

**In** mythology, the last place anyone would want to be was in a labyrinth. On the surface, labyrinths seemed easy to navigate, with only one way in and out, but they were often dark, and their continuous twists and turns made it easy to get turned around and confused. And, at least in the Greek versions, there was a minotaur—a part man, part bull monster—inside, ready to eat anyone that crossed its path.

Actual labyrinths, however, are surprisingly serene.

Often found on college campuses, churches, or parks, their looping paths are a chance for anyone to spend a few meditative moments. “It’s a terrific tool for leaders, because it gives them a framework to

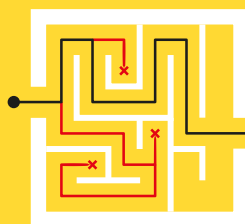
unplug,” says Nicholas Pearce, PhD, clinical professor of management and organizations at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

The most famous example is a labyrinth inside the Chartres Cathedral in France. Its classic design, consisting of 11 concentric circles meant to mimic the sacred journey of a pilgrimage, has inspired many other similar structures. One such Chartres-style labyrinth is located in Palos Park, Illinois, a southern suburb of Chicago, at The Center, a nondenominational community focused on wellness and healing. Rev. Chris Hopkins, pastoral director of The Center, walks the 39-foot-diameter labyrinth almost every day as a way of becoming more grounded.

“I practice sitting meditation, but that’s kind of a struggle. When I can be outdoors, simply walking the path, I find myself becoming present,” Hopkins says. Slowly, the busyness of the day retreats, and Hopkins becomes more aware of her surroundings: the breeze, the birds, even her own breathing. It’s relaxing and, at times, transformative, she says, adding that if you do become distracted or turned around on the path, that’s a valuable lesson, too. “There’s no wrong way to walk a labyrinth,” she says.

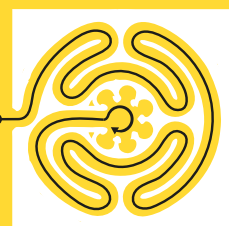
Spanning the globe, here are four of the most intriguing labyrinths—minus any minotaurs. //

## Maze or Labyrinth?



**A maze with many paths to choose, some of which dead-end, is meant to confound.**

**A labyrinth with only one looping path is meant to enlighten.**



## Lands End, San Francisco

A “hidden labyrinth” awaits visitors along the Coastal Trail at Eagle’s Point, overlooking Golden Gate Bridge. It was created by a San Francisco artist who was inspired by historical labyrinths, including the classical Chartres design.

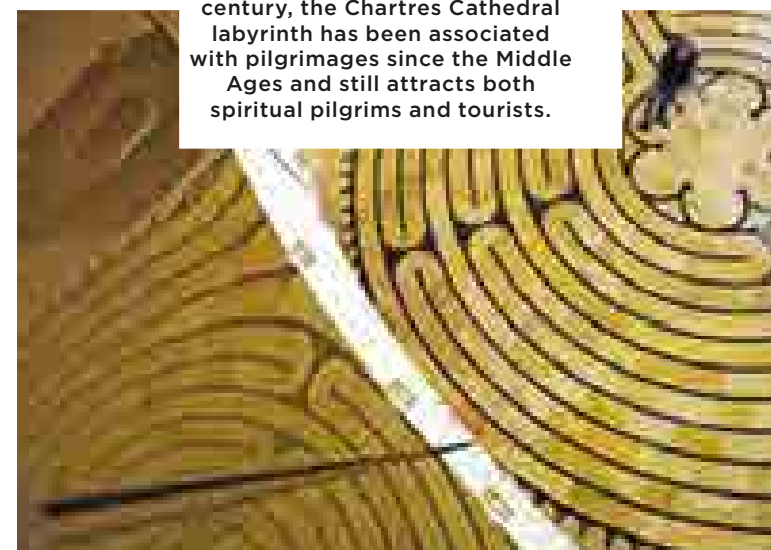


See the video, take the journey at [kornferry.com/institute](https://kornferry.com/institute).



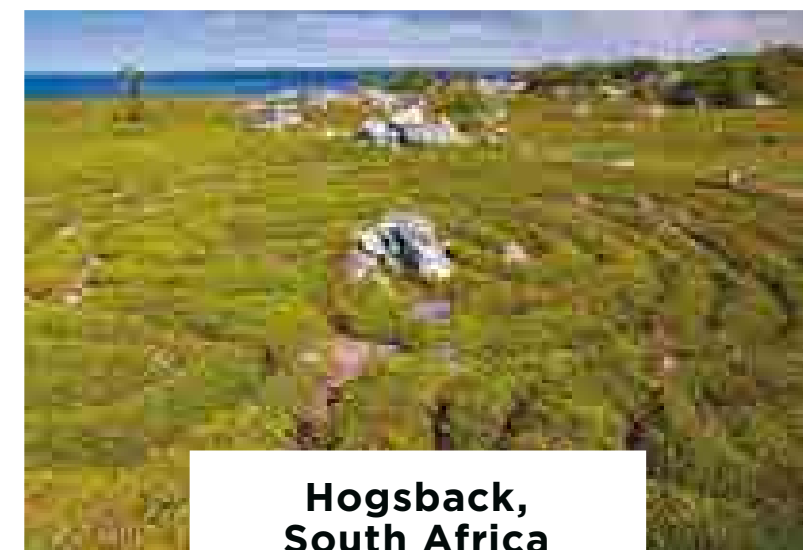
## Chartres, France

Dating back to the early 13th century, the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth has been associated with pilgrimages since the Middle Ages and still attracts both spiritual pilgrims and tourists.



## Bolshoi Zayatsky Island, Russia

There are more than a dozen labyrinths on this island. Estimated to be about 2,500 years old, the labyrinths and their exact meaning are uncertain, but may be connected with the movements of the earth around the sun or the solstices.



## Hogsback, South Africa

Set against a backdrop of forests and mountains at The Edge Mountain Retreat, this labyrinth and the pathway leading to it measure more than a mile—making it one of the longest such walks in the world.