

YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS WITH US

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THE INSIDER

WHERE WE WANT TÕ BE

AROUND THE WORLD
VIA 13 OF ITS COOLEST
NEIGHBORHOODS.

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IF IT'S OUR FIRST TIME IN A NEW place, we want to know how locals spend Saturday mornings, where to find the unassuming food cart with the most amazing tamales ever, and which gorgeous townhouse-lined street is going to make us seriously consider packing up everything and moving there for good. In short, we fall in love with a city through its best neighborhoods. We asked *Virtuoso Life* writers who have lived and worked around the world to share their favorite ones for this story. Here are their odes to beloved locales, and our advice for how to discover each one on your own.



KINGS CROSS, SYDNEY

BEST FOR: Trendsetters on a quest for matcha lattes and hipster hangouts.

Kings Cross is a tiny eastern inner-city area with a raucous history (it's Sydney's former red-light district) and a popular nightlife scene. For daytime exploration, join locals walking their pugs and grabbing coffee at the Kings Cross Organic Food Market. Nearby, Macleay Street is the heart of hip, with shops full of niche perfumes, Fornasetti plates, and Missoni towels, plus arrangements of waratah and pink flowering gum at Grandiflora. Diners rave about the tagliatelle with brisket ragu at Fratelli Paradiso, the green tea soft-serve at Cho Cho San, and the Rum Blazer cocktail at The Roo-sevelt. One thing's for sure: You won't leave Kings Cross hungry. —*Susan Skelly*

STAY The 140-room **InterContinental Sydney Double Bay** — a five-minute car ride east of Kings Cross and the city's only luxury hotel outside the Central Business District — promises a laid-back, local place to spend the night. *Doubles from \$158, including an upgrade (if available) at time of booking, breakfast daily, and a \$100 dining credit.*

From top: Grandiflora in Kings Cross and Victorian influence in Cape Town's CBD.

TIP “**Macleay on Manning** is a fantastic home store that stocks unusual and eclectic items from all over the world — jewelry, fragrances, office supplies, and more. It's always a great place to browse.” — *Stuart Reay, Virtuoso travel advisor, Sydney*



CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, CAPE TOWN

BEST FOR: Feeling like you're in the middle of it all.

When I moved from the Cape Town suburbs to a downtown high-rise on Adderley Street a few years ago, my decision elicited more than a few raised eyebrows — the Central Business District used to be an area to avoid after dark. Thanks to a steady rejuvenation over the past ten years, the colorful, always buzzing CBD is now my favorite part of the city. There's so much variety, from new cafés opening every month on Buitenkant and Harrington streets (don't miss Swan Café and Belly of the Beast) to the calls for prayer echoing from the rainbow-bright mosques in the Bo-Kaap quarter. The neighborhood's striking Victorian and Cape Dutch buildings are just as likely to house an artisanal chocolatier (hello, Honest Chocolate) as they are a takeaway joint with a line out the door. The CBD is the most diverse and dynamic part of Cape Town, and its beating heart. —*Sarah Khan*

CRUISE Spend time in the CBD before boarding **Oceania Cruises'** 684-passenger *Nautica* for a 15-day, round-trip-from-Cape Town sailing, which includes calls elsewhere in South Africa, as well as in Namibia and Mozambique. *Departure: January 6, 2020; from \$3,499.*

BANDRA WEST, MUMBAI

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MOST FIRST-TIME VISITORS to Mumbai focus on the southern part of the city, where most of the monuments and grand boulevards are concentrated. Fair enough. But make a little time for the northern coastal suburb of Bandra West, with its trendy restaurants, hyperlocal shopping, and a solid chance of rubbing shoulders with Bollywood royalty. Here's an ideal one-day introduction:

11 AM: The main draw at the **Taj Mahal Tea House** is the expansive tea list, but the food holds its own here too. Settle in and tuck into a butter chicken sandwich or lamb kebab salad.

2 PM: Wend your way through the former fishing villages of Chimbai and Ranwar before swinging by the Bandra outpost of **Kulture Shop** – a collective of contemporary Indian artists and graphic designers – for framed prints and tote bags.

6 PM: The Bandstand Promenade is where all of Bandra converges for sunset. Walk along the water to the Castella de Aguada (**Bandra Fort**) for impressive views of the Bandra-Worli Sea Link bridge and the Mumbai skyline beyond.

8 PM: Canadian-born chef Kelvin Cheung has a lock on Mumbai dining: Reservations for his Sunday brunch at **Bastian** are hard to come by, while his **One Street** bar upstairs is the place to be for spiced Moscow mules. – Sarah Khan



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STAY The landmark 543-room **Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai** overlooks the Gateway of India. It's a 45-minute drive north to Bandra West, but the hotel can arrange for a private car and driver. *Doubles from \$242, including breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit.*



Clockwise from top: Downtown Mumbai beckons, the Taj Mahal Tea House, and Kulture Shop.