



*Dream of  
Travel Writing*

# How to Hone Your Article Ideas to Perfectly Fit Each Magazine

by Gabi Logan, founder of Dream of Travel Writing

A hand holding a vintage brass compass against a blurred background of a mountainous landscape. The compass is the central focus, showing its intricate details and the cardinal directions. The background is a soft-focus view of rolling hills and mountains under a bright sky. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Today, we're going to  
do something different...



1. Quick look at the types of **\*\*hyper-specific\*\*** ideas magazines are really looking for

2. How to make sure you have an article idea, not just a topic (and other things that came up when I was reviewing your submissions)

3. Workshopping your travel article ideas live two ways: pitchable ideas and ideas matched to magazines



**THE KINDS OF HYPER-SPECIFIC  
IDEAS MAGAZINE EDITORS ARE  
REALLY LOOKING FOR**

# Travel + Leisure

## **SERVICE**

“Upgrade” shares tips and strategies for traveling smarter in five smaller 400-to-700-word instructional sections written in second person. Examples include “[Safety for the Smaller Set](#)” about preventative measures parents can take to keep their kids safe and healthy while traveling, and “[Bidding Your Way Into Business Class](#)” about how to land a winning bid to upgrade your seat on your next flight.

## **FOOD PROFILE**

“Worth Flying For” is a 200-word, second-person article about a must-try dish worth traveling for. A recent article details the Gâteau de Foie Blond at Le Suprême in Lyon, France.

## **TRENDS**

“Here and Now” shares the latest travel news, trends, and discoveries like “[Hawaii Hits the Mainland](#)” about Hawaiian chefs bringing their traditional native food to the mainland United States. This section is made up of approximately seven 500-to-600-word pieces written in second or third person, with approximately three to four of these written by contributors.

## **ESSAYS**

“Beyond” is a compilation of stories surrounding a personal experience by the author in a specific destination. A recent issue focused on the destinations of Mexico, Croatia, Vermont, England, and Denmark. For example, “At Home on Hvar” is about the author’s perspective on Hvar, Croatia from when he visited as a college student and how it changed (and didn’t) when he returned years later. The articles in this section are approximately either 1,500 or 500 words long and are written in first or third person.

# Delta Sky

## SHORTS

“Wheels Up” is broken up into seven to eight smaller sections. One subsection written by a contributor is a 250-word, second-person piece called “Trending” about a popular city to travel to, like Mexico City, Ottawa, or Oakland.

“Break Away” is the final subsection written by a contributor, which is a 500-word first person article about getting out of the city into nature and focuses on moderate outdoor activities like biking, walking, or [hiking](#).

## PROFILE

“Pop Biz” is a 1,000-word, third-person article about breakthroughs in business featuring companies and professionals who are making advances in their industry by innovating and thinking differently than the majority in their industry. In a recent issue the article was titled “[The Branding of You](#)” and was written about how retailers are moving into markets like fashionable office supplies to help customers build their personal brands.

## DESTINATION GUIDES

“1 City 5 Ways” showcases a city in five different ways to appeal to five different tastes and preferences in a second-person, 700-word long article. A recent article featured Boston and broke the city down into the categories of those who identify as a foodie, historian, sports fan, adventurer, or modernist. Within each category, the writer suggests where to stay, where to eat, and what to do during the morning, afternoon, and evening. Other cities that have been featured include Rio de Janeiro, Seoul, Nashville, and Anchorage.

“Profile” looks deeper into a specific city and is broken up into three smaller sections ranging from 500 to 1,000 words that are written in third person and share different highlights of the city within the categories of Q&A, business, travel, or sports. Typically only three of these four categories are used in each issue. Q&A is an interview with that city’s governor, business focuses on the industries and companies shaping that city, travel features the facets of the city that are appealing to travelers, and sports goes into detail on the sporting culture in that city. Cities are mostly in the United States with the occasional international destination. Recent cities that have been featured include Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Titusville, and Atlanta. **(NOTE HERE: YOU NEED TO KNOW THE CITIES HIGHLIGHTED TO PITCH)**

# United Rhapsody

## **TREND**

“On Trend” is a 250-word overview of the latest fashion trend and the story behind it, for example sequins and fur coats. This section is written in the third person and does not concentrate on a specific designer, country or brand, but delivers a vision from across the world. It is playful and more humorous section.

## **FOOD PROFILE**

“Tasting Notes” is an approximately 300-word section focusing on a dish served in-flight. It is written in the third person and describes how the dish is made through an interview with a chef as well as the history behind it. Examples include “Crème de la Kremlin,” “Stick to Your Ribs,” and “Better Off Red.”

