

# lonely planet

MAGAZINE  
ASIA

MARCH 2017

**Win!**

A 2-NIGHT STAY IN  
DORSETT WANCHAI  
HOTEL IN  
HONG KONG

## CITY AT A GLANCE

A fresh look on Tokyo

## USA

The National Parks of  
America – Find your  
perfect wilderness

# Unique Travel

*(for less than you think)*

Bucket-list worthy  
experiences for low budgets

SGD 7.50  
RM 20  
NT 270  
THB 195



9 772010 082017

MCI (P) 101/12/2016, PPS 1747/12/2012(022909)

Regent  
Media

6 MINI GUIDES LONDON ♦ BERLIN ♦ OSLO ♦ PRAGUE ♦ NOVA SCOTIA ♦ CHICAGO





# #ILOVEBINTAN



Find us on WeChat:



## ESCAPE, UNWIND AND DISCOVER BINTAN LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

Plethora of resorts to stay, fun-filled things to do, delightful local food to eat & endless new discoveries to make. A tropical island paradise, just 60 minutes away from Singapore!

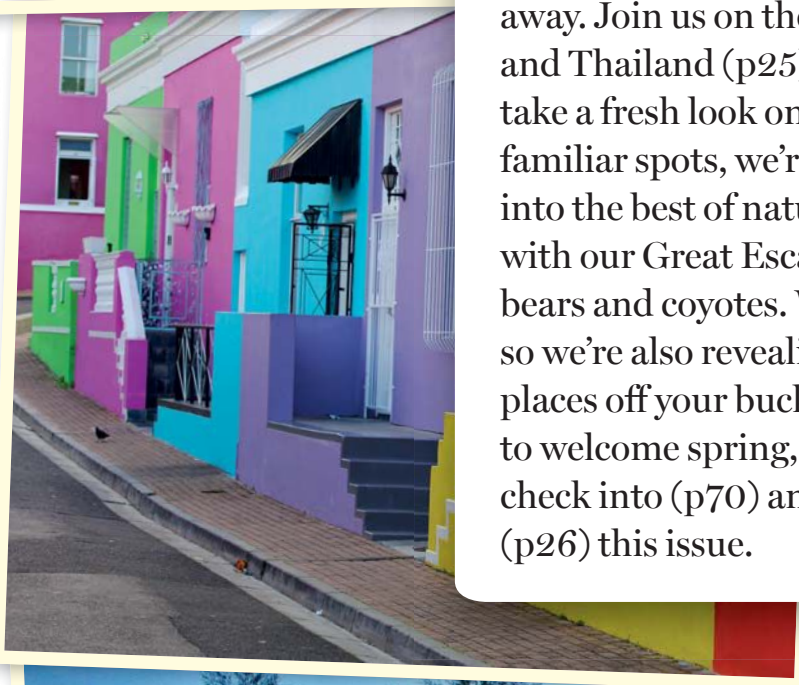
Visit us: [bintan-resorts.com](http://bintan-resorts.com) [bintanresorts](https://www.facebook.com/bintanresorts) [@bintanresortsofficial](https://www.instagram.com/bintanresortsofficial)



RAEWYN KOH,  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

## *This month...*

... we're re-visiting some old favourites for quick getaways just a short plane or boat ride away. Join us on the beach in Bintan (p22) and Thailand (p25), or explore with us as we take a fresh look on Tokyo (p30). Beyond familiar spots, we're also delving head first into the best of nature America has to offer with our Great Escape (p37) to meet bison, bears and coyotes. We know travel isn't cheap so we're also revealing how you can tick places off your bucket list for less (p52). And to welcome spring, see our list of B&Bs to check into (p70) and hot springs to soak in (p26) this issue.





MARCH 2017

# In this issue...

**Win!**

A 2-NIGHT STAY IN  
DORSETT WANCHAI  
HOTEL IN HONG KONG  
Turn to p91

## POSTCARDS

Your travel photos and stories

- 6 Looking a short-eared owl in the eye in Gujarat and more images from around the world

## GLOBETROTTER

The latest travel news and discoveries

- 11 Our Where To Go When guide, Obama's travels and more

## EASY TRIPS

Short breaks you can take right now

- 22 The ultimate playground is in Bintan  
24 Jazzing it up at SING JAZZ  
25 Life's a beach at Thailand's top sand and surf spots  
26 Landing in hot water in hot springs around Asia  
28 Review of the Month: The Nai Harn Phuket

## CITY AT A GLANCE

A low-down of the best on offer

- 30 Tokyo is the city of blurred lines; where change is the norm, nature coexists in amnesty with the urban, and the sky is full of Michelin stars

## GREAT ESCAPE

Your next big trip mapped out

- 37 We're marking 100 years of America's National Park Service with a tour of its Western treasures: the eerie Badlands, monumental works in the Black Hills, Devils Tower, Yellowstone (the oldest national park) and majestic Grand Teton

## FEATURES

More ideas for your bucket-list

- 52 Try out unique travel experiences around the world for little or nothing, from Asia's top sunset spots to American film fun  
64 South Africa's reinvention of itself as the Rainbow Nation can be found at Bo-Kaap  
70 Extraordinary places to stay: Spring B&Bs

## MINI GUIDES

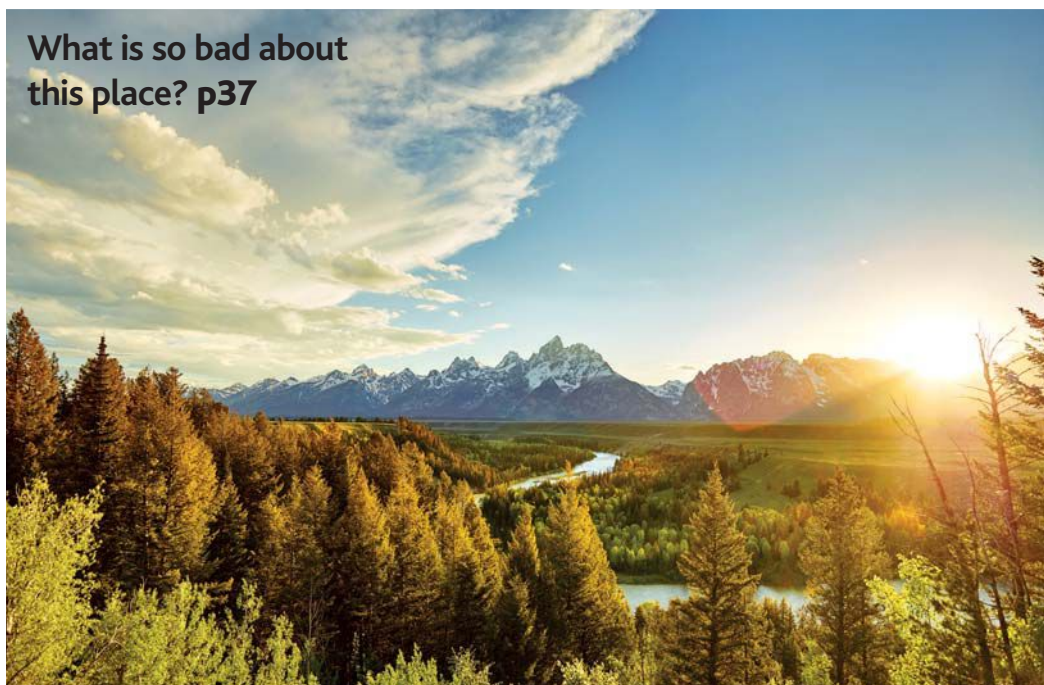
Themed guides to take with you

- 79 Take a tasty bite out of London  
81 Museums of all kinds in Berlin  
83 The best of Oslo in a weekend  
85 Delve into Prague's hidden corners  
87 Fresh-air experiences in Nova Scotia  
89 How to do Chicago without big bucks

Low-budget bucket-list experiences for less p52



What is so bad about this place? p37







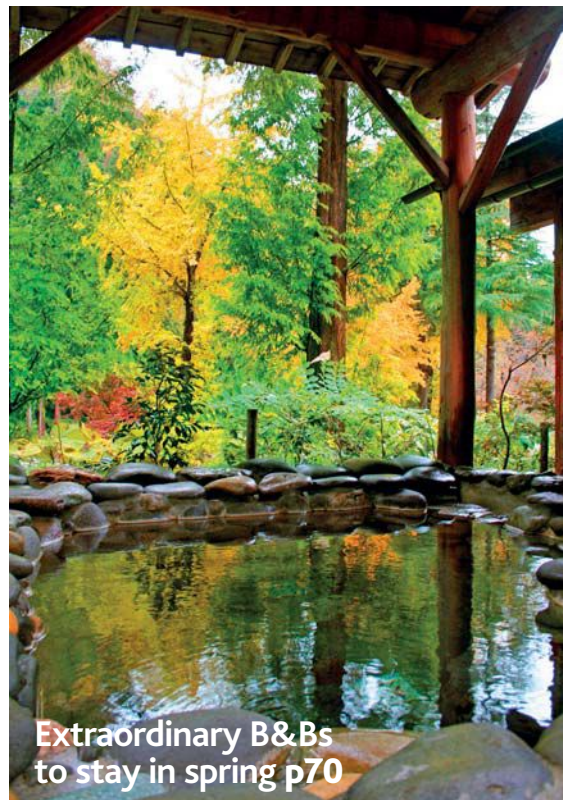
At which European opera house can you walk on its roof? p83

## DESTINATION INDEX

Botswana	58	Italy	
Canada		Graian Alps	56
Nova Scotia	87	Japan	
Czech Republic		Ehime	27
Prague	85	Niigata	72
China		Tokyo	8, 30, 54
Hangzhou	54	Kenya	58
Cuba		Myanmar	
Havana	9	Inle Lake	9
England		Mandalay	53
Dorset	72	Mongolia	
London	8, 55, 79	Khatgal	74
France		Namibia	58
Paris	55	Nepal	
Pyrenees	57	Sarangkat	53
Germany		Netherlands	
Berlin	55, 81	Amsterdam	55
Bavaria	57	Norway	
Ghana	58	Jotunheimen	56
Greece		Oslo	83
Mount Olympus	57	Philippines	
Hong Kong	53	Manila Bay	53
Iceland		Singapore	19, 24
Vatnajökull	57	Scotland	
India		Cairngorm	57
Amritsar	54	South Africa	
Gujarat	6	Cape Town	64
Indonesia		Kruger	58
Bali	26, 54	South Korea	
Bintan	22	Seoul	74
		Spain	
		Madrid	55
		Swaziland	
		Shewula	74
		Taiwan	
		Taipei	27
		Tanzania	59
		Thailand	
		Koh Samui	25
		Krabi	25
		Phuket	19, 25, 28
		USA	
		Alaska	61
		California	62
		Colorado	62
		Florida	61
		Michigan	62
		Nevada	60
		New Mexico	60
		New York	60
		North Dakota	60
		South Dakota	42
		Wyoming	46, 60
		Vietnam	
		Phu Quoc	11



Painting Cape Town red, blue, pink, yellow, and more p64



Extraordinary B&Bs to stay in spring p70



In our previous issue, we made an error in our review of Park Regis Singapore (p24). We would like to correct that Park Regis Singapore is part of the Australian StayWell Hospitality Group (SWHG) and serves all-day continental dining at Twenty3 Drink & Dine.

### Look for these symbols to quickly identify listings

Sights	Tours	Drinking
Beaches	Festivals	Entertainment
Activities	Sleeping	Shopping
Courses	Eating	Information & Transport

All prices correct at time of going to press. Prices for hotel rooms are for double, en suite rooms with breakfast in low season, unless otherwise stated. Flight prices are for the cheapest return fares, including one piece of hold baggage, unless otherwise stated.





## NEED TO GET IN TOUCH?



**Subscription and back issue enquiries**  
Tel: +65 6446 6888  
**Editorial enquiries**  
Tel: +65 6446 6888



**Subscription enquiries**  
subscription@regentmedia.sg  
**Advertising enquiries**  
sales@regentmedia.sg  
**Editorial enquiries**  
lpmagazine@regentmedia.sg



**General enquiries**  
Regent Media Pte Ltd  
20 Bedok South Road, Singapore 469277

### ASIA TEAM

**Managing Director** Dennis Pua  
**Publisher** Ben Poon  
**Associate editor** Raewyn Koh  
**Senior writers** Josmin Ong / Jonathan Gan  
**Intern writer** Akanksha Nair  
**Creative director** Eric Wong  
**Art director** Cally Han  
**Senior marketing manager** Tasmin Chua  
**Marketing executive** Rachel Tan  
**Finance executive** Julie Khong  
**HR executive** Wendy Chua  
**Business directors** Marie Yeo / Thomas Leow / Kelly Koh  
**Senior Business Manager** Marcus Wong

### MALAYSIA TEAM

**Sales and marketing director** Jessly Pak  
**Business director** David Choo  
**Business manager** Carmen Leow  
**Customer service executive** Nurul Hanizah

### UK MAGAZINE

**Editor** Peter Grunert

### LONELY PLANET TEAM

**Director of Magazines** Sue Coffin  
**Foreign Rights** Joe Revill

### MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

**Hong Kong/ Indonesia/ Macau/ Thailand**  
**Abu Dhabi/ China/ Dubai/ Turkey/**  
**Australia/ Japan / South Korea/ Taiwan**  
Marie Yeo marie@regentmedia.sg  
**India**  
RMA Media

### DISTRIBUTORS

**Singapore** Pansing Distribution Pte Ltd  
**Malaysia** MPH Distributors Sdn Bhd  
**Hong Kong** Times Publishing (HK) Ltd  
**Thailand** Asia Books Co., Ltd

Lonely Planet Magazine Asia MCI (P) 101/12/2016, ISSN 2010-0825, PPS 1747/12/2012(022909), is published bi-monthly by Regent Media Pte Ltd under licence from Lonely Planet Global, Inc (part of the Lonely Planet Group). The words "Lonely Planet" and the Lonely Planet symbol are trademarks of Lonely Planet Global, Inc. © Lonely Planet Global, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part prohibited without permission. No part of this publication is to be reproduced, stored, transmitted, digitally or otherwise, without the prior consent of the publisher. The information contained herein is accurate at time of printing. Changes may have occurred since this magazine went to print. Regent Media Pte Ltd and its editors will not be held liable for any damages, loss, injury or inconvenience, arising in connection with the contents of the magazine. Regent Media Pte Ltd will not accept responsibility for unsolicited contributions.

Printer: KHL Printing Co Pte Ltd (197801823M)

Lonely Planet is distributed in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand and Taiwan.

*Regent*  
Media  
A Publication of



Persatuan Penerbit Majalah, Malaysia  
Magazine Publishers Association, Malaysia

# Behind the Scenes

## HOW OUR TEAM OF WRITERS MADE THIS ISSUE



### VOYAGE OF THE SOUL

The Nai Harn Phuket knows how to make its guests melt into a puddle. Imagine sore muscles being kneaded while the sound of the waves of the Andaman Sea crashing against the shoreline resonates just outside. The custom 'Spa Voyage' is a personal journey of bliss at Nai Harn's newest beachfront (p28).

—Josmin



### NEW INTERN ALERT!

Akanksha Nair is the new intern at Lonely Planet Asia. She's fresh out of graduate school with a Master's Degree in English Literature from the University of Warwick and is now looking to pursue a career in publishing. Like all of us, she's an avid traveller but counts this part of Southeast Asia as new exploration grounds. In her spare time, Akanksha (or Sasha as we call her) dances and checks off must-eats from Singapore's hawker centres.



CASIO®

LET'S ENJOY  
**SELFIE**

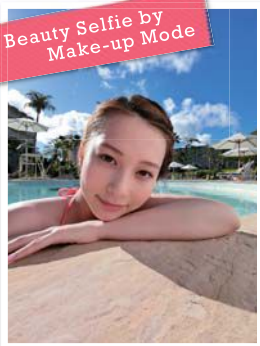
EXILIM

**Selfie for Active Girls!**

Discover your own New Selfie Style by  
Wide-angle Lens and Waterproof feature.



Beauty Selfie by  
Make-up Mode



Outfit Of The Day

Long Legs Effect



Outdoor Recording Gear **FR100**

**NEW**



RD (Red) Limited

BK (Black)

YW (Yellow)

**NEW**  
**Recording Experience!**

**[Multi Camera Mode]**

Double your fun by shooting  
with two cameras at once



**Using two FR100s, shoot your front  
and rear views at the same time**

Set up one camera to point at yourself, and the  
other one to point at the scenery. Now you can  
take a selfie and capture the scenery at the  
same time.

 **Casio Exilim Singapore**



# Postcards

WHERE YOU'VE BEEN AND WHAT YOU'VE SEEN





Send your pictures and tell us the stories behind them:  
email [lpmagazine@regentmedia.sg](mailto:lpmagazine@regentmedia.sg)

Short-eared owls have feathered tufts on the tops of their heads that resemble ears – they are often raised in a defensive posture

## GUJARAT, INDIA

### All ears

A friend and I visited the Little Rann of Kutch, a salt marsh landscape home to many local and migratory bird species, and the last sanctuary of the Indian wild ass. We'd been hoping to spot the short-eared owl, a majestic bird that winters there but is rarely seen in daytime. On our second day of searching we found one, resting on a branch just above the ground. We crawled slowly towards it, our knees and elbows scratching against thorns. Finally I managed to capture the image I wanted: the intense stare of this flame-coloured owl. It was hard work, but well worth it. When I look at the image now, it takes me back to the scene, those mesmerising eyes barely a metre away.



**Hardik Pala**, from Gujarat, spent two days at the Little Rann of Kutch





London's latest high-rise additions include 'The Cheese grater' (centre) and 'The Walkie-Talkie' (right), both built in 2014

## LONDON, ENGLAND

### Towering inferno

I was following the Thames Path from the Southbank Centre to London Bridge one winter's night when I came across a view I hadn't seen before, at Blackfriars Bridge. The resulting shot, looking into the City of London, seems to me like looking at a timeline of the city, old and new blending together amid bright lights, colours complementing the sky above. I've walked past the same spot since – and the view, like London, is always changing.



Philip Cherukara is an electrical design engineer based in London

## TOKYO, JAPAN

### Sign language

I recently spent a month travelling in Japan – a trip that I had longed to take since I was a small child. I loved the whole country, but Tokyo really was jaw-dropping. I'm fond of big cities, and was immediately entranced by its neon scenes and lively atmosphere. Keen to capture it in the best light, I was fortunate enough to find myself in the Ueno district during the golden hour, and snapped this picture on my phone. To me, it summarises the magical atmosphere that engulfs Tokyo at night.



Guilherme Breschi is a psychiatrist from São Paulo, Brazil



Ueno district is one of Tokyo's key cultural centres, and is home to museums, galleries, concert halls and Buddhist temples





Inle Lake is fringed by marshes, floating gardens, stilt-house villages and Buddhist temples

## INLE LAKE, MYANMAR

### Catch of the day

The Intha fishermen of Inle Lake in Myanmar demonstrate their unusual technique for catching fish in the shallow water using just one leg to balance on the front of the boat, while guiding their conical nets with the other. Standing provides the rower with a view beyond the reeds. However, the leg rowing style is only practiced by the men. The fishermen's way of life is under threat from floating fish farms springing up on the lake. The lake is also shrinking due to silt from the surrounding hills washing into the body of water after heavy rainfall.



**Sirsendu Gayen** is an Assistant Professor in Chemistry of Vivekananda College Kolkata, India

## HAVANA, CUBA

### Taking a shine

I was on a three-week trip in Cuba when I took this picture, at what happened to be a very important moment. A friend and I had fortuitously arrived in Havana just in time to witness Barack Obama's historic visit – the first by a sitting president since the 1959 revolution. Two days later, we were thrilled to hear that The Rolling Stones were to play a free concert in Havana, and we would be there to sing alongside 500,000 Cubans. This classic shot of Havana will always remind me of this very accidental, once-in-a-lifetime experience.



**Adam McDonald** is a freelance events manager based in London



Cuba's abundance of classic American cars is the result of decades of self-imposed import bans and an ongoing US trade embargo



COMING NEXT MONTH

# NICARAGUA

From the churning waves of the Pacific in the west to the blue lagoons of the Caribbean in the east, Nicaragua is Central America at its most colourful: tropical islands and dense jungle, smouldering volcanoes and storied colonial towns

- ▶ **THAILAND'S WATER FESTIVAL** makes a splash
- ▶ **THEMED HOTELS** to book for your next trip
- ▶ **UNIQUE GARDENS** with full blooms around Asia



# Globetrotter

A WORLD OF TRAVEL NEWS AND DISCOVERIES

## NEW HOTEL

### Phu Quoc's First Pearl

JW MARRIOTT HOTELS and Resorts' first flagship in Vietnam is its newest luxury hotel situated on Phu Quoc island. The JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort and Spa has been designed by famed architect Bill Bensley, who has woven a whimsical narrative of a mythical academy of learning into the buildings on the premises. A bright and calming emerald colour reminiscent of the ocean paints a perfect backdrop to the palette on which the architecture thrives. The lavish resort has 243 rooms, suites, apartments and villas to spend the night (and day) in (opening rates from US\$400; [marriott.com/pqcjw](http://marriott.com/pqcjw)).



# SOMETHING TO DECLARE: It's time to start capping visitor numbers at the world's top tourist spots

On a rainy day in the Austrian Alps this summer, I decided to take a spontaneous break from hiking and drive two hours to see the castle of Neuschwanstein, across the border in Germany. I had visited more than 20 years before, and I remember it was busy even then. The difference in those two decades? China has started to travel. All tickets to the castle had sold out. My experience was a scenic but distant view from the grassy verge out of town where I left the car, then a meal in a Bavarian inn, where long tables of Chinese coach parties looked in bemusement at their set meal: hefty joints of pork and mounds of sauerkraut.

Neuschwanstein's limit has been reached, but it's not just enclosed sights under pressure: caps on visitor numbers are being discussed for Italy's Cinque Terre coast and the Greek island of Santorini. I instinctively don't like the idea of visitor caps – of slamming on the brakes just when travel

starts to become a possibility for millions of people whose dreams of seeing far-off places were previously restricted. But now I don't see a way round it.

Consider the Mona Lisa: there are bigger, more exciting artworks even in the same room in the Louvre in which it's hung, but somehow this has become the world's most famous painting. Let's say the sum of people wanting to stand in front of Leonardo da Vinci's leading lady grows by five per cent each year, and the number of genuine Mona Lisas in the world continues to hold steady at one, the gallery will eventually run out of solutions short of zooming visitors past the painting on a conveyor belt. We are not producing any more da Vincis or Santorinis – or, at least, the rate at which true travel icons are born is not catching up with the growth in the numbers wanting to stand in their presence. In the last 15 years, the number of international travellers from China alone has leapt from 5 million to 50 million.

So visitor caps are likely to become an ever more common part of the tourist experience, even for sights like the Cinque Terre where the idea of selling a fixed

number of entry tickets each day would once have seemed ridiculous. By all means encourage travellers to seek out lesser-known spots, but be prepared for sights caught in the feedback loop of fame. I have already had my turn in front of the Mona Lisa, but I know if I go back to the Louvre, I will be tempted to see her again.

When locations bring in limits to visitor numbers, I would like to see it go something like this: a third of the places go to people who book well ahead. The advance-planners among us are thus rewarded. A third of tickets are sold at a premium, so all these wonderful sights get the resources they need for upkeep. And a third are held back to be given out by lottery so, with luck, the experience is not completely out of bounds to travellers without deep pockets or predictable diaries. I hope there will still be room for spur-of-the-moment travel, even if I never get to see Neuschwanstein again.



**RORY GOULDING** is our sub-editor. He has yet to see Angkor – the top sight on our Ultimate Travelist ([lonelyplanet.com/ultimate-travel](http://lonelyplanet.com/ultimate-travel)).



## PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

Research by the University of Texas and holiday rental site [homeaway.co.uk](http://homeaway.co.uk) confirms something we've long suspected – people who take pictures while on holiday are 40 per cent more likely to remember their trip. Your future self will thank you for all those digital memories.



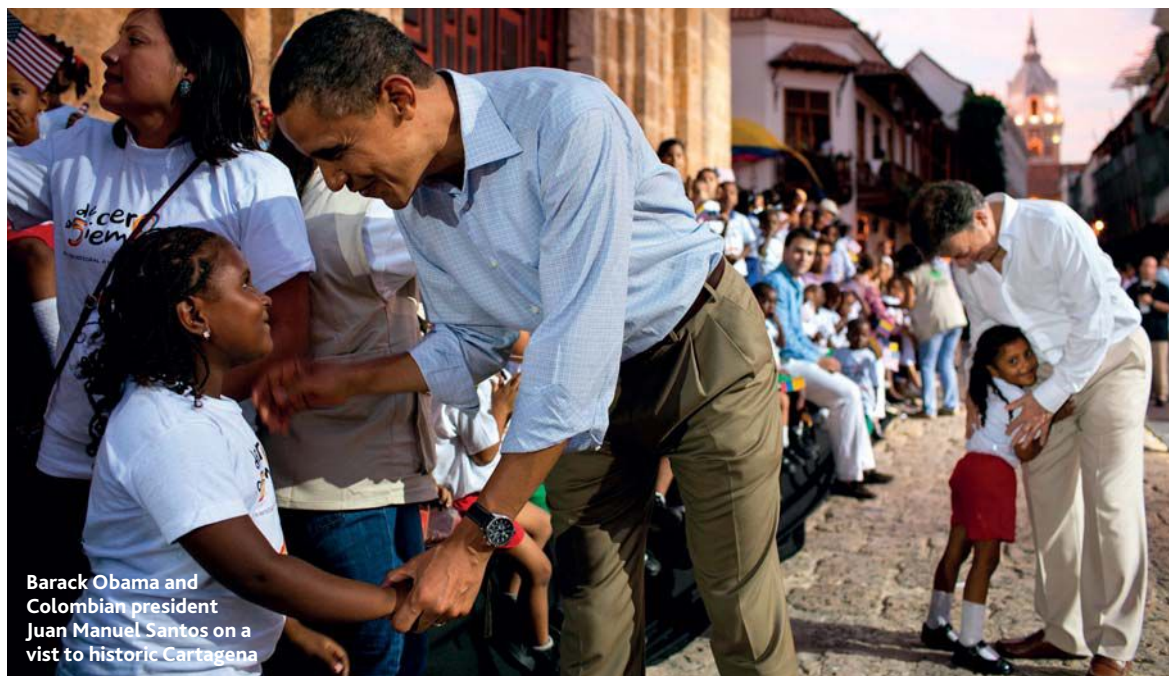
## DANGER SELFIES

Tempted to grab a shot with a grizzly bear or snap yourself hanging off a cliff edge? The trend for 'danger selfies' is sheer lunacy. We're all for photographic novelty, but no number of Likes could justify the very real possibility of death or serious injury.



# OBAMA'S TRAVELS

As he departs office, US president Barack Obama writes exclusively for us on how travel aids international understanding, and how it can act as a worldwide force for good



Barack Obama and Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos on a visit to historic Cartagena

**D**uring my time as president, I have travelled well over a million miles to every corner of the world. I leave office more convinced than ever before that international cooperation is indispensable. Without regular consultations with foreign leaders, we cannot overcome challenges that recognise no borders. It took dozens of countries working together to stamp out Ebola. It took coordinated pressure and careful diplomacy to reach a peaceful agreement to roll back Iran's nuclear program. Nearly 200 countries spent years in painstaking negotiations to achieve the Paris Agreement to protect our planet. Every single day, the US works seamlessly with other countries to share information to prevent terrorist attacks, stop human trafficking, break up drug cartels, or combat corruption.

But while this cooperation is essential, I have always believed that our engagements with other countries must not be limited to governments – we also have to engage people around the world. In particular, we must sustain our engagement with young people, who will determine the future long after those of us in positions of power leave the world stage. Consider the demographics of our world. More than half of human beings are 30 years old or younger. This is even more pronounced in the developing world, where 90 percent of the global population under 30 lives. These young people are living through revolutions in technology that are remaking life on our planet, allowing for unprecedented access to information

and connectivity. And while the world's leaders discuss the issues of the day, it is the world's young people who will determine whether their voices direct the change that is sweeping our world towards greater justice, opportunity, tolerance, and mutual respect.

That is why I have launched Young Leaders Initiatives in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America that are focused on empowering youth, connecting them with one another, and with resources that can help them build a non-governmental organisation, start a business, or begin a career in public service. Half a million people are now a part of these networks. Every day, these young

people are working to improve their communities from the bottom up. A Rwandan entrepreneur is using new technologies to provide power to villages that are off the grid.

