

MAIN STORIES  
**OBAMA'S  
SCOTUS  
GAMBLE**  
p.7 *Merrick Garland*



INTERNATIONAL  
**How Trudeau  
charmed  
Washington**  
p.17



PEOPLE  
**Why Paulson  
prefers older  
partners**  
p.22



# THE WEEK

THE BEST OF THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

## The threat of violence

Trump's warning to protesters  
and Republicans who would  
block his nomination

Pages 6, 8



MARCH 25, 2016 VOLUME 14 ISSUE 703

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS

WWW.THEWEEK.COM

**This week's dream: Soaking up Saudi Arabia's quiet beauty**

Saudi Arabia doesn't rank high on most Westerners' must-visit lists—"and for good reason," said Ben Hubbard in *The New York Times*. The birthplace of Islam adheres to a strict creed that makes alcohol illegal and forces women to wear head-to-toe black gowns and refrain from driving or socializing with men outside their families. Plus, criminals are beheaded in public squares. Although 10 million foreigners live in the oil-rich desert kingdom, and millions more Muslims come every year on pilgrimage, the country has little tourism infrastructure and doesn't issue tourist visas. I gained access because I was invited to a conference, and for the adventurous traveler who finds a way in and follows the rules, "there is the exhilaration of having awe-inspiring sites virtually to yourself."

That was true for me on Farasan Island, "the largest of a cluster of sunbaked sand and coral outcroppings in the Red Sea that are festooned with pristine beaches,



A visitor at the ruins of Mada'in Saleh

prime dive sites, and historic relics dating back centuries." After a "bone-shattering" speedboat ride from Jizan, I reached my boxy, two-star hotel—the only one on the beach. Because its restaurant was closed, my guide drove me to a market where we bought two fish as long as my forearm and asked some men to grill them. We ate on a pier under the stars, and the fish were "as tasty as I have ever had." The next

afternoon, we took a hired boat to a mangrove-covered inlet. Pelicans nested in the branches and green fish skipped in the water. When the captain killed the engine, "all was silent but the waves and the squawking of the birds."

On another day, I visited one of Saudi Arabia's most impressive archaeological sites: Mada'in Saleh. My hotel, in the oasis town of Al-Ula, secured the required permission, and when my guide and I reached the site early in the morning, we found it empty. In the first century A.D., the Nabateans who lived nearby carved massive tombs into the sandstone formations that rose out of the sand, decorating the Greek- and Egyptian-style entryways with statues of birds and images of flowers, faces, and serpents. Unlike the scenes at similar sites in Egypt, there were no hawkers, no bedouins offering camel rides. We were truly alone with the past. At Al-Ula Arac Resort ([arac.com.sa](http://arac.com.sa)), doubles start at \$150.

**Hotel of the week**

787 feet beyond remote

**Pumpphouse Point**

Lake St. Clair, Australia

At this secluded Tasmanian retreat, the rest of the world feels far away, said *Travel + Leisure*. A converted 1940s hydroelectric station, the 18-room hotel allows guests to stay in either an art deco-style shore house or in the old pumpphouse—which is set at the end of a 787-foot-long pier on Australia's deepest lake. Most guests rise early to go trout fishing, or to hike the surrounding national park in search of pygmy possums, wallabies, and wombats. At night, "everyone grabs glasses of local pinot and then swaps stories over celebratory communal feasts." [pumpphousepoint.com.au](http://pumpphousepoint.com.au); doubles from \$211

**Getting the flavor of...****Rejuvenated Birmingham**

Vacant storefronts and empty sidewalks were the norm for years in downtown Birmingham, Ala., said Jennifer Cole in *Garden & Gun*. Not anymore. The area in the shadow of the city's historic high-rises, including all the industrial neighborhoods hemmed in together by highways, is now a legitimate weekend destination. The renaissance started with the 2010 opening of Railroad Park, a \$20 million project that created 19 acres of green space from a "once-gritty wasteland" along the tracks. Craft breweries and restaurants soon moved in, and the reawakened music scene has produced "such national darlings" as St. Paul and the Broken Bones. Suddenly the young people who once fled to Atlanta are staying put. "Just try to get a Friday-night table at El Barrio"—a modern Mexican cantina. Because the wait can exceed an hour, folks wander down to the terrace at Carrigan's Public House. "The sidewalks are buzzing."

**Virginia's changing capital**

Richmond, Va., is "a city of contrasts," said Erica Jackson Curran in *The Washington Post*. The state capital has grand mansions and ramshackle row houses, and its residents include tattooed creatives and old-money blue bloods. Lately another group has joined the mix: "curious visitors drawn to the city's emerging status as a trendy Southern capital." They head to hip neighborhoods like Jackson Ward, a traditionally African-American area that's home to soul food and Korean caterers and even a thrash metal-themed bar-restaurant. To the southeast lies Church Hill, one of the city's oldest communities and now its hippest culinary destination. At the Roosevelt, chef Lee Gregory creates twists on Southern favorites, plus border busters like poutine with pimento and sausage gravy. If you feel like unwinding after dinner, head to the historic Byrd Theatre. You can catch a flick for \$1.99, and "they still play the mighty Wurlitzer before screenings on Saturday nights."

**Last-minute travel deals****Old-time San Diego**

The historic Glorietta Bay Inn, on San Diego's Coronado Island, is offering reduced rates on select dates through June 16. Rooms at the bayside hotel start at \$159 a night, a \$40 discount, while mansion rooms start at \$254. [gloriettabayinn.com](http://gloriettabayinn.com)

**Himalayan adventure**

Enjoy a 13-day tour of Bhutan with the kingdom's former U.N. ambassador. The trip, departing Oct. 31, starts at \$4,960 per person, double occupancy—a \$250 saving—and includes accommodation, meals, and internal airfare. Book by April 15. [geringerglobaltravel.com](http://geringerglobaltravel.com)

**Turks and Caicos now**

The Seven Stars Resort in Turks and Caicos is offering up to 30 percent off on all rooms. With the price break, the resort's airy garden suites start at \$451 a night, down from \$645. Book by March 31 for travel through Aug. 12. [sevenstarsgracebay.com](http://sevenstarsgracebay.com)

THE WEEK March 25, 2016

**Last-minute travel deals****Old-time San Diego**

The historic Glorietta Bay Inn, on San Diego's Coronado Island, is offering reduced rates on select dates through June 16. Rooms at the bayside hotel start at \$159 a night, a \$40 discount, while mansion rooms start at \$254. [gloriettabayinn.com](http://gloriettabayinn.com)

**Himalayan adventure**

Enjoy a 13-day tour of Bhutan with the kingdom's former U.N. ambassador. The trip, departing Oct. 31, starts at \$4,960 per person, double occupancy—a \$250 saving—and includes accommodation, meals, and internal airfare. Book by April 15. [geringerglobaltravel.com](http://geringerglobaltravel.com)

**Turks and Caicos now**

The Seven Stars Resort in Turks and Caicos is offering up to 30 percent off on all rooms. With the price break, the resort's airy garden suites start at \$451 a night, down from \$645. Book by March 31 for travel through Aug. 12. [sevenstarsgracebay.com](http://sevenstarsgracebay.com)