



WHERE I'D RATHER BE ...

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WASHINGTON DC, USA

WHAT TO SEE

In Washington DC each year, right next to the National Mall, the Washington Monument and the White House, the cherry blossoms bloom, heralding the arrival of spring. The nearly 4000 trees that surround the tidal basin were a gift from Tokyo in 1912, and although the average life of a cherry tree is around 40 years, some of the original ones are still flowering today. The annual Cherry Blossom Festival is a huge event in America's capital – so this year, the city is celebrating online.

- Planned performers have recorded films for online viewing, and you can watch park rangers walk you around

the basin and talk you through the history and importance of the festival. nationalcherryblossomfestivallive.org

- Most importantly, however, the blossoms are still blooming, and you can see them via the webcam set up to keep an eye on the trees through their "peak bloom".

nationalmall.org/bloomcam

WHAT TO DO

In this capital of US culture, there's a plethora of fantastic museums to choose from, many of them offering an online presence for those of us at home, too.

- Ford's Theatre is the site of Abraham Lincoln's assassination in 1865 – Lincoln was shot in the back of the head while watching a performance at the venue. The

theatre is now a museum and hosts a collection of online exhibits, including one on the assassination. fords.org

- At the National Museum of Women in the Arts, online exhibits include the letters of Frida Kahlo and her mother, and the painting of Colombian artist Fanny Sanin. nmwa.org

IF I WERE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- U Street is Washington DC's most colourful area and the legendary Ben's Chili Bowl has been serving hearty food there since 1958. benschilibowl.com

- Next to Ben's is the Lincoln Theatre, where musical legends such as Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday performed to the city's African American population during the days of race segregation. thelincolndc.com



Cherry blossoms in bloom at the Tidal Basin and Jefferson Memorial during spring, Washington, DC. Photo / 123RF

ARMCHAIR TRAVELLER

Long summer afternoons are made for platters and tasting flights in our own award-winning vineyards. Lockdown doesn't mean losing out. Around the country, vineyards and wine regions offer virtual tours, fast deliveries and online tasting notes to go with your purchases. Pick a region and enjoy supping world-class wine on the couch.

Fancy a little history with your tasting? Only half an hour west of Auckland, historic and unique Kumeu offers a cluster of family-owned vineyards renowned for their chardonnay and pinot noir. Settled by Dalmatian families in the early 1900s, the area was the centre of New Zealand's wine industry a few generations ago. Now the vineyards are working together under the Wineries Out West (wineriesoutwest.co.nz) banner to show Aucklanders that Waiheke isn't the only gourmet destination on their doorsteps.

For a reminder of the beauty of these parts of the country, Cloudy Bay (cloudybay.co.nz) in Marlborough offers a virtual tour, with views and insights into each of their four vineyards. Click through to meet the viticulturist, learn about the variety of soils, and vicariously enjoy some late afternoon sun as it sets across Marlborough.

In North Canterbury, the folks at Black Estate (blackestate.co.nz) are hosting live tastings on Instagram – order online, then catch up in their stories @blackestate.

If whisky is your thing, join the Lockdown Festival. Hosted by Scotland's Tomatin Distillery (tomatin.com), this event has tastings of Glen Moray, Arran, Kilkerran and more. Search for #LockdownWhiskyFestival on social, and raise a dram with fans around the world.



Photo / Getty Images



Photo / Getty Images

EXPRESS YOURSELF

More time at home means being more present in the moment. Juliette Sivertsen looks at how it is done in other cultures.

Some travellers bring back souvenirs to remember the journey; others, a new way of living based on another culture.

Whereas the English language often fails to succinctly encapsulate these concepts, other languages can do it in a single word.

Here are four words to introduce to your lifestyle at home. The common thread between them is being in the moment.

LAGOM

If there's ever a time to listen to this word, it's during a crisis filled with panic-buying. This Swedish word roughly translates to "just the right amount" – not too much, not too little. It can also be translated as living with everything in moderation.

UBUNTU

Ubuntu is an African philosophy of

connectedness, compassion and humanity. It means "I am, because of you". You could have all the riches in the world, but without ubuntu, you cannot be complete.

HYGGE

It didn't take long for the world to become obsessed with the Danish word hygge. It is a concept of "cosiness", particularly in winter, and embracing the simple pleasures in life. Hijacked by Instagram images of soft furnishings and candles, this Danish way of life is also associated with hot drinks by a roaring fire, quality time with friends and family, and getting out in nature.

SHINRIN-YOKU

The Japanese recognise the importance of being connected to nature. Shinrin-yoku translates to "forest bathing", which is about being in nature and green spaces. It's not about exercising in nature, but being present by opening your senses to listen, observe, smell and touch your surroundings in the natural world.