

the Social

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Courses you should take on your next vacay

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For many people, travel is about relaxation, eating and a round of golf. However, when you're in exocotic locals, there's actually a lot you can learn.

It may sound boring, but learning on vacation doesn't have to be! Travel writer [Caleigh Alleyne](#) breaks down some of the incredible classes you can take on your next vacay

CULINARY COURSES

[Le Cordon Bleu](#) in Paris offers a variety of programs for professional chefs seeking professional development, but also a number of [short courses](#) for beginners that

run from a few hours to a few days depending on the focus. Le Cordon Bleu has schools all over world too (even in Ottawa!) if your travels take you somewhere else instead.

Get your own personal taste of eating off the land and on the rugged Newfoundland coastline at [Cod Sounds Cooking School](#) that offers workshops led by Lori McCarthy that will allow you to learn the east coast way of cooking. As a professional forager, she will guide you on a walk to collect wild edibles including oyster plants, crow berries, mussels, urchins, and sea greens, before setting up camp on the beach for a traditional boil-up of Arctic char, mussels, cod, smoked mackerel, or other seasonal fish.

LANGUAGE COURSES

To mix both cooking and conversation, head to Italy and the [Grand Hotel Tremezzo](#) in Lake Como (where George and Amal have a house!) where you can choose between pasta or pizza making and learn how to speak Italian while cooking with the Cook & Conversation program. During the class, in addition to the language, you will learn the art of pasta making through the generations.

Ranging from 2-24 week programs, [Education First](#) has been a leader in language courses abroad in over 50 destinations, 9 languages and over 150 study programs. Their programs are available for all ages.

CULTURAL LEARNING

As a way to focus on gender equality and cultural learning in travel, [Intrepid Travel](#) has recently launched women-only expeditions in Morocco, Iran and Jordan, encouraging female empowerment and showcasing the traditions and routines of local women in each destination. The itineraries, each guided by female tour leaders, will break the barriers of traditional tourism in these locales, offering a deeper understanding of female culture in each Middle Eastern nation. The trips will expose female travelers to a range of fascinating local women – young, old, religious, conservative, rural, modern and liberal – while respecting traditional cultural values.

ACTIVE/ADVENTURE COURSES

[Showcase Women's Snowboarding Camps](#) in Whistler, British Columbia are all women weekend ride camps that will help you master confidence at any level of snowboarding. Two days with top female coaching, in a safe and motivating environment, will help you expand your terrain and develop your skills. Save or splurge on your accommodations in the village by booking at the luxurious [Fairmont Chateau Whistler](#) or by being one of the first to book at the brand new [Pangea Pod Hotel](#) which will be having their soft opening in July.

Travel to Morocco for a week of fitness with [Exodus Travels](#) that focuses on general health and fitness like: learning how to run faster, cycle longer or hike in a higher altitude, all while in a beautiful destination. Beginning in the coastal town of Essaouira and onto Marrakech, this high intensity cardio week also includes cycling along the Atlantic coast, sunrise beach runs and abdominal workouts and a day trek in the foothills of the Atlas Panorama.

CAMPING/MARINE CONSERVATION

Help prepare for your next trip with a workshop at your local MEC. They offer a variety of workshops like “Intro to Backpacking”, “Intro to Camping”, “Running clinics” and more that help you get equipped with the right gear and the right skill set for whatever adventure you may encounter. MEC also has a longstanding partnership with Parkbus, which is a bus service that connects city people to nearby provincial parks! This program is perfect for those who live in city without cars, but still want to explore outside the city. The service is currently available in Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax.

The ultra-luxury cruise line Silversea has launched a new partnership with ORCA (a marine conservation charity) to enable guests to discover and engage with incredible marine life on their Silversea adventures. Not only will they get a chance to check out whales and other marine life, and learn from marine conservation experts, guests will also contribute to ORCA’s ongoing marine conservation work by helping to collect critical sighting data of whales, dolphins and porpoises.

ART CLASSES

Travel to El Salvador to experience the vivid murals of birds, houses, trees, and shapes that cover many of the walls, businesses, and homes in the northern town La Palma. These images are the signature style of artist Fernando Llort who singlehandedly changed a town’s livelihood from one of agriculture to one driven by art, and whose work today has been exhibited around the world in esteemed venues including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and The Vatican Museum in Rome. Travelers can participate in one of La Palma’s many workshops to try their own hand at the style and can visit Fernando’s gallery, El Arbol de Dios.

In Guatemala, Lake Atitlán is a hidden gem with its three iconic volcanoes and 12 charming Mayan villages. Known for its weaving cooperatives and art galleries, the town is known is also one of the most progressive around the lake, empowering women to take control of their lives by running their own businesses and avoiding early pregnancy through sexual education programs. Casa Palopo’s tours to San Juan La Laguna give travelers the opportunity to shop local textiles and learn the different methods used to create them.



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