

INTERNATIONAL EXPLORATION IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING



Traveling to another land may not be possible at the present. There are unique joys to actually being in another country, but there are still many opportunities open to us for to learn about other cultures and connect with people outside the United States. Here are some suggestions for how you can have an international adventure without leaving your home.

- Mark Friedman -The Athenian School



Throughout history, we have used stories to make shared meaning of our lives. Through the magic of reading, you can see the world through another person's eyes, learn about another culture—and even travel back in time. There is an incredible wealth of great novels, autobiographies, histories and graphic novels available. Reading is an old-fashioned way to explore the world that still works beautifully.

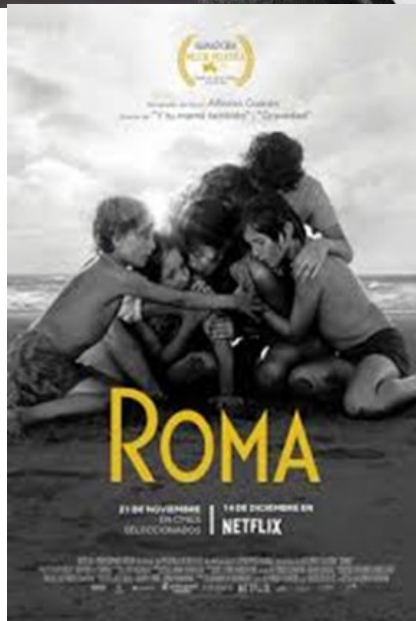


It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, who had ever been alive.

- James Baldwin

We all are born with a certain package. We are who we are: where we were born, who we were born as, how we were raised. We're kind of stuck inside that person, and the purpose of civilization and growth is to be able to reach out and empathize a little bit with other people. And for me, the movies are like a machine that generates empathy. It lets you understand a little bit more about different hopes, aspirations, dreams and fears. It helps us to identify with the people who are sharing this journey with us.

- Roger Ebert



Films are another way we share stories. Hollywood isn't the only place where excellent movies are made. Films can transport you to another culture, its sights and sounds and people. [We Are One](#) brings together 20 shuttered film festivals around the world for free on YouTube & runs from May 29 to June 7.



SHADY SIDE
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Now is a great time to reach out to your friends around the world, such as friends from exchanges. You have something new in common—living through a global pandemic. Check in with them. They will appreciate hearing from you. It's fascinating to learn how different countries and communities are responding to the current crisis.

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes. - Marcel Proust



[The Experiment in International Living](#) is running a digital exchange program connecting hundreds of young people in the U.S. with peers in Iraq, Algeria and Yemen. The program runs from June 22 to August 16 and takes 4 hours per week. Apply by May 20. Online info session is May 5.

Stuck at home, you might be bingeing on television shows. There are many great series from other countries. The New York Times published a list of the [30 Best International TV Shows of the Decade](#). Maybe Kim's Convenience, about a Korean-Canadian family, or Terrace House, a reality show out of Japan, both on Netflix.





Take an online class or study with a teacher from another part of the world. There are classes and teachers available online now that aren't usually there. Many teachers have free live classes or videos online that you can join from your home.

Travel is not really about leaving our homes, but leaving our habits.
– Pico Iyer

Remember and reflect on international and intercultural adventures you've had. Talk about the trip with your friends and family. Organize and share your photos. Reach out to the friends you made. Make a donation or organize a fundraiser to support a local organization there.



[IMPACT](#) is a 2020 summer program for students grades 6-12 organized by the National Network for Schools in Partnership. Students will be led through a variety of activities to explore their sense of purpose, develop leadership skills, think critically about the social systems around them, and design ways to advocate within their community. The 3-day, 6-hour online opportunity will be offered four times this summer

[Google's Street Art](#) project takes you on walking tours of graffiti & street art in different cities around the world. Go on a virtual tour, perhaps to [Kruger National Park](#) in South Africa. There are interesting travel channels on YouTube, such as [Indigo Traveller](#) by New Zealander Nick Fisher or [Eva zu Beck's channel](#) of the adventures of a single female traveler. 24 hour live feeds allow you to drop in on some different spots in the world. I checked out a very quiet [Times Square in NYC](#).



It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.
- Audre Lorde

Study a world language. Read the online edition of the newspaper in another country. Learn about cultural differences within the USA.

If you're willing to step outside your comfort zone, the world is available to you even if you can't leave your home. Moreover, most of the strategies described here will work when social distancing restrictions can be lifted.

Plus est en vous.