A DECADE AGO, TRAVELER published a landmark issue—"50 Places of a Lifetime"—that in subsequent years has become something of a hallmark of the magazine, spawning related books, podcasts, special issues, web content, games, mobile apps—even a round-the-world jet trip from National Geographic Expeditions to lift off in October 2010. Long before The Bucket List and 1,000 Places to See Before You Die, we sought to showcase those treasured destinations that every curious traveler should visit in a lifetime.

Now, in Traveler's 25th-anniversary year, we recognize the first 50 places (see page 4) and offer another 50 that speak to the transformation of travel since 1999—how we travel, where we travel, why we travel. Ten years ago, we could see the emerging signs of a new kind of journeying—one that puts a premium on sense of place, authenticity, culture, sustainability, and experience rather than mere sightseeing. These elements became the compass we use to
steer you to destinations that are more than just numbers in a hot list. Our first 50 picks were icons the world collectively recognizes as superlative. What we offer in the following pages is what sets this magazine apart. We go beyond the obvious. You'll see that we've picked locations of character—and asked those with a personal connection to them to tell us why they are important, unique, compelling. Some are places you may know but haven't seen the way we view them here. Others, we hope, are surprises that may seduce you to explore them firsthand. We address what makes a destination special, what will reward the traveler, why you should come here rather than go somewhere else. We are more sensitive than ever to the fact that many places we love most are deeply threatened—and our challenge is to preserve them for future generations. When they travel, I want my children to know the same joy I feel every time I discover somewhere new and different. We all begin that journey by finding a place that sings to us. We hope you find many destinations in these pages that do just that. —Keith Bellows, Editor in Chief
Your Places Checklist

How many of our Places of a Lifetime have you visited? This list combines our picks from this issue with those from 1999.

URBAN SPACES
- Athens, Greece
- Atlanta, Georgia
- Barcelona, Spain
- Berlin, Germany
- Delhi, India
- Dublin, Ireland
- Florence, Italy
- Hong Kong, China
- Istanbul, Turkey
- Jerusalem, Israel
- London, England
- Mexico City, Mexico
- New York, New York
- Paris, France
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- San Francisco, California
- St. Petersburg, Russia
- Tokyo, Japan
- Vancouver, Canada
- Venice, Italy
- Quirimbas Archipelago, Mozambique
- Salina, Italy
- Seychelles
- Torres del Paine, Chile
- Yap’s Outer Islands, Micronesia

COUNTRY UNBOUND
- Alps
- Asturias, Spain
- Azure Coast, Turkey
- Big Sur, California
- Canadian Maritimes
- Cordillera Terraces, Philippines
- Danang to Hue, Vietnam
- Gaspé Peninsula, Canada
- Gobi desert, China and Mongolia
- Lake District, England
- Loire Valley, France
- Mendoza, Argentina
- Montenegro
- North Island, New Zealand
- Norway’s Coast
- Piedmont region, Virginia
- Rif Mountains, Morocco
- Sawtooth Mountains, Idaho
- Tuscany
- Vermont

WORLD WONDERS
- Acropolis, Greece
- Angkor, Cambodia
- Cyberspace
- Easter Island, Chile
- Fatehpur Sikri, India
- Great Wall, China
- Karnak, Egypt
- Kuelap, Peru
- Leptis Magna, Libya
- Machu Picchu, Peru
- Mesa Verde, Colorado
- Petra, Jordan
- Potala Palace, Tibet
- Pyramids, Egypt
- Sagrada Familia, Spain
- Samarkand and Bukhara, Uzbekistan
- Terra Cotta Army, China
- Taj Mahal, India
- Vatican City

PARADISE FOUND
- Aitutaki, Cook Islands
- Amapái Coast, Italy
- Boundary Waters, Minnesota
- British Virgin Islands
- Fernando de Noronha Archipelago, Brazil
- Greek Islands
- Hawaiian Islands
- Japanese Ryokan
- Kerala, India
- Lord Howe Island, Australia
- Mayreau, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Molokai, Hawaii
- Mount Rigi, Switzerland
- Pacific Islands
- Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica

