

Adventures

The Men's Fitness Guide
to Action Vacations By Peter Koch

of your life,



2016



It's that time of year again, when the daydreaming starts. Cold rains, fluorescent lighting, pitch-black commutes, and faint memories of summer fun force you to take stock of what pathetic little you've done, and start plotting bigger, better adventures for next year. Don't worry, though, we've got you covered. We tapped dozens of the world's top operators to come up with next year's definitive list of outsized adventures—hiking, biking, paddling, surfing, and mountaineering trips in the wildest blue yonders. From fat-biking across Greenland's Arctic tundra to walking with the wildlife (the kind that can—*gulp*—eat you) in Tanzania, these trips will give you a great workout—and, more important, perspective. The world is smaller than ever, but it's much bigger than your drab gray cubicle. Time to bust the hell out and see it.

Martin Bassig

Get lost in the Arctic.
Fat-biking Greenland's
100-mile hut-to-hut
route is the definition of a
remote vacation.



Uphill battle.
Slovenia isn't known for its inclines—yet. Get there before the crowds ruin it for you.

FRESH TAKES ON AGE-OLD JOURNEYS

Find a world of surprises

Already crashed through the Grand Canyon? Topped out on Mount Rainier? Lift-biked the Swiss Alps? For the been-there-done-that crowd, these novel trips riff on the classics, offering thrilling new perspectives on old adventure staples.

- Explore Morocco, from markets to mountains**

■ Most tours bring clients to Morocco just to haggle at souks, explore walled medinas, and ride camels. Ryder-Walker Alpine Adventures, though, mixes the rich Berber culture with six days of climbing in the Atlas Mountains, starting in Marrakesh, ascending to the town of Imllil for acclimatization and peak-bagging, then making the final assault on Jbel Toubkal, North Africa's highest peak. Then it's back to civilization again, with a visit to the port city of Essaouira and a last night in Marrakesh.

> Apr.–May, Sept.–Oct.; 10 days, from \$4,120; [ryderwalker.com](#)
- Get onboard with Belize**

■ Travelers flock to snorkel, dive, and fish in the clear turquoise waters of Belize's more-than-185-mile-long barrier reef. Still, there are hidden corners in this ecosystem, like the South Water Caye Marine Reserve, where Island Expeditions runs what may be the world's first inn-to-inn stand-up paddleboard trip. Based out of laid-back island lodges, the journey balances snorkeling and open-water crossings—where you can see stingrays, nurse sharks, and sea turtles—with island-style downtime.

> Jan.–Mar.; 7 days, from \$2,179; [islandexpeditions.com](#)
- Peak-bag the Cascade classics**

■ This madcap expedition from Seattle's Mountain Madness tackles three Cascade summits and a total of 32,000 feet of elevation gain in a week. Individually, the routes are fairly beginner friendly, with roped glacier travel, low-grade climbing, and route-finding through ice-falls. Consider it a crash course in mountaineering, with on-the-fly training to make sure you summit in one piece. But the real concern here is physical endurance. The "Cascade Express" is, after all, a test of mental fortitude only the strong survive.

> July–Aug.; 7 days, from \$1,800; [mountainmadness.com](#)
- Storm Slovenia's Julian Alps**

■ Bombing down Slovenia's rugged Julian Alps is a lot like biking in the Italian Alps—minus the crowds. Though it's one of the continent's most forested and water-rich countries, Slovenia is only now being discovered by outdoor junkies as a cheaper, quieter European alternative. This seven-day H+I Adventures trip covers the best trails—from Alpine passes to seaside cliffs—while making forays into Italy and Austria. At night you'll rest up at cozy guesthouses and enjoy local meats, wines, and cheeses.

> June–Sept.; 8 days, from \$2,448; [mountainbikeworldwide.com](#)
- Run the canyons of the Colorado**

