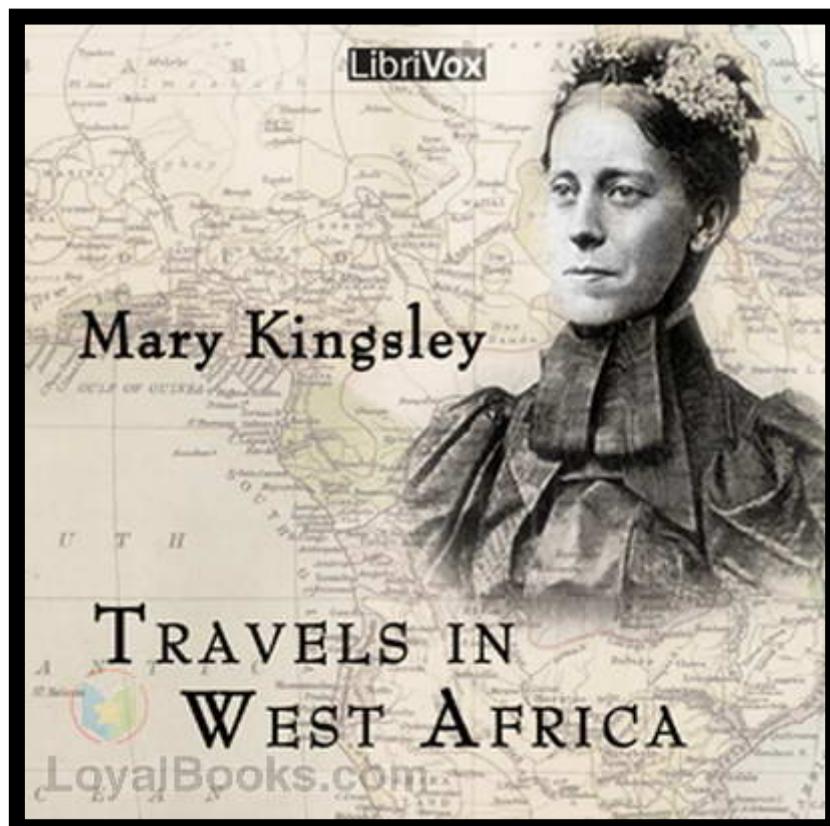


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TOP 10 INSPIRING FEMALE ADVENTURERS

(from: <http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2016/mar/08/top-10-inspiring-female-travel-adventurers>)

Many female travel adventurers have become lost in time so, to celebrate International Women's Day, we pick 10 incredible women who defied convention to undertake awe-inspiring journeys.



1. Jeanne Baret (1740-1807)

Baret is recognised as the first woman to circumnavigate the globe - but she had to do it disguised as a man. She joined the world expedition of Admiral Louis-Antoine de Bougainville from 1766 to 1769. The French Navy prohibited women on its ships, but that didn't stop Jeanne. She bound her breasts with linen bandages and became Jean Baret. She enlisted as valet and assistant to the expedition's naturalist Philibert Commerçon and travelled on the vessel with 300 men. Expedition accounts differ on when her true gender

was discovered. But, by the time she returned to France, Jeanne had seen the world, **defied** conventions and earned a place in history.

2. Lady Hester Stanhope (1776-1839)

A British **socialite** and adventurer, Stanhope was possibly the greatest female traveller of her age. Born into an eminent political family, she played society **hostess** for her uncle, William Pitt the Younger. But as soon as he died, she **took off** for the unknown, finding her destiny in the Middle East. "Her Ladyship" did whatever it took to go where she wanted to go, including dressing as a man, carrying a **sword** and riding an Arab stallion. Crowning herself queen of the desert, Stanhope was the first European woman to cross the Syrian desert and the first to conduct modern archaeology **research** in the Holy Land.

3. Isabella Bird (1831-1904)

Overcoming poor health, as well as the limitations of living in a man's world, Isabella Bird became one of the 19th century's most **remarkable** female globetrotters. An explorer, writer, photographer and naturalist, she was the first woman to be elected a **fellow** of the Royal Geographical Society. Her travels began at the age of 41, and didn't end until she returned from a trip to Morocco, when she was 72. In between she visited America, India, Kurdistan, the Persian Gulf, Iran, Tibet, Malaysia, Korea, Japan and China. She climbed mountains and rode thousands of miles on **horseback**, as well as the occasional elephant.