“From the Sideboard” is a drinks-themed section focusing on an area or place that United Airlines fly to. The section is approximately 300-500 words and includes quotes from an interview with a bar manager or vineyard owner, for example. This section is often followed by a short section recommending drinks or a cocktail recipe. Article examples include “Vine of the Times” about wine production in Portugal and “Prix-Fixe Pours.”

“Fine Dining” is a 300-to-500-word section that gives the reader an insight into a restaurant, such as Noma in Copenhagen or Parador La Huella in Miami. It is written in the third person and takes the form of a review or commentary on the dining scene in the city. The cities are places that United Airlines fly to and are not limited to a specific region or country.

## **PERSON PROFILE**

“Designer Profile” is an up to 1,000-word section that looks into the life and work of a fashion designer such as Tommy Hilfiger or Edgardo Osorio. Written in the third person, the section combines quotes from an interview with the designer and provides readers with a more personal insight into their lives.

## **JOURNEY ESSAY**

“Day Tripper” is an approximately 250-word section combining travel within the USA with the latest cars. The journey, the car and its features are described in the first person in an informal tone. Examples include a trip to Washington DC from New York or a journey along the Atlantic Coast. The section is followed by short bullet points recommending places to visit, eat and sleep.

Feature article “First Person, Far Flung” is written in the first person and recounts a writer’s journey through an exotic place, such as the Swedish Arctic or Jamaica. It looks at places from a different perspective; whether a well-known person, the history or culture. The writer’s talk about their first-hand experience and meet local people along the way. The feature is a multi-page spread and can be up to 2,000 words with images interspersed throughout.

# b.inspired

## **DESTINATION GUIDE**

“Discover Belgium” is a 200-word article highlighting a town in Belgium. It’s written in third person. There are three subsections called “Where is it?” “Why should I go there?” and “What should I do there?” Example towns from previous issues include Durbuy, Tournai, and Wonck.

“Barrio” is a 400-to-600-word article covering things to do in a particular city. It usually lists seven-to-eight bars, restaurants, museums, and shops including their addresses and websites. They are written in third person. Example destinations from previous issues include Edinburgh, Cotonou, and Barcelona.

“The Big City Guide” is a 700-word travel story. It’s written in first person and includes details like the names of restaurants, hotels, and websites. Example destinations from previous issues include Hannover, Basal, and Granada. The feature comes with two sidebars pertaining to the destination featured. “My...,” plus the name of the city, is a 200-word profile of a local blogger or business owner. The second sidebar is a 100-word round-up of three events in the city in the month of publication.

## **PROFILE**

“Smart Belgians” is a 300-word profile of an interesting Belgian person written in third person. Examples from previous issues include profiles of a graduate, a director, and a former pro-skier.

## **JOURNEY ESSAY**

“On the Road” is a 700-word descriptive account of a short road-trip, usually only a few hours long. These are sometimes taken in the same month the issue is published, although not always. Pieces are written in first person and include details such as road names, towns, and things to do. Examples from recent issues include Milan to Lake Garda, Toronto to Collingwood, and Vienna to Baden.



# Saveur

## SHORTS: TRENDS/ESSAYS/DESTINATION GUIDES


“Eat the World” is broken into eight smaller sections focused on culinary hot spots across the globe and featuring a special part of the culinary and local culture from that destination. Half of these are written by contributors. A recent issue included the 1,200-word “[Ice Cream Socialism](#)” written in first person that dives into Cuba’s obsession with ice cream sundaes, “Now Arriving: Tijuana,” a 300-word gallery written in first person about the food trucks, new chefs, and young locals reviving the town’s culinary scene, and “[The Beers of Summer](#),” a 550-word article written in third person about Brooklyn-based brewer Jeppe Jarnit-Bjergsø’s must-have elements when drinking brews outside.

## JOURNEY ESSAY

“A Meal to Remember” is a photo that is the final embodiment of that issue and a short 250-word story written in first person about a memorable meal. A recent example titled “[The Spearfisher’s Dinner](#)” is about a spearfisher who catches her own dinner while free diving 75-feet below water in the Bahamas.

