



SURFACING

In Hidden Corners, A Highland Oasis

Rustic shelters called bothies, more than 100 of which are scattered throughout England, Scotland and Wales, are an indispensable element of British hill culture.

The Hutchison Memorial Hut, colloquially called the Hutchie Hut, illuminated by moonlight in Cairngorms National Park, Scotland.

By STEPHEN HILTNER

By the time the tiny hut came into view, nestled high in a corrie in Scotland's 1,748-square-mile Cairngorms National Park, I'd trekked for nearly nine miles, three of which, regrettably, I'd had to navigate after nightfall. The hike, through a broad valley in the Eastern Highlands called Glen

Derry, carried me past groves of Scots pines and over a series of streams, some of which, lined with slick steppingstones, made for precarious crossings. All the while, two rows of smooth, eroded mountain peaks enclosed me in an amphitheater of muted colors: hazel-hued heather, golden grasses. Though much of my walk was solitary, the flickering glow in the hut's main

window, I knew, meant the company for the night and of a fire to greet me.

My overnight home, the Memorial Hut, colloquially called the Hutchie Hut, which I visited in October, is one of more than 100 shelters scattered throughout Scotland, Wales and Scotland that are

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FRUGAL TRAVELER

On the Road to Uruguay's Gorgeous Beaches

This laid-back country has off-the-grid villages, and discounts for foreign travelers.

By NELL McSHANE WULFHART

"Todo tranquilo" — it's all good! — is a phrase you get used to hearing when you spend time in Uruguay. This small country has a laid-back vibe that's like Xanax for the soul, plus some of the best beaches in South America to boot.

Exploring them usually means renting a car in the capital, Montevideo, and cruising northeast to discover peaceful hippie communities, chic fish restaurants by the sand dunes, a newly lively water-sports scene and off-the-grid villages where you can sleep in a hammock and commune with sea lions.

And you can do it on a budget: As of September, the government has discounted restaurant and rental car bills by 22 percent

when paid with a foreign credit card (foreign travelers don't pay the country's value added tax, or IVA). Foreigners don't pay the IVA on hotels, either.

This regulation is in place until April and makes a huge difference for visitors. While the country is still mostly off the radar for North Americans, tourism numbers last year were up by 50 percent in some places. While the summer season runs from late December until the end of February, the warm weather actually begins in November and lingers until the end of March.

There are wineries to visit and whales to watch. But the main appeal of Uruguay, a progressive country wedged between two neighbors led by right-wing politicians, Argentina and Brazil, is taking it easy: Locals are as chilled out as it gets, more than 10 cars is a traffic jam and cows outnumber humans four to one.

Driving up the coast could take five hours

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TAJ KIMELMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

VOL. CLXVIII ... No. 58,220

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National Edition
Northwest: Mostly cloudy in Montana. Some afternoon rain and snow. Partly sunny elsewhere. Areas of morning fog. Highs in 30s to lower 60s. Weather map is on Page 20.
Printed in Seattle \$6.00

U.S. Scrambles to Outrun China in New Arms Race

Seeking to Restrict Beijing's 'Central Nervous System'



Rubio Driving U.S. Strategy In Venezuela

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — His hand chopping in the air, his voice stern and stalwart, he declared that it was time for the regional despot to go and warned of the consequences if he did not. With a command that the United States would do whatever it took to protect its own diplomats on the ground.

It was not the commander in chief but Senator Marco Rubio, the Florida Republican who

Standoff Adds to Trump's Vulnerability for 2020

Slide in Polls May Even Inspire a Challenge in the Primaries

This article is by Alexander Burns, Jonathan Martin and Maggie Haberman.

President Trump's defeat in his border-wall standoff with Congress has clouded his already perilous path to a second term in 2020, undercutting Mr. Trump's cherished image as a forceful leader and debt negotiator and emboldening like his democratic challengers who hope to block his re-election.

The longest government shutdown in history inflicted severe political damage on the president, dragging down his poll numbers

even among Republicans and stirring concern among party leaders about his ability to navigate the next two years of divided government. Mr. Trump, close associates acknowledge, appears bereft of a plan for mounting a strong campaign in 2020, or for persuading the majority of Americans to give him another chance.

Compounding the hurt was the Trump on Friday was the adviser for several charges of bying and obstructing special counsel into the 2016 the was taken as Mr. Trump's plan for mounting a strong campaign in 2020, or for persuading the majority of Americans to give him another chance.