

BY ERIC HANSEN

DESPITE THE TREND TOWARD CASUAL WORKPLACES

and increased flexibility, your workday duties probably aren't any less taxing. The two-martini lunch of a generation ago has shrunk to a 23-minute binge—not the most relaxing experience. Luckily, the tight labor market means that it's easier to quit, drop out, or just take a holiday. Nowadays, your career won't stall just because you escape for a few months. So skip out! Fly the coop. Just keep in mind that a well-crafted itinerary can transform ordinary time off into meaningful professional development. In your next interview, that three-month vision quest might make you the standout candidate. The following three hot spots will do more than deepen your tan—they'll give you the chance to build your personal story, broaden your worldview, and put your career into focus.

**BREAK FREE
FROM THE GRIND
AND EXPAND
YOUR RESUME
IN THE PROCESS.**

HOT

British Columbia, Canada

WHY NOW: It's the site of an outdoor revolution.

HOW TO SPIN IT: "I work hard, play hard."

THANKS TO A MOTLEY BUNCH of outdoor punks, British Columbia is currently the bona fide new world capital of outdoor sports. In the last three years, B.C. has become a holy land for young skiers, mountain bikers, and surfers. Mike Douglas, a Vancouver Island native, practically invented "new school" skiing in Whistler, British Columbia. Wade Simmons, a 27-year-old mountain biker, popularized the old-growth trails above Vancouver known as the North Shore. And Jenn Smith and her boyfriend, Dean Montgomery, opened Canada's first permanent surf school, Inner Rhythm Surf Camp, in Tofino. These four have shown young Americans that there's more to Canada than *Strange Brew* and hockey.

While in B.C., don't miss the unparalleled sea kayak-

ing in the Gulf Islands and along the Northwest Passage, the protected and crenulated coasts between Vancouver Island and the mainland. Jacques Cousteau once said the diverse marine life found in the Northwest Passage made it one of his favorite dive spots. In the winter, three hours inland, park in Vernon and Revelstoke for access to the best backcountry skiing in North America, as well as little resorts like Big White and Silverton that offer uncrowded lift lines, bottomless dry snow, and inexpensive lift tickets (especially considering the nearly 1-to-2 exchange rate for U.S. money). Does all this play sound like a lot of work? That's the point.

Havana, Cuba

WHY NOW: The mix of Latin culture, a tropical environment, and the best salsa dancing around.

HOW TO SPIN IT: "I'm a risk taker. And, by the way, soy una salsaera fenomenal."