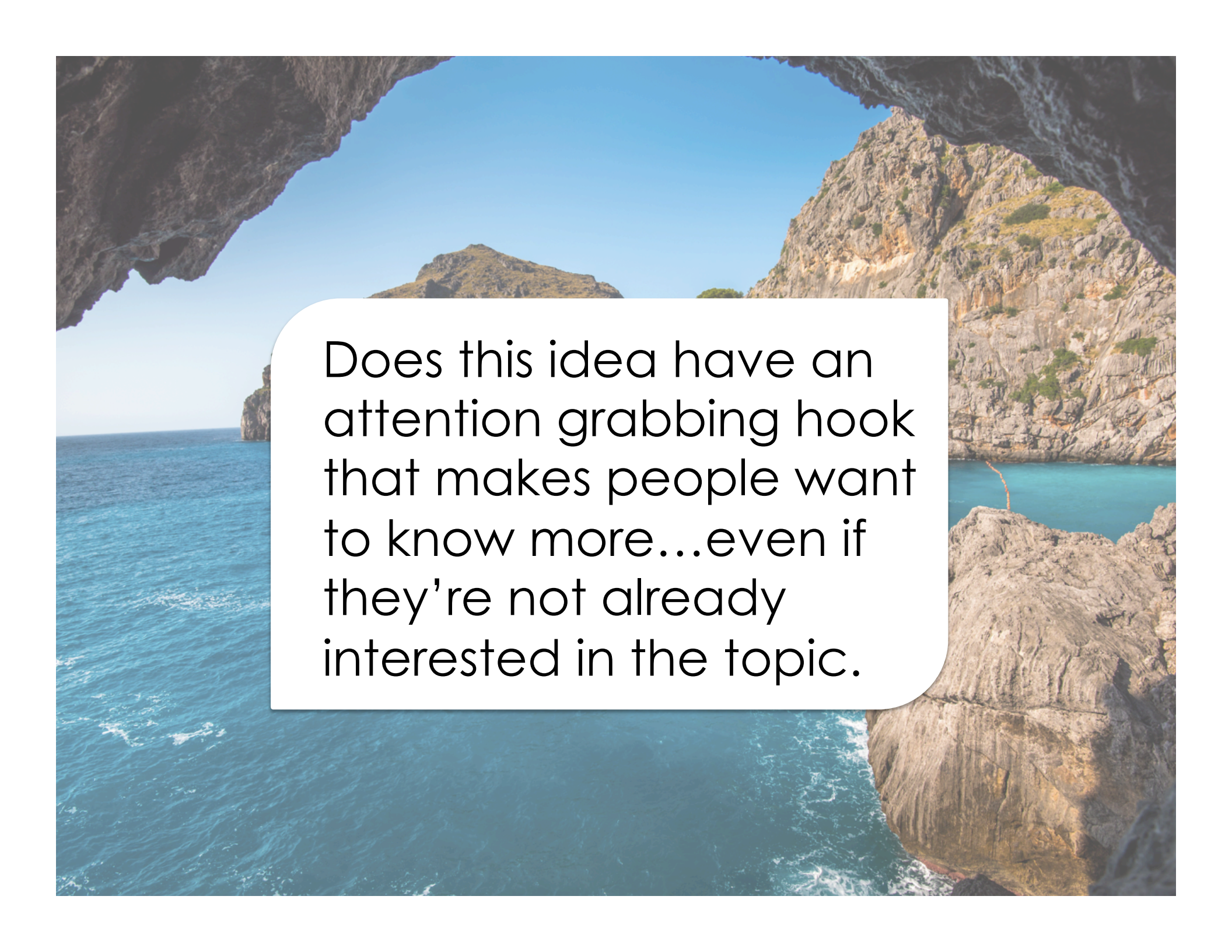


**HOW TO TELL IF YOU HAVE A  
TOPIC RATHER THAN AN  
ARTICLE PITCH IDEA**


An aerial photograph of San Francisco, California, featuring the Transamerica Pyramid on the left and a dense urban landscape. A white rounded rectangular text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Do I have a blog post idea rather than an article idea?