A doctor in Myanmar is offering free surgeries for children. A young Laotian is mobilising communities to stop the illegal logging that damages the environment.

No one of these initiatives will transform our world. But each of them creates a ripple of progress that can gradually bring the change that our world needs. And in talking to these young people, one thing comes up again and again: the value that they gain from being connected with one another.

**'It creates a ripple of progress that can bring the change that our world needs'**



**BARACK OBAMA**, the 44th US president left office on 20 January having served for two terms. Read his full article at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com)

## PRESIDENTIAL TRIPS

The first US president, George Washington, made only one overseas trip: to Barbados as a teenager, when the island and his home state of Virginia were still British colonies.

The first president to leave US soil while in office was Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, on a trip to see progress on the construction of the Panama Canal. Until then, practicality as well as tradition had dictated that serving presidents should not travel abroad. Even Canada had to wait until 1923 for its first presidential visit.

It wasn't until the 1930s that US presidents began to make frequent international trips. Franklin Roosevelt was the first serving president to travel by airplane, on a 1943 mission to Casablanca.

Barack Obama has visited 58 countries during his time in office. He broke new ground in Southeast Asia, with the first presidential visits to Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. His Cuba trip was the first visit by a president in 88 years.

Traveller favourites still awaiting their first visit from a serving president include Belize, Bolivia, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal and Sri Lanka.





# WHERE TO

LINE UP A YEAR OF SEASONALLY APPROPRIATE

January

February

March

April

May

June

## NATURE AND WILDLIFE

### UGANDA

The best month to track gorillas – the world's biggest primates. Dry season means easier trekking through their home in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in southern Uganda.

### LADAKH

It's worth braving the cold for one very special experience: tracking snow leopards during the winter mating season.



### BAJA CALIFORNIA

Want to meet a whale? Then Mexico's Baja California in March is your place. Around 10,000 grey whales migrate from the Arctic to winter off Baja's Pacific coast each year.

### GALÁPAGOS

There's never a bad time to visit the Galápagos but April is particularly magical. Some of the islands' birds are in the finest form, with waved albatrosses beginning their elaborate courtships, and blue-footed boobies doing their comic mating dance.

### KOMODO

The Komodo dragon is the world's largest lizard, and May is a great time to encounter it. The island is warm and less humid than summer, tourist numbers are low, and reptilian mating season has begun.

### BORNEO

It's (relatively) dry season in Malaysian Borneo, with turtles hatching on the beaches and orangutans thriving on plentiful forest fruit.



## CITY BREAK

### BUDAPEST

Snow is likely in Hungary's beautiful capital, making its streets more magical than ever. Warm up from winter strolls in one of the city's 120 thermal baths, and over coffee in an Art Nouveau café.

### VENICE

Crowd-free Venice is a rare, wonderful thing and early February provides it. Canals are swathed in mist, sights free of tourists, and waters unclogged by ships. If you like a party, however, visit from the 11th, when Carnival is in full swing.

### VALENCIA

Spain's third city heats up this month, meteorologically and culturally. Huge figures called ninots are constructed and then burnt in the festivities of Las Fallas. Be sure to book in advance.

### ISTANBUL

It's still low season in the city but things are warming up. Smaller crowds + forgiving weather = jackpot.



### PRAGUE

The most intoxicating time to visit the Czech capital – Beer Festival time! More than 150 brews are showcased in the 10,000-seater festival tent, alongside spicy sausage and pork dumplings.

### LISBON

Enjoy fine wine, food and fado in the Iberian spring. The city's at its most enjoyable in June, when flowers bloom, festivals create a buzz, and it's warm enough to sit outside with a beer on a terrace. The city goes sardine-mad during the Feast of St Anthony.

## RELAXATION

### GRENADA

Get a taste of the 'spice island' in dry season: calm clear days means excellent diving. Water visibility is usually 15m, often closer to 30m. And, of course, winter sun affords good opportunities for lounging on one of the island's many fine beaches.

### CAMBODIA

Dry and warm, but not sweltering, February is the perfect time to explore the UNESCO-listed Angkor temple complex.



### MALDIVES

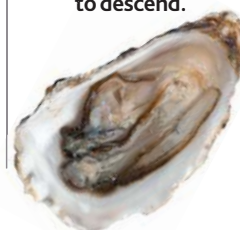
The 1,200 islands of the Maldives are at their most winsome this month, with low rain and low humidity. Sunbathing and swimming are often distraction enough here, but it's also a great place to learn to scuba-dive.

### HAWAII

Temperatures vary little year-round, but tourists tend to visit when it's cold where they are (December to March) or during traditional US vacation times. Come in April for hotel bargains and crowd-free beaches.

### CORNWALL

Beat the crowds to Britain's best beaches and finest seafood. In May, the weather's picking up, and the summer hordes have yet to descend.



### CROATIA

A great month to visit: the tipping point between spring's warmth and summer's somnolent heat and before the cruise passengers cram every alley and beach. Spend time strolling around Dubrovnik then retreat to the quiet beaches of Mljet, Lokrum or Šipan.



# GO WHEN

TRAVEL PLANS WITH OUR NEW GUIDE (US\$24.99)

*July*

*August*

*September*

*October*

*November*

*December*

## SVALBARD

The northernmost shores of this Arctic archipelago are only free of ice for a month or two, allowing expedition cruisers to sail into the remotest fjords in search of walruses, whales and polar bears.



## COPENHAGEN

July buzzes in the Danish capital. People sit at outdoor cafés or at street-food markets, and while away the long days at Tivoli amusement park.

## MASAI MARA

The migration of 1.5 million wildebeest, along with attendant lions and crocs, usually reaches the Mara River in Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve in August – creating one of the world's most incredible wildlife spectacles.

## VERMONT

Be dazzled by the fiery colours of autumn. Come late September, Vermont's hillsides are donning their fall foliage, their maples, ashes, aspens and oaks flaming reds and yellows.

## MANITOBA

There are 900 reasons to visit Manitoba this month – that's the number of polar bears that descend on the town of Churchill in autumn.



## ATACAMA

Expect fewer tourists, little rainfall and warm daytime temperatures in Chile's Atacama desert. Clear skies make this a great time for stargazing in one of the world's best spots for astronomy.

## SAHARA

Cool temperatures and fewer crowds make December a fine time to visit Morocco, particularly if you head to the desert: there are few better places to experience the hundreds of shooting stars of the Geminid meteor shower than the Sahara.

NATURE AND WILDLIFE

## BERLIN

Jump into the waters of a barge-turned-swimming pool at Badeschiff, lounge about in the city's enormous Tiergarten park, hunt for treasures in outdoor flea markets or simply grab a beer at a pavement beer – all yours for the taking in August.

## DUBLIN

Get a taste of the city on the Liffey in its mellowest season: September, often the sunniest month, sees a diminishing number of tourists. Dublin also hosts hundreds of arts performances this month, as part of its Tiger Dublin Fringe Festival.

## PORTO

Wander the tumbling, narrow and crowd-free streets of Porto's old Ribeira district before heading out to the surrounding Douro Valley for port-wine tastings among vines.



## NEW ZEALAND

Not yet high summer but with temperatures warm enough to justify beach-lounging, late spring is a great time to head to the southern hemisphere.

## VALLETTA

Tiny Malta is still marvellously warm in November, making it a fine month to visit the harbour-hugging capital of Valletta. Days can be lost wandering down its narrow lanes, and it's still clement enough to eat outside.

## TALLINN

Indulge your Christmas fantasies in Europe's most fairytale, medieval city.



CITY BREAK

## IONIAN ISLANDS

This cluster of six islands has some of Greece's best beaches, and blue skies make them even more inviting. July is busy, but it's easy to escape: there is plenty of untamed coast on the largely undeveloped island of Lefkada.

## TURKEY

Slipping into the waters of the Med from a traditional gulet boat: the perfect way to spend a hot summer's day.



## CORSICA

The whole of France decamps to Corsica over the summer. By September, they've all gone home, leaving you free to explore its winding roads, gorgeous shores and empty beaches all by yourself.

## GOA

Seek out the balmy, palm-wafted beaches of Goa on the Indian coast in November when the landscape is verdant from the recent monsoons but barely a raindrop falls, and Christmas holidaymakers are still but a rumour.

## SIMILAN ISLANDS

The white-sand beaches and coral reefs of this Thai archipelago are at their clear and spectacular best in December.



RELAXATION



# An adventure with Casio

Casio's EXILIM EX-FR100 is the companion to have on adventure-filled travels



Sharing memories of our travels has advanced past printing out photos and slotting them into albums, and even uploading a bunch of photos onto social media platforms. These days, documenting experiences involves bigger productions of on-the-move social media postings, video montages, digital photo albums

and accompanying blog posts that really regale the escapades we encounter on our adventures.

These large productions often require the use of multiple cameras – one for scenic shots, one that can be used for extreme sports and is waterproof, and one that can be used to film videos – but Casio's EXILIM EX-FR100 Outdoor Camera proves that just one camera is all is needed to record all sorts of activities in all sorts of outdoor filming situations for your next big adventure.

The Casio EXILIM EX-FR100 features a rugged shock, water and dust resistant design that be can easily be operated single-handedly. The camera, like its predecessor, the FR10, can be controlled by a remote via Bluetooth of up to 10m range. However, the 12-megapixel camera boasts a wider 16mm f/2.8 lens that is useful for better close-up shots. The Casio EXILIM EX-FR100's remote control also has a much larger 3-inch touchscreen display. On a single charge, record up to 55 minutes of Actual Movie Recording (FHD movie) or one hour and 20 minutes on Continuous Movie Recording Time (FHD movie). To

instantly share images and movies, the camera comes equipped with Bluetooth and WiFi for wireless data transfer. A simple press of a shutter button also allows users to "Auto Send" captured images to smart devices while pictures are being taken.





# Making the most of the Casio EXILIM EX-FR100

## New shooting styles

Users will find the Casio EXILIM EX-FR100 to be a fun camera to use outdoors thanks to its three shooting styles. Detach the controller from the camera in Wearable Style to attach the camera to harnesses and helmets for hands-free shooting during wild explorations. In Selfie Style, the camera lies in-line with the controller so users can easily shoot selfies with a large group of people or with a significant landmark in the background. To use as a regular camera, simply fold the hinge over for Camera Style shooting for fuss-free shots.

## Shooting preset functions

When busy exploring the world, figuring out the best camera settings may not be of highest priority for amateur photographers. Casio's EXILIM EX-FR100 solves this issue with its various shooting modes. Its smart Premium Auto Pro is able to analyse the scene quickly and automatically adjusts settings once the shutter button is pressed. For those who love the convenience of beauty apps on their smart devices, the Make-up Mode helps to brighten skin and smooth out uneven complexions. The Casio EXILIM EX-FR100 also adds an element of fun to shooting with five different Art Shot modes: Toy Camera, Soft Focus, Light Tone, Sepia and Monochrome.

The camera also has a smart interval-shooting mode when hands are busy with other activities. The camera automatically takes a picture every few seconds in this mode so important moments aren't skipped over. Choose from Standard (5s interval), Intelligent, Hiking, Biking, Snow & Water and Leisure for smart photo and video taking in such activities.



## Sharing the memories

Half the fun in capturing moments in time is sharing them with friends and family. Casio's EXILIM EX-FR100 has fun ways of creating visually stimulating content, such as its Highlight Movie mode, which smartly selects the best content from a vast amount of recorded still or moving images, and strings the content together using effects, transitions and different background music to suit the mood of the highlight reel. There's also the Time Lapse mode that takes still images from a specific date selection or from the interval-shooting mode to create frames to form a movie. Lastly, present stills in nifty collages with Highlight Photos that picks the best photos to easily create impressive photo content on 10 different layouts.





# HOME-GROWN beauty essentials for spring

Despite being a little red dot on the world map, Singapore is often recognised for its entrepreneurial spirit and impeccable products made famous worldwide. Here are some of our favourites that originated here.



**BALM KITCHEN** These botanical-based skincare and body care brand are made with raw cosmetic ingredients sourced from suppliers and manufacturers who have an active role in preserving the environment and our fragile eco-system. All products are placed in PET and BPA-free packaging (which are recyclable), and have very affordable prices. The latest release, Anti-Pollution skincare range, was made specially for urban environments where fine particles often penetrate into the skin, causing excess sebum production, degradation of collagen, increased oxidation and pigmentation. We recommend the Anti-Pollution Capsule Collection simply for its usefulness and size, which makes it ideal for travelling. There is even a Calendula Baby Balm handcrafted with soothing organic Calendula Infused Oil. Coconut Oil and Shea butter to replenish lost moisture. **From US\$6.50, [balmkitchen.com](http://balmkitchen.com)**

**BIOROYALE** The haircare products are made in Singapore and are approved by the Health Sciences Authority of Singapore (HSA). Passing through stringent assessments, users can be assured that only natural ingredients are used to make the shampoo gentle yet highly effective. Also, all products are sulphate and paraben-free, which stimulates hair growth; enhance healing processes, metabolism and circulation of the scalp. Some notable ingredients include Argan Oil (shines and strengthens hair), Tea Tree Oil (excellent antimicrobial and anti-dandruff), Cochlearia (regenerates hair roots), Buccopa Muneri (decreases hair loss) and Calendula (soothes



inflamed scalp and clears inflection, if any). These are also great for jetsetters who constantly lose balance of oil and moisture in their scalp. **From US\$25, [bioroyale.com](http://bioroyale.com)**

**COAT** This particular brand may not be made locally but it was founded and grown by our very own entrepreneur – Caryn Lim. Previously a spa owner, she felt frustrated with the limited colour options available that are suitable for Asian skin in the nail salon. Concurrently, there was also a growing demand for non-toxic nail polish and thus, she embarked on a journey to research and launch nail lacquers that are not only vibrant, lasting and beautifully coloured but also non-toxic and friendly towards both the environment and end users. COAT is Singapore's first 8-free nail lacquer label – no toluene, dibutyl phthalate (DBP), camphor, formaldehyde, resin, xylene, triphenyl phosphate and parabens. **From US\$17.50, [coatcolours.com](http://coatcolours.com)**



WORDS: JOSMIN ONG.  
ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK.COM



## TWO CENTARA PROPERTIES TOP TRIPADVISOR AWARDS 2017



Centara Hotels and Resorts earned prestigious recognitions at the recent TripAdvisor Awards 2017 with its Centara Seaview Resort Khao Lak earning 10th and Centara Kata Resort Phuket earning 21st places in the Top 25 Family Hotels in Thailand category. The accolades are considered an honour as they are based on the millions of reviews submitted by travellers from all around the globe. Centara Seaview Resort Khao Lak in Phang Nga Province offers a choice of accommodation options and a wealth of activities and facilities to keep families of all sizes and ages busy. Centara Kata Resort Phuket consists of a cluster of several buildings that combine traditional Thai and contemporary-style architecture. The family-friendly resort has three pool areas and sun decks for adults and young ones, as well as many other facilities, like aqua beds and pool bar that centre around the pools.

[centarahotelresorts.com](http://centarahotelresorts.com)



### ART IN MOTION

Belmond, the global collection of exceptional hotel and luxury travel adventures, recently introduced a new concept in luxury rail travel with the unveiling of the Eastern & Oriental Express. The exterior of two of its carriages have been transformed into a stunning 'rolling canvas' by Singapore-based street artist, Rajesh Kumar. The artist's work, 'The Koi Pond', depicts the joy of travel, movement and the coming together as a community with its bold blue pond and lively, vibrant koi. Adding to this sense of adventure are new cocktails by its leading mixologists. The new menu takes guests on a sensory journey along the train's route from Singapore to Malaysia to Bangkok. Sip on 'Mist of the Rice Paddies' and 'Malay Jungle' that evoke imagery of the natural scenes the train passes by.

[belmond.com/eastern-and-oriental-express](http://belmond.com/eastern-and-oriental-express)





# *Out backing the Australian landscape*

Journey across the outback Australian landscape the way it's supposed to be done



Bays of Fires Walk,  
Tasmania

## *Nature's Way, Northern Territory*

Nature's Way is a seven-day drive and cruise adventure that one can embark on from Darwin, the largest city in Australia's Northern Territory. The 735 kilometre drive begins in Darwin through the World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park and Nitmiluk National Parks and onto Litchfield National Park. Amateur anthropologists would be thrilled to learn that Kakadu

is actually home to some of the world's oldest aboriginal rock art galleries which are accessible by car or marked walking trails. Don't miss out also on the opportunity to visit Katherine Gorge located within the Nitmiluk National Park. The gorge offers a series of clear pools fed by a natural thermal spring which are sure to revive tired souls after a long day of arduous driving. Options

to explore the park via a helicopter ride, canoe or on foot are also available. A change of temperature can be found when one journeys onto Litchfield National Park renowned for its monsoon rainforests and waterfalls which flow all year round. Enjoy a swim in the pandanus-fringed plunge pool of Edith Falls that are sure to cool you off.





Bays of Fires

## Indian Ocean Drive, Perth

For an epic 10-day drive measuring over 2800 kilometres, there's no topping the Indian Ocean Drive of Western Australia starting in Perth. The spectacular journey will feature jaw-dropping white beaches, magnificent coral reefs, salty fish towns and the rugged national parks along the Western Australian Coast. On your drive, opportunities to witness the world's largest eucalypt flower, the Mottlecash and a parade of other exotic flowers like the banksia, the starflower and the yellow kangaroo paw will be available at the Badgingarra National Park. Passing by the HMAS Sydney Memorial, you will uncover a piece of WWII history which commemorates the sacrifices of war made by 645 naval officers who perished after a military engagement with a German cruiser. Don't forget to also stop by the UNESCO

World Heritage site, the Ningaloo Reef and the Cape Range National Park for a day of diving with whale sharks, bushwalking the Australian Outback and surfing the white beaches. As you head back to Perth, don't miss Monkey Mia where you would be able to interact with friendly and intelligent dolphins that are sure to brighten up the rest of your drive. Finally, watch one of the world's most spectacular sunsets at The Pinnacles, ancient rock pillars formed from dried up seas in the Nambung National Park before sharing your tale that will be the envy of everyone.

## Great Eastern Drive, Tasmania

Explore the eastern shores of Tasmania from Hobart to the Bay of Fires, a journey some 280 kilometres long and immerse yourself in this attraction packed journey of breathtaking landscapes. Start off in Hobart and journey towards Maria Island National Park where you will get to enjoy sea kayaking and hunt for the history of the land. Move on next to Swansea where you would be able to savour farm fresh berries and fine wine. Fancy a gourmet dining experience while you're at it? Then don't miss the Piermont Resort's fine restaurant located amidst its beautiful stone cottages. On the trail one may also find the rainforests of Douglas-Apsley National Park and the picturesque port of St Helens Park noted for its diving scene. Before your journey ends, remember to marvel at the soul-stirring ocean views of the Bay of Fires where a seaside view of specially coloured orange-hued granite rocks await.

Katherine Gorge,  
Nitmiluk National Park

Monkey Mia



Ningaloo Reef, Exmouth



# Easy Trips





## BINTAN ISLAND, INDONESIA

# The ultimate playground

THIS MONTH... it's time  
to play in **Bintan**,  
jazz it up in  
**Singapore**,  
and pack your bags for  
sand, surf and sun in  
**Thailand**



The year-end holidays have come and gone but most wanderlusters have already begun planning their March holiday getaways. Here is one location to cater to travellers of all ages and pocket sizes. Bintan Resorts is home to shimmering azure seas, empty beaches packed with adrenaline pumping or relaxing activities, endless nature discoveries and most importantly, resorts of all types. Impeccable villas are springing up to cater to discerning travellers and even though private villas are often portrayed as lavish and (possibly) out of reach, Bintan is able to provide the same immaculate services and facilities at a fraction of the price. One such example is the Holiday Villa Pantai Indah – a high-end resort that features 139 pool villas with spacious one- or two-bedroom suites. Surrounding the resort are scenic views, beautiful pools, tropical outdoor pavilions and immaculate furnishing to complete the finishing touches of the luxurious estate.

Complimentary shuttle services are available to nearby Plaza Lagoi for shopping, dining or leisure purposes.

Lagoi Bay is a 1,300 hectares development set to be the new 'heart of Bintan' that encompasses holiday resorts, residential villas, outdoor activities, shopping options and of course, food and beverage outlets. To hype things up a notch, PT. Bintan Resort Cakrawala launched its first Lantern Park in Lagoi Bay, situated near the beachfront. The park covers up to 4,000sqm, with a 300m long trail that takes on the "Underwater World" theme with lantern displays of marine creatures that are larger than life. Other fascinating lanterns include endangered land species and this will serve as a reminder for both adults and children alike to play a part in conservation and protecting our earth. Try the Odong Odong mini cycling car with light and music ride after paying a visit to the Lantern Park. This is a great way to explore Lagoi Bay with family and friends without having to walk around.

For food lovers, stop by Warung Yeah for great local food at the cheapest prices. Popular dishes include the Nasi Goreng Special and Indomi Rendang. For a slightly more upscale eatery, try out Lamak Basamo, a famous nasi padang stall from Pujasera that recently opened in Plaza Lagoi. There are two options of enjoying your meal, either by ordering from the main counter or enjoying the spread in a buffet pay-as-you-eat system. An insider tip mentioned the mouthwatering Beef Rendang is a must-try.

## MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ Take a high-speed catamaran ferry from Singapore's Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal to Bintan's Bandar Bintan Telani (BBT) Ferry Terminal. The ride is both cost and time efficient ([reservations.brf.com.sg](http://reservations.brf.com.sg)). Although it is possible to catch a flight from Singapore Changi Airport and/or Kuala Lumpur International Airport, it is not recommended due to its long layover in Jakarta, Indonesia.

❷ There are plenty of accommodation types on Bintan Island, from the simplest lodge to the most opulent of them all – a colonial homestay in a luxury setting. The Canopi Resort though, has the best novelty factor for providing glamping opportunities to travellers. Combine the best of modern amenities with your private air-conditioned tent that comes with an en suite outdoor bathroom that allows you to be one with nature (from US\$97 per night; [thecanopi.com](http://thecanopi.com)).



WORDS: JOSMIN ONG  
PHOTOGRAPHS: BINTAN RESORT





## SINGAPORE

# Singapore International Jazz Festival

The mellow harmonies of jazz return to Singapore's shores once more with the Singapore International Jazz Festival. Music lovers can expect three nights of extraordinary music with an incredible line-up featuring multiple Grammy Award winners, including Corrine Bailey Rae and David Foster. Joining them on the Main Stage are also local acts, like Aaron James Lee Trio and Raw Earth Blues Tribute. Look out also for Ernesto Enriquez and his jazz-infused Afro-Cuban sounds, and R&B legend Ray Parker Jr. New to this year's festival is The Late Show, which starts after hours at 10pm and goes on until 4am each night. The late night experience continues on the jazz festival with music sets performed by international artists and DJs – Basement Jaxx, Al McKay's Earth, Wind & Fire Experience, and Incognito are just some of the sets to look forward to.

## MAKE IT HAPPEN

**i** The Singapore Jazz Festival has a three-day run from 31 March to 2 April this year. Check [sing-jazz.com](http://sing-jazz.com) for the full line-up for Main Stage and The Late Show. Buy tickets at [marinabaysands.com/ticketing](http://marinabaysands.com/ticketing) or [apactix.com](http://apactix.com).

**📍** The festival will be held at Marina Bay Sands so it only makes sense to book a stay at this hotel that is now an iconic part of Singapore's skyline. Hotel guests will be given exclusive access to the rooftop infinity pool that overlooks Singapore's glittering CBD. The integrated resort also has some of Singapore's best restaurants and international brands all within reach ([marinabaysands.com](http://marinabaysands.com)).



## THAILAND

# Life's a beach

It's always the perfect time for a quick beach getaway to any of Thailand's stunning beaches, especially in March when the days are long and there is little rain. Here are our favourites that are literally just hours away, with each destination having multiple daily flights from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur.



## KRABI

Head here for your introduction to the Andaman Sea. Krabi's top two beaches, Ao Nang and Railay, have been touted as some of the most stunningly beautiful in the world and often make it to many "world's best beaches" lists. Despite its ever-soaring popularity, both beaches are well kept and in pristine condition. For something new, Koh Hong, the island off Krabi, has crystal clear waters that are perfect for snorkelling in; there's a lagoon carved out on the east side of the island where schools of fishes gather waiting to be fed.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

① Access Ao Nang and Railay beaches easily with a stay at Centra by Centara Phu Pano Resort, which is situated in between both beaches. The 158-room affordable resort offers views of its expansive swimming pool or surrounding undulating lime karsts. Concierge is also able to book excursions to both beaches, as well as Koh Hong ([centarahotelsresorts.com/centra/cpp](http://centarahotelsresorts.com/centra/cpp)).



## KOH SAMUI

Thailand's second-largest island has various beaches to suit different travellers, such as rowdy Chaweng for partygoers, Lamai for holidaymakers on a budget, Bophut for those who want a quieter stay but with plenty of cultural activities nearby, and Maenam for exclusivity and privacy.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

① Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui lies on Maenam on the northeast of Koh Samui. Enjoy the ultimate in luxury at your own private hillside luxury villa that is shaded by coconut groves and overlooks the Gulf. The resort offers a plethora of things to do on its private beach and has plenty of off-coast options like yacht rides ([fourseasons.com/kohsamui](http://fourseasons.com/kohsamui)).



## PHUKET

Known as the 'pearl of the Andaman', Phuket is a gem of an island with some spectacular beaches. Patong may be its best known with its go-go girls and full moon parties but there are many more beaches that are quieter and more laid-back. Kata and Karon on the west coast attract those who want fuss-free beach holidays, while Natai and Ao Bang Thao are the preferred beaches of the affluent.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

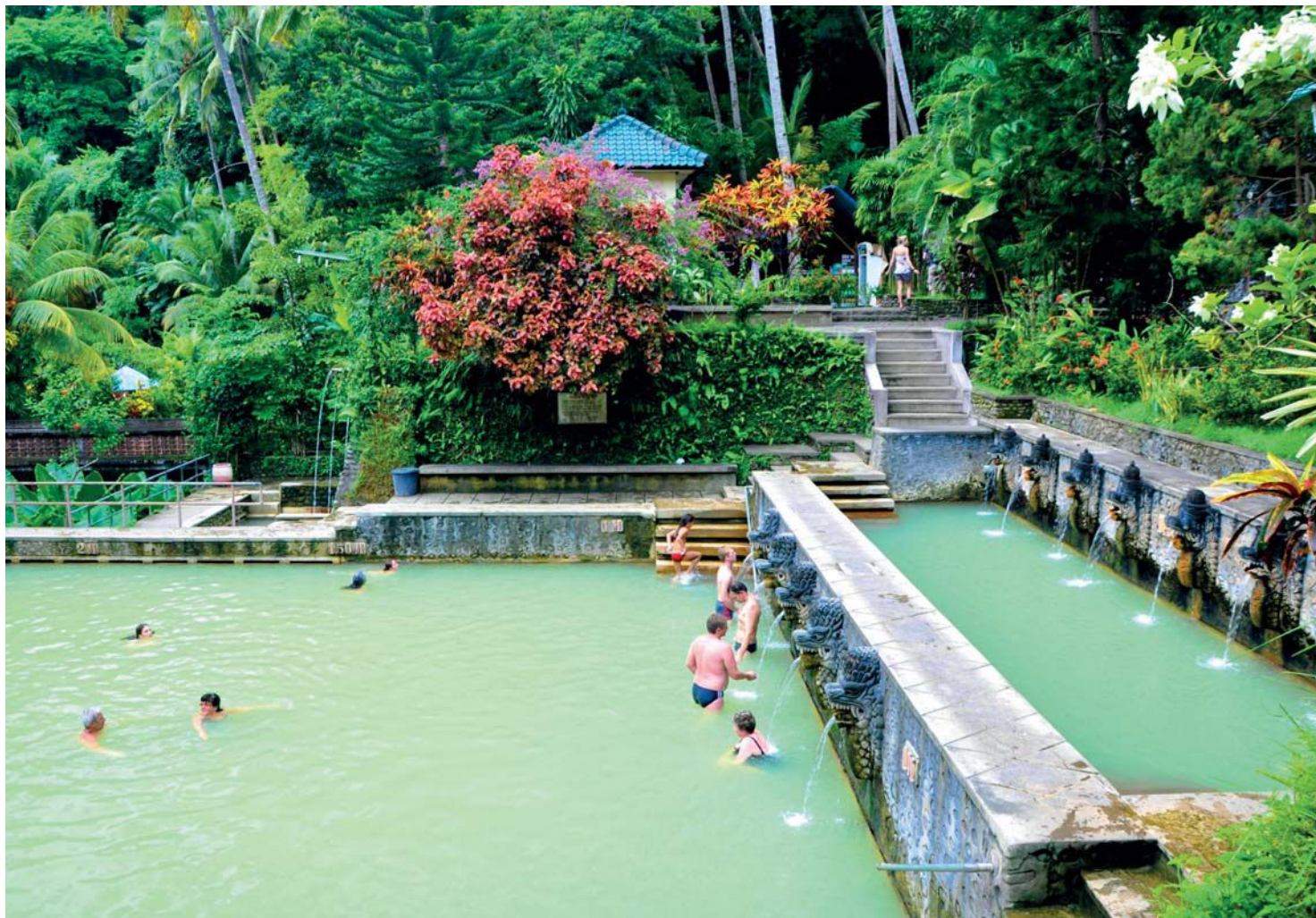
① akya's newest beachfront property, akya Beach Club Phuket, is ideal for those who want a peaceful beach stay away from crowds. The 58-room boutique beach resort is located along Natai and has its own private access to the aquamarine waters of the Andaman Sea right on its doorstep. Additional luxury can be found at its sea view villas and two-bedroom beachfront pool villas ([theakya.com/phuket](http://theakya.com/phuket)).





