WAYFARER

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EDITOR'S DISPATCH

An island is a useful teacher. It has edges, so you can see what it can carry. A ferry that runs twice a day, a reef that does not like sunscreen, a national park that has just decided how many people it can hold in a day: these are not inconveniences, they are the place telling you its limits.

This month's issue goes to a few of them. We begin in the Azores, where the same cliffs that once held whale-spotters' huts now hold spotters who radio boats full of visitors. We go to Tripura, which does not appear on enough itineraries, and to the Andaman Islands, where one researcher's patient work with fishers has turned into a network of more than 200 people watching for dugongs.

- Gitanjali Gautam

LEAD STORY



Pico: the island that stopped hunting whales and started watching them

In the Azores, sperm whales still live offshore all year. What changed is who goes out to look for them, and why.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Tripura: a palace on a lake and a hillside of stone gods
Agartala's royal buildings, a water palace reached by boat, and the carvings of Unakoti, a site now on India's UNESCO tentative list.

Swaraj Dweep and Shaheed Dweep: the Andamans, carefully
Two renamed islands, one patient network of dugong watchers, and what the rules actually say about permits.

Komodo and Flores, under a new visitor cap
Indonesia has capped visits to the dragons' islands. What that means if you were planning to go.

Tasmania in winter: the island that turns up the lights
Cold, dark and unusually busy: why July is a good month for festivals at the bottom of Australia.

The Island Logistics Checklist
Ten points for ferries, small planes and places with limited choices.

COMING UP (DATES APPROXIMATE - VERIFY)

Beh Deinkhlam
Jowai, Meghalaya · 6–9 July 2026

Rath Yatra
Puri, Odisha · 16 July 2026 (Bahuda Yatra 24 July)

Kharchi Puja
Old Agartala, Tripura · 22–28 July 2026

Onam (Thiruvonam)
Kerala · 26 August 2026

ONE PRACTICAL TIP

Never schedule a flight home on the same day as an island ferry. Weather cancels crossings; leave a buffer day.

YOUR TURN

Which island has stayed with you longest? Reply and tell us — we may feature your answer.

Read the full issue: travaah.com/magazine/2026-07/

Prices, timings, permits and visa notes are approximate - please verify before booking.