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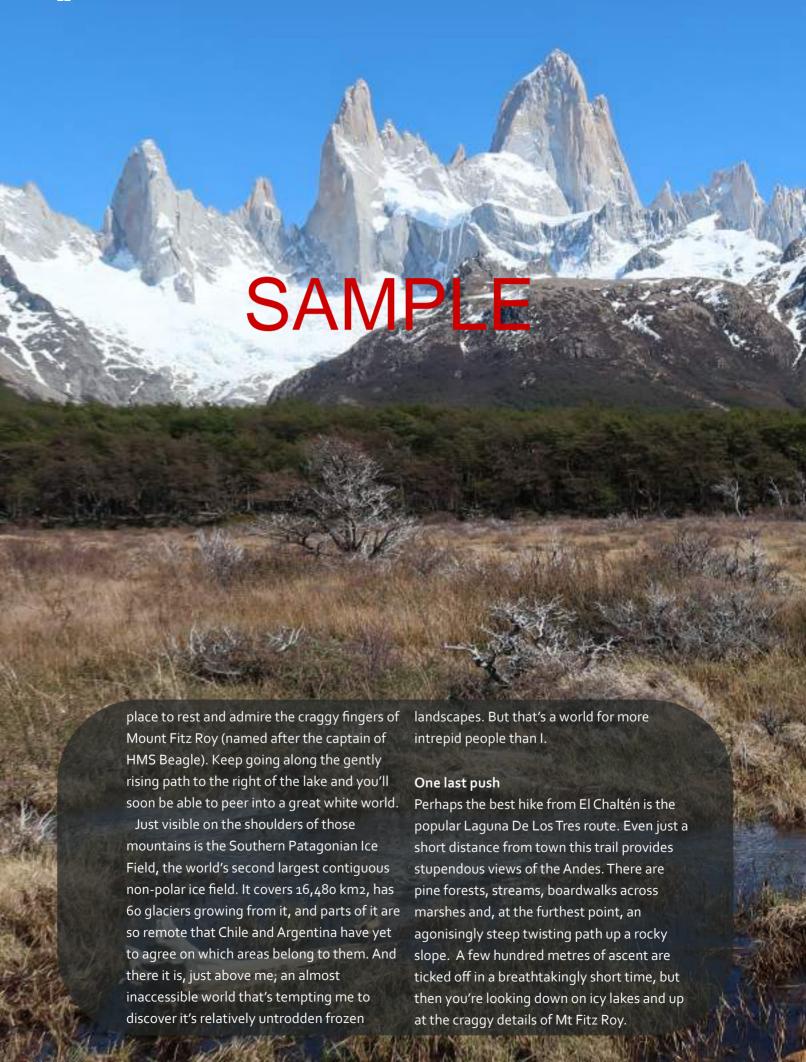
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History and hikes in Theth National Park

Words by Emily-Ann Elliott



SAMPLE

Prominence: 2,353m

Height: 5,054m

Glaciers: 6

First ascent:

Yosif Buzurtanov who is believed to have made his acent in the late 18th century

Rising dramatically above the much smaller peaks around it, Mount Kazbegi (aka Mqinvartsveri) has a classic volcano shape. Dormant since c.750 BCE the mountain can be hiked from the Georgian town of Kazbegi, with both the Betlemi mountain hut and,

beyond this, the Dyevdorak glacier providing good turnaround points. You'll need to be a highly experienced skier to first climb to, then descend from the peak. Be sure to bring your passport as there's a checkpoint on the trail just past the Betlemi mountain hut.

- 1. Mix the flour, water, vegetable oil in a bowl with a spoon. When it starts to come together use your hands to knead the dough for 3 minutes then set aside for at last 30 minutes.
- 2. Chop the aubergine and fry in vegetable oil, covering the pan so that the moisture is retained. When the aubergine begins to soften add the mirin, rice wine vinegar and soy sauce. When the aubergine has fully softened take off the heat and set aside.
- 3. Using the same pan fry the chopped butternut squash, adding more oil if necessary. When beginning to soften add the garlic, sesame oil and soy sauce. Remove from the heat and set aside when cooked.
- 4. Roll the dough into a cylinder, divide into quarters and then cut each quarter into three so that you've 12 separate pieces.

- 5. Roll each piece into a ball then flatten into a disc of about 10cm. Squeeze the edges so that they're thinner than the centre.
- 6. Spoon each mixture into separate discs, folding over and pinching together the edges so that the oyaki is sealed.
- 7. Fry the oyaki in batches, beginning with the sealed side down and then flipping over once the underside begins to brown. Remove when both sides are browned.
 8. In batches, place the oyaki onto a wire mesh and then steam over a pan or slow cooker. Be sure to place a lid over the pan/cooker. Steam for about 15 minutes, there's no need to turn over during this time.
- 9. Remove the oyaki and allow to cool a little on a wire rack. While still hot serve with soy sauce to dip into, and chopped spring onions as a garnish.



