

TRAVEL

TRAVEL EDITOR'S NOTE

I'm optimistic once we are again allowed to travel we're going to see a tourism boom not seen since the 1960s. Until then, be safe and avoid any unnecessary travel. For those looking to travel vicariously (or seeking to plan your next trip once we have a new normal), we asked freelancer Jay Gentile to update his list of the best travel shows to binge watch. I'd also like to thank those who have shared their travel stories and postcards — I'll share them with our readers when I can.
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VANCOUVER SUN SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2020

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Starring Vancouver travel journalist Robin Esrock, and Julia Dimon, Word Travels takes viewers into the world of travel writing in a show spanning 36 countries. *WORD TRAVELS*

10 BEST ONLINE TRAVEL SHOWS

Now is the perfect opportunity to discover a new favourite program to feed your wanderlust while sidelined at home, writes *Jay Gentile*.

ANTHONY BOURDAIN: PARTS UNKNOWN

Long regarded as the travel show against which all other travel shows are judged, Anthony Bourdain changed the game in food-focused television the minute his award-winning show debuted on CNN in 2013. While many have tried, no one has been able to uncover the soul of a place and its people quite like the legendary former chef and author.

With effortless cool and respectful curiosity, Bourdain uses food to open up discovery of a place and its people across all corners of the globe. While his oft-imitated masterwork Parts Unknown is no longer streaming on Netflix, it is currently available for purchase on several platforms, including YouTube and iTunes.

BALD AND BANKRUPT

This entertaining YouTube series follows British traveller Benjamin Rich as he explores little-visited destinations across the world. Mostly focused in former Soviet states like Moldova and Belarus while also including travels from India to Africa, Rich (often under the screen moniker Bald) shows no fear as he explores some of the world's most dangerous neighbourhoods just looking to make friends and get a better understanding of the local people.

He is also unafraid to decry government corruption, get



Benjamin Rich, of YouTube's Bald and Bankrupt, makes a new friend in Belarus. *NETFLIX*

boozy with the locals or ride questionable modes of transport (including a dodgy freight car in Mauritania) along the way. He showcases a side of the world that few ever see, packaged with a playful sense of humour and irreverent charisma that makes his show close to irresistible.

INDIGO TRAVELLER

If you want to learn about the world beyond the headlines, turn to this YouTube channel from New Zealand globetrotter Nick Fisher. The affable Kiwi showcases the humanity and beauty

behind destinations that most would never think to visit, from Iraq and Afghanistan to North Korea and Iran. You will come away with an entirely new perspective on these destinations after watching Fisher interview friendly locals, film beautiful landscapes, and showcase a daily slice of normal life in these countries.

Some of Fisher's additional adventures include getting banned from filming in public in Venezuela, spending "one day as a tourist in Somalia," and going hitchhiking across Ethiopia.

UNPLANNED AMERICA

Sometimes the best way to see a place is through the eyes of a foreigner. Such is the case with the Aussie trio of Nick, Parv, and Gonzo, who explore unique aspects of American culture you certainly won't find in the guidebooks throughout their four-season Amazon Prime travelogue.

Their eye-opening, hipster-approved tour of the American underground includes stops at an off-the-grid community in New Mexico, a strange encounter with a "cannabis shaman" in Colora-

do, and visits with local militia groups to learn about the Second Amendment. They also spend time on Chicago's South Side at a rap video shoot, explore why Portland is the strip-club capital of the United States, and throw their own street parade in New Orleans.

WORD TRAVELS: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE BYLINE

Although it is listed on Amazon as World Travels, the correct name of the show is Word Travels. The world of travel writing is explored and demystified in this Amazon Prime travel series starring Vancouver travel journalist Robin Esrock, and Julia Dimon. Filmed in 36 countries spanning six continents over the course of three seasons, the series follows the seasoned pros as they search for travel stories with unique angles they can sell to their editors.

This includes profiling the Indigenous female wrestlers of Bolivia, exploring one of the world's oldest circuses in Latvia, and swimming in the crater of a chocolate mud volcano in Colombia, among other adventures. In addition to providing the viewer with interesting information on the destinations, they also offer behind-the-scenes details on how they file their stories and navigate ethical issues like promoting tourism in lesser-developed regions.

SEE TRAVEL SHOWS ON **C11**



Tales by Light is a National Geographic series depicting the journeys of acclaimed photographers as they travel to remote destinations to tell the story behind the image. NETFLIX

ZEST FOR ADVENTURE

TRAVEL SHOWS FROM C10

SOMEBODY FEED PHIL

"I'm exactly like Anthony Bourdain if he was afraid of everything," Everybody Loves Raymond creator Phil Rosenthal says he told Netflix when pitching his food travel series, Somebody Feed Phil.

Indeed, Rosenthal proves the anti-Bourdain in this nerdy but lovable travelogue full of dorky outfits and flaccid dad jokes that plays out in low-impact fashion over two six-episode seasons. Exploring well-known locales like Venice and New Orleans sprinkled in with a few more eccentric offerings like Cape Town and Tel Aviv, Rosenthal's show lacks the sharp point of view or journalistic insights of Parts Unknown but makes up for it with an infectious optimism and earnest desire for human connection. The show's cheesy theme song declares Phil "a happy and hungry man," and maybe that's exactly what the world needs right now.

JACK WHITEHALL: TRAVELS WITH MY FATHER

In a classic odd couple pairing, 31-year-old British comic Jack Whitehall and his prim and proper 79-year-old father tour Southeast Asia and eastern Europe over the course of three seasons in this Netflix original series. Taking advantage of a "gap year" for season one, they tour Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam, with the fun-loving Jack eager to partake in playful activities like parkour while his father, Michael, is lusting after fancier accommodations than the ones Jack books.

