



In this June 29 photo, Michael D'Agostino, left, sits with David Derstine at his Tentrr campsite on a 200-acre organic farm in Berlin, N.Y. D'Agostino, CEO of Tentrr, says it's like Airbnb or Uber for the great outdoors, providing a platform for landowners to earn some cash by sharing secluded and scenic sites for camping.

AP Photo/Mary Esch

Rent a tent

Startup matches landowners with campers

Associated Press

BERLIN, N.Y. (AP) — The idea came to Michael D'Agostino as he was driving past a beautiful farm and imagined what it would be like to camp there.

"It was a lightning-bolt moment," said D'Agostino, who left his job in finance three years ago to launch the startup Tentrr, which matches landowners looking for extra cash with vacationers yearning for solitude under the stars. Think of it as Airbnb for the great outdoors.

Since it began, Tentrr has spread from a smattering of campsites in New York's Catskill Mountains to nearly 500 sites across the Northeast.

Backed by \$15 million in venture capital, the New York City-based company is aiming to expand across the country, with sites opening soon in southern California.

Here's how it works: A farmer or other landowner with a secluded and scenic spot that would make a lovely campsite pays Tentrr \$1,500 to outfit the camp with a white safari tent and other gear and list it online. The landowner receives 80 percent of bookings, which cost upward of \$100 per night.

"We get about 60 inquiries a day from people who want to have campsites on their property. We're building them as fast as we can," said D'Agostino. "But before we accept a site, we send a scout with a 20-point checklist."



AP Photo/Mary Esch

This June 29 photo shows a picnic table and cabinets at a Tentrr campsite on a 200-acre organic farm in Berlin, N.Y., near the Vermont border. The dining setup is standard equipment provided by Tentrr, along with a safari tent, Adirondack chairs and other gear. Like Airbnb or Uber for the great outdoors, Tentrr provides a platform for landowners to earn some cash by sharing secluded and scenic sites for camping.

The site must be accessible and spacious, generally about 12 acres. It must be quiet, private and steeped in natural beauty, whether fragrant forest, mountain vista, waterfall or placid pond.

"We look for a 'wow' factor where you're going to be overwhelmed by the place," said D'Agostino, who lives in Manhattan and has a Tentrr site near his upstate weekend home 110 miles north in rural Bovina.

Many of the camp hosts are farmers eager to

derive another source of income without investing a lot of money or having the hassle of running a bed-and-breakfast.

"We had been thinking of maybe building tiny homes to rent," said David Derstine, who runs a 200-acre (81-hectare) organic farm with his wife, Leila, in rural Berlin, New York. "We got a flyer in the mail from Tentrr. They had an awesome platform where they provide the entire reservation system, liability insurance and infra-

structure and you're just letting people use your land."

Derstine, 35, said he figures he can earn \$4,000 to \$6,000 in a season from his Tentrr campsite on a wooded hilltop overlooking the Taconic Mountains.

Robert McCracken, a physician in Sand Lake, New York, near the Massachusetts border, hopes to earn enough with Tentrr to cover the property taxes on his 80 acres of forest, meadow and wetland.

Tentrr isn't the only outfit cashing in on a consumer trend toward "experiential travel" as an alternative to hotels. Collective Retreats, based in Denver, Colorado, leases land on mountains, vineyards and even Manhattan's Governor's Island for luxurious glamping tents. Campspace, based in Leiden, the Netherlands, and Hipcamp, based in San Francisco, provide online portals to search for and rent private campsites.

While you need your own tent for most sites on Campspace and Hipcamp, Tentrr sites have the basic necessities: canvas tent from Denver Tent Co.; five-person popup tent; and wood deck, Adirondack chairs, table, box toilet and cabinets from Tentrr's factory in Oneonta. The intent was to give Tentrr sites a distinctive brand.

"If you go to a Westin Hotel, you know you'll get the Heavenly Bed, the aspen leaf soap, the nice place to eat in the lobby," D'Agostino said. "We wanted the same kind of thing. No matter what Tentrr site you go to, whether in the Adirondacks or Arizona or the Big Sur, you get the same thing — it's your base camp for whatever you want to do."

MANDELA: Tour includes Mandela's jail cell

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can National Congress into a mass political movement.

The Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum tell the story of the 1976 Soweto riots. Hector was 12 when he was shot and killed by police firing on student protesters. A famous photo shows his limp body being carried as his sister ran alongside. Some accounts say hundreds died during the protests. The museum contains a heart-wrenching and moving collection of oral testimonies, large-scale photos, audiovisual displays and historical documents about the uprising.

