

# A Collection of Ultimate Bucket Lists

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## Bucket List

A list of things to do before you die.  
oder auf gut Deutsch

Eine Liste von Dingen die ich unbedingt machen möchte bevor ich sterbe.

Gerade beim Thema Reisen kann es hilfreich und schön sein eine **persönliche Reise - Bucket - Liste** zu haben.

So können Sie optimal planen, wann der richtige Zeitpunkt für Ihre Traumreise ist. Es ist sinnvoll den Everest-Trekk zu machen, wenn man noch jung und fit ist. Das eine oder andere Traumziel lässt sich auch bequem über ein Wochenende besuchen. Gewisse Reiseträume brauchen ein längere Vorlaufzeit und wieder andere sollte man sich schon bald erfüllen, weil diese sich in nächster Zeit, wie zum Beispiel Bhutan stark verändern werden.

Wir haben für Sie im Internet recherchiert und verschiedene ultimative Bucket Listen gefunden. Diese haben wir für Sie als Inspiration zusammengestellt.

**Wir helfen Ihnen gerne Ihre persönliche Bucket - Liste zu erstellen oder Ihnen bei der langfristigen Planung zu helfen.**

**Wir wünschen Ihnen viel Freude und Erfüllung beim Erstellen Ihrer persönlichen Bucket – Liste**



## Bucket List

**A list of things to do before you die.**

Especially when it comes to travel, it can be helpful and nice to have a personal travel bucket list.

This way, you can perfectly plan the right time for your dream trips. It makes sense to undertake the Everest trek when you are still young and fit. One or the other dream destination can be visited comfortably over a weekend.

Some travel dreams need longer preparatory time and others should be fulfilled soon, because they will change a lot in the near future, like Bhutan for example.

We have done the research for you and found various ultimate bucket lists. We have compiled these for you as inspiration.

**We will be happy to help you creating your personal bucket list or assist you with long-term planning.**

**We wish you a lot of joy and fulfillment when are creating your bucket list**



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# The Top

# 100

## Places In The World

## 1. Get stunned by the Great Pyramid of Giza



The Great Pyramid of Giza defines bucket list goals. Built over 5000 years ago, it's the oldest and the biggest of the pyramids, the last structure of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World that survived. It is a marvel of human engineering and construction, and a defining symbol of the Egyptian world.

## 2. Walk along the Great Wall of China



The Great Wall of China is a good reason for the existence of the Bucket List! It's an astonishing relic of China's history, and it's a must for many travelers and tourists around the world, in fact, it is considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Identified as one of the most important symbols of China, it consists of numerous walls and fortification, many running parallels to each other for a measure of 8,850 km. The Great Wall can be visited from Beijing.



### 3. Explore Petra



Jordan's rose-colored sandstone city is an extraordinary experience. On the border of the Arabian desert, hidden in the mountains of the Dead Sea, Petra is one of the most notorious archeological sites in the world. The city's architectural beauty comes from the fact that it was directly chiseled from the sandstone mountains. Temples, tombs, and monastery that you cannot miss!

## 4. Visit the Colosseum



Recognized as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Rome's great gladiatorial arena is the most exciting of the city's ancient sights. Also known as the Flavian Amphitheatre, the Colosseum is the perfect example of Roman engineering and architecture. It's the largest amphitheater in the world and the site of some of the bloodiest and most brutal contests in history.



## 5. Walk to Chichen Itza



Located in the Yutacan state of Mexico, Chichen Itza is the trace of an ancient Mayan city featuring ruins and architectural wonders that captures the culture and history of the people from the past. For a cultural experience and a chance to discern a significant part of Mayan heritage, this is the right trip.

## 6. Trek to Machu Picchu



A trip to Incas' lost city in Perú is a dream trip for many travelers. Machu Picchu is an Inca citadel situated on a mountain of 2,430 meters above sea level, that can be reached by a hike on mountain trails or a train trip through the valley of the Urubamba River. As one of the best known and most visited tourist destinations in South America, Machu Picchu is sure to fill travelers with high expectations.

Read more about [How to visit Machu Picchu](#)



## 7. Discover the Taj Mahal



An enormous mausoleum of white marble, built in Agra between the 1631 and 1648 by order of the Mughal emperor Shah Janan in memory of his beloved wife, the Taj Mahal is the jewel of Muslim art and one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Nowadays, the Taj Mahal attracts over 3 million visitors each year and has become an unmissable attraction for anyone traveling in India.

## 8. Hike to Christ the Redeemer



Situated at the top of Mount Corcovado overlooking the city of Rio de Janeiro, the statue of the Christ the Redeemer not only captures tourists' attention with its breathtaking views but also with the imposing statue of the Christ, considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Standing with his arms open, the Christ is one of the most recognized and photographed monuments in Brazil.

## 9. Be intrigued by Stonehenge



One of the wonders of the world and best-known prehistoric monument located near the city of Salisbury, England. The structure that we call Stonehenge was built between roughly 5,000 and 4,000 years ago and was one part of a most extensive sacred landscaped.



## 10. Discover the Amazon Rainforest and River



Also named “lungs of the world”, the Amazon rainforest produces an important share of the oxygen for the entire planet and is made up of a mosaic of eco-system and vegetation types. Live an experience in the Amazon rainforest and its River is to experience a lifetime of moments in one single trip. It is difficult to find another place in the world as rich in adventures and unique experiences as the Amazon.

## 11. Sail on Ha Long Bay



The ethereal beauty, Ha Long Bay is located in the area of the Gulf of Tangkia, in the north of Vietnam. Frequently included in lists of natural wonders of the world, Halong Bay is famous for its scenic ocean karst topography and its crystal waters.



## 12. Discover the Milan Cathedral



Standing proudly in the main square of the city center, Milan's Duomo is decidedly the most impressive structure and the emblem of the city of Milan. Stay speechless in front of the majestic and Gothic style of the church and admire the breathtaking views of Milan (and on clear days, the snow-capped peaks of the Alps) from the rooftop of the Church.

## 13. Visit Notre Dame Cathedral



One of the major attractions in Paris, the Notre Dame Cathedral is known as one of the most notorious of the Gothic cathedrals of the middle age and is distinguished for its size, antiquity and architectural details. Its stained glass windows and sculptures show the influence of naturalism that serves to contrast the Romanesque architecture. It's also said that the cathedral's tower has one of the best views of the city.