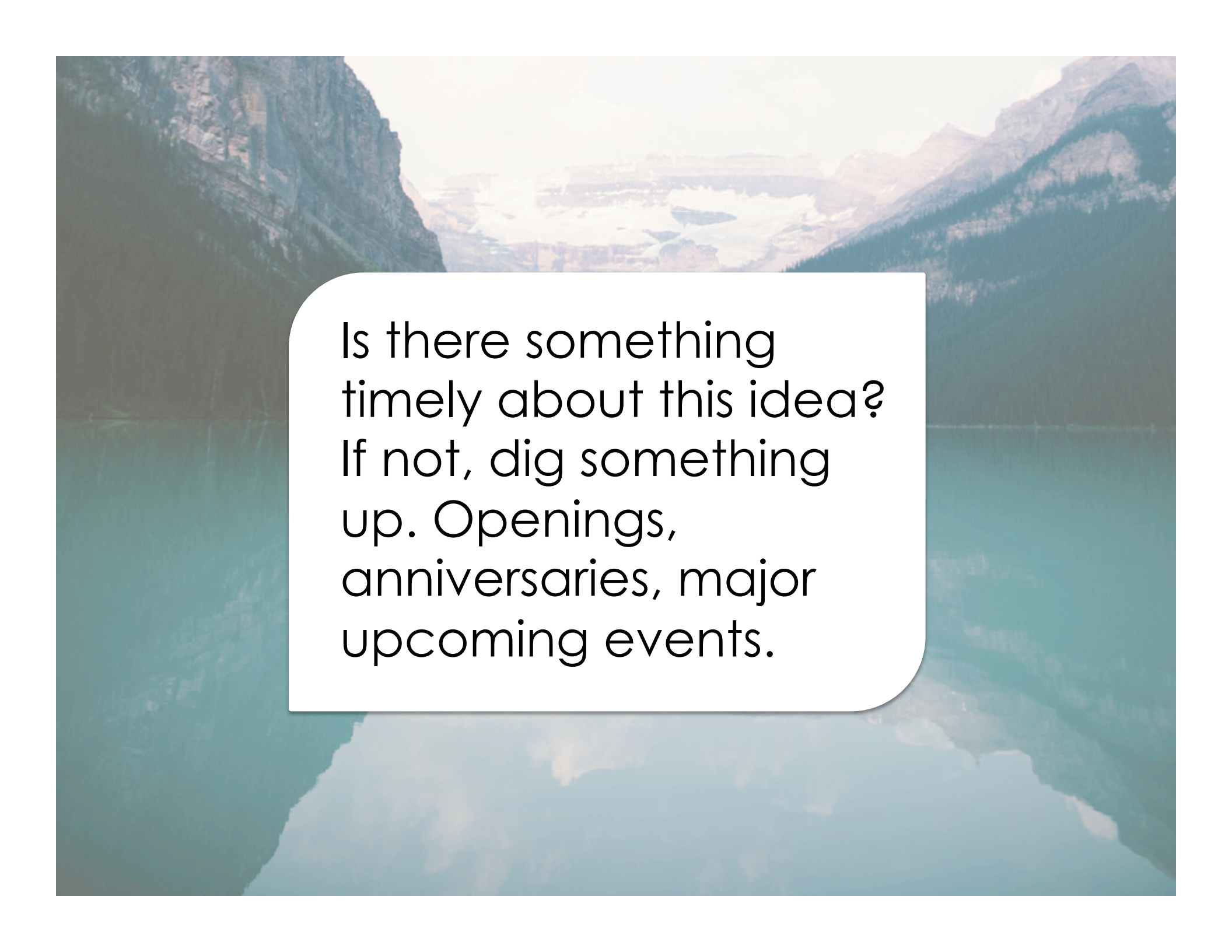
Is it encyclopedic or is there a story to tell with a point at the end?

A scenic view of a rocky coastline with a blue sea, seen through a cave opening. The image shows a large, dark cave opening in the foreground, framing a bright blue sea and a rugged, rocky coastline. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on a white, rounded rectangular background in the center of the image.


Does this idea have an attention grabbing hook that makes people want to know more...even if they're not already interested in the topic.

An aerial photograph of a large suspension bridge under construction over a vast, choppy blue ocean. The bridge's massive orange-red steel towers and cables are prominent. A multi-lane highway is visible on the bridge deck, with several cars driving. A large, curved concrete structure is visible in the water below the bridge deck. A white text box with rounded corners is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Is this a regional or nation story? (for the sake of pitching at least)

A scenic landscape of a mountain valley with a lake and a text box. The background shows a wide valley with a lake in the foreground, surrounded by steep, rocky mountains. The sky is bright and hazy. A white text box with rounded corners is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Is there something  
timely about this idea?  
If not, dig something  
up. Openings,  
anniversaries, major  
upcoming events.

A scenic landscape featuring a large, light blue lake in the middle ground. In the foreground, a guanaco stands on a rocky, sparsely vegetated hillside with yellowish-brown shrubs. The background consists of rugged, brown mountains under a cloudy sky. A white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the image, containing text.

Should it be a  
basket of kittens?  
How do we really  
pitch round-ups?

