



TMAC SCORING CRITERIA / MATRIX

Category: Best Magazine or Newspaper Article

Type: Written

Description: This category celebrates outstanding travel writing published in print or digital editions of magazines and newspapers. Submissions (800 words or under) should demonstrate strong storytelling, journalistic integrity, and a compelling sense of place, culture, or experience.

Judging Considerations: While category descriptions provide general guidance, winning entries should clearly align with the specified parameters. Written stories are to be judged on **words only**—images, layout, and design should be disregarded, if they aren't removed already during the submission process. Judges should assign a score for each criterion (e.g., 0–5 or 0–10 points per category, with no half-points). The total possible score is 35 points. The entry with the highest cumulative score will be deemed the winner. In the event of a tie, the final decision will be determined through discussion among the judges during the final deliberation meeting.

Criteria	Points
Style & Creativity Demonstrates originality and a distinctive voice. The tone, language, and rhythm enhance the storytelling and draw readers in. Does the writing feel fresh, authentic, and emotionally resonant?	10
Quality of Content Shows journalistic strength through accuracy, structure, and clarity. The story is well-organized, factually sound, and thoughtfully balanced between information and narrative.	10
Impact Captures a strong sense of place, people, or experience. Does it evoke emotion, curiosity, or a desire to explore further? Does it leave a lasting impression or communicate something meaningful about travel or culture?	10
Overall excellence The “wow” factor — does everything come together seamlessly? Is the piece polished, memorable, and worthy of being featured in a top publication.	5

Total	35
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