## 14. Drink wine under the Eiffel Tower



The Eiffel Tower was the principal exhibition of the Paris Exposition of 1889. It was constructed for the commemoration of the centennial of French Revolution and to demonstrate France's industrial power to the world. Nowadays is the emblem of the city of Paris and it's considered an architectural wonder of the world, in fact, each year attracts more visitors.



## 15. Visit Saint Basil's Cathedral & the Red Square



Born from a basement served as a basis for nine small churches built one after another and connected with galleries and passageways, the St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square is a can't miss attraction in Moscow. This crazy confusion of colors, patterns, and shape is the culmination of a style that is unique to the Russian architecture.

## 16. Visit the Acropolis of Athens



The Acropolis of Athens and its monuments are the universal symbol of the classical spirit and civilization and form the most significant architectural and artistic complex of the Greek antiquity. The Acropolis in Athens was a military fortress during the Neolithic period, due to its position which offers a great view of the land and sea. Now it's one of the most important ancient monuments in Europe.



## 17. Visit Easter Island



Who wouldn't want the opportunity to visit one of the most isolated and mysterious islands on Earth? You can not miss the enormous volcanic craters, preserved stone villages, beaches and, in particular, 900 Moai giant stone figures. You should definitely add The Easter Island to your bucket list.

## 18. Enjoy yourself at Sydney Opera House



Opened in 1973, the Sydney Opera House is a multi-performing art center in Sydney and great architectural work of the 20th century that is synonymous with creativity and innovation. Set in a remarkable waterscape, these shell-structures are nowadays a world-famous icon of architecture.



## 19. Discover the magnificent Angkor Wat



Angkor Wat is the ultimate expression of the genius of Khmer, an impressive temple that is stunning for its grand scale and its incredible details. One of the most important archeological sites in Cambodia, the Angkor Wat is considered the largest religious monument in the world.

## 20. Visit the Summer Palace in China



The Summer Palace is a vast conjunction of lakes, gardens, and palaces in Beijing and is said to be the largest and most well-preserved royal park in China. Known for being the playground for emperors during the summer of the old imperial city, the Summer Palace is a marvel of design and offers an exciting escape into the traditional Chinese landscape.



## 21. Visit Hagia Sophia



The most important Byzantine structure and one of the world's great monuments. This church was built at Constantinople (nowadays Istanbul) in the 6th century under the direction of the Byzantine emperor Justine I. Hagia Sophia, that means "Church of Holy Wisdom", each year attracts over 3 million visitors. The monument, which is now a museum, once was a church and then a mosque. TourScanner is the No 1 meta-search engine for tours & travel activities. Search over 20 bookings websites and **find your ideal tour & travel activity at the best price.**

## 22. Dive on the Great Barrier Reef



Located on the coast of Queensland in Australia, the Great Barrier Reef is famous for being the world's largest coral reef system. Viewing it from a greater distance, you can understand why it is considered as one of Australia's most remarkable natural gift and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. Due to its natural beauty, the Great Barrier Reef has become one of the most touristic destinations to enjoy many experiences, including scuba diving.



## 23. Participate in a Hiking Tour in the Grand Canyon



As one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, the Grand Canyon, located in the high desert of northern Arizona (USA) will take your breath away with its ever-changing scenery of enormous proportions. Thanks to its forest, painted deserts, sandstone canyons, to the Colorado River and the waterfalls, Grand Canyon is one of the most beautiful scenery in the world. Grand Canyon helicopter tours are an amazing way to visit the impressive scenery of the national park. Around 5.5 million of people visit the Grand Canyon each year and its 277 miles of superlative beauty, making it the most visited National park in the United States. Due to the vicinity to Las Vegas, it can be easily visited through day tours from Las Vegas to the Grand Canyon.

## 24. Sail to the Statue of Liberty



Inaugurated in 1886, the sculpture stands at the entrance to New York Harbour and from the beginning has welcomed millions of immigrants to the United States. For this reason, the Statue of Liberty more than a monument is a symbol of freedom to millions of people around the world and a point on your bucket list that you cannot miss!

## 25. Visit the city of Lhasa and the Potala Palace



In the center of Lhasa (Tibet), literally “Land of the Gods”, you can find the Potala Palace, that once was the principal residence of the Dalai Lama. If you want to live a spiritual experience, this is the right place because you can chat with monks, learn more about Tibetan culture and experience the mystical atmosphere of Lhasa. Setting eyes on Potala Palace for the first time is a moment you’ll never forget!



## 26. Climb the Kilimanjaro



The Kilimanjaro is famous for being the highest mountain in Africa and the tallest freestanding mountain on earth. It is a possible bucket list option for most people and 20.000 people every year climb it. The Kilimanjaro is an extraordinary experience if you want to stand on the roof of Africa.

## 27. Discover the Wailing Wall



Erected initially as part of the expansions of the second Jewish temple begun by Herod the Great, it's one of the holiest sites in the world. The Western Wall is a surviving trace of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which was destroyed by the Romans. The Temple was the center of the spiritual world, the primary conduit for the Godliness. For this reason, the Wall is the holiest place where Jews are permitted to pray.

## 28. Admire Mount Rushmore



Attracting approximately 3 million of tourists from all over the world each year, Mount Rushmore is one of America's most important attractions. Mount Rushmore National Memorial is a large-scale mountain sculpture created by the artist Gutzon Borglum. On it, you can admire America's most prominent U.S. presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.



## 29. Swim in Palawan, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park



It's not complicated to understand why Palawan, in Puerto Princesa National Park, was chosen as one of the New Seven Natural Wonders of the World. This park features a spectacular limestone karst landscape with an underground river, it's considerate one of the world's most impressive natural place. Famous because its lower portion is subject to tidal influences, emerges directly into the sea.

## 30. Visit St. Peter's Basilica



Located in the Vatican city, the center of Christianity, St. Peter's Basilica is Italy's largest, most luxurious and most spectacular basilica. One of the largest churches in the world, St. Peter's Basilica, was built during the Italian Renaissance and it's located in the Vatican. The imposing structure was built over a span of more than one hundred years by the most excellent Italian architects of the period. Learn how to skip the line to enter the St. Peter's Basilica.



