

editorial

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*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Robert Frost (1874–1963) *The Road Not Taken*



Imagine how it might have been to be an early travel writer. All that virgin territory just waiting to be documented. There was scarcely any need to leave the main highway, for the most frequented routes still revealed all manner of unreported sights and novel encounters worthy of a few pages.

Today's writers have it harder. Is there a new word to be written about Barcelona, Florence or Munich? Well, yes, there certainly is, but the mainstream media are rarely willing to risk deviating from the standard narrative that defines such well known destinations. And the great majority of travel bloggers plough the same well worn furrows, endlessly hyping a predictable and limited range of sights and accommodation options — although without the benefit of editors to weed out the typos.

In *hidden europe* we try to do things a little differently, and — to misquote Robert Frost — we really do prefer the road less travelled. And this issue of *hidden europe* has a feast of by-ways and diversions that should more than suffice to rejuvenate even the most jaded traveller. Our opening feature explores Spain's ancient *cañadas*. These are the old drove roads used by herders in their twice yearly journeys between summer and winter pastures. Elsewhere in this issue we visit two Italian extremities: one at the western tip of Liguria on the border with France and the other in the northeast corner of Italy where the city of Trieste nudges up against the frontier with Slovenia. Our southern European explorations find a northern counterpoint in a report from the Faroe Islands.



We also feature Finnish islands and an unsung town in England's Black Country, ponder whether the European continent really is expanding, and join a group of men in leather in the back streets of a German town. Not as grim as it sounds, we promise. Enjoy the road less taken.

Nicky Gardner & Susanne Kries
Editors

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front cover: Miramare Castle, Italy

top left: Menton, France

middle left: Opicina, Italy

bottom left: relaxing on a *cañada* in Spain (photo © Diego Vivanco)

above right: Tindhólmur, Faroe Islands (photo © Rastislav Vimpel)

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