# Landing in hot water

Soak in the healing energies of hot springs to get rid of fatigue at this turn of the season



## BALI

Hot and humid Bali might not call for any use of a hot spring but soaking in the sacred waters of Air Panas Banjar (literally Banjar Hot Water) has been a locally known hideaway for curing rheumatic diseases. Much more warm than it is steaming hot like at other thermal springs, the sulphuric water that flows here are at a soothing 37°C, which makes it easy for visitors to spend hours soaking in its high mineral content water. The water flows from the mouths of intricately carved stone naga (mythical dragon-like creatures) into three different pools of varying heights set in a beautifully landscaped and lush tropical garden. There is one other pool adjacent to the main pools where the sulphuric water gushes from 4m-high spouts. Standing under these streams of water feels like a strong massage that will instantly rejuvenate tired bodies. This thermal bath is a perfect entry-level hot spring for those new to the idea of public baths, as Air Panas Banjar requires all guests to be in swimsuits to enter.

## MAKE IT HAPPEN

**i** Those familiar with Bali will know that it is most convenient to hire a driver for the day to get to the hot springs from anywhere in Bali but for those looking for a stay closer to the hot springs, the Lovina Bali is your best bet. It is one of the few luxury resorts on Lovina Beach and is nearest to Air Panas Banjar. The resort runs tours to the hot springs and nearby Buddhist temple every morning ([thelovinabali.com](http://thelovinabali.com)).

WORDS: RAEWYN KOH



## TAIPEI

Taiwan was formerly colonised by the Japanese, who brought with them their love of ramen and hot springs to the local people. Long after the Japanese have left, Taiwan has fully embraced the culture of spending time soaking in hot springs as a way to relax and fight fatigue from the stress of daily life. Beitou is one such place that has become a favourite among locals and travellers for its proximity to Taipei City. Before heading for a soak, take some time to visit the free-admission Beitou Hot Springs Museum, the original public hot spring bath in Beitou. Although built by the Japanese during their colonisation, its design elements borrow influence from Victorian-era architecture. After the museum, take a well-deserved break at Millennium Hot Springs, the main public bathhouse in Beitou. There are four hot spring baths for guests to try, each with varying temperatures. After soaking in the hot springs, travellers might want to head to Hell Valley, a jade-coloured hot spring with mineralised water that reaches temperatures of up to 100°C (not suitable for bathing), to see the eerie steam rising above the waters.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

**i** It may have been more convenient for travellers to stay in Taipei City and make Beitou a day-trip event but the opening of Aloft Taipei Beitou in January this year has changed that. 292 loft-styled guestrooms make up Aloft, which boasts an enviable location just steps away from the Beitou hot springs and just minutes' walk from two metro stations with easy access to downtown Taipei ([alofttaipei Beitou.com](http://alofttaipei Beitou.com)).



PHOTOGRAPHS: FLICKR / MARISKA RICHTERS; SEAN SU; NEVERBUTTERFLY; 陶澤中



## EHIME

Visiting hot springs is very much still alive and thriving in Japan. The act of bathing in an onsen (hot spring bath) is ingrained deeply into the culture and much of what attracts the local Japanese to travel to other prefectures are the quality onsen found in the area. While there are many accessible onsen available in more touristy towns like Kyoto and Hokkaido, only Ehime Prefecture can claim that it has the oldest standing hot spring recorded. Dogo Onsen, located in Matsuyama of Ehime Prefecture has an extensive history of 3,000 years (some say even more than that) and has an impressive list of clientele that includes many of Japan's noblemen, scholars and the Imperial Family. The main building of Dogo Onsen is the communal bathhouse that was built in 1894. The three-storey Meiji period bathhouse is said to be the inspiration for the incredible bathhouse in Hayao Miyazaki's Academy Award-winning film, *Spirited Away*. Guests can enjoy the public baths on the first and second floors, while the private Yushinden bath is reserved for the Imperial Family. While not open for public use, guests can still enjoy a guided tour of the royal facilities when not in use.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

**i** As with every onsen experience, staying in a ryokan (traditional Japanese-style guesthouse) is almost necessary. Dogo-kan is one of the more modern ones near Dogo Onsen that provides accommodation in Japanese and Western-style rooms for those who are not accustomed to floor futons. Dogo-kan has its own onsen facilities filled with the same water that runs through Dogo Onsen. For a special treat, book a stay at the seventh-floor Shofuro, which has its own private hot spring bath in the middle of a Japanese garden under the moonlit sky ([dogokan.co.jp](http://dogokan.co.jp)).





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Each room in The Nai Harn is like your own private little sanctuary; anything from the Grand Ocean View Room and up will entitle guests to their own personal daybed; the spa suites are designed to evoke the charms of the Andaman coast

## REVIEW OF THE MONTH

PHUKET, THAILAND

# The Nai Harn Phuket

### WHY PHUKET?

Everyone knows Phuket for its affordability, convenience and laid-back town or bustling beach life, depending on personal preferences. But not everyone knows of the ultimate luxury the island can offer. Jet-setters can comb the island in stylish sedans, get rejuvenated in swanky beach spa cabanas, sip customised cocktails with vistas of the Andaman Sea in view or simply lounge on board a rented yacht. And even though it sounds extravagant, there is no need to break the bank here.

### WHY THE NAI HARN?

Despite having over 2,000 fierce rivals on the island in terms of accommodation types, The Nai Harn is the only one with exclusive membership to the elite Leading Hotels of the World (LHW) group. LHW is often recognised for its affluent hospitality experiences. The hotel is perched above a pristine beach and bay, near the southern part of Phuket, far from the rowdy crowds and noisy partying spots. Here, discerning travellers can truly rest and rejuvenate while unwinding in the romantic sanctuary by the sea.

### WHAT'S MY ROOM LIKE?

Most of the 130 rooms and suites showcase the cool and comforting

colours of a seaside paradise and my Grand Ocean View Room was no exception. The stunning 81sqm contemporary space was an amazing private sanctuary, complete with an interactive TV, Samsung sound bar, oversized king bed fitted with exquisite 300-thread-count cotton linens, luxurious bathroom amenities from ELLE Spa, and my favourite of all – an expansive terrace with a canopied four-poster daybed offering panoramic views of the Nai Harn bay.

### WHAT AM I EATING?

Choose from a lavish selection of Thai and international dishes in any one of the three establishments – Cosmo Restaurant & Bar, Rock Salt and Reflections. Alternatively, place an order in the comforts of your sheets from the 24-hour room service menu. Cosmo's breakfast choices are bound to blow your mind away with its selection of freshly made cheese and cured meat stored in a separate cold room aside from the usual hot and cold food fare.

### WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

The Spa at The Nai Harn offers a mix of traditional treatments, cutting-edge therapies and sought-after indulgences. Revitalise in any one of the beach spa suites or spa cabanas and let the staff create the best bespoke treatment for you with the help of some natural ingredients. A Lifestyle Cabana is also present in the hotel premise for shopping eco-friendly mementos such as beachwear, home decor pieces and resort-inspired jewellery.

### EXCURSION TIPS

Nai Harn Beach has been voted one of Phuket's most popular destinations for its tranquil environment and the beach lies just in front of the resort. Grab the complimentary beach bag, water and yoga mat and head out for a calming sunset yoga session. The bay is also popular for swimming and serves as a great starting point for island hopping. Ya Nui and Ao Sane are some snorkelling spots not to be missed.

### WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

Rooms start at US\$200 per night, going up to US\$500 for the Royal Ocean View Suites that come with a "press for champagne" four-poster daybed by the veranda (thenaiharn.com).

WORDS: JOSMIN ONG. PHOTOGRAPHS: THE NAI HARN



# YOU DON'T JUST SEE THE VIEW YOU BREATHE IT IN

THERE'S NOTHING  
LIKE AUSTRALIA



DISCOVER THE 12 APOSTLES, VICTORIA AT [AUSTRALIA.COM](http://AUSTRALIA.COM)

The above picture is for illustration purpose only, captions in the image are not included in the package price.

## AUSTRALIA SELF DRIVE JOURNEY

### TASMANIA

- \* **FREE** 1 complimentary box of Raspberry Chocolates & 1 TAS Gourmet Sauce gift pack
- \* **FREE** AUD50 petrol voucher (min 5 nights stay)

#### 4D3N Flexi Self Drive

From **AUD 420**

##### Includes:

- 3 Nights accommodation
- 4 Days Hertz car rental
- Choice of 1 tour in Tasmania

#### 5D4N Best of Tasmania

From **AUD 670**

##### Includes:

- 2 Nights stay in Hobart / 1 Night stay in Cradle Mountain / 1 Night stay in Launceston
- 1 National Holiday Park Pass
- 5 Days Hertz car rental

### PERTH

#### 5D4N Rottnest Discovery & Perth Farmstay

From **AUD 489** (quad-shared)

##### Includes:

- 2 Nights stay in Lavendale Farmstay & 2 Nights apartment stay in Perth
- Rottnest Island Discovery Bus Tour with lunch & ferry transfers
- 5 Days Hertz car rental

### MELBOURNE

#### 6D5N Melbourne & Beyond Self-Drive

From **AUD 890**

##### Includes:

- 5 nights accommodation in Melbourne & Surrounds
- One way ferry from Sorrento to Queenscliff
- 6 Days Hertz car rental with NeverLost GPS

### Campervan/Motorhome

#### Free-Style Experience in Australia

From **AUD 240** (per person)

##### Includes:

- 7 Days rental
- Unlimited mileage

##### Terms and conditions:

- Prices in Australia Dollar; payment in Ringgit Malaysia subject to prevailing currency exchange rate upon booking
- Minimum 2 persons travel together entire trip unless specify
- Prices quoted are subject to change
- Cash term only
- Other terms and conditions apply

## SUNWAY TRAVEL GROUP

### SUNWAY TRAVEL SDN BHD

(Co.No: 158589-D) (KPL-0210)

**603 - 5633 3446**

[tour@sunway.com.my](mailto:tour@sunway.com.my)

[www.sunway.travel](http://www.sunway.travel)

### SUNWAY LEISURE SERVICES SDN BHD

(Co.No: 543257-K) (KPL-6172)

**603 - 2032 5622**

[opkul@sunway.com.my](mailto:opkul@sunway.com.my)



[www.facebook.com/sunwaytravel](http://www.facebook.com/sunwaytravel)





# *City at a glance:* **TOKYO**

Always on the go, this is the city of blurred lines, where change is the norm, nature coexists in amnesty with the urban, and the sky is full of Michelin stars

WORDS AKANKSHA NAIR



One among the many  
iconic skylines that  
this metropolis has  
to offer

PHOTOGRAPH: FLICKR - HANS JOHNSON



High cliffs surround the Ogasawara island, making it a popular spot for divers



WHETHER YOU'VE SEEN Tokyo as the idyllic cityscape that Godzilla trampled, or in its countless other mentions

in film and literature, perhaps the most impressive part of the city that has been the setting for many an award-winning cultural phenomenon is that it is equally impressive when experienced in person. Dynamic is the norm for the world's largest urban agglomeration, where change is welcomed with speedier acceptance than anywhere else in the world. This is self-evident in the way it evolved from being just a fishing village in 1457, into the world's largest metropolis, replacing former imperial capital Kyoto to become the new capital of Japan. Formerly known as Edo, meaning 'estuary', Tokyo rose to these current credentials because of its role as a power base for the Tokugawa Shogunate (the last Japanese feudal military government).

Among other titles bestowed on this city, relevant to a majority is perhaps the title of having the most Michelin-starred restaurants anywhere in the world with an astounding 227 food establishments with one or more stars as per the Michelin food guide. For the epicurean finger-licker, this is the central hub for tickling all your taste buds, and discovering new ones along the way, all with the guarantee of Michelin-starred quality.

Apart from its tremendous urban landscape, Tokyo is also known for its contrastingly traditional landscaping, showcased in the parks and gardens, as well as its temples and shrines. For a break

from the urban, find refuge in these green oases nestled within the concrete cocoon of the city. For visitors in March and April, there is more to look forward to, as the spring Hanami festival brings into full bloom the innumerable sakura (cherry blossom) trees that line the city. The entire country blooms pink from March end to early May, and Tokyo lights abuzz with lively Hanami festivities and complete celebratory splendour. Whether it is a tranquil walk, a serene boat ride on the Meguro River, or a lively party scene, Tokyo is the perfect destination to enjoy the famed Japanese sakura blossom.

The city is easily accessible from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur by flight, starting from US\$446 with Japan Airlines (jal.com). Before being welcomed into the thriving urban centre of Tokyo city, most international visitors would have to go through the grey concrete jungle that is the train ride through the east side. It is possible to take the bus, train or taxi into the city, but irrespective of the mode of transport chosen, it takes a minimum of 60 minutes to get to the centrally located Tokyo Station from Narita International

airport. Options abound though, starting with the limousine bus which stops at all the major hotels in the city, the extensive rail services that run directly between Narita airport and Tokyo Station, as well as the taxi service, which is of course considerably more expensive, with prices averaging US \$177.

Within the city, transport via rail and subway makes getting by extremely convenient. The subway is operated by two different operators, the Tokyo metro and TOEI subway, yet the subway commuters are only a small percentage of the total daily commuters, with a much more widely used Japan Rail service that covers most of the city. So if you're looking to get around without the hassle of having to purchase individual tickets to different destinations, it is advisable to purchase a Pasma or Suica smart card instead of the three-day subway pass. Apart from being the ideal means to get around Tokyo, they also double as cards that can be used for purchases at select shops and vending machines. The two cards are also essentially interchangeable, one serving the same purpose as the other.

*"When the plum-blossoms are gone,  
Are not the cherry-flowers  
Ready to bloom in their place?"*

- From Man'yōshū, the oldest existing collection of Japanese poetry



At a height of 634m, the Tokyo Skytree is the tallest tower and the second tallest structure in the world



### Mount Fuji

Located about 100km from central Tokyo, this is undoubtedly Japan's highest and most prominent peak and ultimate cultural icon. Book a tour in order to make the most of this day trip, which can take you up to the fifth station on mount Fuji, and thereafter the climb is yours to make. Stretch your legs and savour the extraordinary view from the cruise through Lake Ashi, one of the five lakes that surround the peak, or hop onto the ropeway that offers overwhelming views of this serene locale. For the complete package, we recommend using the Sunshine tour service, which also offers special cherry blossom tours of Mt. Fuji during spring season.

● [japanican.com/en/special/tours/mt\\_fuji](http://japanican.com/en/special/tours/mt_fuji)



### Ueno Park

Yet another idyllic spot for the hanami festivalgoer, this is among the country's first public parks. Home to abundant museums, and safeguarding some of the best views, the Ueno Park is famous for the right reasons. While it offers the best sights during the Hanami season, that's also reason for it to be extremely busy around this time of the year. Apart from the Tokyo National Museum and the Kaneiji temple being in close vicinity, the Ameyoko shopping street nearby offers a plethora of inexpensive items on sale ranging from food to clothing, spread across the 520 stores that line the district.

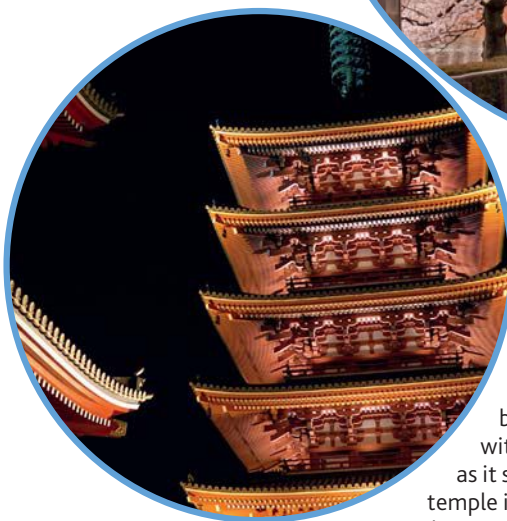


## Attractions

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**  
Japan's tallest peak - Mt Fuji or "Fuji-San"; Senso-ji temple's stately Pagoda lit up at night; Ueno Park flushed pink with cherry blossoms

### Ogasawara National Park

With over 30 islands clustered in three different groups, the Ogasawara National Park is the natural refuge about 1000km south of the main Japanese archipelago, but administratively a part of Tokyo. Accessible only through a ferry that departs from Takeshiba; the ferry takes about 25.5 hours one way to get to this UNESCO world heritage site. With a range of activities within the island, including whale watching, scuba diving, dolphin swimming, trekking, and kayaking among others, this is easily Tokyo's best kept secret. With the pristine blue of the water surrounding the archipelago, and the refreshing green of the island's abundant biodiversity, no other 25-hour long ferry ride will seem as worthy as this one.



### Senso-ji Temple

Located in Asakusa, Tokyo's oldest temple, the Senso-ji Buddhist temple is almost as crowded as Tokyo Disneyland in the daytime. The entrance to the temple showcases the *Kaminarimon* or the "Thunder-Gate", followed by the *Nakamise-dori* shopping street that takes with it a majority of the crowd around the temple as it shuts down in the evening. The highlight of this temple is viewing it with the nightlights soon after sundown.

PHOTOGRAPHS: FLICKR - REGINALD PENTINIO; FLICKR - ROSINO; FLICKR - H KASE



# Food

## Chatei Hatou

Reviving a slowly dying part of Japanese culture, the Chatei Hatou is a traditional Japanese kissaten (coffeehouse), one of the few that continues to challenge the myriad coffee chains that have now popped up all over Tokyo. Sit at the counter to watch as coffee is prepared for you, and enjoy a conversation with the people seated next to you. Alongside the experience of watching coffee being spectacularly prepared, the barrista also chooses a special cup and saucer as he deems fit for your personality. Engage to enjoy, and for the lover of caffeine and company, the kissaten is an experience that simply must not be missed.

## World Beer Museum

As if the name wasn't enough to bowl us over, this bar still has more to offer. Situated on the seventh floor of Soramachi, Tokyo Skytree, the World Beer Museum is the first of its kind bar and restaurant in Tokyo, consisting of five different counters, each representing specialty imported beer from five different countries. It features counters that transport you individually to Germany, Belgium, UK, USA and the Czech Republic, with separate food spreads that authentically complement the beer served. Sit on the terrace and be transported, all whilst enjoying the towering reminder of the cosmopolitan centre that brought these worlds to you, in the form of spectacular views of the Skytree right above.

● [world-liquor-importers.co.jp](http://world-liquor-importers.co.jp)

FROM  
TOP  
Chef  
Yoshihiro  
Narisawa  
recreates  
natural landscapes  
on beautifully  
presented plates; Innovation  
abounds in the wide variety of  
sakura flavoured delectables

## Sakura Sweets

As part of the Hanami celebrations, the springtime delicacies in Tokyo are the sakura (cherry blossom) flavoured sweets and drinks. From a special Sakura frappuccino and cupcake at Starbucks outlets, to the specialty desserts ranging from sakura flavoured meringue, panacotta and amandine at the Fiorentina Pastry Boutique inside the Grand Hyatt, Tokyo – options abound for visitors to indulge in these seasonal pink concoctions.

## Narisawa

Ranked sixth on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list for 2017, this double Michelin-starred specialty restaurant is maestro chef Yoshihiro Narisawa's own personal culinary laboratory. You'll have the promise of a unique menu, and the delectable food with its floral presentation looks so good that don't be surprised if you end up staring at it longer than you intended. The recommended wine is a really good bet, because they curate it specifically to accompany the menu. Don't forget to book well in advance for this one!

● [narisawa-yoshihiro.com/](http://narisawa-yoshihiro.com/)







### Tokyo Station Hotel

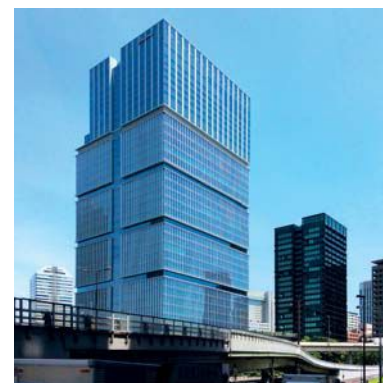
Within the noise and the buzz from inside the Tokyo Station Marunouchi building, the last thing to expect is an elegant European-style luxury hotel with a crisp silence that promises a safe haven from the buzzing city. Yet, that is exactly what you will find at the Tokyo Station Hotel. The only hotel in Tokyo to be located inside an important cultural property also known as the 'Gateway of Tokyo', luxury and heritage are wonderfully juxtaposed at the Tokyo Station Hotel. It now also offers the special feature of a 'Digital Historic Tour' using a tablet with an English narrator, catered specifically to overseas guests.

● [thetokystationhotel.jp](http://thetokystationhotel.jp)



**FROM TOP**  
Impeccably designed  
Palace-side and Dome-  
side rooms at the Tokyo  
Station Hotel, where  
Omotenashi (Japanese  
hospitality) is exemplified

## Hotels



### Prince Gallery Hotel Tokyo

Situated within the top seven floors of the Tokyo Garden Terrace, this Luxury Collection Hotel brilliantly echoes the synchronised confluence of modern and traditional that is unique to its location in Kioicho, Tokyo. Cashing in on the prime delight of the city's extravagant skyline, the hotel's entire design concept is filled with allusions to levitation, offering views that start from their own manicured gardens all the way to Mt Fuji. The newly opened hotel also features a standout rooftop bar with a two-story floor-to-ceiling glass window, framed by a kaleidoscopic glass waterfall designed by Japanese artist Mari Noguchi.

● [princehotels.com/en/kioicho](http://princehotels.com/en/kioicho)

PHOTOGRAPHS: TOKYO STATION HOTEL, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



# Shopping

## Omotesando

The generic term for a street leading to a shrine, Omotesando is so named for being a delightful tree-lined avenue (frequently compared to Champs Elysees) leading up to the Meiji Shrine. Lined with shops that leave you drooling, from high-end luxury brands to fast retail outlets, as well as cafes, restaurants and vintage shops to stop for a bite, succumb to the temptations of consumerism as you walk towards the stunning holy Buddhist temple, the Meiji temple, right at the end of this valley-shaped avenue.



**PICK THE RIGHT MARKET  
FOR YOUR BUSINESS.**



**ITB**  
*China*

The Marketplace for China's Travel Industry



**10 – 12 May 2017, Shanghai**

**itb-china.com**

Co-Host:

**环球旅讯**  
TravelDaily

Media Partner:

**CHINA**  
TRAVELNEWS

**MB** EXHIBITIONS  
SHANGHAI



# Great Escape

## NATIONAL PARKS OF THE AMERICAN WEST

2016 is the centenary of America's **National Park Service**: celebrate with a **road trip** across **South Dakota** and **Wyoming**, for larger-than-life landscapes, **wildlife** and history in the parks and preserves that define the nation.

WORDS AMANDA CANNING [@amandacanning](#) • PHOTOGRAPHS ADRIENNE PITTS [@hellopoe](#)

Ranch hand Luis  
Alvarenga at Diamond  
7 Bar Ranch, near  
Devils Tower National  
Monument





# Plan your trip

**1** Wonder at the otherworldly rocks of **Badlands** National Park then sleep under its cinematic, star-filled skies (p42).

**2** Meet the presidents at Mount Rushmore and hear a different narrative in the **Black Hills** that surround (p44).

**3** Take the reins and pull your horse to a stop at mysterious monolith **Devils Tower**, which rises out of the rolling prairie (p46).

**4** Find out why the first-ever US national park, **Yellowstone**, is known as the 'Serengeti of North America' (p48).

**5** Raft the wild currents of the sweeping Snake River, in the shadow of the mighty **Grand Teton** mountains (p50).



PHOTOGRAPHS: AF ARCHIVE/ALAMY, ELIOT ELISOFF/GETTY IMAGES, JOHN PITCHER/GETTY IMAGES, MARK READ, MURPHY-SHEWCHUK/GETTY IMAGES





## HOW TO GET THERE

Rapid City is the nearest airport to Badlands, with flights to hubs such as Chicago, Dallas and Minneapolis. Jackson Hole airport near Grand Teton also offers connections to a variety of domestic hubs. Return flights from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur can be booked on United Airlines but involve multiple stopovers, such as in San Francisco and Denver from Singapore, and Narita, Tokyo and Denver from Kuala Lumpur (from US\$1,050; united.com).

## HOW TO GET AROUND

To get between the parks and cover the big distances within them, most visitors rent a car (from US\$190 for a week; kayak.com). All the parks are connected by easy-to-navigate highways, but be sure to fill up when you can, because petrol stations can be widely spaced in more rural areas; and ensure you have a paper map and/or a GPS with good coverage because signal strength can drop quicker than a departing president's mic. A 4x4 will be useful if you intend on driving along some parks' dirt tracks. Pay attention to road signs – some speed trap towns make up to half their local budget from fine revenues.

## HOW LONG TO SPEND

Going to all the locations featured in our Great Escape should take around 10 days on a whistle-stop tour. But two to three weeks allows space to soak in the landscapes and take leisurely scenic routes such as the Bighorn and Buffalo Bill Cody Scenic Byways. To turn this journey into a classic American road trip, make time for pit stops in the historic Wild West towns of Deadwood, Buffalo and Sheridan.

## WHAT TO BUDGET

If visiting more parks than the ones covered here, consider buying the National Parks annual pass (US\$80; nps.gov). Accommodation within the parks comes at a premium – expect to

pay at least US\$90 a night. Options just outside are normally less pricey. Campsites cost as little as US\$10 per carload and some parks allow backcountry camping permits from US\$7ppn. Meals are often affordable (mains from US\$10) but basic. Budget a little extra to splash out on the great restaurants in Jackson Hole.

## WHEN TO GO

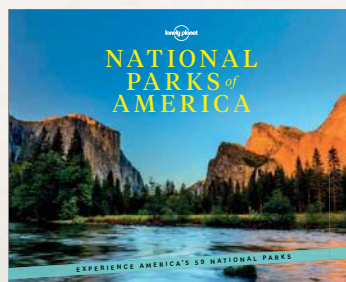
June to August offers the best climate for getting out and exploring the parks but expect clogged roads and peak prices in the gateway towns. The thin shoulder seasons of late May and the USA's Labor Day (5 September) to October bring fewer people. Mid-late September sees meadows and forests turn autumnal gold. Over the long winter, prices plummet. Some hotels and roads close but there's excellent cross-country skiing and wildlife-spotting too.

## WHO CAN HELP

For visitors who want to camp, Mountain Side Gear Rental posts out everything from sleeping bags, tents and lanterns to first aid kits and even hammocks across the USA (from US\$30 for three days for a two person tent; mountainsidegearrental.com).

## HOW TO PLAN

See Lonely Planet's *USA's National Parks* guide (US\$24.99). Find wider inspiration with *National Parks of America* (US\$29.99) – a photo tour in hardback of all 59 US national parks. Check more details at nps.gov, realamerica.co.uk, visittheusa.com, travelsouthdakota.com and travelwyoming.com.



## ON THE ROAD

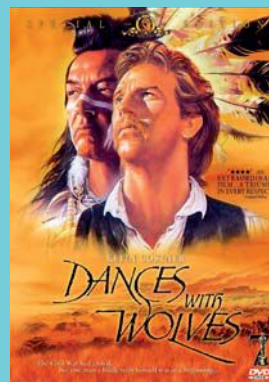


## Eat

Chokecherry produce; foraged for millennia by native tribes in the Northern Rockies and Plains, this wild berry is today made into fine preserves, jellies and syrups – the latter a delicious alternative to maple syrup over pancakes.

