

20 TRIPS FOR 2020 • TIFFANY HADDISH • LAS VEGAS

UNITED 

# Hemispheres

JANUARY 2020



Where you can let  
the Caribbean winds  
rock you to sleep in a  
beachfront hammock

Three  
Perfect  
Days

# Curaçao

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 





It used to be that if you wanted a glimpse of one of the most pristine swaths of South Africa's coastline, you had to earn it, with a five-day, 34-mile Whale Trail hike through the De Hoop Nature Reserve. The trek boasts fynbos-blanketed slopes, tidal pools swirling with marine life, and a breathtaking reveal of Lekkerwater Beach and its whale-filled bay, but the accommodations along the trail are mostly simple, rustic park cottages.

Now, there's a more comfortable way to get left breathless here. A three-hour drive from Cape Town brings visitors to the Lekkerwater Beach Lodge at De Hoop, which opened last April. Safari outfitter Natural Selection built seven cliff-hugging chalets that promise the same views as the Whale Trail—except those panoramas can be taken in from

a wraparound deck or through floor-to-ceiling cabin windows.

The property also has a fascinating historical pedigree, as it was built on the site of former South African president F.W. de Klerk's "Camp David." The eventual Nobel Peace Prize winner was drawn to the isolation of Lekkerwater while he was helping to map out the transition from apartheid.

That isolation is still the main draw, along with the marine wildlife. This remote perch is one of the world's best spots for land-based whale-watching, as southern right whales gather in the protected marine reserve to calve from June to November. And there's more to see for those who venture from their cabins.

"Lekkerwater has the best-preserved marine rock pools on the Southern African coastline," says Billy Robertson, a

guide who takes guests on beach walks. "There are no other places you can see galjoen, South Africa's national fish, in the gullies, or abalone in rock pools in these concentrations." Robertson also leads fynbos hikes, as there are 30 plant species found only in and around the De Hoop Reserve (which is also home to elands, zebras, and bushbucks).

When it's time to call it a day, you'll likely find a delicious spread in the main lodge. "Lekkerwater is modern on the inside," Robertson says, "and wild on the outside." *From \$257, [naturalselection.travel](http://naturalselection.travel)*

**Cape Town:** United is the only carrier offering nonstop service from North America to Cape Town (originating from New York/Newark). Check [united.com](http://united.com) or the United mobile app for details.