Ski Towns

An Olympians’ guide to Park City, Sun Valley and Steamboat Springs
Travel Trends 2021

Destinations examine their difficult histories

Tours of historic homes in the South have often focused on antique silver and elaborate portraits. But as the U.S. reckons with its racial history, these centuries-old properties, from the Owens-Thomas House in Savannah to Boone Hall near Charleston, are rewriting their narratives to offer a truer glimpse of what life was like not just for the white families but also the Black enslaved ones. 

New York Times travel reporter Tariro Mzezewa says, "Instead of focusing on the way the white families moved through these spaces, they're showing the humanity and pain of the Black people who were enslaved there." After 20 years of planning and fundraising, the International African American Museum will open on the site of Charleston's Gadsden's Wharf, where 40 percent of all enslaved people disembarked in the country. "People are realizing that there is an interest in the experiences of Black people throughout history," Mzezewa says. "For so long the travel industry didn't consider these stories valuable." The Caribbean, too, which has long touted its white-sand beaches and tropical cocktails, is acknowledging the history of slavery and colonialism. And travel consultant Ursula Petula Barzey points to a Bermuda tour by Titan Express dedicated to abolitionist Mary Prince and her contribution to Bermuda's emancipation. The first enslaved Black woman to publish an autobiography, Prince produced work that was significant in dismantling slavery in not just Bermuda but also the British Empire. "When people think of Bermuda they think of sailing and the water," Barzey says. "Destinations that have shied away from their cultural heritage are now having these conversations and finally telling these stories—and they're fascinating." —JESS SWANSON

Travelers are staying longer in places such as Florence, Italy

Traveling isn't just about you—it's also about your impact. Though green travel has been a consideration for years, people will pay closer attention to how they spend their dollars. "We're seeing travelers recognize how important their purchasing power is," says Gregory Miller, executive director of the nonprofit Center for Responsible Travel. "They're traveling closer to home to develop a deeper understanding of where they live. This gets businesses back on their feet." Samantha Brown, host of PBS's Places to Love series, says the travel industry is largely comprised of small establishments: "People now understand that no matter where you travel, it's someone else's local." OurThere magazine editor-in-chief Uwem Jong adds that "LGBTQ patrons will follow brands that have demonstrated their support for the community and are inclusive in their outreach." Destinations and properties that have effective preparations for health, weather or political contingencies also have an edge with travelers, notes Miller. "The leaders will be those who can shift toward the quadruple bottom line of people, planet, profit and purpose." —J.R.