### 31. Admire an aurora borealis in Norway



Every traveler's bucket list should include viewing the Northern Lights, one of the most naturally spectacular phenomena that have the power of taking your breath away. The Northern Lights are a natural light display in the sky, and Norway with its open spaces and little light pollution is one of the best places to try to see the most impressive lights show. So try to discern the Northern Lights!

## 32. Search for Nessie in the Loch Ness



Located in the Great Glen which stretches from Inverness, Loch Ness is the longest and deepest of all the loch in the area. One of the best ways to enjoy the beauty of Loch Ness is by taking a boat cruise or a kayaking trip on the water of the lake where you'll be able to appreciate the surrounding landscapes and villages and, who knows, maybe even catch a glimpse of Nessie. In fact, this is the place, if rumors are to be believed, where Nessie the Loch Ness monster resides.

### 33. Explore the Incredible Temples of Bagan



Built between 1057 and 1287 by a series of kings, this massive expanse of thousands of temples (estimates over 2.000) is one of the most precious archeological sites in Asia. Bagan's Temples are the key to experiencing authentic Myanmar's life and understanding the religious devotion of its people. The most exciting way to see the temples is doing a hot air balloon trip. With over 2000 pagodas and temples spanning across 40 miles of land, it is truly magical to stand in a hot air balloon and to look out over the countryside and the entire complex of Bagan.



## 34. Discover the Iguazu Falls



Recognized worldwide as natural beauties, the Iguazu Falls are located on the border between Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. If you are searching for an immersive experience in nature, this is the right place thanks to the possibilities to walk into the woods and to the proximity of the immensity of the Iguazu waterfalls in the Iguazu River.

## 35. Tour in Patagonia



Wherever you visit, Patagonia maintains an exclusive, secretive charm. Well known for its picturesque mountains, grassland and windswept coastlines, Patagonia is famous for its precious wildlife that never fails to astonish. It is the perfect bucket list material, including watching the Perito Moreno ice dam break, the whale watching or biking the Torres del Paine Circuit.



### 36. Watch whales at Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park



Credit to QuébecOriginal

Do you dream of seeing whales? The Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park in Québec (Canada) is one of the best whale-watching sites in the world. Not only you can admire these magnificent animals, but you can also see Québec's famous coastal landscapes.



## 37. Trek through the Himalayas



The Himalaya is the world's mightiest mountain system, containing nine of world's ten highest peaks and stretching more than 2,500 km across India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, and Tibet. Associated with high adventures and mountaineers, this place is like no other, with its remote and majestic scenery.

### 38. Get splashed at the Victoria Falls



Commonly referred to as “the smoke that thunders” due to the columns of spray that can be seen from miles away, the Victoria Falls are one of the greatest attractions in Africa and the most spectacular natural beauty on the Zambezi River. Considered as the largest fall in the world, is a point on your bucket list that you cannot put into consideration!

## 39. Skydive the Great Blue Hole



A giant underwater sinkhole off the coast of Belize, the Great Blue Hole is one of the most famous destinations for scuba divers that are attracted by the chance of diving in crystal-clear waters and see millions of species of marine life including spectacular coral formations and tropical fish.



## 40. Participate in a wild South African Safari at Serengeti National Park



Experiencing a safari in South Africa has to be one of the points of your bucket list. Here, you have a lot of places where you can see an abundance of wild animals. Serengeti is one of the most famous African's parks and is synonymous with wildlife and outstanding African scenery. It's Tanzania's oldest park and a Unesco World Heritage Site. Furthermore, it's home to the spectacular wildebeest migration and offers wildlife viewing throughout the year.

## 41. Be amazed by the Great Geysir in Iceland



Iceland is a magnificent country and one of the most spectacular and breathtaking geysers in Iceland is the Great Geysir. It's fairly active and erupts on a daily basis. See the mighty geyser erupt and send a spectacular water and steam column into the air have to be on your bucket list. Read more about the best places to visit in Iceland

## 42. Admire Big Ben's mighty clock



The Elizabeth Tower, known as Big Ben, is one of London's most iconic landmark and a London's attraction that you have to see! Big Ben is the name of the impressive bell inside the clock tower, which weighs more than 13 tons. The clock tower looks spectacular, in particular during the night when the four clock faces are illuminated. When you see Big Ben, it feels like you are in London.



## 43. Visit the Louvre Museum



Unquestionably one of the most excellent art galleries in the world, the Louvre Museum contains thousands of classic and modern masterpieces. As a symbol of the French culture and a testament to European art history, it's not surprising that it's also the most visited art gallery in the world. Every trip to France's capital deserves a visit to the Louvre to discover the wealth of treasure it contains.

## 44. Relax at Blue Lagoon



Surrounded by fantastic nature, the Blue Lagoon is an oasis of relaxation set in the pure heart of the Icelandic landscape. It is one of Iceland's most popular attractions, and it's not hard to understand why. The beautiful milky-blue opaque water contrasts with the surrounding black lava field covered with green moss. Combined with its excellent location and its relaxing pools with their rich skin nourishment, the Blue Lagoon quickly became one of Iceland's most visited attractions.

## 45. Walk around on Cinque Terre



A century ago the Cinque Terre (Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola and Riomaggiore) were merely five fishing villages on an unforgiving stretch of the Ligurian coast. The vibrant color of the Mediterranean, the wild coastline with the tiny towns placed like puzzle pieces on the cliffs make the Cinque Terre a Unesco World Heritage Site.



## 46. Visit Pompeii



Credit to Flickr

Famous for being the Roman city that was destroyed by the Vesuvius eruption in 79 a.C. Two thousand people died, and the town was abandoned for many years. When a group of explorers rediscovered the site in 1748, they were surprised to find that Pompeii was practically intact under a layer of dust and debris. Thanks to the buildings, artifacts and skeletons found in the buried city we were able to discover a lot about everyday life in the ancient world.

## 47. Visit the Sistine Chapel



Credit to Flickr

The Sistine Chapel is a chapel in the official residence of the Pope and one of the greatest treasure of the Vatican city. Not only it is known for its decoration, but also for being the temple in which popes are chosen and crowned. What captures the attention of the Sistine Chapel is not only its architecture but in particular the frescoes that completely cover the ceiling and the walls. All the frescoes of the roof of the Sistine Chapel are the work of Michelangelo. Read our guide about the Vatican Museums.