## Drink

Grand Teton vodka; made using snowmelt from the eponymous range and locally grown potatoes, this small-batch spirit has scooped up plenty of awards.



## Watch

*Dances with Wolves*; this epic American Western/Kevin Costner vehicle was filmed partly in Badlands National Park and the Black Hills.

## Take

A can of bear spray with you; in Yellowstone and Grand Teton, it pays to have protection, especially on hikes but even in the car – as these crafty mammals can open vehicle doors.



## Listen out

For coyotes – both the word (pronounced 'ky-oat' in these parts) and the howls of the canine itself. The state animal for South Dakota, they roam widely here and throughout neighbouring Wyoming to the west.





# *Step into an*





A pair of American bison shed their winter coats in the Lamar Valley – a wildlife-rich expanse in the northeastern corner of Yellowstone National Park

# *epic scene...*

GREAT ESCAPE





# 1. Badlands

Camp out under the stars, search for fossils and explore deep time in this most unusual of landscapes



**F**ROM UP ON BIG BADLANDS Overlook, the land concertinas out in plump, prehistoric folds, all the way to the horizon. On this barren stage a celestial drama is playing out overhead: the setting sun has just dipped below a leaden band of dark cloud, to blaze pink across a narrow strip of sky. It's as if someone has switched the light on this primordial scene. The mounds below, dull brown only moments earlier, now glow electric red.

Such dawn-of-time vistas are common throughout Badlands National Park, a 240,000-acre preserve of big skies and bizarre rock formations, rising above the vast prairies in the centre of America. Difficult to cross and unable to support much life, these crumbling ridges were

known to local tribes as 'Makhóšica', or 'No Good Lands'. Today, miles of hiking trails make them a little easier to traverse.

'They look ancient,' says park volunteer Chuck Schroll. 'But actually the Badlands are babies in terms of geology.' On a scale that is more often measured in the hundreds of millions, the Badlands only started taking shape 500,000 years ago, when streams, wind and rain began to sculpt what had once been a flood plain. The Badlands have been making up for lost time. Erosion here happens at an astonishing rate. It takes just a year for the soft stone to wear down as much as the granite at nearby Mount Rushmore does over 3,000 years.

Older layers of rock exposed by this breakneck erosion are windows into the Badlands' many past lives; 75 million years

ago, this area lay under an inland sea that stretched all the way from Canada to Mexico. Later, as the waters receded, it became jungle, then savannah, before finally drying out to the harsh environment it is today. Each colourful band on the warped mounds hides within it the skeletons of the weird and wonderful creatures that once lived here, from mosasaurs – giant marine reptiles – to sabre-toothed cats and titanotheres, rhino-like creatures with two horns.

'It's one of the best places in the world for mammal fossils – people discover them daily,' says Chuck, as he opens the door to the Ben Reifel Visitor Center, where scientists can be watched uncovering new finds in the palaeontology lab. For him, though, the Badlands' biggest appeal lies elsewhere – in the sky above. With no light



The different coloured rock layers in Badlands reflect the environment – ranging from sea, to tropics to woodland – at the time the sediments were deposited



pollution from nearby big towns, this otherworldly landscape is a fitting spot from which to gaze out at the universe.

As night falls and the rocky outcrops cut dark figures against the star-filled sky, Chuck is in the park's amphitheatre, guiding visitors through the cosmos. He invites them to peer into a telescope through which it's possible to see the moons of Jupiter and Saturn's rings. Even to the naked eye, there's still much to spot: the nebulous Milky Way, the Big Dipper, the constellation of Hercules and – momentarily – the International Space Station streaking across the horizon, as it circles the Earth every 92 minutes.

The next morning, the Todd family from Minneapolis follow their astronomy session with a breakfast in the park.

'There's a real sense of getting out of the ordinary here,' says mother Kristen, as she opens a checked red tablecloth over a picnic bench. Her children play in the tall prairie grass, thick with the white fluffy seed heads of western salsify. In the distance, the early hikers exploring the now apricot-hued mounds look like ants swarming over an anthill.

'When they created the National Park Service 100 years ago, most of America hadn't been overdeveloped yet,' she says. 'It's amazing that they had the foresight to put aside places like this – for the benefit of everyone, forever.'

Drive 95 miles west to Black Hills National Forest for a striking change of scenery and history made big at Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore. ➡

## Essentials



➡ The Badlands' warren of red rocks forms a prominent backdrop at **Cedar Pass**, the only accommodation with running water inside the park, with a campsite (from US\$20 for two, tent not included; or from US\$30 for two for an RV site) and pine cabins that are rustic but well equipped with air-conditioning, fridges and microwaves (from US\$150, [cedarpasslodge.com](http://cedarpasslodge.com)).

📍 Entry to **Badlands National Park** costs US\$20 per vehicle and is valid for seven days ([nps.gov/badl](http://nps.gov/badl)). Fossil talks, geology walks and night-sky viewings run through summer.



## 2. Black Hills

Come face to face with American history at the Black Hills monuments of Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore

**F**RANCE HAS THE EIFFEL Tower and Italy the Colosseum, but arguably the most iconic landmark in the USA lies not in the nation's capital nor any of its cities. Instead, Mount Rushmore – that colossal carving of four presidents, built between the two world wars – is holed up in the Black Hills National Forest, hundreds of miles from the nearest major metropolis.

Approaching from Highway 244, the heads appear suddenly from behind a thicket of ponderosa pines – the colour and density of these trees giving the Black Hills their dark appearance and name. To the left, George Washington stares boldly into the future. At his side, Thomas Jefferson looks to the heavens. On the far right, Abraham Lincoln's brow furrows with the resolve to keep the nation together in the Civil War. Then, half hidden between them, there's Theodore Roosevelt – the ballsy, moustached frontiersman, who was as at home on the ranch as he was in the White House.

At the foot of the monument, the enormity of the 18-metre faces becomes fully apparent. Picture-takers assume the Mount Rushmore position: a low squat in an attempt to squeeze both the presidential and their family's heads into the frame.

For many, Mount Rushmore is more than just a photo op, it's a shrine to American democracy. There's a solemnity to the stone columns leading to the viewing point, the flags of all 50 states standing to attention in the breeze. One visitor, one of many with the Stars and Stripes on their T-shirt, has come from nearby Rapid City to pay his respects. Called, ironically, Roy England, he declaims: 'Mount Rushmore is the cornerstone of the American dream. It's all about believing big and working hard to make it happen.'

That Rushmore became more than just a tourist site is thanks to its chief sculptor, Idaho-born Gutzon Borglum. Originally the memorial was to feature heroes of the West such as Buffalo Bill, but Borglum persuaded those who commissioned him to aim higher, declaring: 'American history shall march along that skyline.'

Rushmore is storytelling in stone. But if this was to be the nation's narrative, some felt excluded – especially the Lakota tribe for whom the Black Hills are sacred. To redress the balance, in 1939 Chief Henry Standing Bear wrote to Korczak Ziolkowski, a sculptor who had worked with Borglum, asking him to build a monument of the warrior Crazy Horse, so that 'the white man [would] know the red man has great heroes, too'.

Ziolkowski began work on Crazy Horse in 1948 and today the still-in-progress mountain carving looms just 16 miles from Rushmore. The natural veins of quartz in the face glimmer as they catch the sun. A row of clouds edging up the mountain forms a headdress and a passing helicopter is barely as big as one of the titan's eyes. When finished, it will be the world's largest stone monument at 172 metres high. It's all the more impressive given that, while Borglum had 400 people working under him and over \$800,000 of federal government financing for Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse has been entirely self-funded.

'When Korczak came first here, there was no running water or electricity,' says guide Tom Wilson. He only had his wife, five sons and five daughters to help out. When one son drove a bulldozer off the mountain, Korczak's first words were: "You got that digger there, now you get it out." That's the kind of determination needed to achieve something like this.'



To see the best of the Black Hills landscapes, take Spearfish Canyon Scenic Byway on the 110-mile journey from Crazy Horse to Devils Tower. ➡

### Essentials



Between Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse, **Pine Rest** (pictured) is a collection of wooden cabins with fireplaces, a sauna and hot tub, and easy access to hiking trails (from US\$120 for a small en suite cabin for up to four; [pinerestcabins.com](http://pinerestcabins.com)). Or stay in nearby Rapid City at **Hotel Alex Johnson**, a historic building with an eccentric mix of Native American and Art Deco interiors (from US\$120; [alexjohnson.com](http://alexjohnson.com)).

❗ Parking at **Mount Rushmore** costs US\$10 per vehicle ([nps.gov/moru](http://nps.gov/moru)). Entrance to **Crazy Horse Memorial** costs US\$25 per vehicle ([crazyhorsememorial.org](http://crazyhorsememorial.org)).



Crazy Horse was instrumental in the Native American victory in the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn. **OPPOSITE** The first, third, 16th and 26th US presidents look down on the Ray family at Mount Rushmore





Devils Tower rises 1,558 metres and is a popular but challenging destination for rock climbers. OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT Wranglers Becca Shelbourn and Kendra Meidinger at Diamond 7 Bar Guest Ranch





### 3. Devils Tower

Saddle up and have your own close encounter with the strange rock formation made famous by a Steven Spielberg sci-fi blockbuster

**T**IGHTENING THE SILK bandana round her neck, then buckling up her fringed leather chaps, Kendra Meidinger looks the picture of a cowgirl. Her accessories protect against the mad weather that tyrannises this part of the Wyoming-South Dakota border. Records have been set nearby, with temperatures changing by 27°C in a matter of minutes.

After a morning wrangling cattle, Kendra is taking guests on a ride through Diamond 7 Bar Guest Ranch's 10,000 acres. The warm Chinook winds have died down and the air hangs heavy with a strange stillness that augurs oncoming storms. The only sound is the splash of hooves through water, then rhythmic thuds as Kendra leads the horses through a creek and onto a dirt track named Lame Jones County Road. She regales the riders with tales of encountering mountain lions, their eyes reflecting in the darkness, and the story of a double murder that took place on this very spot 100 years ago. But the most spine-tingling moment is yet to come.

Climbing to the top of a hill in one of the ranch's many pastures, a view opens out of the valley below. And there, emerging like a giant tombstone out of the flat grassland, is Devils Tower – a gargantuan hunk of rock that rises as high as a super-skyscraper. The tallest pines look like matchsticks next to it.

'I used to work as a park ranger at Devils Tower and people would ask me how much concrete it took to build it,' says Kendra. 'They couldn't believe it was nature's work.' Closely studied ever since it was declared the country's first ever National Monument in 1906, the tower still has geologists disagreeing over exactly how it was formed. They all concur, however, that – more than 50 million years ago – a big burst of magma spurted up between layers of sedimentary rock. Over time, the surrounding soft stone wore away, exposing the mighty igneous monolith within, its thick columns running down it like the pipes of a supersized organ.

For local tribes, who call the formation 'Bear Lodge', it has a different origin story. One day a group of young girls were chased by giant bears with claws as big as tipi poles. The girls prayed to the Great Spirit, who made the ground beneath them rise up. With the girls out of reach, the frustrated beasts left deep claw marks on the side of the rock.

There are also those who believe in a third explanation. Since Spielberg's 1977 sci-fi movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*



'revealed' the tower to be a landing zone for aliens, UFO watchers and supernatural theorists have converged on it. 'People would ask me where they could recharge their crystals,' recalls Kendra. 'There's definitely a strange feeling about the place.'

'There are things in nature that engender an awful quiet in the heart of man. Devils Tower is one of them,' wrote the Pulitzer Prize-winning Native American author N Scott Momaday. Whatever people's beliefs, there's something that makes all who come across it stop to contemplate, to search for greater meaning in its mystery.

A hike along one of the trails encircling Devils Tower reveals its magnetism. Prairie dogs stand high on their hind legs, facing the protuberance like a group of worshippers. A pair of turkey vultures, dark slashes across the sky except for their bald red heads, helix upwards in the thermal currents created by the tower heating more quickly than the surrounding terrain. Only the deer seem oblivious to this rocky eminence's pull, skipping through the tall grass and by the charred, lightning-struck trees at its base.

By late afternoon the wind has risen again. Pine needles that were delicately quivering now blast off their branches. A line of red prayer bundles, strung to a branch by a local tribe, sways violently. Clouds part and, as light hits the tower, its lichen-covered surface emanates an ungodly green.



It's a drive of six to seven hours from Devils Tower to Yellowstone's north or east gates – break it up with a stop in the Wild West town of Buffalo, Wyoming.

#### Essentials



**Devils Tower Lodge** has close-up views of the tower (pictured) from the communal areas and many of the guest rooms. A real character, lively owner Frank Sanders hosts meals family-style (from US\$190; devilstowerlodge.com).

**The Occidental** in Buffalo is a lovingly restored heritage hotel that once hosted the Sundance Kid and Calamity Jane (from US\$45 or US\$110 for an en suite double; occidentalwyoming.com).

Entrance to **Devils Tower** costs US\$15 per vehicle for seven days (nps.gov/deto). Diamond 7 Bar offers trail rides from US\$26 per person (diamond7bar.com).



The cinnamon bear is a colour variant of the black bear, with a sense of smell 100 times greater than a human's. RIGHT Grand Prismatic Spring is the largest of Yellowstone's hot springs



## 4. Yellowstone

Marvel at volcanic wonders and spot America's 'Big Five' in the park's wildlife corridor

**A** GAME IS AFOOT. TWO fluffballs have stirred from their bed of branches. As the black bear cubs slide down the tree and tumble about on the hill, a whirl of cameras is set off. Among the wildlife watchers who've been waiting for this moment is Elisabeth Police. Each year for the past fifteen, she's made the long pilgrimage here from Florida. 'This is one of nature's best cathedrals,' she says. 'When you see all the animals, you feel part of it and that gives an incredible sense of peace.'

One would think that terrain atop a

still-active supervolcano would be pretty inhospitable to life. In fact, Yellowstone is one of the best places to see wildlife in North America and – in a roundabout way – it is the area's volcanic features that have allowed the fauna here to thrive.

After early pioneers stumbled across Yellowstone, reports flowed back east of belching mud pits, pools boiling iridescent blue and fiery orange, and steam billowing dozens of feet high like hell's own factory stacks. Anxious that these geothermal wonders should not be exploited, the US government established Yellowstone as the world's first national park in 1872.

It was the bison who gained the most from this newly founded haven. Nearly hunted to extinction by the 1880s, today 5,000 of these bovine superlatives hulk their way through the park, their horns as thick as baseball bats, their dung pats as big as flattened basketballs and their bodies weighing up to 900kg. 'Most of the time they seem slow, but bison can run 35mph and jump over cars,' says Blu Picard, a guide for Xanterra Parks, whose love of wildlife goes so deep he has an eagle tattooed across his back. 'During mating season,' he whispers, pointing to a pair of bulls squaring off, 'rivals will flip each other over.'





The Lamar Valley is one of the best places to spot wildlife. Here in the park's northeast, aromatic sagebrush masks the usual smell of sulphur. Mouthwash-coloured bluebirds streak by as great horned owls swivel their heads round 270 degrees and antelope-like pronghorn prance past at a speed that makes them the world's second-fastest mammal.

For many nature-spotters, the prize draw in Lamar is the grey wolf, reintroduced into the park in 1995. They are most likely to be seen around dawn and dusk; sightings are often little more than a tantalising pair of ears poking above the grass, as seen at the end of a long telescope. 'Look for circling birds,' advises Blu. 'That

often means carrion nearby and feeding predators.'

Wolves may be a challenge to find but most of Yellowstone's fauna hides in plain sight. A few hundred metres from where the black bear cubs were playing, a cinnamon bear is up on a picnic table. He takes an explorative sniff, before scampering back into the forest. Soon after, a couple sit down in the same spot, blissfully unaware of who might have been their dinner guest had they arrived just a little earlier.

It's a leisurely seven-mile drive from Yellowstone's south entrance to Grand Teton National Park. Look out for bears – this is prime grizzly territory. 🐾

## Essentials



🏠 From inns to rustic cabins, there are rooms inside the park, though they get booked up to a year ahead ([yellowstonenationalparklodges.com](http://yellowstonenationalparklodges.com)). Alternatively, **Yellowstone Under Canvas** is a collection of luxury safari tents (pictured) with real beds and wood-burning stoves, a 10-minute drive from the park's west entrance (from US\$190; [mtundercanvas.com](http://mtundercanvas.com)).

📌 A **Yellowstone National Park** vehicle pass costs US\$30 for seven days ([nps.gov/yell](http://nps.gov/yell)). A joint ticket with nearby Grand Teton National Park costs US\$50. Xanterra's Wake up to Wildlife tours are US\$75 ([yellowstonenationalparklodges.com](http://yellowstonenationalparklodges.com)).



## 5. Grand Teton

Float downriver, past pelicans and eagles, and the piercing peaks of America's most recognisable mountain range

**I**N GRAND TETON, THE SKY IS cut with a thousand diagonals. Granite pyramids rocket up to 4,000m, unencumbered by foothills and naked except for their snow blankets. Below these unflinching mountains, row upon row of acute-angled treetops shear the valley floor. Only the curve of the Snake River adds some softness to the scene.

Taking this all in at Snake River Overlook are siblings Elizabeth and Caleb Brumley. They're on their way from Minnesota to Utah, on one last road trip before Elizabeth moves away. To mark the milestone, Caleb asked his sister to ink him a tattoo: three textbook triangles of the Tetons. The outline still fresh on his arm, Caleb photographs his own version of the famous image Ansel Adams captured here, while Elizabeth draws the range in her sketchbook. The trees have grown since Ansel lined his lens up here in 1942 but the same uncompromising

beauty remains. 'You see this view everywhere: in documentaries, on calendars,' says Elizabeth. 'But it still doesn't prepare you for the real thing. I feel privileged to be here.'

Mountains steal the show but the Grand Teton National Park is also an aqua wonderland. Moose and elk wade knee-high into a patchwork of ponds, creeks and watery meadows to graze on grasses and willow shrubs. At the foot of the Teton Range, a ring of glacial lakes shines like a row of forest-green pearls. On the smaller bodies of water, such as String and Leigh Lakes, swimmers, canoeists and stand-up paddle boarders glide through rippling reflections of the peaks above. On Jackson Lake, the largest by far and also the deepest and coldest, motorboats are taken out to islands or anchored for trout fishing.

Down below Elizabeth and Caleb's lookout, the Snake River oxbows through the valley, not quite yet in the shadow of





Grand Teton. On its blinding white surface, a succession of small dots passes by. In one of these dots, which on closer inspection are revealed to be inflatable rafts, Jimmy Vollin is guiding the West family from Georgia. A self-professed 'steward of the river', Jimmy enthusiastically points out the area's geography and ecology as he keeps the vessel on course. 'Look at those beaver dams. They act as natural purifiers, filtering out sediment. The water is always much clearer after them.'

Further downstream, where the Snake River narrows to a canyon, whitewater rafters paddle furiously over such curiously named rapids as the Lunch Counter and the Big Kahuna. But in the wide channel where Jimmy's boat is floating, the water flows at a much gentler pace. A man drifts past on an inflatable kayak, using a cooler as a headrest. 'What's in the box?' he says, repeating Jimmy's friendly enquiry. 'There's a party right here in this box, my friend.'

On the riverbanks, purple lupins shoot up like spears. A pod of American white pelicans stretch out their broad wings and a sandhill crane gingerly treads the water with its long legs. Jimmy hands a pair of binoculars to the family on board his raft so

they can get a closer look at bald eagles and ospreys guarding waterside nests.

'This is such a cool spot,' says Jimmy, 'And this land is all our land. As a national park, it's owned by the people of this country.' But for the generosity of one man, this might not have been the case. When Ansel Adams photographed the park, only the Teton Mountain Range and the six lakes at its base belonged to it. The Snake River Valley remained in private hands. Aware of local opposition to the park's expansion, billionaire John D Rockefeller Jr secretly bought up holdings. Once he'd amassed enough land, he turned this section over to the National Park Service and by 1950 it was added to Grand Teton National Park.

Now a river runs through it. Headwaters from Yellowstone mix with snowmelt from the Tetons in Jackson Lake, flowing another 1,000 miles and out into the vast expanse of the Pacific. In no particular rush to get there though, the waters first wend through the national park, piggybacking Jimmy on his small raft. As he says, 'It's one hell of a ride.'



**GABRIELLE JAFFE** is our contributing editor. She was thrilled to learn that the collective noun for bison is an 'obstinacy'.



A contemporary take on the hunting lodges of the Old West, the relatively new boutique **Hotel Jackson** is one of the best in the cute Grand Teton resort town of Jackson Hole. Every room has a fireplace and there's a hot tub on the roof terrace (from US\$355; [hoteljackson.com](http://hoteljackson.com)).

**i** Entrance to **Grand Teton National Park** costs US\$30 per car for seven days ([nps.gov/grte](http://nps.gov/grte)), or US\$50 with a combined Yellowstone ticket. Mad River offers scenic floats down the Snake River, with enthusiastic guides including Jimmy Vollin (from US\$60; [mad-river.com](http://mad-river.com)).



# Unique Travel

*(for less than you think)*

From unforgettable sunsets to a movie under the stars, the travel memories that stick longest in the mind aren't necessarily the ones that break the bank. We pick our favourite low-budget bucket-list experiences from around the world







# Glorious Asian sunsets

## U Bein Bridge

### MYANMAR

Some landmarks are best seen as silhouettes, and U Bein Bridge is emphatically one of them, being at its most photogenic just as the sun dips over Taungthaman Lake, seven miles south of Mandalay in the riverlands of central Myanmar. Measuring three quarters of a mile long, the bridge was first constructed around 1850 from the timbers of a dismantled royal palace, and has counted as the world's longest teak bridge ever since. For the best view, make for the eastern shore of the lake as sunset approaches – watching maroon-robed monks on bikes and locals carrying parasols traversing the creaking planks, while rowing boats glide and fishermen wade in the waters down below.

● Free

U Bein Bridge was built out of teak wood more than 150 years ago, and is used by locals crossing Taungthaman Lake in Myanmar

## Manila Bay

### PHILIPPINES

Pollution and geography conspire to create a scene of great beauty over horseshoe-shaped Manila Bay in the Philippine capital, an unlikely setting for some of Asia's most spectacular sunsets. Stake out a viewing spot on Seaside Boulevard near the seafront funfair at the vast Mall of Asia complex, Manila's answer to Santa Monica Pier, and a fine place to seek respite from the hectic, traffic-clogged streets of the capital. Here you can listen to the whirring of the Ferris wheel, the music of the merry-go-rounds and the slosh of the tide as you watch the sun disappearing beyond the Bataan Peninsula and into the South China Sea, just as cargo ships sail to the horizon and yachts cast off from nearby jetties.

● Free

## Sarangkot

### NEPAL

With its mirror lakes and mountain canopy, the Pokhara Valley was made for a stunning sundown spectacle. To see it at its best, head for the village of Sarangkot on the ridge high above Phewa Tal Lake where the finest vista in all the Himalayas unfurls before your eyes: a range of snowy summits that glow pink with sunset. Due north is the pyramidal peak of Machapuchare, a sacred mountain ascended only once in the 1950s by a team of climbers who stopped 150m short of the summit out of respect to locals. It has been off-limits ever since. Beyond lies the bulky mass of Annapurna II, and to the west, Dhaulagiri – among the most dangerous peaks in the Himalayas. Look out for paragliders, launching from Sarangkot and gliding the currents above.

● Viewpoint entry fee US\$0.25

## Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade

### HONG KONG

Sunset comes with its own after-dinner show at Hong Kong's Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade, set on the southern tip of Kowloon. Start by taking a late afternoon stroll along the Avenue of the Stars – HK's version of Hollywood Boulevard (hello there Jet Li, howdy Jackie Chan) – before grabbing a waterfront seat for sunset over Hong Kong Island, watching the last rays of sunshine vanish from the top floors of skyscrapers and the forested tip of Victoria Peak. Stay put for a while to see the whole of Hong Kong Island transformed into a giant stage for the nightly Symphony of Lights. The world's largest light and sound show, it's a thirteen-minute long display of lasers, searchlights and pyrotechnics set to music.

● Free; nightly displays at 8pm



### Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building

#### JAPAN

Sunsets over cities really need to be seen from above; but the challenge is finding a viewing deck without a high-rise entry fee. Enter the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building No 1, housing the headquarters of the city government and – in the spirit of civic duty – offering gratis sunset views from the 45th floor. Face south and you'll see the striking three-tiered skyscraper of Tokyo Metropolitan No 2; orientate yourself east and you'll see the leafy expanse of the Shinjuku Gyoen park down below. But by far the best view is to the west, where the sun sinks beside the silhouette of Mount Fuji, some 60 miles distant, often seen rising out of a murky layer of smog.

● Free; [metro.tokyo.jp](http://metro.tokyo.jp)

### Golden Temple of Amritsar

#### INDIA

Pilgrims flock to Amritsar's Harmandir Sahib whatever the time of day – bathing in the sacred waters of the pool, eating in the vast dining room or ambling the long marble walkways. This being said, there's a special magic hovering over the most sacred shrine to Sikhism at sunset – especially when the elegant, gold-encrusted Golden Temple at its centre catches the setting sun, and the pool sparkles sublimely with the dying of the day. Non-Sikhs are welcome in the temple's inner sanctum where priests chant the verses of the Guru Granth Sahib – the Sikh holy book. Be sure to stick around until a few hours after sunset when said book is carried from the Golden Temple into the nearby building of Akal Takht for the night, to be returned again just before sunrise.

● Free

### Jimbaran Beach

#### BALI

Sunset, sand, seafood – what's not to like about Jimbaran Beach? This westward-facing crescent of golden sand stretches south from the runway of Denpasar airport, not far from the busy sands of Seminyak and Kuta, but has a more mellow atmosphere than its northerly cousins. Grab a table on the foreshore, order grilled ocean prawns, squid, barracuda, snapper and mud crabs and tuck in as the sky gets a repaint from the setting sun. Alternatively, take a short detour onto the Bukit Peninsula to the cliffs around Pura Uluwatu – a temple dedicated to Hindu sea gods, perched on a steep bluff at the far southwestern tip of Bali. The temple shuts to visitors shortly before sunset really gets spectacular, but the surrounding cliffs are a perfect spot from which to watch the sun sinking past the pagoda and into the waters of the Indian Ocean beyond.

● Free

### West Lake, Hangzhou

#### CHINA

Chinese poets have waxed lyrical about Hangzhou West Lake since the 11th century, and a thousand years have done little to diminish this spot's boundless charm. Set on the outskirts of the city of Hangzhou, the lake only began life in the 8th century, when a local governor ordered the dredging of a tract of marshes. Ever since it's been one of the nation's most revered landscapes, with meticulously kept gardens of willow and peach trees, lofty pagodas rising among treetops and half-moon bridges and causeways spanning the waters. There are no shortage of potential sunset vantage points around the lake: a classic option is on the eastern shore looking across to the five-storey Leifeng Pagoda: a 10th-century structure which collapsed in 1924. It was rebuilt in 2002 and is much sturdier for it.

● Free; [eng.hangzhou.gov.cn](http://eng.hangzhou.gov.cn)



The sun sets behind Leifeng Pagoda on Hangzhou's West Lake, as seen from a pavilion in Changqiao ('Long Bridge') Park



# European culture – for free



## Amsterdam Gallery

### NETHERLANDS

One of the world's only 'museum streets', this walk-through exhibition space – known until recently as the Schuttersgalerij (Civic Guards Gallery) – mixes a sprinkling of Dutch Masters with a dash of irreverent modern artwork. Run by the Amsterdam Museum (to which it forms an entrance), this mini-collection got its former name from vast paintings of Dutch burghers of old, solemnly bearing their muskets and swords in the role as members of the capital's Civic Guard. Added to their ranks you'll find more recent depictions of Amsterdam residents: Ajax footballers, policemen and, rather strangely, a giant statue of Goliath, rescued from an amusement park, now glaring down at visitors (and accompanied by a much smaller and less fearsome statue of David).

