opened southern region of the [Virunga National Park](#), where they'll have the chance to spot elephants, lions, and hippopotami, as well as encounter the critically endangered mountain gorillas that make their home in this biologically diverse area. The park is also home to Mt. Nyiragongo, an active volcano that holds the distinction of containing the world's largest molten lava lake. The tour starts at \$4200/person.

Travel to Bhutan with Former UN Ambassador Lhatu Wangchuk

Beautiful and mysterious, Bhutan is a country that remains on the bucket the list of many adventure travelers. The Himalayan kingdom is home to a rich culture, deeply-ingrained Buddhist traditions, and some of the most stunning landscapes found anywhere on the planet. This year, adventure travel company [Geringer Global](#) is offering a unique [13-day journey to Bhutan](#) which will be led by the country's former UN Ambassador Lhatu Wangchuk. He'll take visitors on a historical and cultural journey through his nation, introducing them to artists and diplomats alike, while also providing unique perspectives on its past and future. Of course, no trip to Bhutan would be complete without a visit to the Tiger's Nest Monastery, a famous Buddhist shrine nestled high in the Himalaya. The trip costs \$3690/person, but anyone who books prior to March 15 will receive a \$250 discount.