An aerial photograph of a dense forest during autumn. The trees are in various stages of color change, with some showing bright orange and yellow, while others remain green. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the canopy. The text "Let's Break Down Some Ideas" is centered over the image in a black, sans-serif font.

Let's Break Down Some Ideas



# Deirdre

## **-Epic bucket List trips.....**

I have done some trips that I am not sure if I should write up as a ROUND UP, or individually, or perhaps both based on your course last week.

China's Great Wall, Machu Picchu, South of France, Easter Island, Bora Bora, Budapest, etc.

## **-Oldest Restaurants Around the Globe-**

-We have visited some of the oldest restaurants around the world and I have yet to write that up too! Have photos and such wonderful experiences.

I take great notes too.....

Includes: Portland, Oregon, Rouen, France (oldest Restaurant in Europe), Prague, Budapest, London (Rules and that was feature in Downton Abbey if you watche that), Washington DC, Lyon, France, and so on.

# Deirdre (cont)

## **-Culinary Capital Lyon, France-**

All about the Les Halles market and so on....

## **-Recent Cruise....**

-We did a fabulous river cruise Budapest to Vilshofen, Germany and then up to Prague. It was great but have not even written about it yet.

I also interviewed the Chef on board.

## **-Following Travel Writing Author Peter Mayle-**

Scouting All the Spots for Movie "A Good Year" in the South of France.

(Maybe France Today or France Magazine??)

## **-Central Coast of CA-**

Paso Robles to Carmel and Monterey.... A trip for all types of folks....

Couples to family/multigenerational

and what to do and see in each spot. Just did this trip a month ago.

# Jill

1. Best Burgers on the Beach- short story (with photos) of Jetty Shack's great burgers- pitched to AAA Texas, all local papers/magazines (by paper/chamber of commerce, etc). Local= I live in Lake Jackson, TX- it's 1 hour S of Houston.

2. Right in the 'Start' of Texas: 10 Ways to Spend the Day in Surfside- Texas history started in Surfside (Velasco) Texas with the Battle of Velasco. I give info on 10 fun things to do here (surfing, shelling, birding, etc). Pitched to AAA Texas, all local as above.

3. Bira- Best Boats, Beaches and Beer: Fairly long article about how off the beaten path Bira is, how to get there and what you'll find when you get there. Written for people who might be interested in finding a beauty of a boat to sail around the world (or start a business in the Pacific). Pitched to International Living magazine.

4. story about a jazz dinner cruise on the historic Steamboat Natchez.

5. story about the WWII museum in New Orleans (concentrating on the contributions of the Merchant Marine- they lost more men than any other service and no one even knows anything about them!)(I have been a merchant marine for over 30 yrs)- Who would be interested in this other than 'military magazines'?

# Jill (cont)

6. story about spending a month living in Puerto Vallarta getting certified to teach English as a foreign language (TEFL)- what was the course like? what was it like living there?

7. story about a great day sail from Puerto Vallarta (sailing, fishing, snorkeling, sunset)

8. story about spending a week or 2 living with a local family while studying Spanish in Grenada Nicaragua

9. story about a photography safari in Africa- meeting the primitive Datoga tribe of blacksmiths (watching how they forged their materials from scrap metal, making beautiful jewelry, and arrowheads they traded to other tribes)- OR- story about the safari itself. What was it like going out every day looking for/finding the animals, what did we do at night/where, how did it help photography?

10. story about a dinner cruise on the Bosphorus from Istanbul Turkey- fun for the night (dinner, drinks, dancing, show of Turkish dancers).

# Dolphins

When I went on the **Puerto Vallarta** press trip I went on a tour where we were supposed to **swim with dolphins**. Unfortunately, there were orcas in the bay so the dolphins hid. The tour was organized by Wildlife Connection. A **research program that is studying the effect that human interaction has on wild dolphins**. In essence, humans are the lab rats. Not a bad exchange I think, especially if they come out and interact.

Because the **dolphins are wild** and not held in captivity there is a unique angle for a story. Because I did not see any dolphins personally, I was going with the angle from the biologist/educational standpoint. I am not sure what publications to approach.

# Tequila

I have sent out pitches to **American Airlines** inflight magazine and **Imbibe magazine**. I pitched **raicilla, the grandfather of tequila**. A mescal distilled drink that has been around since the pre-Colombian days. The Aztecs medicine men drank it originally during ceremonies, at that time it was a fermented drink. When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico they brought their distilling knowledge and showed the Mexicans how to distil it.

