

Kimpton loves Calif. coast for quick trip

By Jae-Ha Kim
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Growing up as the daughter of the late Bill Kimpton — the founder of the Kimpton Hotels — Marcia Kimpton was accustomed to staying in some of the world's nicest accommodations. But the filmmaker and author also remembers staying in youth hostels, just like other twentysomething adventurers looking to save money.

Since then, she has launched the Kimpton Travels and Films app, as well as her travel show, "Bright Lights Late Night." Splitting her time between Lake Tahoe and Hawaii, Kimpton updates her projects on Instagram, Facebook and X.

This interview with Kimpton has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: What can you share about your Kimpton Travels and Films app and "Bright Lights Late Night"?

A: I took my two passions of loving to watch great films and loving to travel, and put it on the app for a very low, one-time yearly price. It's so difficult to find great films, so if I find one, I update the app immediately. I have a really long curated list with the goal to have a film to watch with every country you visit. I have a special curated list of all my favorite places I have traveled, which now includes 40-plus countries. My pilot episode "Bright Lights Late Night," which was filmed just outside Cape Town in South Africa, is on the app, along with my new film, "An American in Amsterdam."

Q: Traveling can be a chal-



Author and filmmaker Marcia Kimpton recommends Bhutan as an untapped vacation destination. **STORM SANTOS**

lenge these days. What's your stance on passengers asking other passengers to exchange seats with them so that families and friends can sit together?

A: I feel very strongly about this since I have moved for a family before. But when someone asked me to move to a middle seat and I had an aisle seat, I guess you could say I wasn't as accommodating. But if it was a child, of course, I would move. The issue is that I always plan my tickets and my seats ahead of time, so this couple that obviously hadn't planned wanted me to give up my aisle seat for a middle, and they were adults! Plan ahead is my advice.

Q: What is your favorite vacation destination?

A: France is my favorite country because of the food, wine, fashion, different landscape, fun cities, countryside (and the mountains to ski. I love the language, which for me is very difficult to master, but I am determined.

Q: What untapped destination should people know about?

A: Bhutan. It feels otherworldly with its traditional dress, stunning architecture, magical festivals and peaceful people. The Himalayans have been called Shangri-La, and it really feels like it when you visit Tiger's Nest temple.

Q: What was a trip you

took as a child that stands out?

A: I remember going to New York City for the first time when I was 8 years old and loving it so much. New York City has always been my favorite city in the United States and I knew I wanted to live there at a young age. I did end up living there when I was 20 with a summer internship for the "Today" show and then lived there for a total of five years later on. That trip as a young girl made a huge impact on me.

Q: Where are your favorite weekend getaways?

A: I think St. Helena in Napa Valley is a gem. One of the great hotels there is the magical Meadowood (Napa Valley). Or one that is a bit more affordable is the Solage in Calistoga, California. I also love Bernardus Lodge & Spa in Carmel Valley.

Q: If you've ever gone away for the holidays, which was the best trip?

A: I celebrated a big birthday in Courchevel, France. Because my birthday is three days before Christmas, it was also the holidays. The unbelievable food with the DJ blaring for après-skiing on the mountain was one of the best times in my life. The French know how to make everything fun, and this town is made for Christmas in the French Alps.

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