## 48. Discover Venice on a Vaporetto



Credit to Flickr

Italy is full of charm, but nowhere can be compared to Venice, the floating city. Not only it is known for its canals, its art and its rich cultural heritage, but it's one of the world most romantic destinations. Take a gondola ride through the canals of Venice is a point on your bucket list that you cannot miss.



## 49. Visit the mighty Sagrada Familia



The basilica Sagrada Familia is Barcelona's most famous landmark and one of the city's most impressive sights. One of the world's most prized architectural marvels, despite the fact that the Gaudi's construction has not yet been completed. This Church will leave you breathless, not only because of its giant size but primarily because of its pioneering architecture, which perfectly shows off the genius of Antoni Gaudí. Although the outside is a work of art, the interior of Sagrada Familia is inspired by nature. The columns seem tree trunks, giving the idea of being in a forest instead of inside a Church.

## 50. See your reflexion at Salar de Uyuni



Credit to Flickr

It's the world's most significant and most unusual surface area. One of the things we insist you get on your bucket list is the stunning Salar de Uyuni salt flats in Bolivia. A salt flat is an expanse of ground that is covered with salt and other minerals that make incredible patterns and visual wonders. The Bolivian salt flats are just fabulous, and they need to be discovered to be believed.



## 51. Walk in the Sequoia National Park



Credit to Flickr

Known as “Giant Forest” the Sequoia National Park preserves the landscape that still resembles the Southern Sierra Nevada. You’ll find yourself gazing by the towering, majestic and picturesque stretch of trees of the beautiful Sequoia National Park, located just next to the Yosemite National Park.



## 52. Ride through the Sahara



Credit to Flickr

There are only a few places in the world that can be compared to the incredible landscape of the Sahara Desert, the most extensive hot desert in the world. Its landscape is so vast that it's impossible to judge the distance. The color palette makes it difficult to distinguish specific forms, and the intense sunlight that reflects on the sand will show you things that don't exist. In Morocco, you can visit the Sahara Desert from Marrakesh.

## 53. Hike through the Antelope Canyon



The unbelievable beauty of Antelope canyon waits for the adventurous traveler who wants to discover one of the most spectacular attractions. These impressive caves, the spiral rock arches, and stunning colors make the caves look seriously of another planet. It's a canyon of thousands of years just outside of Page, in Arizona.

## 54. Discover the Jeita Grotto

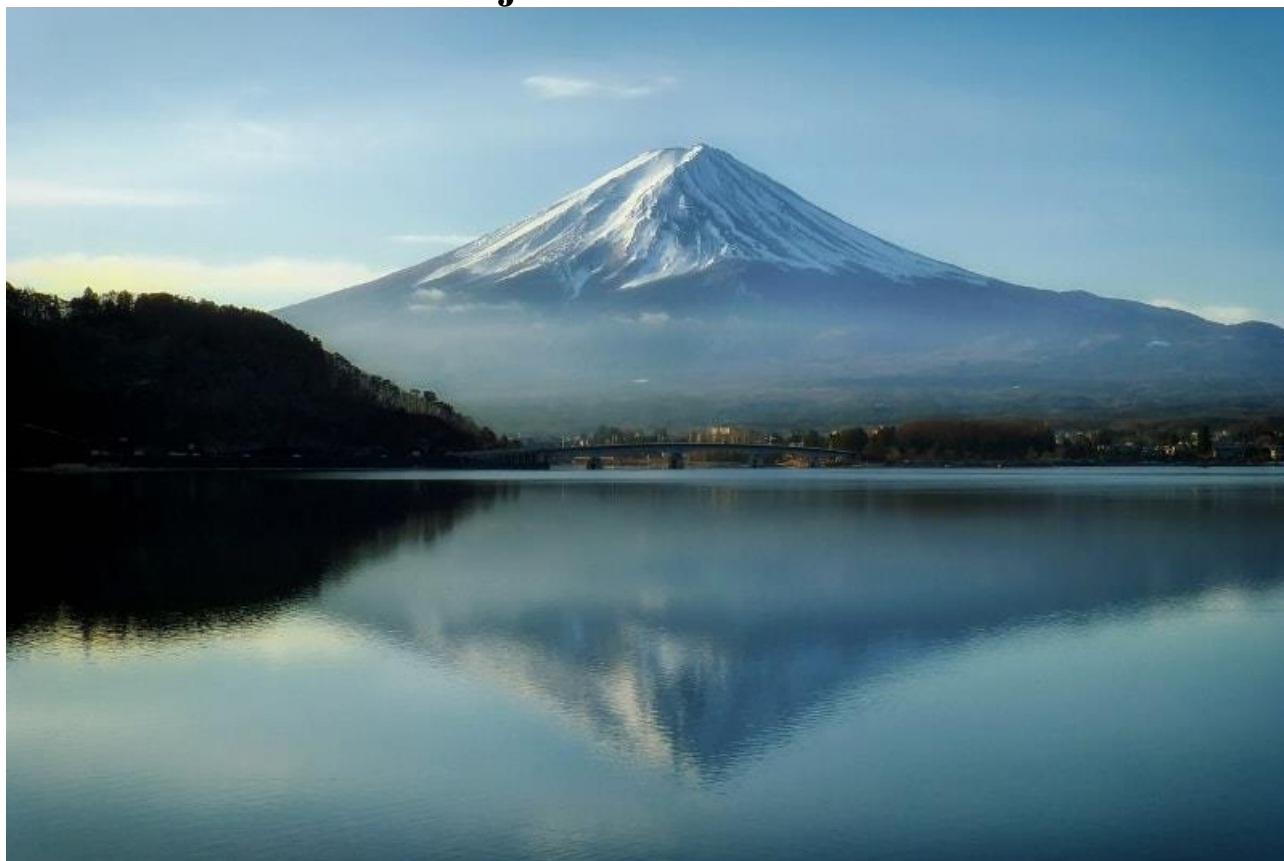


Credit to Flickr

One of the marvelous natural wonders in the Middle-east, Jeita Grotto is the jewel of tourism in Lebanon. A magical trip in a limestone crystallized grottoes characterized by its extraordinary concretions of stalactites and stalagmites sculpt naturally in different forms, sizes, and colors.