A drive north takes you to Liliesleaf, in the suburb of Rivonia. This farm-turned-museum, once owned by South African Communist Party member Arthur



AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster

The rock quarry where prisoners of Robben Island were once forced to work is seen in 2013.

Goldreich, was used in the 1960s as a secret hideout for Mandela and other activists on the run from police. The famous Rivonia Trial ended with Mandela and his comrades sentenced to life in prison on Robben Island.

Robben Island

A 45-minute ferry ride from Cape Town, Robben Island is where Mandela spent 18 years of his 27 years in prison, beginning in 1964, alongside other heroes of the movement like Sisulu and Govan Mbeki.

The most powerful part

of the tour, led by a former prisoner, is a visit to Mandela's cell, a 7-by-9-foot room. Despite the humiliation and oppression of his years here, this was also where he honed his skills as a leader, negotiator and proselytizer, which put him on the path to the presidency in 1994.

Madiba's Journey

For visitors, making a pilgrimage to places connected to Mandela's life is both distressing and uplifting. While South Africa has come a long way, this young democracy still has a lot of work ahead, including improving living conditions and resources for its majority black population.

A mobile app, Madiba's Journey, created by the Nelson Mandela Foundation, can help you trace the footsteps of the man who dedicated his life to freedom.



Neal Herbert/Yellowstone National Park via AP, file

In this 2016 file photo provided by the Yellowstone National Park Service, a white wolf walks in Yellowstone National Park, in Wyo. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission has approved a wolf hunting season this fall that allows for hunters to take up to 58 wolves. The quota is up from the 44 wolves that were allowed to be hunted in 2017. Changes approved Wednesday by the commission meeting in Laramie include allowing hunters to kill up to two wolves.

Wyoming game commission OKs increased wolf hunting

By BOB MOEN
Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission on Wednesday approved a wolf hunting season this fall that allows for hunters to take up to 58 wolves, which is up from the 44 wolves that were allowed to be hunted last year.

There are about 350 wolves roaming Wyoming, including about 210 in areas where the state manages their numbers with hunting.

State game managers who are tasked with trying to control the animals that can prey on domestic livestock want to see that 210 brought down to about 160.

Game and Fish wolf biologist Ken Mills told commissioners that 160 wolves would leave the state with about 14 breeding pairs, easily meeting the state's commitment to maintaining at least 100 wolves and 10 breeding pairs.

Wolf advocates have been critical of Wyoming's management of wolves and have opposed the increased number that could be hunted this fall.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Commission continue to focus on reducing the wolf population toward the bare minimum, Jonathan Proctor, of Defenders of Wild-

life, said in a statement Wednesday.

"Wolves are an important component of Wyoming's natural heritage, and should be managed toward achieving healthy and abundant populations across large landscapes so that they may perform their important natural role," Proctor said.

Changes approved by the state commission include allowing hunters to kill up to two wolves and starting the season a month earlier in some places on Sept. 1. The commission met in Laramie.

Wolf hunting remains prohibited in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, the National Elk Refuge near Jackson and on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Neighboring Montana and Idaho also have established wolf hunting seasons.

A federal appeals court in early 2017 lifted endangered species protection for wolves in Wyoming, allowing the state to take over management of the animals and re-establish its wolf hunting season.

Wolves were reintroduced to the Northern Rockies in the mid-1990s. Since then, the animal has been the subject of debate between conservationists who want to see wolf numbers grow and livestock operators who want wolf numbers controlled to protect their businesses.

BLOOMIN' BLUES

Roundleaf violet shows color after snows melt



Photo by Bruce Barnes

Roundleaf Violet, Viola orbiculata

By BRUCE BARNES
For The East Oregonian

Name: Roundleaf Violet
Scientific name: *Viola orbiculata*

The roundleaf violet looks a lot like any number of yellow-flowered violets in the Blue Mountains. It is not rare, but is not very common either. It tends to hide its leaves under the snow at middle to high elevations, so it isn't seen until after the snow has melted and the plant has had time to send up its flower stalks.

The Latin name *Viola* has been used for this genus since early Roman times; the name "violet" is an English translation of it. The common name "roundleaf" is an appro-

priate name for the plant, given the degree to which the outlines of the leaves come about as close to a perfect circle that a plant can have. And *orbiculata* is simply Latin for being circular.

The round leaves of the plant are about 1 to 1½ inches wide, with fairly small, rounded teeth that are not obvious along the edges. The flower stems are seldom over 2 inches tall, and generally stand straight up. The petals are all yellow on both sides, and sometimes have reddish streaks on the backs of the petals.

Most of the species of violet have been used for treatment of sores and wounds, colds and stomach pain for people, horses and dogs.