



Condé Nast Traveler Honors Southwind Adventures' Tom Damon as 2013 Top Specialist

DENVER, CO – For the ninth time, Tom Damon has been awarded status as Condé Nast Traveler Top Travel Specialist. Since 2005, Tom has been recognized on this exclusive list for his mastery in planning trips of a lifetime to Peru, Ecuador, the Galápagos, and Patagonia. His nine consecutive years make him the longest-standing Top Travel Specialist for South America.

In the August 2013 issue of Condé Nast Traveler, editor and Consumer News Director Wendy Perrin unveiled her 14th annual Top Specialists directory, which has been rigorously pared down from over 10,000 hopefuls from all over the world to only 146 expert trip designers. It is organized by destination and area of expertise.

Of her “list of pros to turn to when a trip has to be perfect,” Perrin writes that gaining Top Specialist status is a challenge, and maintaining it is even tougher. “It requires not only an absence of valid reader complaints but also ongoing positive assessments.”

To make the cut, her criteria for specialists are “the best blend of destination knowledge, insider connections, consumer advocacy, and value for your dollar. They have the expertise and clout to get you the rooms with the best views and the savviest English-speaking guides, not to mention VIP perks.”

For Tom, designing the ultimate trip means capturing the spirit of South America – its lively and friendly local culture, majestic landscapes, and opportunity for adventure around every corner – all without compromising on even the smallest details that distinguish high quality travel planning. He maintains his first-hand knowledge of destinations with regular visits. Most recently he traveled to Peru to experience the M/V Aria luxury Amazon cruise, several of Cusco’s newest boutique hotels and the stunning Hotel Paracas, a Luxury Collection Resort on the Pacific coast.

Distinction as a Condé Nast Top Specialist is more than a title; it also entails membership to an active community of experts. They gather yearly at the Top Travel Specialist Summit to share resources, new ideas and best practices in the field of customized travel planning. Additionally, the prestigious magazine consults Tom for his destination expertise. In 2007, for the premier of Condé Nast’s Iconic Trips series, he helped design the authoritative itinerary to Peru’s Machu Picchu, Cusco, and the Sacred Valley.

Tom joined the Southwind Adventures team in 1994. In 19 years with the company, he has ascended to Senior Travel Consultant and President. A husband and father with two young kids, he has a flair for designing trips for families with kids and teens such as the new customizable nine-day [Family Andean Discovery in Peru](#). A steward of the planet, he holds a BA in Environmental Science and an MS in Natural Resource Management. With decades of outdoor experience under his belt, Tom excels at matching travelers with the right level of activity for them.

Southwind Adventures is a boutique tour operator specializing in South America’s best-loved destinations. To contact Tom to plan your own tailor-made trip of a lifetime, fill in the [Southwind Adventures private trip request](#) or call 1-800-377-9463.

[View Tom Damon’s Travel Specialist Profile](#)



Tom Damon with his wife Kelly in the Galápagos Islands.



Tom Damon vacationing in autumn with family in the Vail Valley.