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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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JOHN W. TOMAC

Going It Alone

If you've ever wanted a spa resort—or dude ranch—all to yourself, now's the time. In the name of social distancing, high-end hotels and travel companies are selling pampered privacy. And it doesn't come cheap.

By **CHRISTIAN L. WRIGHT**

NOW THAT Covid-19 has made extroverts into agoraphobes and sent even the most social of butterflies back into the cocoon, the loonily extravagant world of private jets, cliff-side villas and ultraexclusive hotels has begun to seem...strangely sensible.

Last month, Jack Ezon, founder and managing partner of Embark Beyond, sent three families to the Preserve Club & Residences in Rhode Is-

land to recreate a 10-day summer camp their young children would otherwise have missed. Each family of four had a three-bedroom house to themselves, a shared counselor to do all the wrangling, two activities a day—from shooting clay pigeons to tie-dying T-shirts—all their food provided, including a private chef for one meal a day, and full access to the 3,500-acre sporting resort. Price tag: \$45,160 per family.

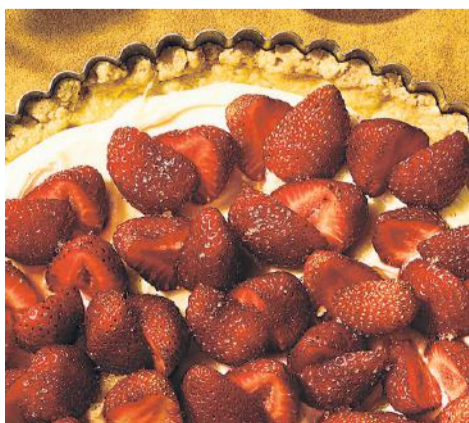
It's no wonder travelers are seeking the heightened control that so-called private travel

affords, given that coronavirus cases are spiking in many parts of the U.S. and a whole passport's worth of countries has forbidden Americans entry. "Everyone's comfort level is different," said Stacy Fischer-Rosenthal, president of Fischer Travel Enterprises in New York, who notes that only about 35% of her clientele is currently traveling, when it's typically about 95% at this time of year. "But safety is the new luxury."

The high-end travel industry is seizing the

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PIE, MORE PROMPTLY

Simplify the art of the tart with this quick, no-roll, press-in crust **D9**



VERY OVER-THE-TOP

26 cardis and thin jackets to layer on your look post-sundown **D2**



SO MANY PEOPLE ASK US...

...for design that's traditional but not dated. Check out this house. **D6**



INSERTION ORDERS

Designers are urging men to tuck in everything from jackets to sweaters **D3**

DESIGN & DECORATING



RYAN McDONALD (CHINA TABLE)



FINE FIND Chicago designer Lauren Svenstrup chatted up the seller of the green marble table at left, leading her to score the chandelier, too.

sellers accept bids randomly.) Be diligent. Said New York designer Rudy Saunders of Dorothy Draper & Company, "I am on resale sites daily." Just filter your search by "newly added," he said.

Make Nice With the Seller

"Be polite in your negotiated bid," said Ms. Kelly. Los Angeles designer John McClain, who nabbed a 1970s console table for \$40, personalizes the transaction: "Let them know the piece is going to a good home."

Be Ready to Act Fast

You'll reduce shipping costs by searching for pieces you can pick up yourself. But better deals can be had with larger pieces that intimidate other would-be buyers. Ms. Downing Pickens's strategy: "Have a mover you can call in a jiffy." Uber-like services such as Dolly connect you with drivers who retrieve and deliver small loads in their own van or truck, for far less than moving companies charge.

School Yourself

Marika Meyer, a designer in Bethesda, Md., points out that you'll be better able to assess a piece's value if you stick to a category you know. Otherwise, educate yourself before you bid: Sites like 1stdibs, Chairish and Live Auctioneers can provide links to other listings across the web. Not everyone will find a green marble table for \$800 (above) like Ms. Svenstrup did (1stdibs lists a near-identical one for \$8,200). But saving money on prestige items isn't the only reward. There's also "the pride you take in finding and curating your own collection," Ms. Svenstrup said.

Second-Hand Gold

Thanks to Americans' Covid-driven purges, offerings on peer-to-peer resale sites are surging. Design pros share strategies for scoring major finds (and savings) on Craigslist and others.

By RACHEL WOLFE

RESELLER SITES like Facebook Marketplace and Craigslist have long held a reputation for being only slightly more curated than the curb. But now that quarantined homeowners have had time to spring-clean all summer, "online marketplaces are brimming with rare vintage and quality contemporary décor," said Chicago designer Lauren Svenstrup, of Studio Sven. Take the Milo Baughman-style vintage sofa she found on Facebook Marketplace for \$120. Or the \$1,000 Moroso YY Chair Brooklyn architect Tal Schori snagged from Craigslist for \$200. Here, tips on

finding your own high-end deals.

Search Broadly, Then Sift

Sellers who list a designer piece by its correct name are wise to its value. A search for "De Sede snake sectional," say, might not pull in listings that simply call it a sofa or couch, said Ms. Svenstrup. "The vaguer the description, the better deal you will get, because they clearly do not know what they have." Joyce Downing Pickens of JDP Interiors in Los Angeles, who found an oak campaign chest for \$250, always uses a broad search term, such as "dresser," and "then I sit down to the tedious task of going listing by listing." Alternatively, said Ms. Svenstrup, look for materials

you like. "I searched 'brass' one day and found a stunning antique brass fireplace surround."

Time Your Quest

More posts about high-end pieces appear on the weekend—"when people have time to clean out a home or garage and post online," said American Society of Interior Designers chair-elect Kerrie Kelly—but weekends are often too competitive to yield the best deals. "Sunday evenings are when the bidding gets hottest," explained London designer Nicky Dobre. You'll frequently find the best bargains midweek, especially before lunchtime. (Note that while eBay sellers exploit bidding deadlines, Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace



Surreal Estate

Floral designer **Lindsey Taylor** captures the strange, exaggerated landscape of British painter David Inshaw's 'The Badminton Game'

IT'S AUGUST and, here in the northeast, too hot for my liking. To take my mind off sweating, I turned to the website of the UK's Tate Gallery, where I stumbled on "The Badminton Game" (1972-3), a fresh take on life in the verdant English countryside painted by British artist David Inshaw (b. 1943). The work's surreal quality—eerily long shadows in a clipped formal garden of unusual scale—drew me in. Who were these otherworldly badminton players? I decided to base this month's arrangement on their world.

To conjure the sky and the outside greenery, I gathered two rotund vintage green vessels and a more-modern glass vase in blue. Into the tallest went fresh chartreuse bupleurum flowers and spiky amsonia foliage. This created a green



The Inspiration

mass which I dotted with grey-blue echinops, or globe thistle, adding indigo with cornflower and stalks of larkspur. Next came white, cloudlike astrantia flowers. Imagining the layered gardens tucked behind the painting's shrubs, I fashioned a separate little bouquet of small white roses, eggplant-colored astrantia (nodding to the players'

purple dresses), drumstick allium and ripening blackberries I let drip over the edge. The final touch: a few snips of clematis 'Rooguchi' in the front green vessel, its conical blossom conveniently echoing a shuttlecock's shape.

To my eye, the awkwardness of the arrangement captured the strange, moody summer scene.

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