## 55. Climb the Mount Fuji



Mount Fuji is one of Japan's pride that you should never let go when you visit this country. A beautiful snow-capped rising from the earth, it's the highest Japan's mountain. The mountain may seem more beautiful seen from a distance, but the views on clear days and the experience of climbing it during the early morning hours it's an experience that you won't forget. Read more about the best Mount Fuji tours

## 56. Visit the British Museum



The British Museum is the house of a vast collection of world art and artifacts. Its collection includes fabulous Egyptian sarcophagi and mummies, hard of treasure from British archaeological digs, and Roman antiquities. Furthermore, the museum is a Greek revival building designed by Sir Smirke.

## 57. Explore the Moma Museum



The Museum Of Modern Art of New York is one of the largest and most influential museums of modern art in the world, in fact, it's presenting one of the best in contemporary art. It has been influential in developing and collecting modernist art, including artists such as Van Gogh, Cézanne, Dali, Monet or Andy Warhol.



## 58. Walk along the Canals of Amsterdam



A visit to Amsterdam isn't complete without enjoying its canals. In fact, Amsterdam is famous for having more than one hundred kilometers of canals and wandering through the city along the canals is one of the favorite activities of the tourist. The main canals, laid-out in a pattern of concentric half-circle, chronicle the growth of the city of Amsterdam. For this reason, they are considered as a symbol of the town!

## 59. Discover the remains of the Berlin Wall



One of the most potent and strongest symbols of the Cold War, for 28 years the Berlin Wall sliced the city. The construction of the wall began in the summer of 1961 by the authorities of the Communist East German that were trying to stop people from escaping to the Westside.



## 60. Visit Versailles



Versailles is best known for being the site of the vast royal palace and gardens built by King Louis XIV on what had been the grounds of a royal lodge. The Palace of Versailles has been the scene for several historical events, and it's today inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List.



## 61. Explore the Glowworm Cave



Credit to Flickr

The Glowworm Caves include a labyrinth of limestone caves and formations which began developing about 30 million years ago. Thousand of tiny, glittering glowworms inhabit these subterranean caverns, making a light show that's memorable.

## 62. Walk on Golden Gate Bridge



The Golden Gate Bridge that connects the city of San Francisco to Marin County (in California) is an architectural emblem. It is stretching on over two miles across the Golden Gate river, and it's a must-see iconic architectural marvel of the city of San Francisco.

## 63. Visit the Great Mosque of Cordoba



Credit to Flickr

The Mosque of Cordoba is the most important monument of all the Western Islamic world, and one of the most amazing in the world. A great symbol and reminder of the golden civilization that Muslims did in Europe over one thousand years ago, it's now the symbol of Cordoba.



## 64. Walk around on Mont Saint-Michel



On a rocky island in the middle of vast sandbanks between Normandy and Brittany stands Mont Saint-Michel, a gothic style abbey dedicated to the archangel St Michael and the village that grew up next to its great walls. In 1979 was classed by Unesco as a world heritage.

## 65. Enjoy yourself at Las Vegas Strip



Las Vegas Strip offers so many gambling, restaurants and entertainment options, that you can take a trip there and never get bored. A Las Vegas' trip is one of the principal American experiences. From the Strip's bright lights to the world-class museums, this little Nevada city is everything you'd expect it to be and much more.



## 66. Admire the Forbidden City



Located in the center of Beijing, the Forbidden city it's the world's largest and best-preserved palace complex. This palace served as the home of two Chinese dynasties and can give you an idea of the Chinese history. The name is referred to the fact that no one could enter into the palace without the emperor's permission.



## 67. Get splashed at Niagara Falls



Six million cubic feet of water flows over Niagara Falls every minute, offering what is considered one of North-America's most spectacular views. In fact each year around 28 million people visit the Canada-US border. It consists of three distinct waterfalls: Horseshoe Falls, American Falls and Veil Falls, that functions as one of the primary power providers to the state itself.

## 68. Climb the Leaning Tower of Pisa



The Leaning Tower of Pisa is the campanile of the cathedral of the Italian city of Pisa, known worldwide for its unintended tilt. Humans make mistakes, and one error was made in the XI century with the tower of Pisa. This calculation error would later become a symbol of civic pride. This tower represents an advanced understanding of weight and load characteristics, showing the Italian knowledge in architecture.

## 69. Walk on Giant's Causeway



Credit to Flickr

The Giant's Causeway is a beautiful, mysterious geological formation on the Ireland's North East. This formation it's steeped in myths and legend. The setting is a spectacular, dynamic coastal landscape of Atlantic waves, cliffs, fascinating geographical antiquity, bays, and magnificent views.



## 70. Visit the White House



Credit to Flickr

Often seen as a symbol of American power and splendor, the official residence of the President of the United States of America, also known as the White House is a point of reference for all the American citizens. So join the over 70.000 people who visit the White House each month.

## 71. Snorkel on Komodo Island



One of the islands that compose the Republic of Indonesia, Komodo Island is a place with unique fauna and flora, beautiful from the bottom of the sea to the top of the mountains. This island is also known as the “dragon’s Island” since the world’s biggest lizard lives here.



## 72. Times Square



Square in Midtown Manhattan, formed by the intersection of Seventh Avenue, 42nd Street and Broadway, Times Square is one of the most tourist places in New York City. Let yourself be conquered by the flashing neon lights and giant digital billboards, the brilliant Broadway marquees, the costumed characters and musicians. Times Square is big, bright and unforgettable.



## 73. Drive through the Black Forest



Credit to Flickr

A different holiday destination, the Black Forest gets its name from its dark, slightly sinister canopy of evergreens. With its mountains located in the southwest corner of Germany, the Black Forest has never been a distressing place, only enchanting and is an opportunity to tick this very picturesque place off your bucket list.

## 74. Climb the stairs at Tianmen Mountain



Credit to Flickr

Has been defined one of the most beautiful mountains in the world by many travelers who have been in China. The Tianmen Mountain is famous for its stunning views that include the “heaven’s door”, 99 bends, vertical cliffs, the thrilling cliff-hanging walk away, the glass skywalk and the world’s longest cable car ride.



## 75. Visit London's Warner Bros Studio



At Warner Bros. Studio Harry Potter fans could experience the magic of the films and discover the real magic that brings the movies life. The Studio Tour offers to its visitors the unique opportunity to explore the original sets, to see the animatronic creatures and the breathtaking special effects. Step into the world of everybody's favorite boy wizard.