● [amsterdammuseum.nl](http://amsterdammuseum.nl)

## Museo del Prado

### SPAIN

Madrid's Prado has enjoyed a long, colourful career: starting life as a scientific institute, transformed into a cavalry barracks during Napoleon's reign over the city, before finally evolving into a home for the royal art collection. It's now one of the world's greatest art galleries, free to royals and non-royals alike every evening. Wandering its long, echoing corridors, you'll find works by the titans of western art – Rubens, Durer, Rembrandt – though the best-loved pieces in its collection are by Spanish artists: especially Goya, El Greco and Velázquez. The latter's *Las Meninas* is arguably the stellar painting in the Prado's collection – a 17th-century depiction of the Spanish royal family in which Velázquez inserted himself into the scene, cryptically gazing into the eyes of the viewer from the shadows.

● [museodelprado.es](http://museodelprado.es)

## Berlin Wall Memorial

### GERMANY

This poignant museum preserves one of the last sizeable pieces of the Berlin Wall, along with remnants of fortifications giving an impression of how the wall would have appeared soon before its demolition in 1989. The adjoining visitor centre tells the peculiar story of Nordbahnhof S-Bahn – a nearby 'ghost station' visited daily by commuter trains from West Berlin between 1961 and 1990, but whose platforms saw no passengers on account of the station entrance being in East Berlin. Exhibits cover other tales of horror, heroism and hope on Bernauer Strasse – where desperate East Germans jumped from their apartment windows into West Berlin during the early stages of the wall's construction.

● [berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de](http://berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de)

## Musée Carnavalet

### FRANCE

History meets art in this peculiarly Parisian institution dedicated to the history of the city, with 100 Tardis-like rooms transporting visitors through time, via paintings and artefacts from the City of Light's illuminating past. Spread over two adjacent mansions – the Hôtel Carnavalet and Hôtel Le Peletier de St-Fargeau – this idiosyncratic collection includes the personal belongings of Marie Antoinette, toiletries belonging to Napoleon and some of the earliest depictions of the Eiffel Tower. Arguably the most memorable exhibit, however, is the room in which the severely allergic Marcel Proust wrote his seven-volume masterpiece *À la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*) – completely lined with cork boards to protect himself from dust, pollen and noise.

● [carnavalet.paris.fr](http://carnavalet.paris.fr)



The Great Court forms the centrepiece to the British Museum. Above, left Goliath looms at one end of Amsterdam's Civic Guards Gallery

## British Museum

### ENGLAND

London's full of famous freebies, but the pick of the bunch is this mothership museum, packed with souvenirs pinched from all continents during Britain's globetrotting heyday. There are also a few wonders dug out of British soil: notably the Anglo-Saxon treasure found in Suffolk's Sutton Hoo, and the Lewis chessmen – a 12th-century chess set from the Outer Hebrides. You'll never get around in one day – you'll just have to come back.

● [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)



# Europe's most awe-inspiring national parks



Ice floes drift through Iceland's Jökulsárlón lagoon. Opposite, below An Alpine ibex surveys the peaks of Gran Paradiso National Park

## Jotunheimen National Park

### NORWAY

Literally translating from Norwegian as the 'Home of the Giants', this park is the Scandinavian wilderness at its most epic: a region of mighty glaciers, highland lakes and snow-crowned arêtes (glacial ridges) at the heart of the country. Jotunheimen also contains Norway's 29 tallest mountains, including the 2,469m-high Galdhøpiggen, the highest peak

in Northern Europe, on whose summit the sun never sets on summer nights. Hikers here get to enjoy 'allemannsretten' – free access to roam all uncultivated parts of the countryside – but there is no shortage of established trekking routes either. Among them is the Besseggen Ridge – a legendary scramble along a rocky spur, requiring concentration and the use of all four limbs, with the lakes of Bessvatnet and Gjende providing a distracting backdrop.

● Free; [jotunheimen.com](http://jotunheimen.com)

## Gran Paradiso National Park

### ITALY

Once the private hunting ground of Italian King Victor Emmanuel II who came here to shoot Alpine ibex, Gran Paradiso National Park is now the preserve of hikers, climbers and cross-country skiers. The peak after which the park is named counts as one of the most accessible summits above 4,000 metres in the Alps – an easy, non-technical trek until the final

paces, where mountaineers shimmy along a sheer cliff watched over by a statue of the Virgin Mary on the peak. Those who reach her are rewarded with sweeping views of the peaks of Mont Blanc and Grand Combin to the north, and towards the plains of Piedmont in the south. If you don't fancy the hair-raising climb, plenty of lower-altitude paths meander among wildflower-strewn Alpine meadows, and larch and fir woodlands down below.

● Free; [pngp.it](http://pngp.it)

PHOTOGRAPHS: UELAPHO/GETTY, GEN VAGULA/GEN VAGULA PHOTOGRAPHY/500PX



## Vatnajökull

### ICELAND

One of Europe's biggest national parks, Vatnajökull covers 14 per cent of Iceland's entire surface area and is home to the continent's most powerful waterfall – the mighty Dettifoss. Visitors come here to hike, go snowmobiling and ice caving – though perhaps the highlight is Jökulsárlón, a glacial lagoon on the southern edge of the park where icebergs drift about in the shadow of the hulking Vatnajökull glacier.

● Free; vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is



## Bavarian and Bohemian Forest

### GERMANY/ CZECH REPUBLIC

This wild utopia exists where Bavaria meets Bohemia in central Europe's largest forest – known as the Bayerische Wald on the German side of the border and Šumava on the Czech side. A remnant of a far larger, ancient wood that extended from the Rhine in the west to the Carpathians in the east, these forested hills were divided by the Iron Curtain during the Cold War, watchtowers and defences gradually being swallowed by the forest ever since. Geopolitics matter little to the 10,000 animal species that inhabit the woods – fox, deer, otter and wild boar among them. Hikers and cyclists can also be found on balmy summer days and cross-country skiers arrive when the woods are covered by a blanket of winter snow.

● Free; nationalpark-bayerischer-wald.de, npsumava.cz

## Parc National des Pyrénées & Parque Nacional de Ordesa y Monte Perdido

### FRANCE/SPAIN

Separated by the Pyrenees, these twin parks share fantastic fauna, including the lammergeier (bearded vulture), one of Europe's largest birds. The French reserve is spread over six main valleys, perhaps the most beautiful being the Vallée d'Aspe, where limestone peaks cast long shadows over a landscape of tumbledown farmsteads and church spires. Once crossed by Julius Caesar's Roman legions, the valley is now traversed by hikers on the GR10 – a long-distance path hewn into steep cliffs, passing by on its way from the Mediterranean Coast to the Atlantic. On the Spanish side, a similarly fine walk takes hikers through a series of switchbacks from Pradera de Ordesa to the Refugio de Góriz: a remote shelter, and a staging post for the rocky heights of Monte Perdido – 'the lost mountain'.

● Free; parc-pyrenees.com, magma.gob.es

## Cairngorm National Park

### SCOTLAND

Britain's largest national park occupies a vast heather-strewn plateau punctuated by some of Scotland's highest peaks. The greatest prize is 1,309m-high Ben Macdui – a humpbacked giant dotted with patches of snow well into the summer months, and often reached as part of a challenging day-hike taking in the adjoining peak of Cairn Gorm. Ben Macdui is the haunt of Am Fear Liath Mòr ('The Big Grey Man') – a supernatural beast that's the Highlands' answer to the Yeti, fond of creeping up behind hikers and leaving cryptic footprints. If you don't fancy the slog to the top to meet him, hitch a lift aboard the Cairngorm Mountain Railway – a funicular that shuttles guests up to the plateau in eight minutes, and from whose terminus station guided walks can be arranged.

● Free; cairngorms.co.uk

## Mount Olympus National Park


### GREECE

In Greek mythology the slopes of Mount Olympus housed the 12 Olympian gods. They spent their days lurking in the mountain's gorges, occasionally congregating on the summit to hold assemblies and on special occasions sending thunderbolts down into the realm of mortals below. Nowadays, it's golden eagles looking down from the heavens, watching over a range of hills home to wolves, wildcats, jackals and deer. Walkers, too, come here to exert themselves in the original Olympic theatre – wandering the cool beech forests or braving the scramble to the Mytikas peak, the highest point in Greece, often shrouded in clouds and lightning storms. The pretty town of Litchoro is the base camp for adventures in the park, while close by are the ancient ruins of Dion – a two millennia-old sanctuary visited by Alexander the Great, devoted to Zeus, the king of the gods, and the lord of the mountain beyond.

● Free; olympusfd.gr



# Safaris on a budget



Botswana's Okavango River. Opposite Tanzania's Masai giraffe is the largest of the nine subspecies of giraffe found in Africa

## Okavango Delta

### BOTSWANA

Exploring the remote backwaters of the Okavango Delta is one of Africa's greatest safari experiences, and also among its most expensive, with US\$625 a night luxury camps in abundance. Budget travellers need not despair, however. One excellent thrifty alternative is Old Bridge Backpackers – a popular overland spot perched beside a hippo pool with a range of self-catering tents and pitches for independent campers.

● Tents from US\$38; [maun-backpackers.com](http://maun-backpackers.com)

## Etosha National Park

### NAMIBIA

The Etosha salt pan is truly captivating – a flat, saline expanse in Africa's most sparsely populated country, transformed by rains into a shallow lagoon for a few days every year, on which flamingos and pelicans congregate. Nonetheless, it's the animals frequenting the nearby grasslands and waterholes that make this one of the continent's most extraordinary parks: with populations of elephants, lions, leopards and endangered rhinos all stomping the bush tracks along the pan's edge. Smooth, well-surfaced roads mean smaller (and therefore cheaper) rental cars are an option for self-drive safari-goers, and there are a number of well-kept campsites to choose from within the park's boundaries.

● Entry fee US\$6.25; [etoshanationalpark.org](http://etoshanationalpark.org)

## Mole National Park

### GHANA

Most people looking for safari immediately make a beeline for the wide open landscapes of East and Southern Africa – not realising that it's eminently possible to encounter the big beasts of the African savannah in the west of the continent too. One such place is Mole National Park in the north of Ghana, a wilderness reserve especially known for its elephants, but whose watering holes and grasslands are also frequented by buffaloes, kob (a type of antelope), baboons, warthogs and numerous colourful bird species. Costs come in much lower than in more popular safari destinations too: share the park's vehicle hire (£16 per hour) with others to make it even more of a bargain.

● Entry fee US\$10, plus guide US\$2.50 per hour; [molemotelgh.com](http://molemotelgh.com)

## Hell's Gate National Park

### KENYA

Beneath the basalt cliffs of this volcanic landscape in the Great Rift Valley northwest of Nairobi, you'll find zebras, giraffes, impalas and buffaloes wandering the grasslands. Large carnivores, on the other hand, are much rarer, meaning it's possible to spend a day walking or cycling through the park without spending too much time nervously glancing over your shoulder, on the look-out for approaching predators. At the centre of the park are the craggy strata of Hell's Gate Gorge, its entrance presided over by the monolithic rock of Fischer's Tower, which local legend tells is a Masai bride turned to stone through homesickness.

● Entry fee US\$29, camping available, bikes can be rented for an additional US\$6; [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke)

## Kruger National Park

### SOUTH AFRICA

Set in the far northeastern corner of South Africa, Kruger is one of the world's greatest parks – a swathe of wilderness the size of Wales, where, unlike Wales, you'll find elephants, rhinos, buffaloes, lions and leopards roaming the landscape. The park is as varied as it is vast: from granite hills in the busier, more game-rich southern region of Kruger, to wide-open savannah in the centre, to the crowd-free fever-tree forests and gorges in the remote north. Perhaps more than any other park in Africa, independent access is a breeze, with good-quality roads suitable for two-wheel drive cars, and petrol stations at all the rest camps. Camping options are plentiful, as are picnic spots with toilet and food facilities.

● Entry fee US\$20; [sanparks.org](http://sanparks.org)

PHOTOGRAPHS: JONATHAN GREGSON, PHILIP LEE HARVEY



## Katavi National Park

### TANZANIA

Think of a thousand hippos sharing a mud bath and you're some way to envisaging the drama of Katavi National Park in western Tanzania – one of East Africa's great unsung reserves, receiving fewer visitors in a year than Serengeti typically gets in a day. A stronghold of walking safaris, it's best visited in the dry season (May to October) when giraffes, lions and elephants congregate around the increasingly dry rivers and swamps, themselves home to large populations of hippos and crocodiles. Best of all, it's ideally placed for travellers on a budget, who can camp inside the park or else find affordable, simple guesthouses in the nearby village of Sitalike.

● Park fee US\$20, walking safari guide US\$20; [katavipark.org](http://katavipark.org)





# Adventures in the US

## Yellowstone National Park WYOMING

Yellowstone's geothermal phenomena attract thousands of visitors, from the spurting jet of Old Faithful Geyser to the technicolour splendour of the Grand Prismatic Spring. Most thermal waters in the park are too hot to safely bathe in; one of the few places you're allowed to soak is the barely signposted Boiling River, near the terraces of Mammoth Hot Springs. From the point where the North Entrance Road crosses from Montana into Wyoming, a half-mile footpath runs along the Gardner River to where a set of hot springs tumble down a mini-waterfall into the bathing pools. Open year-round except when water runs too high, the springs often get very busy – arrive in the morning to stand the best chance of having it to yourself.

● US\$30 for seven-day vehicle pass, US\$15 individual fee; [nps.gov/yell](http://nps.gov/yell)

## Great Smoky Mountains National Park NORTH CAROLINA/ TENNESSEE

Those who think big, blockbuster American scenery means you have to go west should pay a visit to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Here, the southern reaches of the Appalachians see the range at its most beguiling, with rolling foothills where clouds cling to the valley floors, pioneer log cabins with rickety roofs and stone hearths, and swathes of mossy, old-growth forest. More than 1,500 varieties of wildflower explode into colour here during the spring – a perfect time to go back-country hiking and wild camping. Watch out for the black bears that roam the park – if you see one, back away slowly, never run.

● Free, with camping from US\$14; [nps.gov/grsm](http://nps.gov/grsm)

## Great Basin National Park NEVADA

Four hours' drive from the neon glow of Vegas, the night sky is about as dark as it gets in the USA, with heavens so clear you can regularly see five planets with the naked eye. Rangers offer free hikes through the Great Basin National Park in summer when there's a full moon, with walkers looking up to craggy peaks and glacial lakes illuminated by a cool lunar glow.

● Free; [nps.gov/grba](http://nps.gov/grba)



Vernal Fall plunges almost 100 metres in Yosemite National Park. Left A star-gazing party in Nevada's Great Basin National Park

## Theodore Roosevelt National Park NORTH DAKOTA

Follow in the footsteps of the conservationist president in the park where he first fell in love with the American wilderness – a region of copper-coloured badlands, endless green prairies and rushing rivers in North Dakota. Glance up at skies where golden eagles glide by day and, very occasionally,

northern lights dance by night. Back-country hiking adventures along the trails might yield close encounters with mule deer, coyotes, cougars, wild horses, bighorn sheep and the park's greatest celebrity: the mighty bison. Unlike Teddy, you're not allowed to shoot bison and mount them on your wall, so make do with fixing them in your camera's crosshairs instead.

● US\$25 for a seven-day vehicle pass; [nps.gov/thro](http://nps.gov/thro)







## Yosemite National Park CALIFORNIA

The best way to experience Yosemite, America's signature national park, is to ditch the car and set out on foot. And the best short-range hike is the view-rich Mist Trail, which runs for 6½ miles along the Merced River and up into the Sierra Nevada mountain range. En route, walkers pass through the thundering mist created by two magnificent cascades: Vernal Fall and Nevada Fall. Prepare for a soaking, particularly in springtime when the falls are their most powerful.

● US\$30 for seven-day vehicle pass; [nps.gov/yose](https://nps.gov/yose)

## Katmai National Park ALASKA

Humans have lived in Katmai – in the northern part of the Alaska Peninsula – for at least 9,000 years, sharing the mountains, tundra and forest with wildlife including brown bears, moose, foxes, great horned owls and bald eagles. To this day, there are few wildlife encounters as exciting as watching a big brown bear from close by, particularly in

these surrounds; fortunately, at Brooks Camp, the bears have tastier fish to fry than you, with raised riverside platforms offering visitors safe and unobtrusive viewing as the animals pluck sockeye salmon out of the water. July to September is the best time to see them. There are plenty of other opportunities for back-country adventures in Katmai, with several marked hiking trails and ranger-led nature walks through the park.

● Free; [nps.gov/katm](https://nps.gov/katm)

## Chaco Culture Historical Park NEW MEXICO

An International Dark Sky Park, Chaco has terrestrial wonders to complement its heavenly delights. Featuring Ancestral Puebloan buildings set in an isolated high-desert environment, Chaco contains evidence of 10,000 years of human occupation. In its prime, the community here was a major trading and ceremonial hub for the

region, and the city the Puebloan people created was masterly in its layout and design. Pueblo Bonito is four storeys tall and may have had 600 to 800 rooms. It's thought that the complex was built to align with the stars during the equinoxes. It's best to linger after sunset too; there are free Night Sky programmes with talks and telescope viewing. To extend the experience, camp overnight, from only US\$15.

● US\$20 for a seven-day vehicle pass; [nps.gov/chcu](https://nps.gov/chcu)



# America's best movie nights



The skyscrapers of Lower Manhattan provide a screen backdrop for filmgoers at Pier 1 in Brooklyn Bridge Park

## New Orleans LOUISIANA

Whether it's Mardi Gras or the Jazz & Heritage Festival, residents of the Big Easy love to celebrate out on the streets. In spring and autumn each year, the New Orleans Film Society gives them yet another excuse to go al fresco with Moonlight Movies, a carefully thought-out curation of mostly free, outdoor films at locations across the city, ranging from a square beside the Mississippi to the Sculpture Garden at the New Orleans Museum of Art. A highlight this September is *The Wiz*, a 1978 Motown remake of *The Wizard of Oz*, starring Diana Ross as Dorothy and a teenage Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow, with spectacular musical numbers written by Luther Vandross, to be shown at the Arts Market in Palmer Park.

● Screenings free to US\$4.99; neworleansfilmsociety.org; Mar–May and Sep–Nov

## Denver COLORADO

Film on the Rocks evenings offer plenty of bang for your buck, with each movie preceded by a concert and stand-up from a comedian. The real draw here though is the surrounds – this must be one of, if not the only chance to see cinema in a geologically created, natural red sandstone amphitheatre that happens to offer perfect acoustics as well as being a national historic landmark. Just 10 miles west of the city of Denver, this 300 million-year-old rock formation has long been a big-hitting music venue, hosting concerts for the likes of The Beatles and Bruce Springsteen, and its annual film festival has now clocked up its 17th season. This year's edition features *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* – imagine Kylo Ren and Han Solo doing battle against this otherworldly scenery.

● Screenings US\$15; film. redrocksonline.com; May–Sep

## Coldwater MICHIGAN

For a slice of pure Americana, head to Coldwater, a small town between Detroit and Chicago, where the Capri Drive-In Movie Theater remains little changed since it began operating in the 1960s. Even if you're not behind the wheel of a Mustang convertible or Chevrolet pick up, it's still a retro experience to cruise past the original neon sign to pull up by one of the twin screens. Although the films shown are current (think *Star Trek* and *Ghostbusters* – the modern reboots) and moviegoers now tune into the sound system with their car radios, the vintage concession stands selling hot dogs and pop retain a certain Greased Lightning vibe. Just be sure to treat your date well, so you don't get stranded at the drive-in like John Travolta's luckless Danny Zuko.

● Screenings US\$8; capridrive-in.com

## Brooklyn NEW YORK

From providing the backdrop to one of the kiss scenes in Woody Allen's classic *Annie Hall* to being trampled over in *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, New York's Brooklyn Bridge has featured in so many flicks it arguably deserves its own star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. Few places, therefore, could be more fitting to watch the big screen than sprawled out on the lawns beside its eastern end. Every year on hot summer nights, Brooklyn Bridge Park presents Movies With A View, a mash-up of indie shorts, classic and cult films (this year's run includes *American Graffiti* and *Selma*). With the sun dipping below Manhattan's skyline in the background, screenings really can't get more cinematic than this.

● Free screenings; brooklynbridgepark.org; Thu Jul–Aug

## Miami FLORIDA

Taking advantage of the city's long warm dry winters, the Miami Beach SoundScape Cinema Series has weekly movie nights from October to May in a unique open-air setting that's just a couple of blocks back from the beach. Grab picnic baskets and blankets and join local Floridians in the bougainvillea-filled and palm-tree-lined urban park beside the Frank Gehry-designed New World Centre. Settle in as blockbusters such as *The Dark Knight Rises*, *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Back to the Future* are projected onto a suitably colossal 7,000-square-foot wall.

● Free screenings; mbculture.com; Wed Oct–May LP

### GET THE BOOK!



For more money-saving tips and ideas for the best-value sights in the world, pick up our new book

*The Best Things in Life are Free* (US\$22.99).

PHOTOGRAPH: JULIENNE SCHAEER



# Scout out the world's top spots for famous film and TV scenes

*Discover and visit the places where scenes from famous films and TV series were shot. Featuring more than 100 classic moments from the world of cinema and television.*

Game of Thrones  
Dubrovnik, Croatia



Available now in all good bookshops  
and online at [shop.lonelyplanet.com](http://shop.lonelyplanet.com)



## and TV Film Locations

Scout out the world's top spots for famous film and TV scenes







In earlier days, all the houses of Cape Town were painted white. The colours of the Bo-Kaap houses are partly linked to the Eid celebration





## The Photographer's Story

MARK DAFHEY



# BO-KAAP

If there's any one area that best symbolises South Africa's reinvention of itself as the Rainbow Nation, it must surely be Cape Town's Bo-Kaap – for colour, at least, rather than ethnic diversity.

Sitting in the shadow of Signal Hill, in an area broadly termed the City Bowl, the Muslim enclave whose name translates as 'Top Cape' is an indirect legacy of Dutch immigrants using slave labour to help develop their fledgling colony. Known as Cape Malays, these slaves were shipped over from Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka and various African countries during the 16th and 17th centuries. Often highly skilled in crafts, they were considered too useful for employment in the fields and were instead bought by Burghers in town, then housed in slave lodges here, in Bo-Kaap.

Britain seized the Cape from the Dutch in 1795. Religious freedom and an end to slavery followed over the next four decades. In the 1960s, as the apartheid government segregated the country's population by race, cities were transformed into exclusive zones for white South Africans. Non-whites were evicted from all of Cape Town's neighbourhoods with one exception – Bo-Kaap, thus helping to create a distinctive culture today known as Cape Malay.

Bo-Kaap's multifaceted heritage is reflected in its music, dance and food. More obvious is its architecture. Houses painted in vivid colours line cobblestone streets that are some of the most photographed in the country. But it hasn't always been this way.

In earlier days, all houses in Cape Town were painted white. Then the residents of Bo-Kaap began adding splashes of colour in preparation for the celebration of Eid, the Muslim festival of sacrifice. The fall of apartheid also allowed people to express themselves more freely. They did this partly by decorating their homes, with neighbours often agreeing on what colours to use so as not to have a clash of shades.

Today everyone knows this area as Bo-Kaap, but the name has never been official... until recently. Prior to December 17 last year, the suburb was divided into three sections called Schotschekloof, Stadzicht and Schoone Kloof. All are names with Dutch origins dating back to the 18th century.

My, how the times have changed since then!

---

**MARK DAFHEY** is an Australian travel writer and photographer who visited Cape Town courtesy of South African Airways ([flysaa.com](http://flysaa.com)). Follow Mark on Instagram @markdaffey.





It has been suggested that bright colours were a way for Bo-Kaapers to express their long-suppressed individualism after the collapse of apartheid



Neighbours often agree on what colours to use so they don't clash







81

Bo-Kaap is  
a close-knit  
community with  
strong social  
bonds and its  
own traditions










#### MAKE IT HAPPEN

• South African Airways flies from Singapore to Cape Town via Johannesburg five times a week, with same-day connections to 29 destinations on the African continent. Go to [flysaa.com](http://flysaa.com).

• Bo-Kaap is easy to explore independently, though joining a walking tour will greatly enhance your knowledge and understanding of how the enclave came to be. Some are free. Try [nielsentours.co.za](http://nielsentours.co.za). 

The residents of Bo-Kaap are used to tourists pointing cameras at them and are mostly obliging when asked if they can have their picture taken

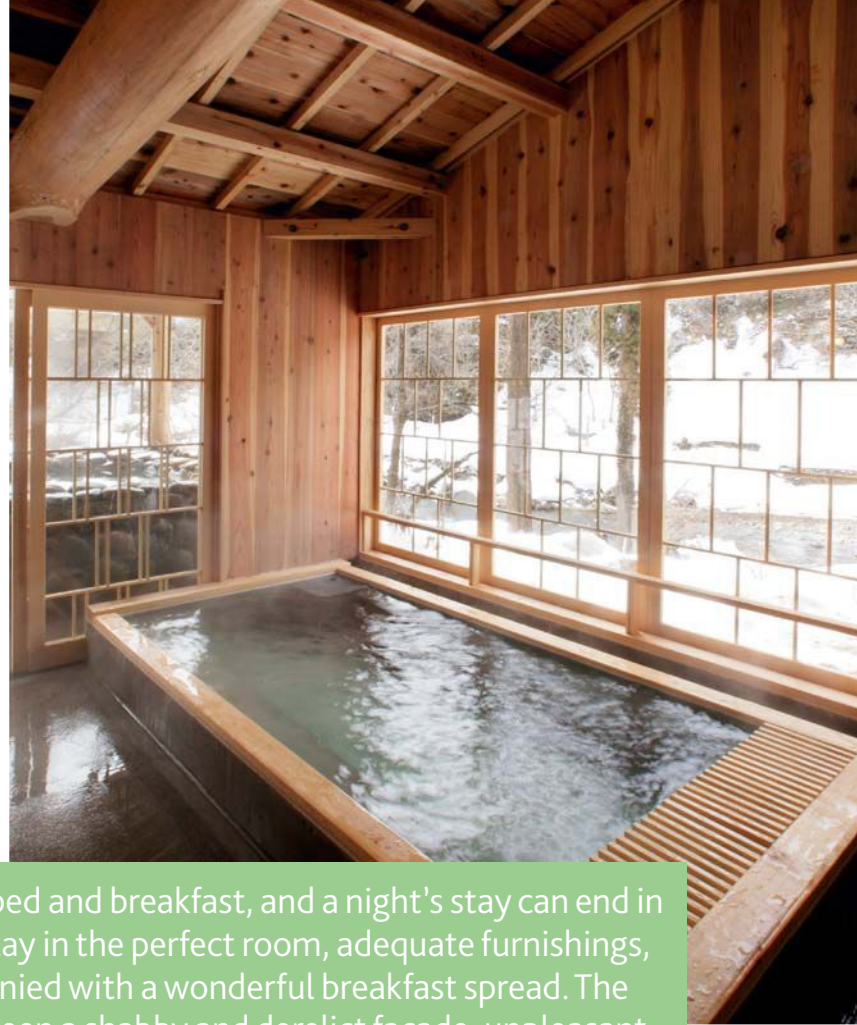
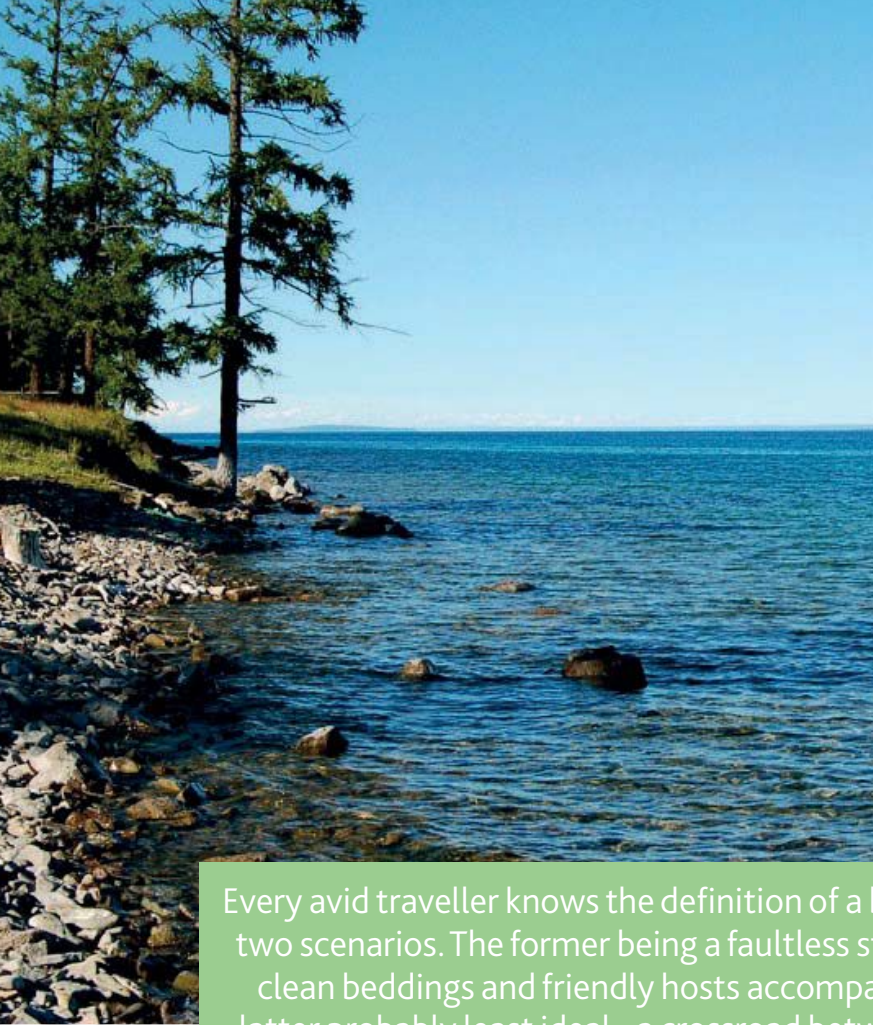




