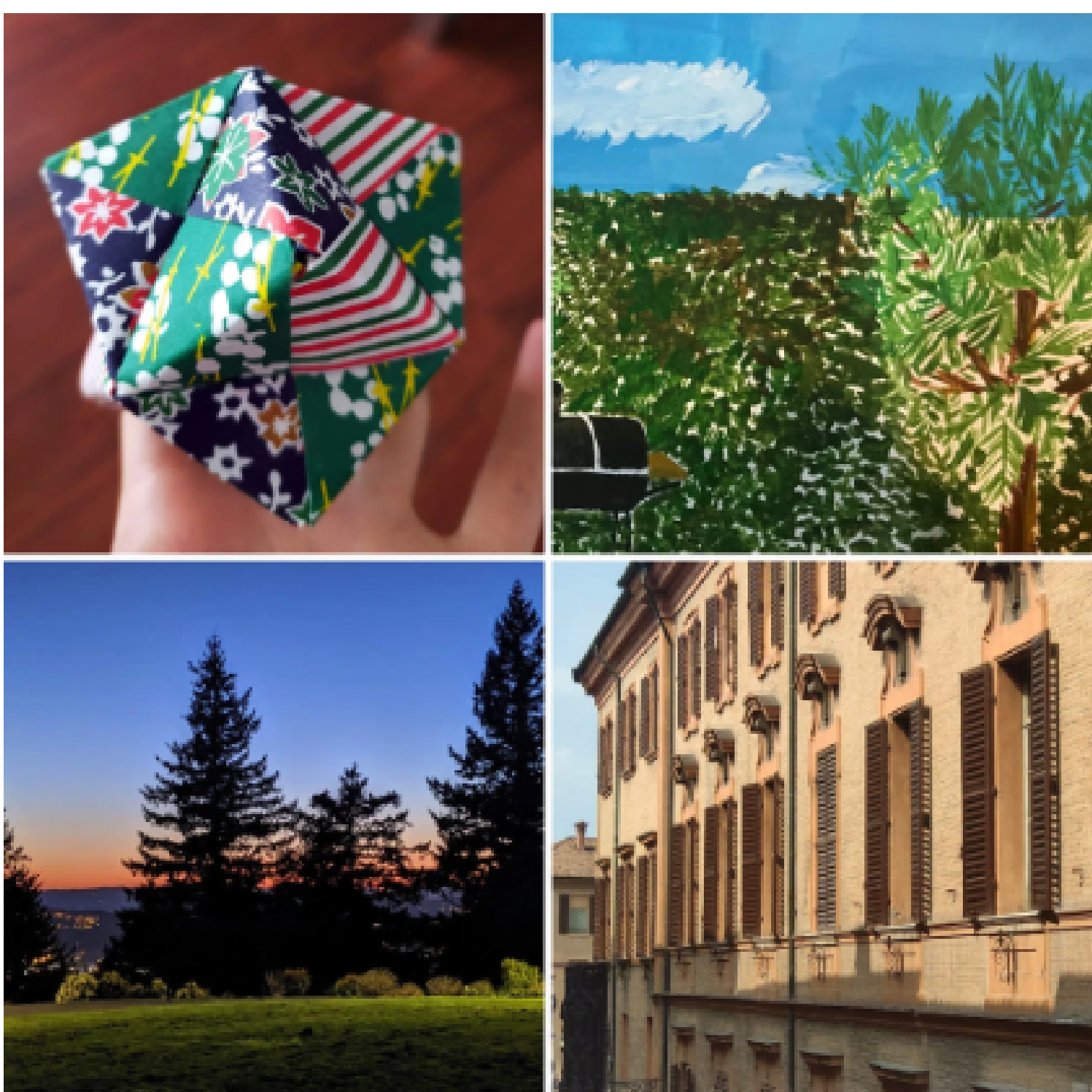


36 Hours in ... Wherever You Are

Our first reader-generated itinerary: a weekend of traveling you can do from home.



clockwise from top left: Laila Dib, Josefina Jolly, Camilla Capasso, Sue Strater



By Tacey Rychter

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The New York Times has published its popular [36 Hours column](#) for nearly 20 years, helping readers plan weekends in far-flung destinations all over the world.

For many of us over the past month, our grand plans have shrunk down to small ones, as have the physical spaces we occupy.

While we can't travel for pleasure right now, the spirit of travel — our curiosity, empathy and sense of adventure — can't be confined.

With all of this in mind, and to continue our 36 Hours column, [we called out to our readers](#) for ideas of what people could do over a weekend, wherever they are in the world (even if they are homebound), that embraced the ethos of travel.

We received (and read!) more than 1,400 submissions from all over the world — from Guangzhou to Zurich, Sydney to Buenos Aires, and across the United States.