## 76. Admire the view from Burj Khalifa



Dubai takes pride in having the tallest building in the world. Standing at 829,9 meters tall, the Burj Khalifa with its 360 degrees view on the 124th floor is one of the most attractive places of Dubai. Get ready to enjoy the highest observatory in the world.

## 77. Explore the Lençóis Maranhenses National Park



Credit to Pinterest

It's a vast area of undulating sand dunes between which are formed rainwater lakes at certain times of the year. The result is blue lakes surrounded by brilliant white dunes. Stretching on for miles upon miles, the dunes in Brazil are so vast and so blindingly white that it's easy to understand where the park got its name, Lençóis Maranhenses in Portuguese, that means "bedsheets of Maranhão".

## 78. Admire The Great Sphinx



The first truly colossal royal sculpture in Egypt, and one of the oldest, largest and most mysterious monuments ever created by man. The Great Sphinx with the lion's body and the human's head offers us an invaluable glimpse into the past.



## 79. Hike on the Rainbow Mountain



Credit to Flickr

The Rainbow Mountain, otherwise known as Vinicunca Mountain, is about three hours away from Cusco. Towering at 6.000 meters, it's coat of many colors is attributed to its sedimentary layers exposed for years to environmental conditions and mineralogy. Hiking the colored mountain is no joke, due to the combination of the weather and the high altitude.

## 80. Sandboard at Huacachina



The natural oasis of Huacachina inside the expansive sand dunes, is a desert paradise with a dreamy lagoon surrounded by palm trees. The perfect place for doing sandboarding and dune buggies, the most famous activities there.

## 81. Visit Quito



The Ecuadorian capital's not only the largest and best preserved colonial center in Latina America but also the first Unesco World Heritage City. If you want to stand with one foot in each hemisphere, there you can find a monument and a museum marking the general location of the Equator. Known as "The Middle of the World" because it is located about 25 kilometers south of the equator and the city extends about 1 kilometer of zero latitudes.



## 82. See the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace



London's magnificent Buckingham Palace is more than just the home of the British monarchy, it's one of the most visited attractions in the city. It's possible to visit this grand mansion and it's over 700 rooms including 19 staterooms and 78 bathrooms. You can also enjoy the Changing of the Guard ceremony, a unique celebration of British pageantry and the major event happening all year in front of the Palace that attracts the biggest crowds.

## 83. Take a boat to Jeju Island



Credit to Zizzee

With breathtaking natural wonders and hundreds of unique attractions, Jeju Island is one of Korea's best travel destinations. Korea's largest island offers many attractions, including a volcanic Hallasan commanding the Island from the center, a 224 km semi-tropical forested national park, a wild coastline dotted with waterfalls and the most extended lava tube in the world.

## 84. Admire the Zocalo



Credit to Flickr

The Zocalo is the center of Mexico City and one of the Mexican capital's most well-known landmarks and squares. Formally known as Plaza de la Constitución, this grand square once constituted the ceremonial hub of the Aztec city. Measuring 220 m from north to south, and 240m from east to west, it's one of the world's largest city squares. It's undoubtedly one of the city's most historically and culturally exciting destinations.



## 85. Enjoy a bath in Pamukkale



This Turkey's unreal landscape is made up of mineral forests, petrified waterfalls and a series of terraced basins. Also named "Cotton Palace", at the end of the 2nd century was selected as the thermal spa of Hierapolis. You can now relax and bath at Pamukkale so it should definitely figure on your bucket list.