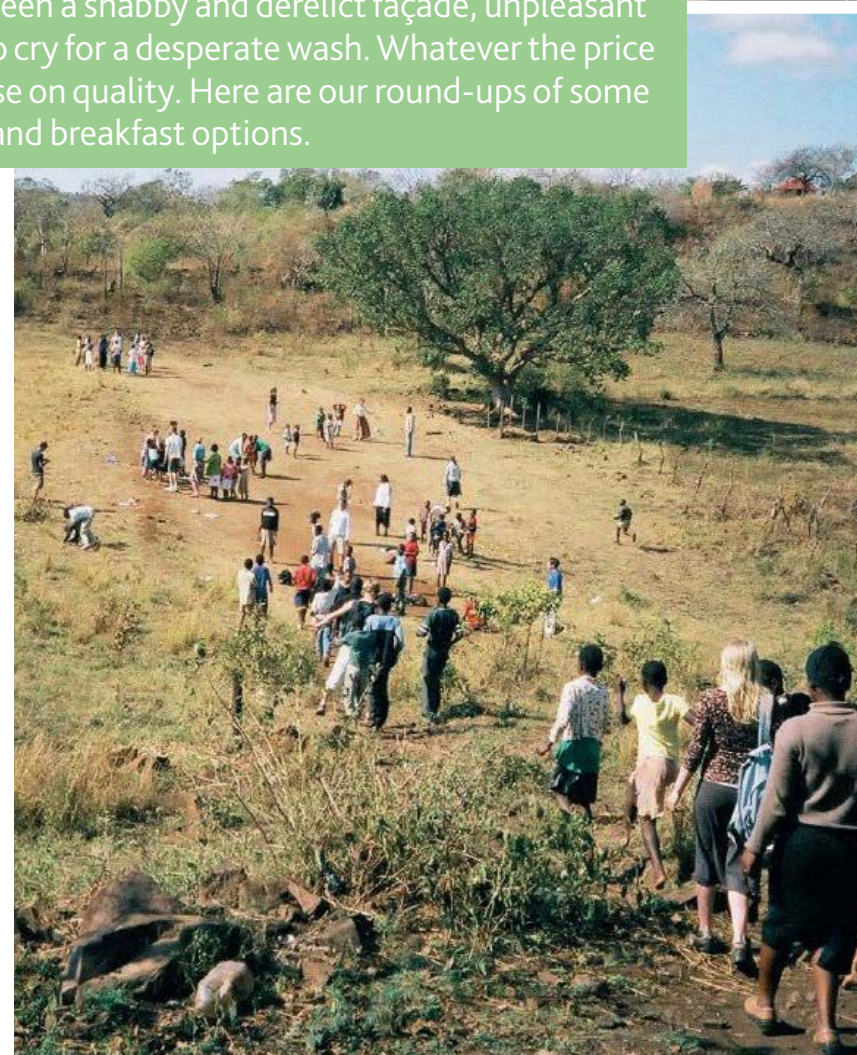
# EXTRAORDINARY PLACES TO STAY

WORDS JOSMIN ONG





Every avid traveller knows the definition of a bed and breakfast, and a night's stay can end in two scenarios. The former being a faultless stay in the perfect room, adequate furnishings, clean beddings and friendly hosts accompanied with a wonderful breakfast spread. The latter probably least ideal - a crossroad between a shabby and derelict façade, unpleasant musky scents alongside bedding that seem to cry for a desperate wash. Whatever the price point, there should be no need to compromise on quality. Here are our round-ups of some exquisite spring bed and breakfast options.





## EXTRAORDINARY PLACES TO STAY

### 1. RANKEISOU

#### Niigata, Japan

**YOU ARE SLEEPING IN:** An authentic Japanese ryokan, or a Japanese-style inn. Like most Japanese-style inns, the atmosphere, appearance and hospitality outweighs the latest modern conveniences. A typical ryokan guestroom includes a small area to step in and remove shoes, sliding paper doors that separate that from the sleeping quarters, tatami floor mats, low wooden tables, sitting cushions, futon (sleeping quilts) and closets to keep the sleeping quilts. In Rankeisou, guests are also offered luxurious natural mineral baths in traditional onsen (public or private) settings and classic Japanese cuisine. The ryokan is also conveniently tucked within the rural area, right along the mountain stream river. Sakura and mountain wildflowers bloom in abundance during spring season, and makes for a perfect walking break while admiring Mother Nature's best offerings.

**NEARBY EXCURSION TIPS:** The nearest train

station, Echigo-Yuzawa, is home to Sake Museum Ponshu-kan where patrons can taste more than 100 varieties of sake at its best temperature. They are presented in vending machines, an old school method of enjoying sake in sample sizes, and are extremely affordable. It also serves as a sampling corner for visitors who wish to get bottles of sake as souvenirs.

**RATE:** US\$316++ per night

[i rankei.com](http://i.rankei.com)

### 2. BINDON BOTTOM

#### Dorset, England

**YOU ARE SLEEPING IN:** One of the world's best bed & breakfast (as voted by international guests) located in the magnificent World Heritage Jurassic Coast in beautiful Dorset countryside and the Isle of Purbeck. There are five guestrooms to choose from, all named after world acclaimed

writers (mostly poets). Each room is fitted with organic and pure cotton bed linens and luxury duvets, complimentary selection of DVD on the flat screen TV, WiFi internet access, hospitality tray brimming with snacks and drinks, organic luxury toiletries and guide books to get around the area. What we love most was the fact that each stay helps to support one of three chosen charities: Air Ambulance Dorset & Somerset, Cancer Research UK and Dorset Wildlife Trust that will help sustain things for generations to come.

**NEARBY EXCURSION TIPS:** There is something for everyone, from beaches to walking and cycling tours, Jurassic Safari tours for wildlife lovers, boat trips to nearby islands, gardens and manor house tours and even visits to castles and other historical places. The one place you must visit though, is Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door itself, with its panoramic sea views.

**RATE:** US\$112++ per night

[i bindonbottom.com](http://i.bindonbottom.com)



PHOTOGRAPHS: RANKEISOU, BINDON BOTTOM







### 3. TOILOGT GER CAMP

#### Khatgal, Mongolia

**YOU ARE SLEEPING IN:** A campsite with 20 traditional Mongolian gers. These are portable, round tents covered with skins or felt and used as a dwelling by nomads in the steppes of Central Asia. Within the campsite, visitors can also expect vigvams, cabins, a restaurant and bar, children's playground and a Mongolian traditional game centre. The site is fully equipped with sauna and showers, solar electricity, internet and a souvenir shop for those who would love to bring home a knick-knack or two. Established on the northwestern side of the lake, tourists can ensure the comforts of a 'hotel' while enjoying outdoor pursuits and locally prepared cuisine by in-house expert cooks.

**NEARBY EXCURSION TIPS:** Horseback riding, outdoor camping, mountain biking tours, canoe and kayak tours, boating, fishing, hiking and trekking are all available at the camp upon request. If you love exploring local cultures, take on the nomadic culture tours and discover folk singing, dancing and traditional melodies like never before.

**RATE:** US\$25++ per night  
 ⓘ hovsgoltravel.com

### 4. BUKCHONMARU HANOK GUEST-HOUSE

#### Seoul, South Korea

**YOU ARE SLEEPING IN:** A Korean traditional house. Korean architecture takes into consideration the nearby environment and surroundings, which includes the land type and seasonal changes. A hanok has a framework involving a stylobate at the bottom, and the placement of wooden pillars, beams and rafters on top. The stylobate protects wooden structures from insects and humidity, and thus, makes it both beautiful and functional. Other notable differences are the heating system in the flooring and lots of light being 'trapped' in the room with Korean paper covering windows and doors. The real strength of hanoks though, is its comfort, convenience and the feeling it evokes as humans reconnect with natural spaces. Bukchonmaru is

conveniently located in the heart of Bukchon residential area in Seoul, making it a truly authentic destination to reside in.

**NEARBY EXCURSION TIPS:** Bukchon neighbourhood itself is an attraction that brings in flocks of tourists to admire its unique charm and tinge of nostalgia. In here, the wide array of small shops, both modern and traditional, creates an interesting and vintage atmosphere. This is not a museum nor a folk village, but a residential area breathing and brimming with residents and their life stories – step in and widen your horizons on Korean history as you chat up one of the home owners here.

**RATE:** US\$84++ per night  
 ⓘ bukchonmaru.com ⓘ

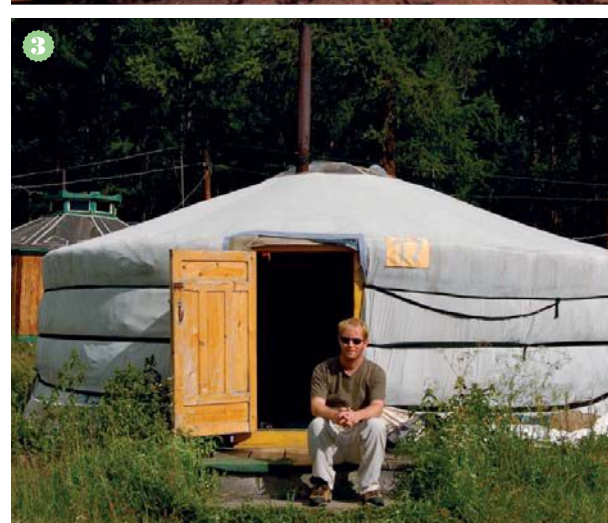
### 5. SHEWULA MOUNTAIN CAMP

#### Shewula Nature Reserve, Swaziland

**YOU ARE SLEEPING IN:** A rondavel – traditional circular African dwelling with a conical thatched roof – something akin to a westernised version of the African-style hut. Globetrotters will love the traditional Swazi lifestyle in its appealing natural setting. Aside from the sleeping quarters, there is a boma (open communal area) with a fully-equipped kitchen and dining space, store room, flush toilets and hot showers in a separate facility and other little amenities such as self-catering menus prepared by the locals and paraffin lanterns to light the darkness of the night. The campsite is built without electricity on purpose to enhance the rightful environment conditions.

**NEARBY EXCURSION TIPS:** Visits are available to nearby villages to participate in their daily chores, taste the local beer or simply listen to their fairy tales. There are also opportunities to meet local crafters at work or visit the schools. Alternatively, take a visit to the Sangoma – a highly revered person in Swazi culture, thought to have healing powers and the ability to foresee the future. Shewula specially curated this visit for visitors to further understand the traditions and way of life here in Swaziland.

**RATE:** US\$23++ per night  
 ⓘ shewulacamp.org ⓘ



PHOTOGRAPHS: TOILOGT GER CAMP, BUKCHONMARU HANOK GUESTHOUSE, SHEWULA MOUNTAIN CAMP







## SUBSCRIPTION

# FREE INNERGIE POWERGEAR ICE 65 UNIVERSAL LAPTOP ADAPTER WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE

The PowerGear ICE 65 is the universal laptop adapter for the truly mobile lifestyle that spans both local cafes and foreign lands. Plugging directly into a wall socket, the PowerGear ICE 65 combines powerful utility with elegant styling, incredible versatility with superb usability.

- Reimagined Crystal Design
- 90% Power Conversion-Power Saving
- High Compatibility with laptop brands

*\*Gifts are on a first come first served basis. While stocks last.  
Terms and conditions apply.*



**FREE**  
INNERGIE  
POWERGEAR ICE  
65 UNIVERSAL  
LAPTOP  
ADAPTER

## 4 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE:



### OR EMAIL

Subscription@regentmedia.sg



SINGAPORE: 65-6449 9945  
MALAYSIA: 603-42926251



SINGAPORE: 65-6446 6888  
MALAYSIA: 603-79548989



Regent Media Pte Ltd,  
20 Bedok South Road,  
Singapore 469277  
or  
Regent Media Sdn Bhd,  
Unit 6.02 Level 6, Menara Maxisegar  
Jalan Pandan Indah 4/2 Pandan Indah  
55100 Kuala Lumpur

*\*ONLINE SUBSCRIBERS ENJOY A 15% DISCOUNT OFF THE SUBSCRIPTION RATES BUT ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ANY SUBSCRIPTION OR PROMOTIONAL GIFTS*

## LONELY PLANET MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

### PLEASE TICK ACCORDINGLY

- ☐ Singapore, 1 year subscription, 12 issues for S\$90
- ☐ Malaysia, 1 year subscription, 12 issues for RM230

*\*Rate is inclusive of postage in SGP and MY*

### PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Title	Surname
Name	
NRIC	DOB
Tel Number	Mobile
Email	
Address	
Country	
Postal Code	

### MY PROFILE

Gender	Age Group	Occupation	Annual Income
<input type="radio"/> Male	<input type="radio"/> Below 30	<input type="radio"/> Executive	<input type="radio"/> Below \$50,000
<input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> 31 - 40	<input type="radio"/> Management	<input type="radio"/> \$50,001 - \$100,000
	<input type="radio"/> 41 - 50	<input type="radio"/> Professional	<input type="radio"/> \$100,001 - \$150,000
	<input type="radio"/> Above 50	<input type="radio"/> Businessman	<input type="radio"/> Above \$150,000

### YOUR PAYMENT OPTIONS

#### ☐ CHEQUE

Please enclose a cheque made payable to:

Singapore: Regent Media Pte Ltd  
Malaysia: Regent Media Sdn Bhd

Cheque No.:

Amount:

#### ☐ CREDIT CARD\* (VISA & MASTERCARD ONLY) \*Singapore only

Debited amount under "Golf Events and Marketing" will be reflected in your credit card statement for subscribers in Singapore.

Name on Credit Card:

Credit Card No.:

Amount:

Expiry Date:

Signature:

Date:

#### TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- This subscription offer is non-refundable
- Promotion is valid till the end of Mar 2017
- Subscription gifts where applicable are available on a while stocks last basis
- The above subscription rates are only applicable to readers residing in Singapore & Malaysia
- Gifts must be taken as provided and are neither transferable nor exchangeable for cash
- All prices are inclusive of GST and taxes
- Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing
- By subscribing to the magazine, you agree to allow Regent Media Pte Ltd to send you marketing collaterals for promotional purposes.
- Subscribers/Winners will be notified by post
- Subscription gifts/lucky draw prizes are to be collected at address stated on notification letter
- Other terms and conditions apply



MARCH 2017

# Mini Guides

SIX THEMED GUIDES TO TAKE ON THE PERFECT SHORT BREAK



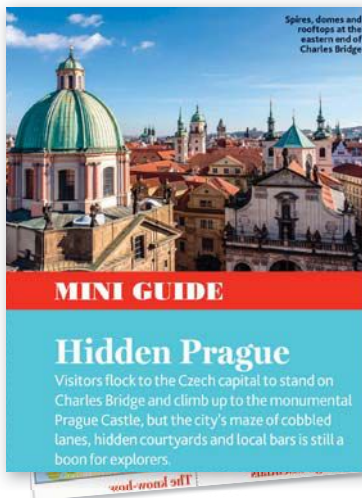
page 79



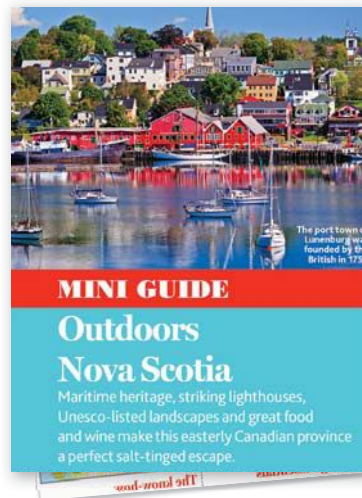
page 81



page 83



page 85



page 87



page 89

*From your magazine to your pocket...*



1

**TEAR**  
the guide out  
along the  
perforations...

2

**FOLD**  
the guide along  
the first dotted lines...



3

**FOLD**  
again to  
make a handy  
pocket-size guide.





# WIN! A UNIQLO AIRISM EXPERIENCE



LifeWear

**Win a set of UNIQLO AIRISM products worth up to \$80 each!**

Uniqlo's AIRISM is more than just an underlayer beneath your clothing. The innerwear is designed with comfort technologies in mind, one that includes anti-odour and moisture-wicking functions to help keep dry and cosy throughout the day. Try it once and love it forever, experience AIRISM today.

\* Terms & conditions apply

## PRIZE DRAW ENTRY FORM UNIQLO AIRISM Promotion

For your chance to win this fantastic prize, fill in your details and post this form to:  
Regent Media Pte Ltd, Lonely Planet Asia Mar 2017, 20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277

☐ Women's Set ☐ Men's Set

Title Name

Address

Postal code

DOB / /

Mobile

Email\*

Regent Media Pte Ltd may contact you with details of our products and services or to undertake research. If you prefer not to receive such information from any of these companies by post or phone, please tick this box ☐. \* Please include your email address on your entry if you prefer to receive such information by email. We may occasionally pass your details on to carefully selected companies whose products and services we feel may be of interest to you. If you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone, please tick this box ☐.

## EACH SET INCLUDES

Either

► Men's set:

- o 1 x AIRISM Crew Neck Short Sleeve T Shirt
- o 1 x AIRISM V Neck Short Sleeve T Shirt
- o 1 x AIRISM Mesh Crew Neck Short Sleeve T Shirt
- o 1 x AIRISM Mesh V Neck Short Sleeve T Shirt
- o 1 x AIRISM Mesh V Neck Sleeveless Top
- o 1 x AIRISM Mesh Tank Top

OR

► Women's set:

- o 1 x AIRISM Stretch Long Sleeve Hoodie
- o 1 x AIRISM Short Sleeve Crew Neck T
- o 1 x AIRISM Camisole
- o 1 x AIRISM Sleeveless Top

## HOW TO ENTER

Stand a chance to win this fantastic prize, simply answer and fill in your details on the entry form and send it to: Regent Media Pte Ltd, **Lonely Planet Asia Mar 2017**, 20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277. Alternatively you can email to [lpcontests@regentmedia.sg](mailto:lpcontests@regentmedia.sg), titled **Mar 2017 - UNIQLO AIRISM Promotion** with your full name, ID number, contact number and address. Competition closes 31 Mar 2017 at 11.59pm. Terms and conditions apply.

### Terms & Conditions.

This promotion is open to all except staff of Regent Media and sponsor.  
Prizes must be taken as provided and are not transferable or exchangeable for cash.  
Winners will be notified by post, email or phone and prize is to be collected at address stated on notification letter.  
The management reserves the right to replace items with those of similar value.  
The management's decision is final and no further queries will be entertained.  
Entry information may be used for future marketing and promotional purposes.





A cheese stall at Borough Market in East London

## MINI GUIDE

# Eating in London

In London, the whole world is available on a plate. Fine-dining institutions thrive but the city is also having a renaissance in British cuisine and unique market food.

## Gastropubs

### ✕ THE ANCHOR & HOPE ①

A stalwart of the South Bank food scene, The Anchor & Hope is a quintessential gastropub: elegant but not formal, and delicious. The menu is European food with a British twist, such as rabbit with anchovies, almonds and rocket, and panna cotta with rhubarb compote ([anchorandhopepub.co.uk](http://anchorandhopepub.co.uk); 36 The Cut; 5pm–11pm Mon, 11am–11pm Tue–Sat, 12pm–3.15pm Sun; mains from US\$20).



The Empress serves its fish and chips on yesterday's news

### ✕ THE WHITE SWAN ②

Though it may look like any City pub from the street, The White Swan is anything but typical. Downstairs, diners will find a smart bar that serves excellent pub food under the watchful eyes of animal prints and trophies, including a swan. Upstairs, there's a more formal dining room with a classic British menu ([thewhiteswanlondon.com](http://thewhiteswanlondon.com); 108 Fetter Lane; 11am–midnight Mon–Thu, to 1am Fri; mains from US\$16).

### ✕ THE EMPRESS ③

In the hip inner east suburb of Hackney, a spitting distance from Victoria Park, this upmarket pub conversion belts out excellent modern British cuisine under chef Elliott Lidstone. On Mondays there's a US\$12.50 main-plus-drink deal, on Tuesdays its BYO, and on weekends there's a classic British brunch menu ([empresse9.co.uk](http://empresse9.co.uk); 130 Lauriston Rd; 5pm–11pm Mon, noon–11pm Tue–Fri, 10am–11pm Sat & Sun; mains from US\$15).

## Special occasions

### ✕ DUCK & WAFFLE ④

Perched atop Heron Tower, just down from Liverpool St Station, Duck & Waffle is a fashionable city venue for dining with a view. It serves Continental and British dishes in small and large plate sizes, including the signature duck leg confit, fried duck egg and waffle, with maple syrup ([duckandwaffle.com](http://duckandwaffle.com); 38th fl, Heron Tower, 110 Bishopsgate; open 24hr; dishes from US\$10).



Vegetables with goat's curd and buckwheat at Duck & Waffle

### ✕ THE ORANGERY ⑤

Punctuate a visit to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens with breakfast, lunch or afternoon tea at The Orangery, housed in an 18th-century conservatory on the grounds of Kensington Palace. Tea is the standout experience here: book ahead to bag a table on the beautiful terrace and splash out on the 'Royal' to enjoy it with a glass of Pimm's or champagne ([orangerykensingtonpalace.co.uk](http://orangerykensingtonpalace.co.uk); afternoon tea noon–6pm; US\$35, or US\$43 with Pimm's, and US\$47 with champagne).

### ✕ FOYER AT CLARIDGE'S ⑥

A landmark hotel and London institution, Claridge's is a swanky spot for dining. The setting is gorgeous and the gentle clinks of porcelain and champagne glasses may be a highlight of your trip to London. Extend your pinkie finger to partake in afternoon tea within the classic Art Deco-style foyer, or retreat to the inner sanctum for Michelin-starred dinner at its Fera restaurant ([claridges.co.uk](http://claridges.co.uk); 49–53 Brook St; afternoon tea 2.45pm–5.30pm; US\$75, with champagne US\$85; three-course lunch US\$50).

## Food markets

### ✕ BOROUGH MARKET ⑦

This market nicknamed London's Larder is overflowing with food-lovers, wide-eyed visitors and Londoners in search of inspiration. There are plenty of takeaway stalls for lunchtime browsers. The market heaves on Saturdays: head to Southwark Cathedral gardens nearby to enjoy your finds ([boroughmarket.org.uk](http://boroughmarket.org.uk); 8 Southwark St; 10am–5pm Mon–Thu, to 6pm Fri, 8am–5pm Sat).



Maltby St Market is a popular spot for brunch at the weekend

### ✕ MALTBY ST MARKET ⑧

Billed as an alternative to Borough Market, Maltby St Market is another popular SE1 food haven; it's smaller than its big brother and some would say more authentic. The stalls are top-notch and many offer original small bites, such as East London smoked salmon and cream cheese blinis, and luxury cheese toasties. Little Bird Gin bar is a small-batch distillery serving cocktails ([maltby.st](http://maltby.st); Maltby St; 9am–4pm Sat, 11am–4pm Sun).

### ✕ MARYLEBONE FARMERS' MARKET ⑨

This weekly farmers' market is the largest in town, with 30 to 40 producers coming from within a 100-mile radius of the M25. It's expensive but charming, reflecting the upmarket clientele who come here to do their weekly shop. Local beekeepers sell London honey here and it's also possible to get freshly shucked oysters ([lfm.org.uk/markets/marylebone](http://lfm.org.uk/markets/marylebone); Cramer Street Car Park; 10am–2pm Sun).

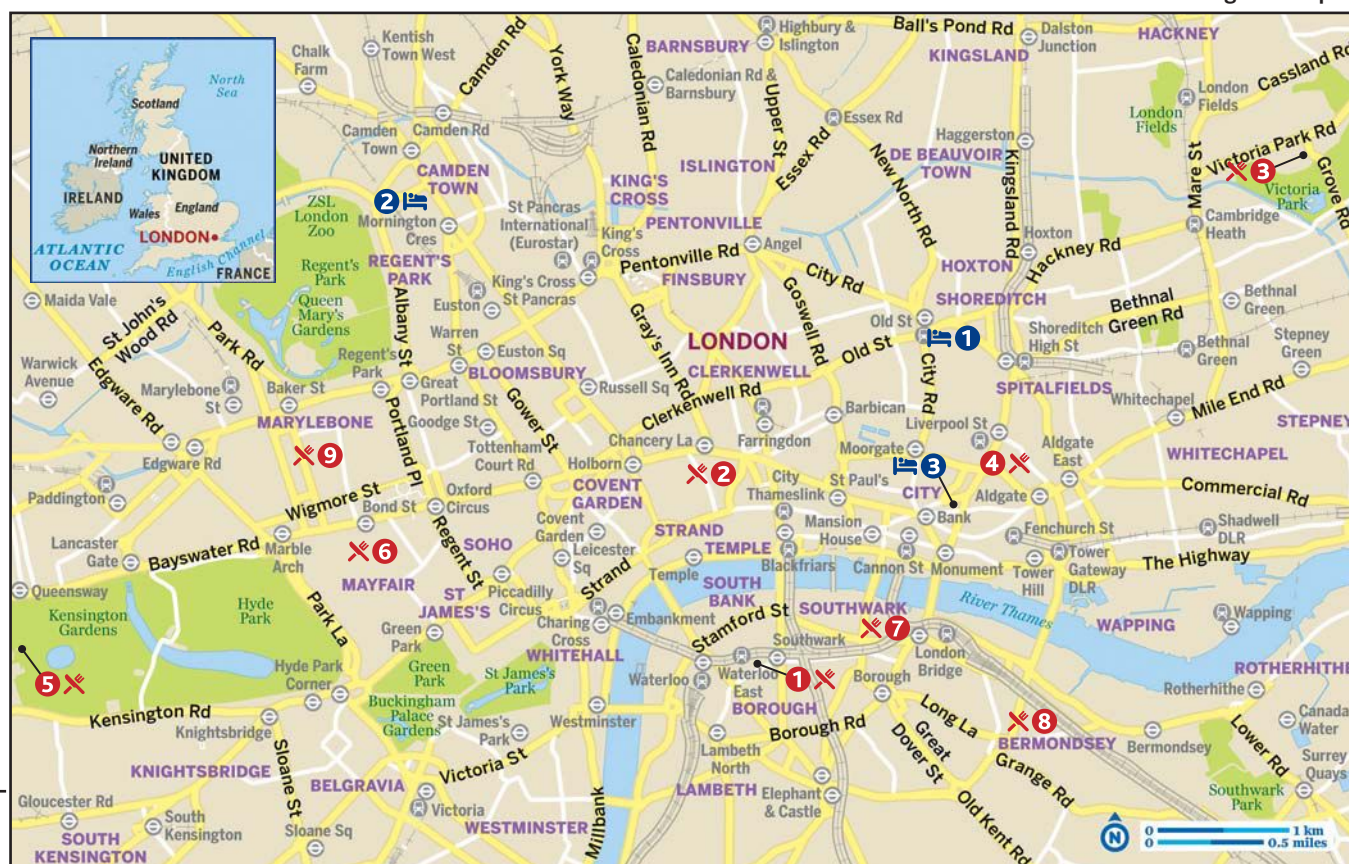
TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Eating in London

✕ Eating 🛏 Sleeping



## London essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Travel from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur is quite straightforward. Fly direct on British Airways to London Heathrow (from US\$1,040; ba.com) or on national carriers, Singapore Airlines (from US\$1,250; singaporeair.com) or Malaysia Airlines (from US\$838; malaysiaairlines.com). Heathrow has its own tube stations. Public transport in London is expensive: buy an Oyster card from any of the city's tube stations for the cheapest fares (zone 1 single US\$3; see tfl.gov.uk). Or hire a 'Boris bike' (US\$2.50 access fee, first half-hour free, US\$2.50 for every half-hour after that; tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/santander-cycles).