4. Annie Smith Peck (1850-1935)

A **trailblazing** American mountaineer and **scholar**, Peck wrote and lectured about her adventures to **encourage** travel and exploration. Yet the **acclaim** she won for setting mountain climbing records was almost overshadowed by the **outrage** caused by her climbing **attire**: trousers and tunics instead of skirts. She showed her support for the **Suffragist** movement by planting a flag championing votes for women atop Mount Coropuna in Peru. The north peak of Huascarán in Peru was renamed Cumbre Aña Peck (in 1928) in honour of its first climber. She was elected a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society four years after women were admitted, and was a **founding** member of the American Alpine Club. Smith climbed her last mountain, the 5,367 feet Mount Madison in New Hampshire, at the age of 82.

5. Mary Kingsley (1862-1900)

At a time when respectable women didn't walk the streets of London unaccompanied, Kingsley was exploring uncharted parts of west Africa alone. After the death of family members she had been obliged to look after, Kingsley was free to travel at the age of 30. In Africa, she canoed up the Ogooué river and pioneered a route to the summit of Mount Cameroon, which had never been attempted by a European. She became the first European to enter remote parts of Gabon, and made extensive collections of freshwater fish on behalf of the British Museum. In her controversial book, *Travels in West Africa*, Mary expressed her opposition to European imperialism and championed the rights of indigenous people. The moleskin hat she wore throughout her travels is often on display at the Royal Geographical Society.

6. Gertrude Bell (1868-1926)

Bell was a woman of firsts. Her expertise, determination and curiosity got her to the top of mountains, but also to the top of her professions. An archaeologist, linguist and the greatest woman mountaineer of her age, she is best known for her role in establishing the modern state of Iraq during the 1920s. She was the first woman to attain a first-class degree (in just two years) in modern history at Oxford, the first to make major contributions to archaeology, architecture and oriental languages, and the first to achieve seniority in the British military intelligence and diplomatic service. The in-depth knowledge and contacts she acquired through long and arduous travels in then Greater Syria, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Arabia, shaped British imperial policy-making.

7. Nellie Bly (1864-1922)

No one had ever circled the globe so fast; American journalist Nellie Bly stepped off the train in New York on 25th January 1890, and into history. She had raced through a "man's world" in 72 days -alone and literally with just the clothes on her back- to "beat" the fictional record set by Jules Verne's Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in 80 Days*, which had been published 17 years earlier. When she had suggested the trip to her newspaper editor, he replied that it was a great idea but he'd have to send a man. After all, as a woman, Nellie would need a chaperone and dozens of trunks. When she told him she'd take her idea to another paper, he relented and off she went with only two days' notice and one small bag. Bly was also a pioneer of investigative journalism and paved the way for many other female reporters. Her stories brought about sweeping reforms in asylums, sweatshops, orphanages and prisons.

8. Bessie Coleman (1892-1926)

Bessie Coleman flew in the face of race and gender discrimination to become the first black woman pilot in the world. **Banned** from flying schools in her native America, she taught herself French and travelled to France, where she earned her pilot's licence in 1921, two years before her more famous contemporary, Amelia Earhart. Coleman flew all over the US, performing aerial **tricks** and lecturing to **raise funds** for an African-American flying school. She **refused** to participate in segregated events. Tragically, her life and dream ended when she died during an air show **rehearsal** at the age of 34.

9. Freya Stark (1893-1993)

Stark went where few Europeans, especially women, had ever been before. A British explorer and writer, her travels **led** her into remote areas of Turkey and the Middle East. While living in Baghdad, she explored and mapped uncharted areas of the Islamic world. Hers were some of the first **accurate** maps of the region. She moved on foot, on donkeys, on camels and by car, camping along the way. Stark is the author of more than 24 travel books, covering local history, culture and tales of everyday life. In spite of age and illnesses, she never stopped travelling. In 1972 she was honoured as Dame Freya Stark.

10. Lady Grace Drummond Hay (1895-1946)

On 19th August 1929, wealthy aristocratic widow Lady Grace Drummond Hay boarded the LZ 127 Graf Zeppelin, the first airship to circumnavigate the world. When the airship landed 21 days later, the British journalist had become the first woman to travel around the world in a zeppelin. Her reportage of the pioneering flight was published in leading newspapers, and helped cement her career as a writer and aviation specialist. The adventures didn't stop there: Drummond Hay spent the next 10 years travelling the world and writing about her experiences. She was a foreign correspondent in Ethiopia and China and during the Second World War she was interned in a Japanese camp in the Philippines, where she became ill. She died shortly after her **release**.