## 86. Hike to the Vesuvius

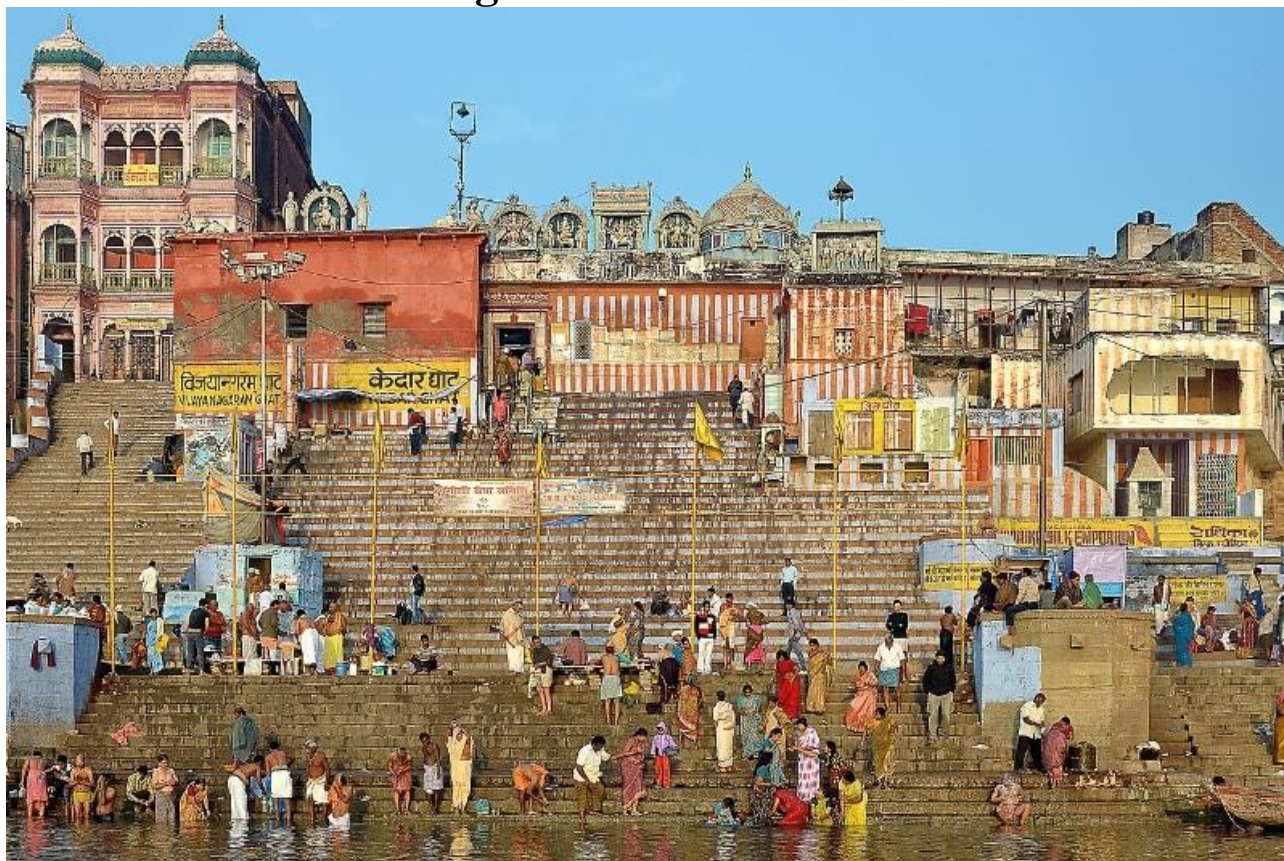


Credit to Flickr

Located on the Gulf of Naples, Mount Vesuvius is the only active volcano in Europe. It's best known because of the eruption in 79 a.C. that destroyed the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Seen as one of the most dangerous Volcanoes in the world, is the emblem of the city of Naples!



## 87. Don't bathe in Ganges River in Varanasi



Varanasi is a city on the banks of Ganges, the largest river in India whose basin is the most populated river basin in the world, with over 400 million people. Varanasi is the holiest of the seven sacred cities in Hinduism and Jainism, for this reason, many Hindus believe that death at Varanasi brings salvation. Furthermore, there is a spectacular Hindu ritual called “Ganga Aarti” (consisting in a ceremony that dispels darkness) which takes place in the banks of the Ganges River.



## 88. Discover Al-Masjid an-Nabawi



Credit to Flickr

Also known as Prophet's Mosque, it's a grand mosque in Medina and the second holiest mosque in the world. Built by the Prophet Muhammad, the construction stands on the site of a mosque and contains the tomb of the same Prophet. One of the holiest sites in Islam and one of the principal destinations for religious pilgrimage.

## 89. Bath in the Dead Sea



Salty lake located on the lowest place on the face of the earth, the Dead Sea (431 m below sea level) is a breathtaking natural beauty surrounded by the stunning landscape of the Negev Desert. Takes its name from the saline water of the lake because no fish can survive in the salty waters. The other result of the salty water is their renowned health and healing properties and the unique feature that one can float naturally in them.

## 90. Admire the blue flames at Ijen Volcano



Credit to Flickr

Indonesia's Kawah Ijen Volcano, on Java's Island, has two of the most unusual occurrences on the hearth. The first is electric blue flames, difficult to see during the day but illuminate during the night. This is possible because the sulfur combusts on contact with the air creating stunning blue lava. The second occurrence is the Kawah Ijen Crater acid Lake, at the top of the volcano, filled with blue water. In fact, it's due to the acid that the water assumes this strange color.



## 91. Visit Meiji Jingu Shrine



Credit to Flickr

It's a large Shinto shrine in Tokyo, built in 1920 in memory of Emperor Meiji and his wife Empress Shoken, under whose reign Japan became a modern state. This shrine, surround by a vast forest, it's the most visited religious site in Japan.

## 92. Ride a horse in Mongolia



Credit to Flickr

It's typical say that "a Mongol without a horse is like a bird without the wings". Immerse yourself in the Mongolian nomad's timeless way of life. You'll ride through the vast, treeless steppes of Mongolia with the largest herds of horses the world has ever seen. Enjoying a Mongolian ride means choosing to experience nomad's life and experiment a way of life so different from ours.

## 93. Explore Sensoji Temple



Credit to Flickr

Sensoji Temple, founded in 628, is the oldest and most visited temple in Tokyo. Many people believed that the temple brings good luck, happiness and make all wishes come true. In front of the principal hall of the temple, you will see many people covering themselves with smoke. This because the smoke they are covering themselves with, is believed to make the part they covered better.



## 94. Visit the Grand Palace



Credit to Flickr

Located in the heart of Bangkok, the Grand Palace is one of the most famous landmarks of the country. And offers spectacular sacred sites and buildings. This Grand Palace served as the official residence of the Kings of Siam since 1782. Nowadays the Palace is used for many Royal rituals and other official functions.

