

Condé Nast Traveller

MARCH 2015

FAMILY GUIDE:
THE BEST OF ROME

OUR FAVOURITE HOTELS

UNDER £150
A NIGHT

+ SIX GREAT
INDIAN RETREATS

ON THE ROAD WITH

MARK RONSON
IN MEMPHIS

MARY J BLIGE
IN PARIS

NUNO MENDES
IN LISBON

BAREFOOT MEXICO

THE NEXT TULUM: HERE'S THIS YEAR'S CARIBBEAN BEACH BEAUTY

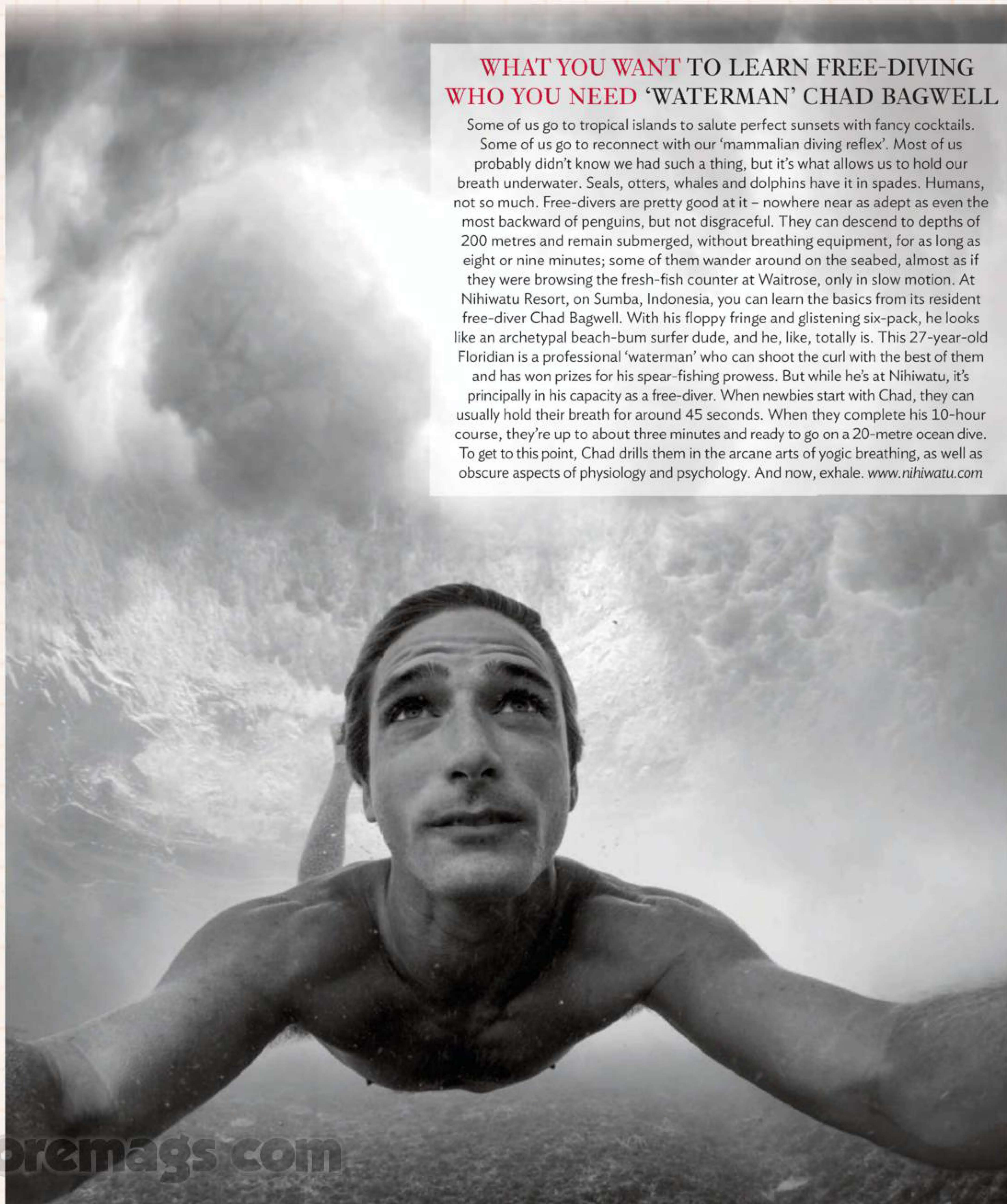
THE EXPERTS

This month: **Underwater adventure** **Family guide to Rome**

EDITED BY STEVE KING & EMMA LOVE

WHAT YOU WANT TO LEARN FREE-DIVING WHO YOU NEED 'WATERMAN' CHAD BAGWELL

Some of us go to tropical islands to salute perfect sunsets with fancy cocktails. Some of us go to reconnect with our 'mammalian diving reflex'. Most of us probably didn't know we had such a thing, but it's what allows us to hold our breath underwater. Seals, otters, whales and dolphins have it in spades. Humans, not so much. Free-divers are pretty good at it – nowhere near as adept as even the most backward of penguins, but not disgraceful. They can descend to depths of 200 metres and remain submerged, without breathing equipment, for as long as eight or nine minutes; some of them wander around on the seabed, almost as if they were browsing the fresh-fish counter at Waitrose, only in slow motion. At Nihiwatu Resort, on Sumba, Indonesia, you can learn the basics from its resident free-diver Chad Bagwell. With his floppy fringe and glistening six-pack, he looks like an archetypal beach-bum surfer dude, and he, like, totally is. This 27-year-old Floridian is a professional 'waterman' who can shoot the curl with the best of them and has won prizes for his spear-fishing prowess. But while he's at Nihiwatu, it's principally in his capacity as a free-diver. When newbies start with Chad, they can usually hold their breath for around 45 seconds. When they complete his 10-hour course, they're up to about three minutes and ready to go on a 20-metre ocean dive. To get to this point, Chad drills them in the arcane arts of yogic breathing, as well as obscure aspects of physiology and psychology. And now, exhale. www.nihiwatu.com



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