They both seek to deepen their relationship through travel and teach other things along the way, with Jack getting his father to loosen up at times (they even get matching tattoos at one point).

The recently released two-ep-



Jack Whitehall: Travels With My Father is a classic odd-couple pairing. NETFLIX



Someone Feed Phil follows Phil Rosenthal in this nerdy but lovable travelogue. NETFLIX

isode third season has them wandering the States from L.A. to Vegas, with stops along the way for acting lessons and naked yoga.

DARK TOURIST

If your vacation itinerary involves trips to creepy abandoned cities and barren nuclear testing grounds, Netflix series Dark Tourist may be your (clearly sugar-free) cup of tea. New Zealand journalist David Farrier explores the budding

enterprise of "dark tourism" in this wholly unique eight-episode docuseries, which has him touring the sites of Jeffrey Dahmer's murders in Milwaukee, hanging out with death cults in Mexico City, and exploring the slums of South Africa among other activities.

The show succeeds mainly in its ability to shed light on untold stories and settings like a "suicide forest" in Japan (where over 100 bodies were found in 2013) and an "extreme" haunted house

in Kentucky (where visitors are voluntarily tortured.) Proving that travel isn't all eating pasta in Italy and taking photos of the Eiffel Tower, this show is a must for fans of the macabre.

TALES BY LIGHT

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, this Australian docuseries might end up being longer than the Bible. Through the course of three six-episode seasons on Netflix, this National Geographic

series (produced in collaboration with Canon) depicts the journeys of acclaimed photographers as they travel to remote destinations to tell the story behind the image.

In its quest "to capture disappearing worlds" while providing imagery that could help save endangered species and cultures from Utah to Ethiopia, the series takes the viewer along for the ride as the photographers chronicle ancient death rituals in India and indigenous clans in Papua New Guinea in between efforts to photograph elusive snow leopards in the Himalayas and human-friendly sharks in the Bahamas. With different experts in the fields of nature photography, adventure sports photography and even underwater photography often rotating between episodes, this show will put your Instagram travel selfies to shame.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

In a style that comes off as something akin to a mash-up of Parts Unknown and Jerry Seinfeld's Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee, this Netflix original series finds celebrity chef David Chang (creator of the Netflix food travel series Ugly Delicious) hitting the road with a rotating cast of celebrities as they seek to explore the food and culture of various destinations across North America, Africa, and Asia over the course of four food-packed episodes.

That means watching Chang getting stoned with Seth Rogen as they stuff their faces in Vancouver, exploring Marrakesh with Chrissy Teigen, uncovering great food in a Los Angeles bowling alley with Lena Waithe, and wandering Phnom Penh with Kate McKinnon. While you might not walk away with the most comprehensive understanding of each destination, the show is compelling and rarely lacking in entertainment value.

TRAVEL BRIEFS

Thrill rides come to living room

As the world rides a roller-coaster of bad news related to COVID-19, Canada's biggest amusement park is riding out the storm with virtual thrills. Canada's Wonderland, north of Toronto, is reminding self-isolators that all its 34 rides and coasters can be experienced online, through its YouTube channel. "If you're self-isolating or stuck with the kids at home and looking for something exciting to do, we thought we'd offer up the rides at Canada's Wonderland and bring the amusement park to you!" the attraction said in a statement. The virtual rides offer a point-of-view perspective of its 16 roller-coasters, 11 thrill rides and seven family rides, the park said. Canada's Wonderland tradition-

ally opens its season on May 1, but that has been postponed until at least mid-May.

Caribbean isle brings sunshine in dark times

Saint Lucia is bringing a little sunshine into the lives of vacation-starved Canadians with a social-media travel series. The Caribbean island is inviting people to follow the series on Instagram as the coronavirus pandemic crushes holiday dreams around the world. Virtual guests will be able to make a tropical cocktail with locally made rum, cook up an authentic Saint Lucian dish and discover yoga and meditation sessions amid its dramatic mountain range, the Pitons, the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority said. Online participants will be able to submit live

comments to make the sessions even more interactive. To check it out, follow @TravelSaintLucia on Instagram.

Canadian gizmo among U.K. beach relics

A Canadian research buoy that was still transmitting data has washed up on a British beach. Other oddities found along the U.K. coast: sonar equipment from Texas, fly spray from Russia, Prohibition-era rum from the U.S. and a litter bin from an English city 110 km inland. The list was compiled by the British charity the National Trust, which oversees the 1,200 km of coastline in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, as part of a drive to protect the marine environment and encourage litter-picking by visitors. The

Canadian buoy, still recording temperatures and relaying data via satellite, came in with the tide at White Park Bay, Northern Ireland, the Daily Express reported.

Flight attendant's tearful farewell

A New Zealand flight attendant has spoken of her anguish over the grounding of nearly all international air travel in a heartfelt farewell message shared with passengers. In a tearful video on Facebook that is sure to strike a nerve with flight crews everywhere, Cassy Appleton said her emotions were "indescribable" after being told she was losing her job. The video shows Appleton delivering her final on-board announcement with Virgin Australia during a flight to Dunedin, on New Zealand's South Island.

"My heart is breaking for all of us today," she posted. Stuff.co.nz said the passengers burst into a round of applause over her farewell message. Appleton was part of a New Zealand-based trans-Tasman operation that is being shut down by the airline as the COVID-19 pandemic devastates the aviation sector.

Andre Ramshaw



AARON SAUNDERS
Ports + Bows
will return