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

1 Book far enough ahead at **The Hoxton** and you might pay just US\$62. The recently renovated rooms are small but stylish and come with a desk, fridge and breakfast in a bag delivered to your door (thehoxtan.com; 81 Great Eastern St; from US\$62).



The circular lobby and glass dome at Threadneedles

2 **York & Albany** is a north London gastropub in Gordon Ramsay's culinary empire. Its nine bedrooms have huge windows, fireplaces and plush bathrooms (gordonramsayrestaurants.com/york-and-albany; 127-129 Parkway; from US\$213).  
3 **Threadneedles** is in the heart of the city (five minutes from Duck & Waffle) yet from the wonderfully understated exterior you'd hardly know it existed. The 74 rooms are spread over five floors (hotelthreadneedles.co.uk; 5 Threadneedle St; from US\$313).

## The know-how

### FOOD TRENDS & FADS

New food obsessions sweep the capital; here are the trends occupying Londoners right now:

**Going regional** It's no longer plain old Chinese but Dongbei or Xinjiang; Indian is now Gujarati, Goan or Punjabi.

**Smokehouses** The growing fad for flame-seared flavours has hatched a host of restaurants across town.

**Late-night dining** The imminent weekend night tube service is only going to give this trend a further shot in the arm.

**Peruvian food** Food waves in Lima have sparked inspiration for Peruvian food in the capital, in particular ceviche.

**Ramen** The Japanese noodle broth is served and eaten quickly – perfect for those on the move.

**Food trucks** Whether part of a market or just occupying a chain-free corner, food trucks have become a feature of the capital's eating scene.

### FURTHER READING



**Lonely Planet's London** (US\$21.99) is a comprehensive guide to the city; for short breaks, try

**Pocket London** (US\$13.99).

Download Lonely Planet's free Guides app, featuring London, from iTunes. The London supper club scene is eclectic. To find out about coming events, try supperclubfangroup.ning.com, an excellent directory set up by a supper club host. Tania Ballantine's **Eat Like A Londoner** (US\$12.50; Frances Lincoln) is an illustrated guide to dining in the capital, with venues split out into clever categories.



COMPILED BY LORNA PARKES. WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PETER DRAGICEVICH, STEVE FALLON, EMILIE FILOU AND DAMIAN HARPER. PHOTOGRAPHS: KERSTIN BITTNER/GETTY; TAVI IONESCU; CHRISTIAN MANTUANO; MEXICAN FOOD TRUCK COURTESY OF IT'S RUDE TO STARE



The Bauhaus Archiv celebrates a landmark design movement



## MINI GUIDE

# Museums in Berlin

Berlin's fascinating past and positioning as a centre of cultural experimentation provide endless material for thoughtful exhibitions, offbeat museums and historic archives.

Fold 2

## Cold War

### DDR MUSEUM 1

This interactive and often busy museum pulls back the Iron Curtain to explore the workings of the former DDR (East Germany). Exhibitions address the feared Stasi (secret police) and chronic supply shortages, as well as everyday aspects of socialism such as collective potty training for kids ([ddr-museum.de](http://ddr-museum.de); Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse 1; 10am–8pm, to 10pm Sat; online ticket US\$5).

### SPY MUSEUM 2

It's only fitting that the city once known as the 'capital of spies' now has its own museum of espionage, which opened in September 2015 with more than 1,000 exhibits. The Spy Museum spans thousands of years of international intelligence tactics from across the globe, and has attempted to bottle smells and preserve the sound, feel and taste of espionage ([spymuseumberlin.com](http://spymuseumberlin.com); Leipziger Platz 9; 10am–8pm; US\$18).



A camper-style Trabant in the Museum in der Kulturbrauerei

### MUSEUM IN DER KULTURBRAUEREI 3

Defunct DDR society is also the focus of this former brewery and branch of the Haus der Geschichte museum. Original documents and objects teach visitors about the daily grind in East Germany, with themed sections juxtaposing the state's lofty aspirations with the sobering realities of surveillance and oppression ([hdg.de/berlin](http://hdg.de/berlin); Knaackstrasse 97; 10am–6pm, to 8pm Thu, closed Mon; free).

## Weird & wonderful

### DEUTSCHES CURRYWURST MUSEUM 4

Bright, fun and interactive, this museum is entirely dedicated to the currywurst, Berlin's beloved sausage snack. Here you can find out what curry type you are, learn about the wurst's history and watch a film about one woman's quest for the best currywurst ([currywurstmuseum.com](http://currywurstmuseum.com); Schützenstrasse 70; 10am–6pm; US\$11 including a wurst tasting).



A Berlin favourite since 1949, currywurst has its own museum

### COMPUTER GAMES MUSEUM 5

A trip down computer-game memory lane is what's in store for big and little kids at the well-curated Computerspiele Museum, whether you're of the Pacman or World of Warcraft generation. Exhibits put the industry's evolution into historical and cultural context, and explain how games are designed. One section looks at aspects such as violence and addiction ([computerspielemuseum.de](http://computerspielemuseum.de); Karl-Marx-Allee 93a; 10am–8pm; US\$7.50).

### RAMONES MUSEUM 6

You might ask why a museum dedicated to a New York punk band is in Berlin. Well, it's all thanks to one dedicated fan who vows to keep their flame alive with his eclectic collection of memorabilia. Look for Marky's drumsticks and Johnny's jeans amid signed album covers, posters, flyers, photographs and other flotsam and jetsam. The on-site café hosts the occasional concert ([ramonesmuseum.com](http://ramonesmuseum.com); Krausnickstrasse 23; 10am–10pm; US\$3.50, with drink US\$5).

## Design

### MUSEUM OF THINGS 7

A bit like a cross between a cabinet of curiosities and a flea market, the Museum der Dinge examines 20th- and 21st-century product and design culture, with items from the archive of the Deutscher Werkbund, a group formed in 1907 to integrate traditional crafts and industrial mass-production techniques ([museumderdinge.org](http://museumderdinge.org); Oranienstrasse 25; noon–7pm Thu–Mon; US\$6).



An elephant model from 1600 at the Museum of Decorative Arts

### BAUHAUS ARCHIV 8

Klee and Kandinsky are among the famous artists whose work is on display at this museum dedicated to the Bauhaus, a seminal school of architecture, design and art founded in Germany in 1919 but sadly quashed by the Nazis in the early 1930s. The avant-garde building was designed by Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius ([bauhaus.de](http://bauhaus.de); Klingelhofstrasse 14; 10am–5pm Wed–Mon; US\$7 Wed–Fri, US\$7.50 Sat–Mon).

### MUSEUM OF DECORATIVE ARTS 9

The Kunstgewerbemuseum is the main home of Germany's prized collection of European design, fashion and decorative arts from the Middle Ages to today. Pride of place goes to classic outfits and accessories from the past 150 years, but there are plenty of other exquisitely ornate pieces to feast your eyes upon ([smb.museum](http://smb.museum); Matthäikirchplatz; 10am–6pm Tue–Fri, 11am–6pm Sat–Sun; US\$7.50).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

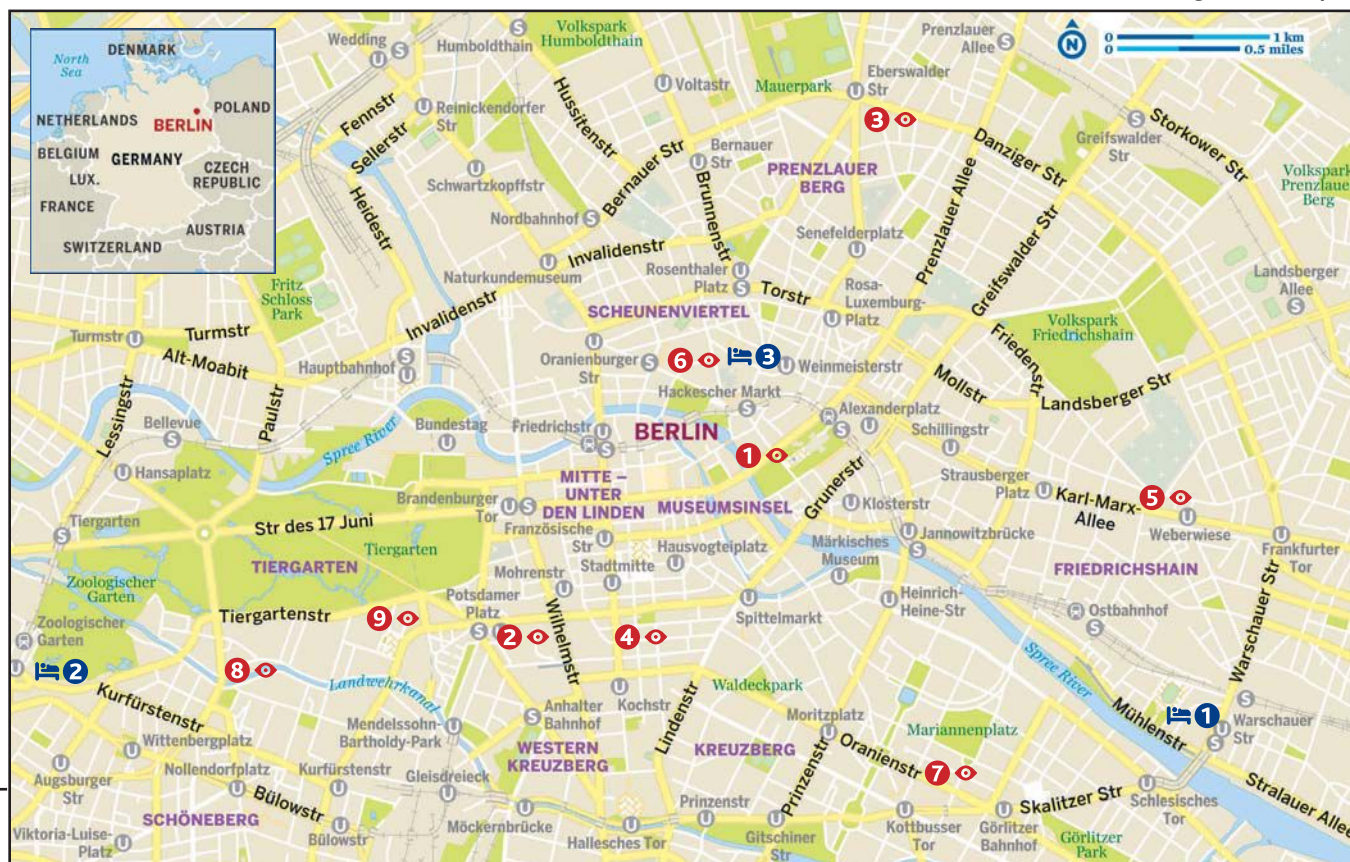
Tear out page here then fold along the dotted lines



# MINI GUIDE

## Museums in Berlin

📍 Sights 🛏 Sleeping



## Berlin essentials

### 🚆 TRANSPORT

Most flights from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur land in Tegel airport. Turkish Airlines flies from both with one stopover in Istanbul (from US\$589; turkishairlines.com). Tegel has no train service, but buses reach the city centre in about 45 minutes (US\$2.50 one-way); from Schönefeld, Airport-Express trains (RB14 or RE7) to central Berlin run twice hourly (20–30 minutes; US\$3.50 one-way). Taxis to Alexanderplatz cost about US\$25 from Tegel and US\$40 from Schönefeld. The U-Bahn (subway) is the most efficient way to travel around Berlin (singles from US\$1.50 day tickets from US\$6.50; vbb.de).

### 🛏 WHERE TO STAY

1 The ultimate in creative crash pads, the offbeat Michelberger Hotel is based in an old factory in Friedrichshain, close to the East Side Gallery. Rooms come in a range of sizes (michelbergerhotel.com; Warschauer Strasse 39–40;



Rooms at the Michelberger Hotel encapsulate Berlin's DIY spirit

from US\$94).

2 The 'urban jungle' theme of the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin nods to its place between Berlin's zoo and main shopping district. Quirk factors include hammocks and an onsite bakery (25hours-hotels.com; Budapest Strasse 40; from US\$125).

3 Casa Camper is what you get when a trend-conscious Catalan shoemaker moves into the hotel business. There's a top-floor lounge with stellar views, plus free 24/7 hot and cold snacks and drinks (casacamper.com; Weinmeisterstrasse 1; from US\$207).

## The know-how

### KEY DATES IN BERLIN'S 20TH CENTURY HISTORY

**1918** WWI ends and Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II flees.

**1920s** Berlin evolves into a cultural metropolis, drawing in leading artists and scientists.

**1933** The Nazis come to power and the Reichstag burns.

**1945** Berlin is devastated in the final days of WWII. The Allies take control of Germany.

**1949** The country is split into East and West. Thousands of people in Soviet-occupied East Germany move to West Berlin.

**1961** Communist East German authorities erect the Berlin Wall (below) overnight on 13 August.

**1989** East Berliners demonstrate against the regime. The wall falls on 9 November.

**1990** Germany is reunified.

**1991** The German parliament votes to reinstate Berlin as national capital.

### FURTHER READING



Lonely Planet's *Berlin* (US\$24.99) is a comprehensive guide to the city; *Pocket Berlin* (US\$13.99) is

ideal for shorter trips. *Goodbye to Berlin* by Christopher Isherwood is a brilliant semi autobiographical account of early 1930s Berlin (US\$9; Vintage Classics), which inspired the musical (and later film) *Cabaret*. To learn more about the Stasi's spy culture try *Stasiland* by Anna Funder (US\$9; Granta), with perspectives from both victims and perpetrators.



COMPILED BY LORNA PARKES. WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ANDREA SCHULTE-PIEVERS. PHOTOGRAPHS: BAUHAUS-ARCHIV BERLIN/FOTO: KARSTEN HINTZ, DEUTSCHES KUNSTGEWERBEMUSEUM/FOTOSTUDIO BARTSCH ROCHON PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY, STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN/KUNSTGEWERBEMUSEUM



Oslo Opera House, opened in 2008, is designed to resemble a glacier

Fold 2



## MINI GUIDE

# Weekend in Oslo

Norway's capital has world-class museums and galleries, a thriving café culture and top-notch restaurants – all complemented by a buzzing waterfront and the great outdoors.

## Friday

### OSLO OPERA HOUSE 1

This centrepiece of the massive redevelopment project sweeping the waterfront precinct is fast becoming one of the iconic modern buildings of Scandinavia. Before venturing inside be sure to walk up onto the roof, a 'carpet' of sloping angles and flat surfaces. It's free to enter the foyer; to venture further, join a lunchtime guided tour ([operaen.no](http://operaen.no); Kirsten Flagstads Plass 1; tour US\$11).

### AKER BRYGGE 2

For dinner, head to this old shipyard west of Oslo's main harbour, which has been turned into a trendy shopping complex with dozens of cafés and waterside restaurants that are among the most popular in the city. If the weather is nice, the local meal of choice is peel-and-eat shrimp, bought off a fishing boat and eaten dockside with a fresh baguette, mayonnaise and a touch of lemon.



Formerly industrial Aker Brygge is now a popular dining spot

### JAZZ AT BLÅ 3

This jazz club features on a global list of 100 great jazz clubs compiled by the savvy editors at the US jazz magazine *DownBeat*. It's an intimate venue by the River Akerselva that hosts both up-and-coming artists and well-known international acts. Many gigs are free and, when there's no live music, DJs get the crowd going ([blaaooslo.no](http://blaaooslo.no); Brenneriveien 9c; paid-for gigs from US\$11).

## Saturday

### ASTRUP FEARNLEY MUSEET 4

All manner of zany art is contained within this museum, the artistic highlight of the city. This stunning architectural creation on the waterfront, designed by Renzo Piano and completed in 2012, is a wonderful wooden building floating on jetties and rafts, with sail-like roofs ([afmuseet.no](http://afmuseet.no); Strandpromenaden 2; entry US\$14).

### AKERSHUS FESTNING & SLOTT 5

Oslo's Festning (fortress) and Slott (castle) are two of the city's architectural highlights, strategically located on the eastern side of the harbour. Inside the expansive complex are a couple of museums and interesting buildings, dungeons and a chapel worth exploring. The Slott looks medieval from the front, but inside it was renovated into a Renaissance palace in the 17th century ([akershusfestning.no](http://akershusfestning.no); entry US\$8).



Akershus Festning has survived every siege since the 1290s

### BYGDØY PENINSULA 6

Just a hop across the harbour, the Bygdøy Peninsula holds some of Oslo's top attractions and is worth at least half a day's exploration. To get there, take the 15-minute ferry from Rådhusbrygge Quay, around the corner from the Festning (No 91; US\$4). Highlights include the Vikingskipshuset (Viking Museum), which displays the best-preserved Viking vessels in the world, and the Fram polar ship museum ([khm.uio.no](http://khm.uio.no); Huk Aveny 35; joint entry US\$9).

## Sunday

### VIGELAND PARK 7

Take tram No 12 west to this park, brimming with 212 granite and bronze works by Norway's best-loved sculptor, Gustav Vigeland. His highly charged sculptures range from entwined lovers and tranquil elderly couples to contempt-ridden beggars. His most renowned work, *Sinnsataggen*, portrays a particularly grumpy young child stamping his foot (free).

### NASJONALGALLERIET 8

The National Gallery houses the country's largest collection of Norwegian art. Some of Edvard Munch's best-known creations are on display, including the main copy of *The Scream*. There's also an impressive collection of European art, with works by Gauguin, Picasso and El Greco, and Impressionists such as Manet, Degas, Renoir, Matisse, Cézanne and Monet ([nasjonalmuseet.no](http://nasjonalmuseet.no); US\$11, free Thu).



Tapas bar Champagneria Bodega in Mathallen Oslo

### MATHALLEN OSLO 9

Before hopping on a plane back home, grab lunch at this seriously hip, post-industrial food court dedicated to the best of Norwegian regional cuisine, as well as food from elsewhere. There are dozens of delis, cafés and restaurants crammed into this space and the surrounding buildings, and the place buzzes throughout the day. Prices are generally low and quality high ([mathallenoslo.no](http://mathallenoslo.no); Vulkan 5).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

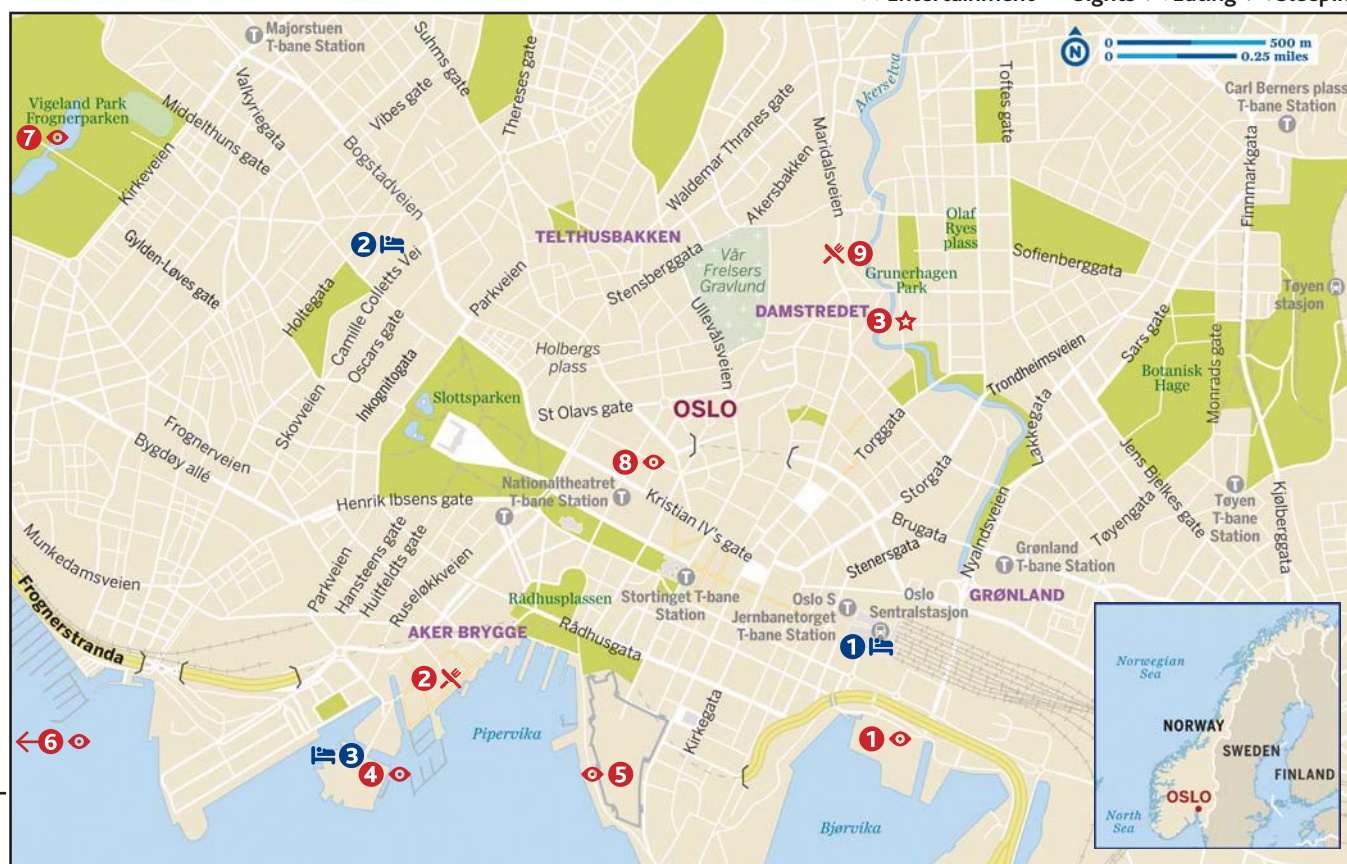
Tear out page here then fold along the dotted lines



# MINI GUIDE

## Weekend in Oslo

★ Entertainment ○ Sights ✕ Eating 🛏 Sleeping



## Oslo essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Fly KLM from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur with one stop in Amsterdam to Oslo's main airport, Gardermoen (from US\$885; klm.com). Oslo's other airports, Torp and Rygge airports are further out. All three have good train or bus links to the city centre (visitoslo.com/en/transport/to-oslo). Oslo has an efficient transport network of underground trains (T-bane), buses, trams and ferries (advance single tickets US\$3). Buy an Oslo Pass from the tourist office and it will get you free public transport, free museum entry and other discounts (visitoslo.com; 1-/2-/3-day pass US\$38/55/69).

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

1 **Grand Central**, built out of part of the former train station, has a trainload of character, with graffiti-covered rooms and a central position right next to the newly opened Østbanehallen food court (choice.no; Jernbanetorget



The artwork-decked lobby at contemporary hotel The Thief

1; from US\$88).

2 **Ellingsens Pensjonat** is a comfy, historic pension offering one of the best deals in Oslo. Rooms are spacious, and there's also a sweet studio. Plus there's a small garden for lounging on sunny days (ellingsenspensionat.no; Holtegata 25; from US\$131).

3 Part of the buzzing waterfront development, **The Thief** is a world-class hotel overlooking the Astrup Fearnley Museum. Luxuries include rainforest showers, down duvets and wool blankets (thethief.com; Landgangen 1; from US\$313).

## The know-how

### BEST COFFEE SPOTS

**Tim Wendleboe** Produces the most authentic Italian-style espresso in the city – most of the tiny space is given over to a giant coffee bean grinder and roaster (timwendleboe.no).

**Kaffebrenneriet** Opposite the National Gallery, this relaxed café has dozens of types of coffee, as well as great cakes (kaffebrenneriet.no).

**Zagros Café** Strong Italian coffee, comfy sofas and cakes to tuck into (Storgata 34C).

**Stockfleths** Founded in 1895, this award-winning coffee shop is one of Oslo's oldest.

It also serves wholegrain bread with brown cheese – a local favourite (stockfleths.as).

**Åpent Bakeri** Neighbourhood bakery that serves coffee in deep bowls, as well as freshly baked rolls topped with homemade stirred jam, called røre syltetøy (apentbakeri.no).

### FURTHER READING



Lonely Planet's *Norway* (US\$24.99) has a chapter dedicated to Oslo and its surrounds,

which can also be downloaded individually (US\$4.95) at lonelyplanet.com. *The Almost Nearly Perfect People: The Truth About the Nordic Miracle* by Michael Booth (US\$12.50; Vintage) is an entertaining look at modern Scandinavia, with Norway playing centre stage; or try the *Oslo Crime Files* – a quartet of thrillers set in and around Oslo, by Torkil Damhaug (US\$11; Headline).



COMPILED BY LORNA PARKES. WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ANTHONY HAM AND STUART BUTLER. PHOTOGRAPHS: MATTHIAS HÄMMEN, SABINE LUBENOWSKI/PHOTO/GETTY, WERNER NYSTRAND/FOLIO IMAGES/ALAMY, SHUITA SHAN/ALAMY, FINN STALE FELBERG/MATHALLEN





## MINI GUIDE

# Hidden Prague

Visitors flock to the Czech capital to stand on Charles Bridge and climb up to the monumental Prague Castle, but the city's maze of cobbled lanes, hidden courtyards and local bars is still a boon for explorers.

## Local haunts

### ✂ LOKÁL 4

This classic Czech beer hall (albeit with slick modern styling) is always busy, mostly with locals. It serves excellent tankové pivo (tanked Pilsner Urquell) complemented by a daily-changing menu of traditional Bohemian dishes and smiling, efficient, friendly service (lokal-dlouha.ambi.cz; Dlouhá 33; 11am–1am Mon–Sat, to midnight Sun; mains from US\$4.50).



Czech beer and its traditional accompaniments at Lokál

### ☆ ICE HOCKEY 5

Catching an ice hockey game in Prague is a genuinely Czech experience and well worth the effort, as Czechs rank very highly among the world's players and the sport is a passionate affair for Prague locals. HC Sparta Praha, one of the top teams in the Czech league, plays at the city's O2 and Tipsport Arenas (en.hcsparta.cz) and tickets are usually available for electrifying matches during the season from September to April. Buy online at TicketPortal (ticketportal.cz).

### ✂ NÁPLAVKA FARMERS' MARKET 6

Stretching along the east bank of the Vltava, south of the junction with Trojická, this weekly market makes the most of its riverside setting with live music and stalls selling fresh bread, locally grown vegetables, homemade cakes and pastries, wild honey, hot food and a range of arts and crafts. From May to October, you'll also find stalls selling wild mushrooms, foraged from the woods around the city (farmarsketrziste.cz; Rašínovo nábřeží 62; 8am–2pm Sat).

## Offbeat attractions

### 📶 ŽIŽKOV TV TOWER 1

Prague's tallest landmark is the futuristic (and some say ugly) TV Tower. But more bizarre still are the 10 giant crawling babies that appear to be exploring the outside – an installation called *Miminka*, by artist David Černý. Inside, there's an observation deck with futuristic hanging armchairs, a café, cocktail bar and restaurant (towerpark.cz; Mahlerovy Sady 1, Žižkov; 8am–midnight; US\$7.50).



The 216-metre TV Tower was built between 1985 and 1992

### 📶 HOTEL JALTA NUCLEAR BUNKER 2

Hidden beneath the 1950s Hotel Jalta on Wenceslas Square lies a communist-era nuclear shelter, now open to the public. The tour, led by a guide in period security police uniform, takes in a series of secret chambers; the highlight is the comms room, for monitoring wiretaps in the bedrooms of important guests (hoteljalta.com; Václavské náměstí 45; English tours 2pm–7pm Fri–Sun; US\$5).

### 📶 KGB MUSEUM 3

The enthusiastic Russian collector of KGB memorabilia who set up this small museum will insist on showing you around his treasure trove of spy cameras, concealed pistols, weapons (including an original garotte, known as 'Stalin's scarf') and sinister electrical 'interrogation equipment'. There are also rare photos of Prague taken in 1968 by a KGB officer (kgbmuseum.com; Vlašská 13; 9am–5pm Tue–Sun; US\$12).

