

editorial

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hidden europe comes with a certain geographical preoccupation, inducing us to focus on one continent. True, Europe is a pretty varied place, comprised as it is of over fifty nations. And it's not so small. Seven time zones, several alphabets, dozens of languages. To journey from the Caspian to the Canaries by train and boat, perfectly possible if you have the time, would take more than a week of uninterrupted travel.

But sometimes even we need what Jung called "a psychic observation post outside the European sphere." And we get that in this issue of *hidden europe*, when we follow in the footsteps of three Swiss-born writers who, between them, travelled through most of the northern hemisphere. All three were fascinating women. The one of the trio with whom we identify most is Isabelle Eberhardt. She went to the Sahara, transcending the cultural consciousness that was her birthright to make her mark as one of the most outstanding European travel writers of all time. We are a little like Isabelle, taken by life on the edge, favouring the beggar to the rich man. But there are limits. Isabelle, in her own words, elevated "suffering to a spice, enriching the flavour of existence."



By contrast, we usually quite enjoy our travels, and we hope that comes through in this issue of *hidden europe*, in which we invite you to join us on a tour that includes a region of Denmark full of ritual promise, the coast of Croatia, a village in the Pyrenees and a spa town in eastern Germany.

This year sees the centenary of the designation of Europe's first national parks, and we look at how the concept of such preserves has evolved over one hundred years. Elsewhere in this issue, we are seduced by Europe's sweeter side as we review some tempting diversions: from waffles in Belgium to *šakotis* in Lithuania and *imqaret* in Malta. Not to mention apple pie aplenty. We are at one with Jane Austen who reported in a letter to her sister: "Good apple pies are a considerable part of our domestic happiness."



We have two outside contributors to this issue, Rudolf Abraham and Karlos Zuru-tuza. They both write regularly for *hidden europe*. This time Karlos introduces us to a village in his native Basque region, and Rudolf homes in on a community in Dalmatia with which he has an intimate family connection. To both Karlos and Rudolf, our sincere thanks.

Nicky Gardner & Susanne Kries
Editors

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front cover: the UK's first national park — the Peak District (photo by James Thew)

top left: Urzainki, Basque Pyrenees (photo by Karlos Zurutuza)

middle left: Roskilde, Denmark

bottom left: shades of the desert (photo by Robert Caucino)

above right: Bad Saarow, Germany

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