Below is our first reader-sourced 36 Hours column. We hope it moves you. The responses have been edited for clarity, style and length.



Lorena Kunz Salim

Friday

1) 5 p.m. Happy hour

Make a plan to meet your neighbors at a distance — each of you bringing your respective libation — and yell across the fence, from your fire escape, across the street or out your window about how much you'd rather be enjoying that same drink at some chic bar.

— Kai Romero, San Francisco

Make a Cazuela cocktail (one of Guadalajara's signature drinks), because it is a great way to get some vitamin C and a little bit of tequila. Pour grapefruit soda into a bowl, add in some slices of fresh grapefruit, orange and lime, throw in a shot of reposado tequila and a pinch of sea salt. The outcome will be the most refreshing drink you'll ever try.

— Lorena Kunz Salim, Guadalajara, Mexico

2) 7 p.m. Flavor country

Cook your way through a cuisine and share the experience. I am Turkish, my roommate is Armenian and we're both from Istanbul. We are sharing recipes from an old cookbook with our friends all over the world and having dinner with them via Zoom. The recipes are by the Armenian-American chef George Mardikian, who started his famous San Francisco restaurant, Omar Khayyam's, during another crisis: the Great Depression. It's so interesting to see how dishes we both grew up eating are perceived and translated across cultures.

— Hande Oynar, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Make [Zuppa Pavese](#), a hearty comfort food typical of Lombardy — the area in Italy most affected by Covid-19. In individual heated bowls, place a slice of toasted sourdough and crack one egg; dust with tons of grated Parmigiano-Reggiano; season with salt and black pepper. Ladle boiling chicken or bone broth to cover: the heat of the broth soft-cooks the egg and soaks the bread. Serve the soup immediately, breaking everything with a spoon and mixing into a fantastic mess. A soothing moment of closeness at a time when closeness is not an option.

— Eleonora Baldwin, Rome, Italy



Beverly Dalton

Saturday

3) 9 a.m. Stretch and explore

Let the sunlight wake you up naturally. My bed faces a window. Ever since this pandemic exploded, I stopped drawing the curtains. I sit on my bed, look at the vast city of Manila outside my window and pray for my people. Find solace in morning meditation. Let your mind travel through the many small things you can still be grateful for. A litany of gratitude and a remembrance of the good things that have passed can help the mind and the soul.

— Beverly Dalton, Manila, Philippines

Take a walk before your first coffee or tea. Walking, especially early in the morning, provides a fresh view of the day. It's hard to be pessimistic when the day is just beginning.

— Neill Kramer, Bali, Indonesia

Try doing push-ups every day. If you've never done them before, start with modifications. You can do them on your knees. If you have weak wrists, try using your forearms or knuckles. Proper form: straight back (don't arch), keep your butt down, keep your head aligned with your spine. Your body should be straight. Your shoulders should be positioned over your hands. Lower yourself until your chest reaches the ground. See how many you can do, and challenge yourself to do one more each day!

— Yasmin Assef, Wilton, Conn.

4) 11 a.m. Local wilds

Become an eco-traveler in your own yard. Often we think of nature as “somewhere else” — but it’s really all around us, no matter where we are. What birds are in the trees and bushes, or perched on top of the light pole? If you don’t have a field guide, download the [Audubon identification app](#) and spend some time discovering your avian neighbors. (There are apps for identifying butterflies and native bees, too.)

— Elaine Stachera Simon, Las Cruces, N.M.



Stacy Kissel

5) 1 p.m. Go green

Wander to the nearest bit of earth, whether that’s your backyard, the tree in front of your house or just a bit of soil in a pot. Plant some seeds, put water and nutrients into the dirt and wait. Be patient. Something will grow, and you will be surprised by your ability to enrich the world around you with life. You may not be traveling far, but you are actively changing your environment. While we may not witness spring this year, things will bloom nonetheless.

— Amanda Reynolds, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Create a green indoor oasis. Collect all your houseplants and arrange them in the room where you spend the most time. Snip clippings off any that can spare an offshoot, and place them in water-filled empty jars. Expand your collection by rooting food scraps such as avocado pits, pineapple tops and the bottoms of lettuce and green onions.

— Stacy Kissel, Somerville, Mass.

Lean into fantasy! Two days ago I started writing erotica from quarantine. I offered to send my friends a chapter each week over email. In the world I’m creating, there’s an apocalypse where climaxing is the only antidote to illness. If you’ve never tried writing fiction about desire, I challenge you to it.

— Annika Berry, Brooklyn, N.Y.

7) 7 p.m. Dinner and a show

Transport yourself to an evening in Italy through the three Franks. First, lemon pasta inspired by Frank Prisinzano, cooked while playing the master Frank Sinatra’s “That’s Amore.” Enjoyed with a glass of wine from Francis Ford Coppola’s vineyard and, lastly, a showing of his classic, “The Godfather.” Saluti!

