

lonely planet



you
ONLY
live
ONCE

A LIFETIME OF EXPERIENCES

FOR THE EXPLORER IN ALL OF US



‘You only live once; but if you do it right, once is enough.’

Mae West

CONTENTS



Chapter 01

AN HOUR

In which we spend a couple of hours taking care of the little things – a shave, a shower, perhaps a cocktail or something to eat – before tackling the big stuff: sporting events, extreme feats, life-and-death spectacles, celestial phenomena and the ever-thought-provoking rituals of dawn and sunset.

016–077



Chapter 02

A DAY

In which we lose ourselves at festivals and carnivals, dine like kings, party all night in cities and fall asleep in some extraordinary settings. Then we spend a day or two in the outdoors, watching wildlife, walking by moonlight and seeking out the most silent places in the world. Finally, we face our greatest fears and watch the sun set.

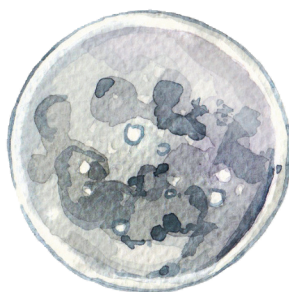
078–147



Chapter 03 A WEEK

In which we take a week or two to drive the world's most exciting roads, spot the Big Five on safari, hail a helicopter, spend an adventure-packed week on an island and swap houses with someone. Closer to home, a week is time enough to discover delights on your doorstep and learn some dance steps to impress.

148–221



Chapter 04 A MONTH

In which, over a month or more, we venture to the Amazon, travel from one end of a country to the other, train for a marathon and celebrate the seasons. On the water we learn to surf and paddle. We also find time to volunteer and participate in a tradition. And to escape it all, we travel solo and build a log cabin in the wilds.

222–275



Chapter 05 A YEAR

In which we quit the desk job, take flying lessons, ski sweet powder for twelve months, uncover your family's roots, and resolve to learn a new language. Then, consider a sabbatical in the Caribbean or the south of France, or even a round-the-world journey with the perfect travel companion.

276–323



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INTRODUCTION

L*ife's not a dress rehearsal.* 'Carpe Diem.' 'Be happy while you're living for you're a long time dead.' Yes, there are *a lot* of motivational proverbs about living life to the max out there, including the title of this book. But that's probably because it's a big deal.

The average person has a lifespan of threescore years and ten, give or take. And there's a lot to pack in. Some people are born with a knack for sucking the marrow from the bones of life.

Sir Richard Burton, the Victorian explorer, soldier, spy, linguist, writer, ethnologist... we could go on, travelled to India with the British Army at the age of 20, where he learned more than half a dozen local languages, studied Hindu culture and kept a menagerie of monkeys. Later he explored Africa and the Middle East and translated *The Arabian Nights*.

A more contemporary example might be Keith Richards, Rolling Stones guitarist, writer of immortal riffs, and aspiring librarian. As both demonstrate, you can pack a lot into threescore years and ten if you try.

And that's what this book sets out to help you do. It is not just another collection of bucketlist of big-ticket items. We've all heard about Venice and, yes, it is probably worth going to Italy to see its waterways. Instead, hopefully you'll take away something more from this book: a resolve to live life to the fullest, to add a dash of *joie de vivre* to every day.

That doesn't just mean splashing out on exotic holidays but also seeking out and indulging in little pleasures – a new pair of handmade shoes, that simple dish of perfectly dressed pasta. And, while we feature a number of serious challenges – the Appalachian Trail,



you ONLY live ONCE

it's worth noting, doesn't get any easier the older you grow – there are just as many experiences that you can enjoy on your doorstep with a little lateral thinking.

Start by embracing spontaneity; experiences like sleeping under the stars, once in a while, remind you what an amazing privilege it is to be alive, to think and to enjoy the world around us.

And we've tried to suggest opportunities to learn and slake a little of that thirst for knowledge among these pages, with illustrations of how to mix cocktails, identify autumn leaves and train for a marathon with a difference. For hedonists and adventure-lovers we've also mapped once-in-a-lifetime experiences in cities and on islands.

Essentially, **You Only Live Once** is about experiences not places – though we travel to every corner of the planet. It is about those experiences that you will replay in your mind's eye years later; they may not feature the most spectacular destinations, they may even in fact have cost nothing, but they will be the travel experiences that changed you, the ones that still bring a smile to your face.

So, how does this book work? There are five chapters – for an Hour, Day, Week, Month and Year – and in each we suggest experiences that may take about that amount of time. Naturally, these definitions are as elastic as you want them to be. You might wish to spend one hour or several kitesurfing in Greece, you can stretch a day into a weekend, a week into a fortnight. You can spend one month or six working your passage abroad, take a year or more to travel around the world.

But what all these ideas have in common is that they're starting points. They will reignite long-forgotten desires – to learn an instrument or a language – or spark new and unexpected ambitions: why shouldn't you move to Provence for a year?

When you know what's stopping you, you can start working on a solution. Perhaps this book will be as useful in helping you identify obstacles as will be for refining your month's or your year's travel experiences. Then it's time to turn to Lonely Planet's extensive travel resources and begin planning the rest of your life. ●

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