GETTING THERE

The Zomba Plateau is a 90-minute drive from Blantyre, the main commercial city, and the road to the plateau is tarred. Drivable tracks are available around the top of the plateau, and a 4x4 vehicle may only be necessary in the rainy season

Minibuses and taxis operate between Blantyre and Zomba throughout the day.

Car rental firms, including Anna's Car

Rental, Ambassador Car Hire, SS
Rent-a-Car, Avis Malawi, and Murheso
Car Rental, offer vehicles for hire at
Chileka Airport in Blantyre for those
arriving by air.

Airlink, Ethiopian Airlines and Malawi Airlines offer international connections to Chileka Airport. Blantyre is a 4.5-hour bus journey from capital Lilongwe

USEFUL RESOURCES

For guided tours, Heart Travel &

Adventures

(hearttravelandadventures.com) offer good single and multi-day options on the Plateau, departing from Blantyre.

Zomba-based Floodgates Tours and private tour guides such as Jonas, The Best Eco Guide In Zomba (tjonasbeyard@gmail.com), also provide tours on the mountain.

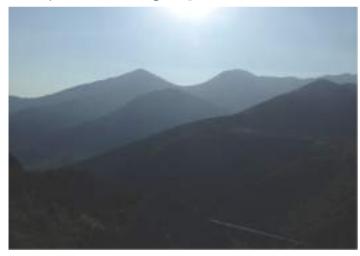
Kwezy Buses (kwezybuses.com) run two buses per day from Lilongwe to Blantyre. One of the world's most mountainous countries, Andorra is a dreamland for peak pursuers. While perhaps not the easiest place to get to by public transport, once you're there the country's diminutive size makes it simple to travel around by bus. This itinerary combines Andorra with a ride on France's famous 'Little Yellow Train', as well as some Occitaine wonders.

12th century Torre del Campanar. If you managed to see all that the day before then catch an earlier bus (line 566) to Latour De Carol for the morning La Petit Jaune train (the train also has an afternoon departure).

La Petit Jaune Train (or Little Yellow Train) is a fun tourist service with some open carriages on a narrow gauge railway that winds through forested mountain valleys, over dramatic bridges and past an remaforts at arrives into Villefranche-de-Conflent (VDC) just ur fee three hours later. This town sits where two livers meet ('conflent' means 'confluence' in English), towards the eastern edge of the Pyrenees. The imposing Fort Libéria Looms above the town, a World Heritage-listed 17th century citadel it's well worth a visit. Regular train services depart for Perpignan from the same station into which you arrived.

Suggested hotels:

- Budget: Hostel HI
- Mid-range: Hôtel PB Perpignan Gare
- Luxury: Hôtel Ile de la Lagune (30-min taxi from station)



DAY SEVEN Perpignan to Narbonne/Carcassonne

There's much to enjoy in Perpignan Old Town and the nearby beaches, if you're in a hurry then continue on to Narbonne (itself a city well worth a night or two, not least for its, canal, Roman road and very impressive cathedral, the construction of which began in 1272) and then to Carcassonne - all linked by efficient trains.

Suggested hotels:

- Budget: Le Couvent HostelMid-range: Tribe Carcassonne
- Luxury: Hôtel de la Cité MGallery Collection

DAY EIGHT Carcassonne

Set aside some hours to walk the ramparts and windy streets of Disneyesque Château Comtal. On a clear day you'll be able to see the Pyrenees mountains from where you've just travelled.

Make it happen

EST TI ME TO GO.

Jly and August can be hot and crowded, May, June, September and October are good months for hiking and biking.

GETTING THERE

- ➡ Fly to either Toulouse or Barcelona, Ryanair fly from Carcassonne airport.
- Flixbus connects Andorra with both Barcelona (and BCN airport) and Toulouse.
- High speed trains connect Toulouse and Carcassonne with Paris. It's possible to travel from the UK > Paris > Toulouse > Andorra la Vella in one day.

VISAS

Andorra doesn't have any visa requirements, however, because entry is only possible via France and Spain then the usual Schengen rules apply.

GO NEXT

Once you've seen the sights of Carcassonne then you could either return home via nearby Toulouse or to the mountains and gorges of the Haut-Languedoc regional nature park.



USEFUL RESOURCES

- French railways: sncf-connect.com/en-en
- Flixbus: flixbus.co.uk

Pakistan: Hike the Karakoram Mountains



For centuries the Thallay La Trail linked the ancient kingdoms of Khaplu and Shigar, now you can follow this Baltistan route with G Adventures past glaciers, mountain streams and into peaceful villages.





Mateira Land's nountaincus interior soars to to 1862 in and this self-guided walking holiday takes you up in to the heart of them, following ancient 'levadas' (irrigation channels) and through UNESCO-listed laurel forests.