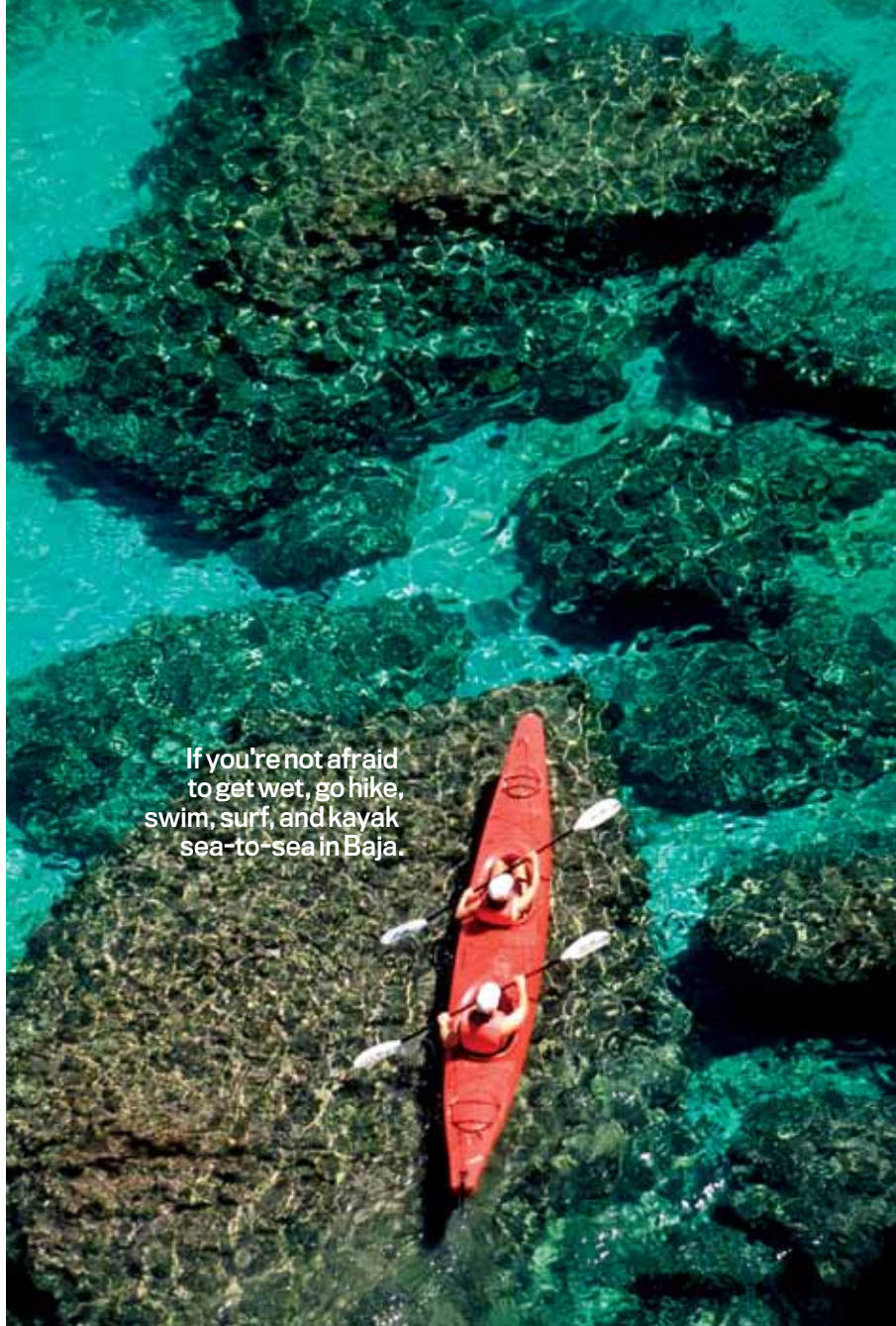
■ Retrace 264 miles of explorer John Wesley Powell's 1869 wild ride of discovery down the Green and Colorado rivers on an epic new trip from Grand Canyon Dorries. Over two weeks, guides navigate historic wooden dories through rapids between the Technicolor walls of Desolation, Gray, Labyrinth, and Stillwater canyons, all the while building up to the churning waves and "Big Drops" of Cataract Canyon. "Inferior boats are mashed like eggshells," wrote Powell of the rapids. Lucky for you, both dories and oarsmen are top-notch.

> May–June; 13 days, from \$4,536; [oars.com](#)



Yearning for Everest?
Learn the ropes here, with a crash course in climbing in the Northwest's Cascade Range.

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If you're not afraid to get wet, go hike, swim, surf, and kayak sea-to-sea in Baja.

ON A MISSION

Test your mettle

For masochists (we're looking at you, Ironmen, ultrarunners, endurance cyclists, and gnarly-ass mountain men) who want to accomplish something tangible on vacation (and bring home bragging rights), these trips offer goal-oriented adventure with a generous side of suffering. Trust us, it's more rewarding than you think—and twice as much fun as you can imagine.

Punch through the Pyrenees from sea to sea

While the Alps usually get top billing at the Tour de France, the Pyrenees, which form the rugged, 305-mile-long natural border between Spain and France, are nearly as tall—and even steeper. This epic DuVine Cycling + Adventure Co. trip traverses the entire range, from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay, hitting all the famous, punchy climbs (including the fearsome Tourmalet and Hautacam) in a week straight of 50-plus-mile, 5,000-plus-foot days in the saddle. Eat your heart out, Lance.

> Aug.; 8 days, from \$4,395; duvine.com

Bisect the Baja

Most classic Baja trips involve either surfing on empty Pacific-side beaches or kayaking the wildlife-rich Sea of Cortez. This REI Adventures hike does both, but joins them with a unique sea-to-sea hike across the verdant Sierra de La Laguna mountains. In four days—one spent swimming in a refreshing mountain river—you'll ascend from cactus-studded desert through dry forest, green preserves, and grassy meadow before hitting the range's highest summit, El Picacho. It's a wild, at times strenuous trek that highlights Baja's amazing natural diversity.

> Year-round; 9 days, from \$3,299; rei.com/adventures



Best of both worlds. Explore the French-Spanish border with a week straight of cycling 50 or miles a day. Ouch!

Run around the roof of Africa

Kilimanjaro, the 19,341-foot Roof of Africa, is a top mountaineering destination. But for a tougher, more intimate experience with the mountain, join world-class ultrarunner Simon Mtuy's Summit Expeditions & Nomadic Experience for a 162-mile circumnavigation of the peak. The grueling trail run follows footpaths through forests and over countless ridges, covering at least a half-marathon every day. Keeping up with the speedy Tanzanian, who was raised here, isn't easy, but the gorgeous scenery should help keep your mind off the miles.

> Aug.; 11 days, from \$2,125; nomadicexperience.com

Ride the Rocky Mountain Front

Glacier National Park's soaring Alpine Going-to-the-Sun Road is one of the nation's most beautiful bike rides. But it's only the warmup to this weeklong trip with Montana's the Cycling House. Next, the tour parallels the Rocky Mountain Front down to Yellowstone, through some of the most gorgeous scenery in the Lower 48. Let your legs do the work—there's plenty of it, with daily tolls averaging more than 75 miles—and keep your eyes peeled for grizzlies, wolves, and elk along the way. It's the great American road trip, only on a bike.

> July; 7 days, from \$1,595; thecyclinghouse.com



For adventure trips you can really feel good about, go to mensfitness.com/voluntourism.