# Tanya

48 hours in Taipei - what to see and do for first time visitors

A luxury weekend in Taipei - visiting the Chinese opera, night markets, and a traditional tea house.

A cycling weekend in Japan along the world's largest collection of suspension bridges

White water rafting in Japan: something I did recently in an area called Iya Valley which is great for outdoor activities, but not really visited by foreign tourists. (Although it is popular with domestic travel).

A guide to the Indian Ocean Islands - which is the best fit for you? something based on a previous job when I was working as the marketing manager for a hotel company. I often used to hear travel agents and clients say they didn't really know the difference between each island. The Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Madagascar all have distinctive features and offer completely different experiences.

How to visit London like a local and avoid the overpriced tourist traps: I was thinking about writing about some of the lesser known places of interest. London is my home city, so I know it pretty well and always use to see throngs of tourists in the same overpriced and not very interesting places.

# Manatees

I have an upcoming trip to Tampa Florida and am hoping to write an article about the Florida **Manatees**.

There are different ways to view the manatees including **snorkeling** with them, **kayaking** with them, or taking a **boat tour to their natural habitat**.

The aquarium and Florida wildlife center also have manatees that have been injured that are there to view. I am thinking of a round up article and maybe even break it down into more articles depending on the magazine. I think it has lots of potential.

Where can we pitch this?

- airlines
- cruises
- kayaking



# Ramblewild

I'd like to offer an article on a company that is something of a perplexity. A beautiful perplexity, in fact, that occurs when forestry and eco-awareness come together. In the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts is a section of hemlock forest and sugar bush owned by the forestry organization Feronia Forests. But the trees aren't being cut down. On the contrary, they are being protected, an odd thing for a forestry company to do. But Feronia Forests isn't interested in simply using the trees; they aim to utilize them instead.

That's where Ramblewild comes in. To protect the trees the Feronia Forests-owned company has turned them into a destination: an aerial adventure park with challenging and thrilling treetop adventures. It's a distinguished B Corp business and they are passionate about conservation, outdoor education, teaching kids about the importance of caring for nature, and are home to the largest wind farm in Massachusetts. They harvest a 110-acre sugar bush with a vast inter-connected tube system and use a portion of the proceeds from the resulting maple syrup to allow students to come learn in their vast outdoor classroom. Their aerial adventure park doesn't damage any trees (they use a brilliant European system of tension and friction and utilize every piece of wood they have to fell to protect root systems and promote the health of the forest) and they're the only park of their kind owned by a forestry organization. Plus, they are aiming to set a model for similar parks across the country. That's innovation.

In the feature article I would include information about the park as a destination, but more importantly, why and how they do what they do for the forest and the trees that occupy it using silviculture (the idea of taking care of the land while doing the least amount of harm to it). Also included in the piece would be how they are reaching out to the next generation to get them interested in outdoor adventure and conservation with their "living laboratory," what they are planning for the future (a mountain bike park, overnight educational camping, and Shen Yen Roku or forest bathing, a guided Japanese meditative walk).

I have toured the park and spoken at length with the programming director for the full rundown on the company and what they are doing to innovate not only the forestry industry, but the outdoor adventure industry and I would love to provide a piece for Sierra Club. I have had articles published in Texas Living, Lake Austin Lifestyle, and more and am passionate about travel and outdoor adventure. I have included a link to my resume and clips and look forward to working with you. Can I send any more details about Ramblewild?

# Superbloom and Timely Events

I have a story idea I've been kicking around. I went to Death Valley last spring for the Superbloom. The flowers only bloom this much every decade or so, so it's kind of a big deal that I was there and have lots of hi-res photos. Since most people are surprised that "Death" Valley has so much life in it, I thought I'd tie the trip into how the place got its name, as well as some quotes from the brief interview I was able to score with a park ranger.

The problem I'm having now, and even when I was brainstorming the idea, was also a question I had when listing to last week's webinar:

How do you pitch timely pieces that are tied to specific events?

I'm pretty cautious about pitching pieces prior to actually taking a trip as well, but for pieces on timely events, like the Superbloom or Mardi Gras (which I'll be in New Orleans for this year!!), don't magazines often want these pieces to come out around the same time as the event itself?

I'm registered for the webinar, but unfortunately I have an appointment at 1pm and am not sure I'll make it for the entire live event. I'll catch the replay for sure though!

Thanks so much  
for joining us today!

It was a pleasure chatting  
travel writing with you 😊

Whenever you need to double check an idea fit, your assumptions about editors, or your self doubt on whether your idea is good, email [questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com](mailto:questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com).