51st PLACE OF A LIFETIME
- The Ocean
- Space

COLOR KEY
- 2009 Destinations
- 1999 Destinations

1 Based on EPA estimates. 2 Includes one-year Safe & Sound Plan: Call 1-888-4ONSTAR (1-888-466-7827) or visit onstar.com for details and system limitations. 3 OnStar acts as a link to existing emergency service providers. Visit onstar.com for details and system limitations. 4 Always use safety belts and the correct restraint for your child’s age and size. Children are safer when properly secured in a rear seat in the appropriate infant, child or booster seat. Never place a rear-facing infant restraint in the front seat of any vehicle equipped with a passenger air bag. See the Owner’s Manual and child safety seat instructions for more safety information.
IN THIS ISSUE

50 PLACES OF A LIFETIME
THE WORLD’S GREATEST DESTINATIONS, PART II

OUR MISSION National Geographic Traveler reports on destinations of distinction and character, and we support efforts to keep them that way—believing that to enhance an authentic “sense of place” will benefit both travelers and the locations they visit.

6 National Geographic Traveler
Grand Isolation

Embraced by the vast Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada’s Gaspé Peninsula—or “land’s end” in native Micmac—treasures its abundant nature and small-town charm. BY KEVIN PARENT

live in Miguasha, a small fishing village in the Gaspé Peninsula at the eastern tip of Québec. From my bedroom window I can see across the Bay of Chaleur, considered by some of the most alluring bays in the world, and into the forested hills of the Chic-Choc Mountains.

Surrounded by the Gulf of St. Lawrence (actually a semi-enclosed sea), the Gaspé is geographically isolated. Its “back in the day” village life draws Québécois film crews as well as travelers seeking natural landscapes. Fish and forests are the peninsula’s main resources, but the soul of the Gaspé is its people. Most are of French extraction, with Scottish, Irish, and English—as well as native Micmac—adding to the mixture. Culture and tradition are important here. We gather to drink, practice slap shots at the local ice rink, and build bonfires on the beach on summer nights.

Music, starting with Irish Catholic church choirs and kitchen jam sessions, is part of the fabric of life on the peninsula. In Carleton-sur-Mer, a seaside resort on the south shore, for example, the music offerings range from the local marina’s jazz happy hour to the Naufrageur Brewery’s traditional music scene, to “le Bateau,” a 374-foot long boat turned bar that features rock-and-roll music and dancing.

The people here—artists, musicians, writers—are sociable, yet we also enjoy our alone time. We will sail across the bay to secluded Heron Island and walk along the shore, play an uncrowded golf course in Carleton, or even better, fly-fish one of the peninsula’s top salmon rivers. Years ago, I landed a 31-pound Atlantic salmon on a small July stonefly at Angus Pool on the Matapedia River.

The pleasures of the Gaspé Peninsula’s cultured, rural life seem endless. Visit Percé to admire the red cliffs, eat fresh lobster, and walk up Percé Rock—a limestone butte rising from the sea—at low tide. Attend a play or concert in L’Anse-à-Beaufils. Hunt for fish fossils at Miguasha National Park, a World Heritage site. Finally, do not leave the Gaspé without taking a drive on Highway 132. It runs along a scenic coast where nothing comes between you and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, that body of water that makes all of this grand isolation possible.

Singer-songwriter Kevin Parent grew up in the French-speaking area of the Bay of Chaleur on the Gaspé Peninsula. In 2007 he released his first English album, Fangless Wolf Facing Winter.

VITAL STATS Location: On the eastern tip of Quebec, Canada, just north of New Brunswick
• Population: 135,000
• Climate: Average summer temp is 68°F; average winter temp is 23°F
• Activities: Salmon and deep-sea fishing, hiking, kayaking, visiting local farms
• Notable: French explorer Jacques Cartier mapped and claimed Gaspé Bay for French King Francis I in 1534; the Parc National de l’Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé protects one of the largest bird sanctuaries in the world; the International Appalachian Trail runs along the Gaspé’s Chic-Choc Mountains and ends at the lighthouse on Cap-Gaspé.

Percé Rock rises from the Gulf of St. Lawrence just off the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula. Life-size concrete sculptures by Marcel Gagnon (inset) appear to move with the tides in Sainte Flavie, a gateway to the peninsula.