## Tranquil spaces

### 📶 NOVÝ SVĚT QUARTER 7

In the 16th century, houses were built for castle staff in an enclave of curving cobblestone streets down the slope north of the Loreta. Today these diminutive cottages have been restored and painted in pastel shades, making the 'New World' quarter a perfect alternative to the castle's crowded Golden Lane. Check out Nový Svět 1, where Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe once lived.



Nový Svět lies at what was once the northwest corner of Prague

### 📶 KAMPA PARK 8

Kampa – an 'island' bounded by the Vltava River and Čertovka (Devil's Stream) – is the most picturesque part of the Malá Strana quarter, especially the little square called Na Kampě, ringed with 16th-century houses. The island is a peaceful place to stroll, and the area where the Čertovka passes under Charles Bridge can also be visited on a dinky tour boat (prague-venice.cz; Křižovnické náměstí 3; 10.30am–5pm; US\$12).

### 📶 OLŠANY CEMETERY 9

Huge and atmospheric, Prague's main burial ground was founded in 1680 after a plague epidemic. The oldest gravestones can be found in the northwestern corner, near the 17th-century Church of St Roch. Jan Palach – the student who set himself on fire in 1969 to protest the Soviet invasion – is also buried here. To get here, take any bus or tram headed for 'Olšanské hřbitovy' (Vinohradská 153, Žižkov; open daylight hours).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



## Hidden Prague



# Prague essentials



Emirates flies one of the more direct routes from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur to the main airport in Ruzyne with a short layover in Dubai (from US\$852; emirates.com). To get into Prague, take bus 119 from outside the terminal to Nádraží Veleslavín (buy your ticket in the arrivals hall; US\$1.25; prg.aero), then take metro line A into the city centre (no new ticket needed). AAA Taxi operates a 24-hour taxi service from the airport, costing US\$20-US\$25 (aaataxi.cz). Prague has an integrated metro, tram and bus network – tickets are valid for 30 or 90 minutes (US\$0.95/US\$1.25; dpp.cz). A 24-hour pass costs US\$4.25.



### A Vintage room at Fusion Hotel in Nové Město (New Town)

helpful (dumuvelkeboty.cz; Vlašská 30; from US\$75).

**2 Fusion Hotel** has style in abundance, but won't break the bank with its dorms, en suite doubles and family rooms. Works by young Czech artists decorate the bedrooms, and there's a revolving bar ([fusionhotels.com](http://fusionhotels.com); Panská 9; from US\$88).

**3 The Golden Well** is tucked at the end of a cobbled cul-de-sac – a Renaissance house perched on the southern slope of the castle hill. The rooms are spacious, and many overlook the city, as does its excellent restaurant ([goldenwell.cz](http://goldenwell.cz); U Zlaté studně 4; from US\$200).

## The know-how

## PUB ETIQUETTE

- It's normal in crowded Czech pubs to share tables with strangers. Don't rearrange the seating, and ask 'je tu volno?' (is this free?) before taking a seat.

- Take a beer mat from the rack and place it in front of you, and wait for the bar staff to come to you; waving for service is guaranteed to get you ignored. The waiter will keep track of your order by marking a slip of paper that stays on your table; whatever you do, don't write on it or lose it (or you risk a fine).

- As soon as the beer in your glass falls to within an inch of the bottom, the eagle-eyed waiter will be on his/her way with another. Never pour the dregs of the old glass into the new – this is considered deeply uncivilised behaviour.

● When you're done drinking, place a beer mat on top of your glass. To pay, say 'zaplatím' (I'll pay) and the bill will be brought to your table.

## FURTHER READING



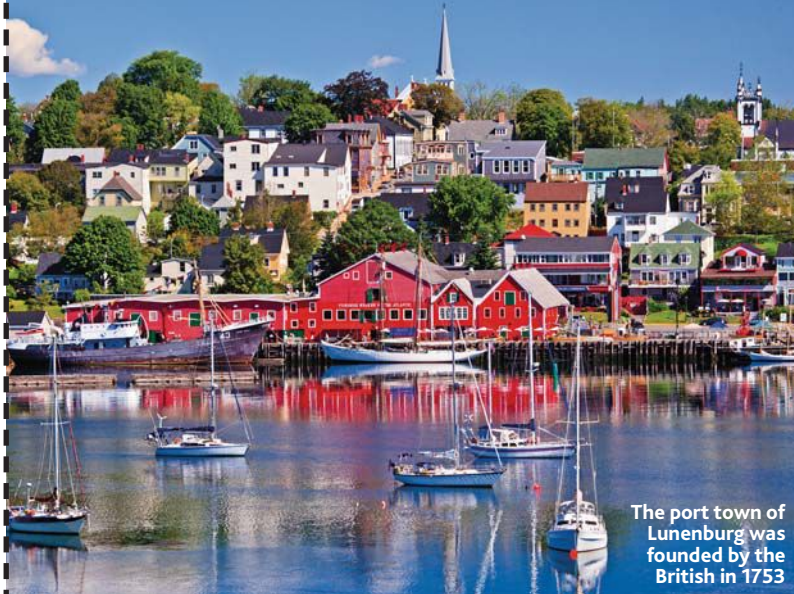
Lonely Planet's  
*Prague & the  
Czech Republic*  
(US\$21.99)  
offers an  
in-depth guide  
to the city;

**Pocket Prague** (US\$13.99) is a compact version. Lonely Planet's free Guides app, featuring Prague, can be found on iTunes. Milan Kundera's classic *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (US\$11; Faber & Faber) is a love story set against the backdrop of Prague before the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion. For insider tips on the food scene, try Taste of Prague's

professional blog, with a 'Prague Foodie Map' ([tasteofprague.com](http://tasteofprague.com)).







The port town of Lunenburg was founded by the British in 1753

## MINI GUIDE

# Outdoors Nova Scotia

Maritime heritage, striking lighthouses, Unesco-listed landscapes and great food and wine make this easterly Canadian province a perfect salt-tinged escape.

## Activities

### KAYAKING 1

About eight miles southwest of Taylor Head Provincial Park, Tangier's deserted islands and protected coves make it one of the Maritimes' best settings for kayaking. Coastal Adventures offers introductions to sea kayaking (half-/full-day US\$65/145), rentals (single/double kayaks from US\$40/50) and guided trips ([coastaladventures.com](http://coastaladventures.com); 84 Masons Point Rd; Jun–Sep).



Kayaking around Borgles Island with Coastal Adventures

### WHALE WATCHING 2

One of the best whale-watching tours in the province is found just near the Tiverton ferry dock at Digby Neck. Ocean Explorations has the adventurous approach of getting you down low to whale level in a Zodiac. The company donates part of its proceeds to wildlife conservation and environmental education. Tour times depend on weather and demand ([oceanexplorations.ca](http://oceanexplorations.ca); half-day tours US\$60).

### TIDAL-BORE RAFTING 3

Maitland is an ideal spot for rafting, thanks to the white water formed by the Shubenacadie River meeting the incoming Fundy tides. Wave heights are dependent on the phases of the moon – book through River Runners and enquire about the tides for your chosen day since your experience will be dictated by this. No expertise necessary ([tidalborerafting.com](http://tidalborerafting.com); 8681 Route 215; half day from US\$45).

## Seaside villages

### PEGGY'S COVE 4

Driving southwest from Halifax you'll come to a series of delightful coastal villages, the first of which is Peggy's Cove – possibly Nova Scotia's most photographed spot: the rolling granite cove, highlighted by a red-and-white lighthouse, exudes a dreamy seaside calm, even through the parading tour buses. Visit before 10am, if coming in summer, to avoid the crowds.



Main St in Mahone Bay is home to restaurants and workshops

### LUNENBURG 5

Historic Lunenburg is the largest South Shore fishing settlement and one of the province's five Unesco World Heritage sites. It was the first British settlement outside Halifax and its heritage is intertwined with rum running and shipbuilding. The town, full of small, independent galleries, is at its most picturesque viewed from the sea around sunset, when the boxy, vividly painted old buildings glow behind the ship-filled port.

### MAHONE BAY 6

The sun shines more often here than anywhere else along the coast. With more than 100 islands only 55 miles from Halifax, the town is a great base for exploring this section of the South Shore. Take out a kayak or a bike from one of the hire companies on Main St, or simply stroll down this central thoroughfare, which skirts the harbour and its three photogenic churches, and is scattered with shops selling antiques, quilts, pottery and local artworks.

## Food markets

### LOBSTER POUND 7

Hall's Harbour is a great spot to spend an afternoon hiking along the beach. It's also one of the best places to eat the much-lauded Bay of Fundy lobster. Hall's Harbour Lobster Pound is a gentrified seafood shack where you can pick your own, and the dining room is a prime spot for watching the tides rise and fall ([hallsharbourlobster.com](http://hallsharbourlobster.com); 1157 W Halls Harbour Rd; lobster roll US\$12.50).



Lobster fishing remains a key industry across Nova Scotia

### GOOD CHEER TRAIL 8

This food and wine trail connects more than 30 wineries, breweries, artisan producers and other foodie outlets across the province. It runs from Yarmouth to Cape Breton and passes through heritage sites, wild beaches and bucolic farmlands along the way. To explore without driving, book a tour with Grape Escapes Wine Tours ([novascotiawinetours.com](http://novascotiawinetours.com); May–Oct; from US\$69, including lunch).

### FUNDY CLAM DIGGING 9

Get your hands dirty with locals who have been clam digging around the Bay of Fundy since they were children, on a food tour with Fundy Adventures. You'll hack through the sand for a couple of hours looking for clams while learning about local sustainability efforts, and then steam your clams right there on the beach for a delicious alfresco meal ([fundyadventures.com](http://fundyadventures.com); US\$50).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Outdoors Nova Scotia

Activities Tours Sights Eating Sleeping



## Nova Scotia essentials

### TRANSPORT

The journey from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur is most direct on Air Canada with two stops in Hong Kong and Ontario (from US\$1,577; [aircanada.com](http://aircanada.com)). The airport is 25 miles northeast of town and there's a bus that runs into the centre every 30-60min between 5am and midnight. A taxi to downtown Halifax costs about US\$40. Nova Scotia does not have a good public transport network; renting a car is the best way to get around, particularly for outdoor pursuits, and can be more economical than taking the bus. Find car rental chains at the airport and in downtown Halifax (from US\$40 per day; [budget.com](http://budget.com)).

### WHERE TO STAY

**1 The Lighthouse on Cape d'Or**, an original lighthouse keeper's residence, is now a simple four-room guesthouse commanding views of the Bay of Fundy at one of Nova Scotia's most beautiful spots ([capedor.ca](http://capedor.ca);



Views over a river from the back porch of Trout Point Lodge

Advocate Harbour; from US\$57).

**2** Lofty Victorian architecture makes Wolfville's **Blomidon Inn** feel pleasantly upper crust. It sits in perfectly maintained gardens and the rooms are just as well groomed. Guests can enjoy a free afternoon tea ([blomidon.ns.ca](http://blomidon.ns.ca); 195 Main St; from US\$88).

**3** **Trout Point Lodge**, nestled in the wilderness of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, can organise outdoor activities to accompany cooking classes and foraging trips. Rooms feel like cosy cabins (troutpoint.com; 189 Trout Point Rd, East Kemptville; from US\$125).

## The know-how

### MARITIME HISTORY

#### Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

This flagship museum in Halifax includes a popular *Titanic* display and another on the extraordinary 1917 Halifax Explosion disaster ([maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca](http://maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca)).

#### Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

Between 1928-1971, over a million immigrants entered Canada via Pier 21 in Halifax – this museum presents many of their stories ([pier21.ca](http://pier21.ca)).

#### Hector Heritage Quay

A replica of the ship *Hector* (below) that carried the first 200 Highland Scots to Nova Scotia sits alongside displays about the passengers ([shiphector.com](http://shiphector.com)).

#### Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic

First-hand tales from retired fisherfolk of life in the fishing industry ([fisheriesmuseum.novascotia.ca](http://fisheriesmuseum.novascotia.ca)).

### FURTHER READING



Lonely Planet's *Nova Scotia, New Brunswick & Prince Edward Island* (US\$19.99) has in-depth

coverage of the Maritime provinces; the Nova Scotia chapter (US\$4.95) can also be downloaded at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com). For good novels set in Nova Scotia, try *No Great Mischief* by Alistair MacLeod (US\$11; Vintage), a saga about a family of Scottish ancestry and their life in Canada; and *The Birth House* by Ami McKay (US\$16; Harper Perennial), which delves into rural midwifery traditions.



COMPILED BY LORNA PARKES. WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CELESTE BRASH, PHOTOGRAPHS: ALL CANADA PHOTOS, SCOTT CUNNINGHAM/COASTAL ADVENTURES, ROLF HICKER/GETTY, BRUCE YUANTUE/GETTY



The Frank Gehry-designed bandshell in Millennium Park



## MINI GUIDE

# Budget Chicago

Low-key and cultured, America's Windy City has bragging rights for its comedy heritage, live-music clubs and public art – much of which can be enjoyed on the cheap.

Fold 2

## Sights

### 1 MILLENNIUM PARK

Public art is everywhere in Chicago, and Millennium Park, the playful heart of the city, is full of it. Anish Kapoor's silvery smooth Cloud Gate (aka 'The Bean') is perhaps the most famous installation, but also don't miss Frank Gehry's swooping silver bandshell. Free concerts waft through the park in summer (millenniumpark.org; 201 E Randolph St; 6am–11pm; free).



Navy Pier acquired its name in 1927 to honour WWI veterans

### 2 NAVY PIER

Chicago's most visited attraction – celebrating its 100th birthday this year – is its old municipal wharf, with a half-mile-long pier stretching into Lake Michigan. Highlights include the newly opened Centennial Wheel, a Shakespearean theatre and regular firework displays, plus there's an appealing beer garden. Nearby Ohio St Beach is a good place for a dip on hot days (navypier.com; 600 E Grand Ave; free).

### 3 CAPONE'S CHICAGO

Gangster Al Capone's legacy looms over Chicago, although the site where the St Valentine's Day Massacre took place is now a car park. You can still sip a martini with his ghost at the atmospheric jazz bar Green Mill (greenmilljazz.com), Capone's favourite speakeasy; the tunnels where he hid his prohibition booze are below the bar. There's also a 1¼-hour Untouchable gangster tour (gangstertour.com; US\$30).

## Activities

### 4 LIVE BLUES

Chicago's music is legendary and the city rocks to the rhythms of jazz, rock, folk, house, hip-hop and gospel. However, the city is most famous for the blues. Catch a live act at B.L.U.E.S. – a veteran, high-volume club where big local names grace the small stage and the audience soaks up every electrifying moment (chicagobluesbar.com; 2519 N Halsted St; 8pm–2am; cover charge from US\$5).



Tiny B.L.U.E.S. bar thrives on an intimate, informal atmosphere

### 5 LOOP ARCHITECTURE

Join the Chicago Architecture Foundation, whose base in the Santa Fe Building houses galleries and a model city of the local skyscrapers, for one of its tours of Chicago's famed architecture. The city erected the world's first modern skyscraper in 1885 and has been pushing the envelope of modern design ever since; the Loop, Chicago's central business district, is the focal point for gawking (architecture.org; 224 S Michigan Ave; 9am–9pm; galleries free, tours from US\$20).

### 6 COMEDY NIGHTS

Chicago is the home of improvised American comedy, and the city's clubs have spawned the likes of Bill Murray and John Belushi. Comedy nights abound but can be pricey – try the iO Theater, one of Chicago's top-tier improv houses but a bit edgier (and cheaper) than its competition. Four stages host bawdy shows nightly and plenty of them only cost a few bucks. Two bars and a beer garden add to the fun (ioimprov.com/chicago; 1501 N Kingsbury St; tickets from US\$5).

## Food & drink

### 7 CLARK STREET ALE HOUSE

This beloved neighbourhood bar in the Near North quarter is a popular place for locals to relax after work with free pretzels and Midwestern microbrews. Join them in the garden and order a three-beer sampler, or try some of the 25 craft beers on tap during the early-evening happy hours, Thursday to Saturday (clarkstreetalehouse.com; 742 N Clark St).



'Sammiches' include The Fat Club at the Little Goat Diner

### 8 LITTLE GOAT DINER

Local celebrity chef Stephanie Izard opened this diner for the foodie masses as a cheaper alternative to her acclaimed restaurant across the street, Girl & the Goat. Scooch into a vintage booth and order off the all-day breakfast menu. If money stretches, try lunch and dinner favourites such as the goat sloppy joe with rosemary slaw pancakes (littlegoatchicago.com; 820 W Randolph St; breakfast from US\$6.50).

### 9 PEQUOD'S PIZZA

You can't come to Chicago and miss out on deep dish pizza – a culinary speciality more akin to a pie cooked in a cast-iron pan than an Italian pizza. Pequod's is legendary because of its caramelised cheese, generous toppings and sweetly flavoured sauce. Midweek, there's a special lunch deal that's US\$5 for a seven-inch pizza plus a fountain soda (pequodspizza.com; 2207 N Clybourn Ave; pizzas from US\$7.50).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

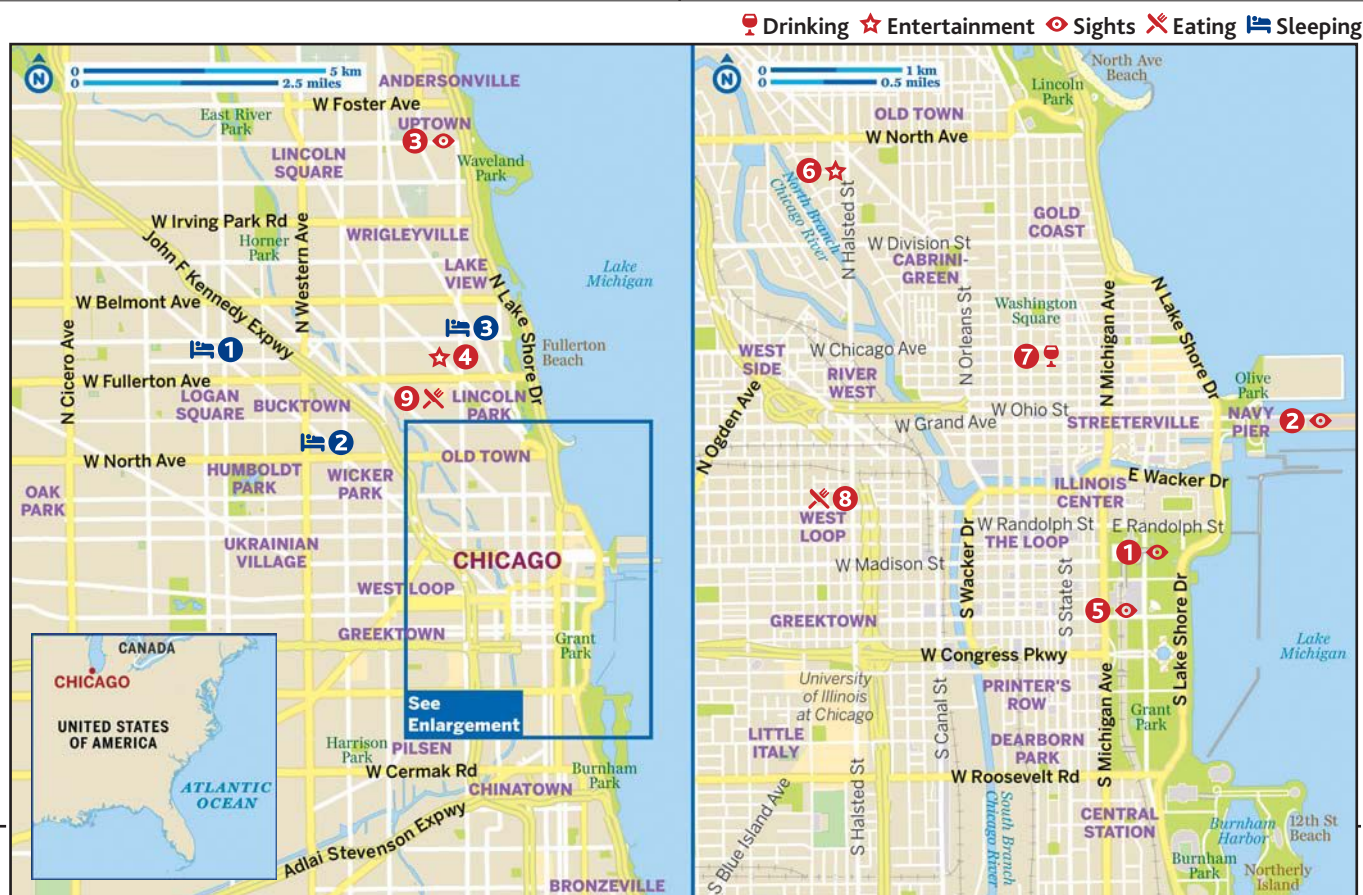
Tear out page here then fold along the dotted lines

Fold 1



# MINI GUIDE

## Budget Chicago



## Chicago essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

United Airlines flies from both Singapore and Kuala Lumpur with one stopover in San Francisco or Narita, Tokyo (from US\$944; united.com). Most airlines will land at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, though there is another smaller airport, Midway. Chicago's elevated/subway train system (nicknamed the 'L'), is the easiest way to get around the city and the Blue Line runs from O'Hare Airport to the Loop (US\$5; transitchicago.com). Buy a rechargeable Ventra Card at train stations – the standard fare is US\$2.50 and allows two transfers, or it's US\$10 for an unlimited day pass.

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

1 Vintage-style accommodation awaits at **Longman & Eagle** in Logan Square. The six arty rooms aren't much soundproofed, but after using your whiskey tokens in the bar you probably won't care (longmanandeagle.com; 2657 N Kedzie Ave; from US\$94).



The industrial-styled lobby at Urban Holiday Lofts

2 **Urban Holiday Lofts** has exposed brick walls, hardwood floors and plump beds. There are dorms as well as private rooms, a buzzy common room, plus there's free wi-fi and breakfast (urbanholidaylofts.com; 2014 W Wabansia Ave; from US\$120).

3 Small and stylish Italianate **Willows Hotel** near Lincoln Park is a beauty. The 55 rooms evoke a 19th-century French countryside feel and there's a cosy fireplace in the lobby should the weather turn (willowshotelchicago.com; 555 W Surf Street; from US\$145).

## The know-how

### DIY CHICAGO TOURS

**Free Tours by Foot** offers a number of 'pay what you like' walking tours. Some, such as suburb walks and food tours, are self-guided; guided options (pictured below) include a ghost walk and a film location tour for movies such as *Blues Brothers*, *Home Alone 2* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (freetourbyfoot.com).

**Chicago Loop Alliance** maps Loop activities, sights and places to eat according to interests such as architecture and art, theatre, film locations and popular food spots (chicagoalliance.com).

The **Art Institute Tours** app features 50 customisable tours through the collection of Chicago's most prestigious art museum, organised by themes, including Impressionism, African art, self portraits and architecture (artic.edu).



### FURTHER READING

**Lonely Planet's Chicago** (US\$21.99) and **Pocket Chicago** (US\$13.99) include walking routes,

restaurant tips and handy hints on sightseeing. Find **Chicago** in Lonely Planet's free Guides app on iTunes. *The Adventures of Augie March* by Saul Bellow (US\$15; Penguin Classics) is a modern classic about a penniless Chicago boy growing up during the Great Depression. Those interested in the Chicago mob, Capone and how the gangster was eventually caught should read *Get Capone* by Jonathan Eig (US\$15; Simon & Schuster).

COMPILED BY LORNA PARKES. WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM KARLA ZIMMERMAN AND SARA BENSON. PHOTOGRAPHS: FREE TOURS BY FOOT; MARY HAMPTON; MATTHEW KUHN/TANDEMSTOCK.COM; MARCHELLO 74/SHUTTERSTOCK; SHANNON MONSON ON BEHALF OF LITTLE COAT



# WIN a 2-night stay in Dorsett Wanchai Hotel in Hong Kong (2 sets to giveaway)



Located just a few minutes away from the pulsating heart of modern Hong Kong, Dorsett Wanchai Hong Kong stands out from any other hotels in Wan Chai. Enjoying a strategic location for both business and pleasure, the hotel is perfectly located between Causeway Bay and Wanchai, with the nearest MTR station only a 8-minute walk away.

\* Terms & conditions apply



## PRIZE DRAW ENTRY FORM

### DORSETT WANCHAI – HOTEL IN WAN CHAI HONG KONG Promotion

For your chance to win this fantastic prize, fill in your details and post this form to:  
Regent Media Pte Ltd, Lonely Planet Asia Mar 2017, 20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277

Title	Name
Address	
Postal code	
DOB	/ /
Mobile	Email*

Regent Media Pte Ltd may contact you with details of our products and services or to undertake research. If you prefer not to receive such information from any of these companies by post or phone, please tick this box ☐. \* Please include your email address on your entry if you prefer to receive such information by email. We may occasionally pass your details on to carefully selected companies whose products and services we feel may be of interest to you. If you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone, please tick this box ☐.

#### Terms & Conditions.

This prize does not include air flight tickets to Hong Kong.  
This promotion is open to all except staff of Regent Media and sponsor.  
Prizes must be taken as provided and are not transferable or exchangeable for cash.  
Winners will be notified by post, email or phone and prize is to be collected at address stated on notification letter.  
The management reserves the right to replace items with those of similar value.  
The management's decision is final and no further queries will be entertained.  
Entry information may be used for future marketing and promotional purposes.

## THE PRIZE

This great prize includes:

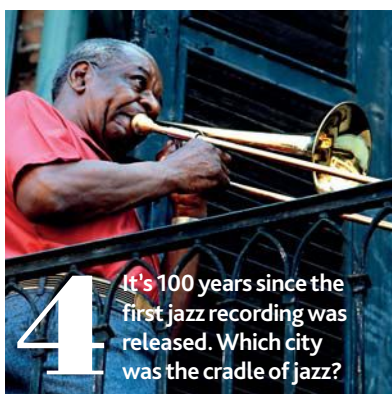
► Two nights' stay in Dorsett Wanchai's Premier room

## HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic prize, simply answer and fill in your details on the entry form and send it to: Regent Media Pte Ltd, **Lonely Planet Asia Mar 2017**, 20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277. Alternatively you can email to [lpcontests@regentmedia.sg](mailto:lpcontests@regentmedia.sg), titled **Mar 2017 - DORSETT WANCHAI – HOTEL IN WAN CHAI HONG KONG** Promotion with your full name, ID number, contact number and address. Competition closes 31 Mar 2017 at 11.59pm. Terms and conditions apply.



# What on Earth?



**YOU WANT ANSWERS?**  
 1) THAILAND. 2) VENICE. 3) ISRAEL. 4) NEW ORLEANS. 5) MOROCCO.  
 6) SEALS. 7) MEXICO. 8) EASTER ISLAND. 9) GERMANY.

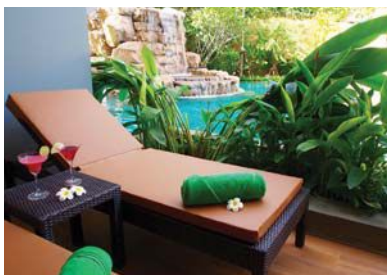
COMPILED BY ROBY COULDING. PHOTOGRAPHS: TRAVEL PIX COLLECTION/AML, ROSSHELEN/ISTOCK/GETTY, TESSI ALFREDO/AGE/GETTY, ISTOCK/GETTY, BIOS-  
 PHOTO/ALAMY, ELIASENOVA/GETTY, ENIC LAFORQUE, MARKUS LANGE/ROBERT HARDING/ALAMY





## Best Western Arrives in Tropical Krabi

The new Hula Hula Resort offers secluded style in the heart of Thailand's beach paradise



### Hula Hula Ao-Nang Resort

222 Moo 3, Klonghang Road, Ao nang, Muang, Krabi, 81180, Thailand P: +66 (0) 75 661 388 [bestwesternasia.com](http://bestwesternasia.com)

**Wherever Life Takes You, Best Western Is There.®**

Each Best Western® branded hotel is independently owned and operated.



# FINE ART ON A FLOATING CANVAS. PRICELESS.

MY PRIDE AND JOY COMES FROM  
KNOWING THAT A SMALL PART  
OF THIS VESSEL, THE LEGENDARY  
"KO LAE", BEARS MY LOVELY  
PAINT STROKES!



DISCOVER YOUR UNIQUE LOCAL EXPERIENCES IN

amazing  
**THAILAND**



Like Us  
facebook.com/tat.sg

[www.tourismthailand.org/sg](http://www.tourismthailand.org/sg)