

News monitored for: Emami Group

■ AROUND THE WORLD

## 2020'S EARLY TRAVEL HIGHLIGHTS

FESTIVALS, ART DOS AND SPORTS EVENTS WORTH TRAVELLING FOR **BY HUMAIRA ANSARI**



### BO SANG UMBRELLA FESTIVAL

Bo Sang village, near Chiang Mai, Thailand

January 17-19

You've appreciated them, perhaps even bought a few in Thailand, those dainty, bright bamboo-framed umbrellas. To see where they're brought to life, book for Bo Sang, a tiny crafts village near Chiang Mai, while the Bo Sang Umbrella Festival is on. Thai women with *chong kraben* wrapped around their waists, hyacinths in their hair, sit on street corners painting flowers and dragons. Inside the factory, artists dexterously clothe bamboo struts with mulberry paper. The main pedestrian street becomes a lively bazaar, selling Thai street food, parasols and a gazillion umbrellas, to top your cocktail or prop up a Thai selfie.

BERTRAND LIEVRE/MOMENT UNRELEASED/GETTY IMAGES



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## “TOLKIEN, JOURNEY TO MIDDLE-EARTH”

BnF, Paris, France

On till February 16

Fans of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, Paris has a present for you—“Tolkien, Journey to Middle-Earth,” an ode to J.R.R. Tolkien’s legendarium. On display at the BnF are loaned manuscripts and original drawings, comprising sketches, work notes, maps, and even watercolours drawn by his son. These whopping 300 pieces are impressive in that they show how vividly the Oxford professor and author had his entire mythical world, Middle-Earth, mapped out in his head, visually too. Geographies, language, characters, and regions—from the velvety, green inlands of the Shire to the cascading waterfalls of Rivendell—this exhibition is an insight into both Tolkien’s imagination and his imaginary world. ([www.bnf.fr](http://www.bnf.fr))

© THE TOLKIEN ESTATE LTD 1937-1992 (PAINTING); PHOTO COURTESY: RULANTICA (WATER PARK)

## RULANTICA

Europa Park, Rust, Germany

Go now! (Opened in November)

Was *Trolls* shot here? It’s not an entirely absurd consideration, given the make of this newly opened Nordic-themed water park, which, at 32,600 square metres, most reviews will tell you, is the size of five football fields. Take that in. Now, picture a water park on a mythical islet, one where Scandinavian folklore comes alive with elves, trolls and mermaids, some roaming the surface in costumes, others projected on 3D screens. With 17 water slides, many eating options, a swim-up bar and stalactite-filled caves, Rulantica in some ways does feel like *Trolls*... a cute family entertainer. ([europapark.de](http://europapark.de), tickets for €38.5/₹3,000 per person.)





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**“THE MIRROR SEES BEST IN THE DARK”**

Emami Art, Kolkata, West Bengal

On till March 10

Mirrors, says Bose Krishnamachari, are receivers, not merely reflectors. His solo mirrors his perspective. One installation features Aranmula kannadi (metal mirrors). Framed, jutting out of a wall, circles carved in their tinted centres, you can appreciate them from both ends, like a coin. Elsewhere, on hand-painted golden wallpaper, evocative of a sanctum sanctorum, words hang heavy in frames. Narcissism. Nationalism. Technology. In contrast to this glitz, a braille exhibit symbolises the language of minimalism. This minimalism juxtaposed against maximalism is the show's crux. ([www.emamiart.com](http://www.emamiart.com))



**ABU SIMBEL SUN FESTIVAL**

Abu Simbel, Aswan, Egypt

February 22 (& October 22)

When it came to engineering a civilisation, Egyptians were geniuses. Witness their talent at the Abu Simbel Temple, part of the UNESCO group of Nubian monuments (1264 B.C.). Tourists congregate well before sunrise and as day breaks, Egyptian ingenuity strikes: Transcending the entrance and some hieroglyph-enriched vestibules, sunrays reach the temple's innermost sanctum, illuminating the statue of Ramses II, the pharaoh who commissioned the colossal structure. Of the four in the sanctum, the only figurine that remains unlit is that of Ptah, the god of darkness.

**ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP**

Across Australia

February 21-March 8

Break the jinx on those long-pending Australia travel plans with the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup... a good excuse, or a sporting event worth travelling for, we say. With the Indian team in great form, all set to play Australia in the opener in Sydney on Feb 21—and hopefully qualify for the finals in Melbourne on March 8—flying Down Under at this time of the year seems like a (travel) innings worth investing in. Besides, why not show some love to our women in blue, too? (Check the matches schedule at [icc-cricket.com](http://icc-cricket.com).) ●

PHOTO COURTESY: EMAMI ART (ART), JEFF\_HU/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES (TEMPLE)