— Taara Sajnani and Abhinav Das, New York, N.Y.

Watch the film “Before Sunrise” by Richard Linklater. The movie is about the spontaneity of travel, the thrill of connecting with someone from another part of the world, and the deep conversations that are only had while on the road. It is such a timeless rewatch too.

— Steven Filie, Chicago, Ill.

Take in the universe. The International Space Station flew over Portland, Oregon on a clear night and we had six minutes of watching it stream across the sky. Go to [NASA’s Spot the Station website](#) to see if there is an observation coming your way.

— Sue Strater, Portland, Ore.

Sunday

8) 8 a.m. Changing routines

Treat yourself to a lovely salad for breakfast. One of my favorite travel memories is a gorgeous [Caprese salad](#) eaten in the sunny dining room of our hotel in Evora, Portugal. Pair with good coffee and rustic bread. In my experience, people in Europe wisely see no reason to limit salad to lunch and dinner.

— Jane Baechle, Albuquerque, N.M.

Make small discoveries. To stretch my legs during the lockdown, I’ve been walking around the block every day, and I’ve started to notice details that I’d never seen before. Like the fake, painted window on the building across the road, or the old candle holders that were once used as part of the street lighting. When the quarantine ends, I hope we don’t forget to appreciate what’s been on a doorstep all along.

— Camilla Capasso, Modena, Italy



Sarah Nisbett

9) 10.30 a.m. Use your hands

Draw your house. Great monuments and famous buildings have been painted thousands of times, but how many times have the nooks and crannies of your apartment been sketched? Let's turn our homes, however small, into art-worthy inspiration.

— Josefina Jolly, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Undertake the easiest and most fulfilling origami project of your life by folding 12 pieces of paper and [building this lovely star](#). Modular origami has been my absolute favorite occupational therapy since I was a restless child: the process is enthralling and soothing.

— Laila Dib, Berlin, Germany

Draw something that's in front of you. When you make art about the world, you make the world yours. Doesn't that sound nice?

— Sarah Nisbett, New York, N.Y.



Elizabeth Yager

10) 12 p.m. Be isolated, together

Check on neighbors on your block or floor with an email, text or phone call, or leave a card with your name and contact information. Are they OK? Do they need something from the store? Help with an errand? Food? Can you bring them a hot dish or home-baked bread? This simple act — done carefully and from a safe distance — palpably reduces our sense of fear and isolation. I've seen the faces of some neighbors for the first time. Now they wave.

— Jim Carrier, Burlington, Vt.

Play a tune on the piano and send the recording to an older friend. I sent Nonna Augusta, my adopted Italian grandma from the hard-hit town of Bergamo, a video of me playing “Ave Maria” on the piano. Google Translate helped me let Nonna know in Italian that this was for her entertainment. Her reaction (translated from Italian): “Thanks, Mia, what a thrill. You made me cry. Thank you very much, a beautiful gift you gave me! Now I listen to it several times.”

Walk to a friend’s house and call them from your phone from the street. They look out their window, and you can see each other in person, using the phone to hear each other’s voices. You are far apart enough to be safe and it’s better than FaceTime.

— Elizabeth Yager, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Send a postcard. Recently, I signed up with a service called [Postcrossing.org](https://www.postcrossing.org). They match people around the world with other postcard-loving people. I will write to someone in Taiwan, and someone from the Netherlands will write to me. Through the postcards, I get to share my wonderful city and learn about other people and where they live.

— Sue Cutsogorge, Eugene, Ore.

11) 3 p.m. Travel through pages

Read your way around the world. Helena Attlee’s delicious “The Land Where Lemons Grow” is a brilliant example of a food-meets-history-meets-travel book. Pair with a shot of [limoncello](#). Salute e forza, Italia!

— Sergio Pérez Llanos, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain

Explore the United States with William Least Heat-Moon’s “Blue Highways.” Published nearly 40 years ago, it retains the power to transport the reader to the V.F.W. halls, the churches and the sun-dappled, two-lane roads of the America left behind by interstate travel and mass commerce. And the people you’ll meet along the way are sufficiently varied, open and engaging to take some of the sting out of social distancing.

— Kristin Hawes, Seattle, Wash.

Start a virtual book club. My good friend created a group chat entitled “Quaranread.” In a week, we plan to discuss the first chunk of “The Poisonwood Bible” by Barbara Kingsolver over FaceTime. Now is a good time to travel to new places within ourselves, but a road trip through one’s imagination isn’t as exciting if you can’t pack other people in the car.

— Cameron Edson, Charlottesville, Va.