- Company: G Adventures - Prices: from £1,879pp

- Duration: 10 days

- Activity: hiking, local culture

- Start/end point: Islamabad

- Difficulty: demanding but not technical

Average group size: 8Months: Jul, Aug, SepBook: gadventures.com



- Company: Inntravel
- Prices: from £1,340pp

- Duration: 7 days

- Activities: hiking, city sightseeing, cuisine

- Start/end point: Funchal

- Difficulty: easy-to-moderate

- Average group size: no groups (self-guided)

- Months: year-round

- Book: inntravel.co.uk









Beloved of cruise visitors, this rail route begins in the village of Flåm, with the station located close to where 127 cruise ships docked last year.

TIMETABLE DETAILS			
Min. daily departures:	3	Min. journey time (mins):	42
Max. daily departures:	10	Max. journey time (mins)	58
Earliest departure (Flåm):	07:20*	Latest departure (Flåm):	18:45*
Start point: Flåm		End point: Myrdal	
Stations visited: between 5 and	9 (depending o	n departure time and date)	
*01.05.2025 – 30.09.2025 only		-	



Facts & Figures

- Max elevation: 866m
- Line opened: 1940
- Passengers in 2024: 960,000
- Round-trip: NOK 595 (£43)
- One-way: NOK 399 (£29)
- Length of line: 20km
- Average gradient: 1 in 18
- Electrified: 1944
- Seat classes: 1
- Restaurant car: o
- Narrated journey: Yes

The journey

Starting 250m from where cruise ships dock, the train eases out of Flåm at the base of a steeply-sided valley. After a waterfall on the righthand side the train travels beside the rushing Flåmselvi river before the

climb begins. The immense Rjoandefossen waterfall appears on the right and the route passes into wilderness, disappearing often into tunnels. Stopping for 5 minutes at the Kjossfossen Watefall (keep an eye out for Huldra), the train

eventually passes out of steep section of the valley, past a small lake and through a shallower green valley. Even in June this section may be covered in snow.

British Colombia

Expanding Horizons Throughout the Seasons

This understanding transformed my approach to other mountain adventures. In Vancouver, rolling my wheelchair cautiously onto the curling "sheet" at Hillcrest Community Centre with ex-Invictus Team Canada member Patrick Levi, I found myself embracing rather than fearing the challenge. Despite our ineptitude, the sense of teamwork and encouragement felt familiar now. "Adaptive sports aren't just about independence," Patrick explained, adjusting my delivery technique, "they're about discovering capabilities you never

knew existed, sometimes through spectacular failure."

The philosophy extends beyond

winter into warmer months.

"...discovering capabilities you never knew existed,

Speaking with Jen Barber, Communications and Marketing Manager at Whistler Adaptive, she explains passionately how technology enables new adventures

vear-round. A new adaptive mountain biking facility will soon be available, while the 'trail rider' hiking facility makes alpine ex-

> ploration accessible regardless of ability level. The facilities offer wheelchair-accessible paddleboarding and easy access kayaks and canoes, with purpose-built pontoons for support.

During misty bike rides through the mysterious Pacific Spirit Park, Vancouver's

outdoors-urban energy perfectly complements Whistler's soaring heights. Each experience builds on the last, creating a journey that's both physical and personal.





In each issue of Mountains Magazine we'll profile a mountain village, town or city, focusing on its unique features and why it is a worthy destination for readers. In this issue we've chosen to take a look at the Tyrollean town of Ischgl.



1,377-2,872m

Ischgl sits at 1,377m altitude in the Paznaun Valley. The ski area rises to 2,872m making it one of the highest ski resorts in Austria.



26 days

Sitting high in the Tyrollean Alps Ischgl has an average of 26 snow days per year, with an average of 247cm falling per year.



12,000

There are around 12,000 beds available to visitors in accommodation ranging from 5* hotels to popular mountain huts.



480km

In total the Silvretta area, of which Ischgl is part, has 480km of downhill ski slopes on a total of 145 pistes and served by 101 ski lifts.



361km

Europe's highest e-bike destination, Ischgl has 16 dedicated routes running to 361km. The town recently joined the Gravity Card network.



3

Despite Ischgl's size it has three Michelin-starred restaurants: Paznaunerstube (*), Schlossherrnstube (*) and Stüva (**).



Buses travel direct from Colombo
Bastian Mawatha Bus Terminal to
Nuwara Eliya and take about 5 hours.
You can also take the train to Nanu Oya,
which is a 15-minute tuktuk ride from
Nuwara Eliya. It's a very scenic train
journey of just over 6 hours, booking a
seat in the observation saloon is
recommended.

WHERE TO STAY

Rooms at the Jetwing St Andrews start from as low as £80, but expect to pay much more in high season. It's also worth paying extra for the excellent Dry season is February to April. I travelled in late May and only had a little rain during the night. Monsoon season really kicks in July-October and heavy rain can make trails impassable.

Sri Lanka

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Pekoe Trail app:

Ap.th. peko, tra srinaka.com
Tha Lia T Jut: takeaft Jst.com

- Tourist information: srilanka.travel

- Train reservations: seatreservation.railway.gov.lk



