

7 of the world's coolest commutes

By **Tamara Hinson, for CNN**

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Photos: 7 of the world's coolest commutes

Wicker toboggan ride (Funchal, Madeira, Portugal) – Although more tourists than locals now use this unusual form of transport, visitors to Madeira can still see the odd businessman being guided down the city's hills to work.

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(CNN) — Is there any struggle more universally dreaded than the daily commute?

Factor in major congestion and inadequate public transit, and the mandatory ritual for many becomes an inescapable burden.

But some designers and planners are developing creative and sometimes bizarre solutions to make our treks a little more bearable.

In fact, a new vision of flashy underground bike lanes in abandoned metro stations [won a London Planning Award](#) this month.

Sadly, it's unlikely that plan will come to fruition any time soon.

In the meantime, we've taken a closer look at some of the world's coolest commutes already up and running.

Cyclocable (Trondheim, Norway)

Cyclists in Trondheim, Norway, don't need to rely on pedal power to get them up the city's steepest hill.

They've got the world's first urban bicycle lift.

Called the Cyclocable, it allows cyclists to simply position themselves at the bottom of the lift and press a button.

A footplate emerges, cyclists place their right foot on the footplate and keep their left foot on the pedal.

Since it was installed in 1993 it's pulled more than 300,000 people up the hill.

Central Mid-Levels Escalator (Hong Kong)



Not just the world's longest covered escalators, these are also shockingly fast.

This 800-meter-long Hong Kong escalator is the longest covered escalator in the world.

It was installed to connect the Central and Mid-Levels districts of Hong Kong Island.

It takes 20 minutes to complete the journey but the escalator goes in just one direction -- down in the morning and up in the evening.

So if you arrive at work only to realize you've left that all-important presentation at home, going back to get it might involve a workout.

Teleférico La Paz (La Paz, Bolivia)

Thanks to a cable car that opened in 2014, residents of the Bolivian city of El Alto, high above La Paz, no longer have to brave the gridlocked road that leads to Bolivia's third largest city.

Constructed by Austrian ski lift company Doppelmayr, it's already carried millions of passengers from El Alto to La Paz's city center.

Every hour, 11,000 passengers make the seven-mile journey, paying 44 cents each.

Wicker toboggan ride (Funchal, Madeira, Portugal)

Although more tourists than locals now use this unusual form of transport, visitors to Madeira can still see the odd businessman being guided down the city's hills to work.

The wicker sledges and their rubber-soled pushers first appeared in the 19th century, when locals invented the mode of transport as a way of getting to Madeira's city center from the hilltop district of Monte.

Today this one-mile journey remains the most popular route on the system.



Not recommended when you're late for work.

The Walberswick ferry (Suffolk, UK)

The Walberswick ferry is the UK's last remaining rowed ferry, although we doubt there were ever that many.

The ferry offers a regularly scheduled service across the mouth of the Blythe River, between Southwold and Walberswick on the North Sea coast.

The boat is operated by one rower and carries 11 people, each of whom pay around 50 cents to make the five-minute journey.

The ferry first started operations in 1885 and was manned by the current rower's great great grandfather.

Rideau Skateway (Ottawa, Canada)

Every winter, the five-mile stretch of the Rideau Canal, which passes through the center of Ottawa, is turned into a massive ice-skating rink.

One million people use it every winter -- commuters included -- and preparations start in October.

The canal is partially drained and facilities -- including shelters, chalets and access ramps for maintenance vehicles -- are installed.

When the ice has reached sufficient thickness, the skateway opens.

Tests to measure the quality of the ice are carried out throughout the winter.

Ottawa's National Capital Commission provides twice-daily ice-related status updates.

Roosevelt Island Tramway (New York)

This urban gondola connects Roosevelt Island with the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

When it opened in 1976, it was the only urban aerial tramway in North America.

More than 26 million people have taken the three-minute journey since then, and it's appeared in several films, including Sylvester Stallone's thriller "Night Hawks," "Scarface" and "Spider-Man."

It's also featured in the King Kong-themed Kongroutation ride at Universal Studios Florida; passengers board a scaled-down version of the tramway before coming face to face with King Kong.

Tamara Hinson is a UK-based freelance journalist who has written for publications and websites including the Daily Mail, the Telegraph, the Independent, the Observer, the Express, BA High Life, Sainsbury's magazine and CNN.

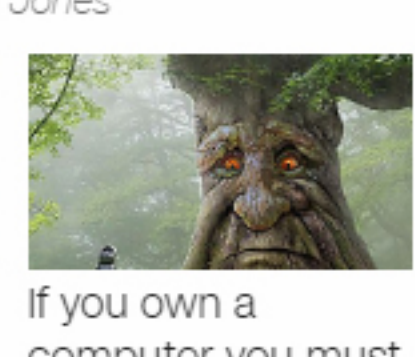
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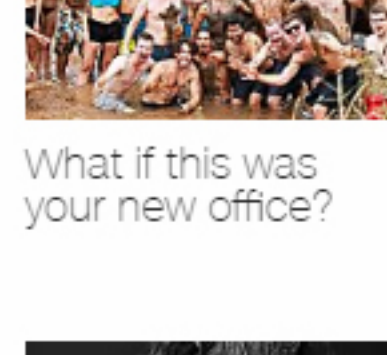


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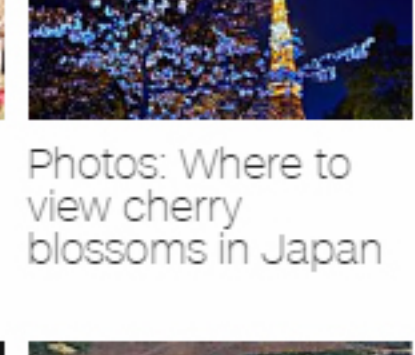


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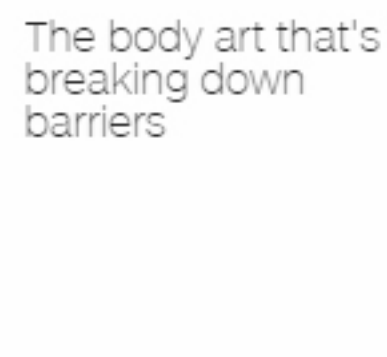
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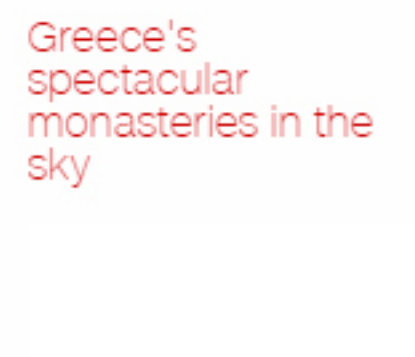
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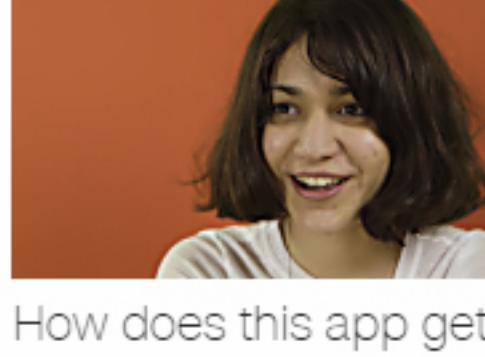
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