## 95. Walk on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

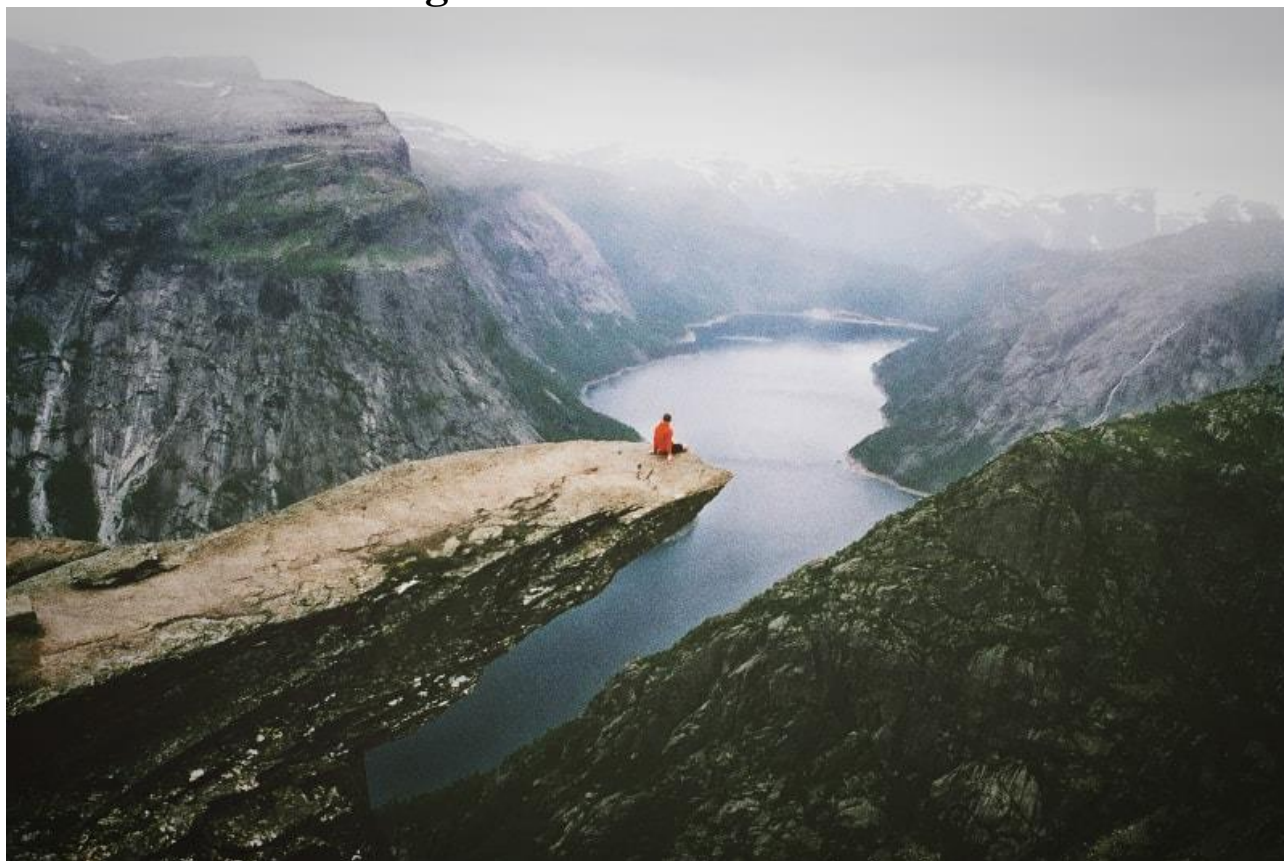


Credit to Flickr

One of Los Angeles's most famous tourist attractions, attracting 10 million visitors each year. The Hollywood Walk of Fame is the stars embedded in the sidewalks of Hollywood Boulevard and Vine St. in Hollywood. The name on each star is the people in the field of television, music, drama, radio, and film that influenced the entertainment industry.



## 96. Hike on Trolltunga



Located about 1100 meters above sea level, suspended 700 meters above lake Ringedalsvatnet, Trolltunga is one of the most breathtaking scenic cliffs in the world. After an arduous hike, that takes 10-12 hours, there is a breathtaking view over lakes and snow-capped mountains, ending at the Troll's tongue, a thin sliver of rock.



## 97. Visit Bourbon Street



Credit to Flickr

If you're looking for a street with lots of people, bars, and live bands, you are in the right place. Welcome to Bourbon Street in the famous French quarters of New Orleans.

## 98. Visit the Paricutin Volcano



Located in the state of Michoacan (Mexico) near the city of Uruapan, the Paricutin Volcano is considered one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. Famous for being the youngest volcano formed in the Northern Hemisphere, developing in a farmer's cornfield. The eruption of the Paricutin scoria cone from 1943 to 1952 marks the first time that scientists have been able to observe the complete life cycle of a volcano, from birth to extinction.



## 99. Shop at Tsim Sha Tsui



Credit to Flickr

Situated in the south of Kowloon Peninsula, Tsim Sha Tsui is known as the shoppers' paradise thanks to its malls and colorful shopping streets. It's a giant world bazaar, where Hong Kong's Harbour meet stands, shops, markets and malls. Take a walk for Canton Road where you'll see the best the world has to offer in luxury designer goods.



## 100. Admire the Golden Temple



Credit to Flickr

The Golden Temple in India is not only a central religious place of the Sikhs but also a symbol of equality and human brotherhood and one of the oldest worship places in the Indian Sikh. The Temple takes its name from the fact that the entire top of the temple is made of pure gold. Sikhs all over the world would like to make a visit and to pay obeisance at the temple. In fact, the tank is said to have healing powers, and pilgrims come from across the world to bathe in its sacred waters. Hopefully, you could do most of them! Do not hesitate to tell us in the comments below which one you have already done and which one you recommend to us!

# 23

## BIG bucket list adventures

The rarest travel experiences. The toughest. The dearest.  
The ones that won't be around forever. These are the real  
do-before-you-die journeys...

## 1. Raft the Grand Canyon Arizona, USA



The Colorado River running through the Grand Canyon

**Why the Grand Canyon?** To see the great gorge from a completely different – and rare – angle. Looking down on the squiggle of the Colorado River from a mile up on the rocky rim, it seems impossible that this river could have carved the gargantuan Grand Canyon.

Of course, it's had about two billion years to do so, slowly slicing through the black-red-orange-purple strata to create one of the natural wonders of the world. And this is why seeing the canyon from water level is the best way to appreciate it – the experience offers a far more intimate encounter than peering in from the top, as well as a close up of all that glorious geology.

The official launch point for a full run is Lees Ferry, at the north-east of Grand Canyon National Park; the end is at Lake Mead, 443km further on. En route are side canyons, Puebloan sites, swimming holes and sandy beaches, not to mention plenty of wild water.

So, all good – it's just getting authorisation to enter that's the problem. There's a 'weighted lottery' system, with a waiting list of several years, to secure a private rafting permit.

Fortunately, commercial tour-op trips – which range from one-day to three-week floats – are available, but even these need booking in advance if you want to guarantee your rendezvous with all this ancient rock.

**How to tick it off your bucket list:** The best time to raft the Colorado is May to October, so book your trip then. Overall, the river is graded a IV (intermediate), with many I to III rapids, plus some Vs.



## 2. See the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City, Italy



Inside the Sistine Chapel

**Why the Sistine Chapel?** Massive art, small crowds. Damn Michelangelo for not picking a bigger room! The 40m long by 13m wide box, squished into the Vatican Museum complex is woefully inadequate for the 25,000-odd people who now traipse through here every day.

Yes, the iconic ceiling, and particularly the altar wall's Last Judgement, are probably the most impressive paintings you'll ever see – but that's only if you can see them, over the heads of the rest of humanity.

Fortunately, there is another way. It's possible to book private tours of the site, which take small groups into Vatican rooms usually off limits, and finish in the Sistine Chapel for an after-hours viewing of Michelangelo's masterpieces, without all the other people.

**How to tick it off your bucket list:** Advance booking is essential, so don't delay in organising your visit to the Sistine Chapel.

### 3. Sleep at Everest Base Camp, Nepal



Everest Base Camp

**Why Everest Base Camp?** To complete an epic trek, then snooze with the summiteers. The trek to Everest Base Camp – a breathtaking 14-day out-and-back into Sagarmatha NP to the foot of the world’s highest mountain – is a classic.

But while the teahouse hospitality and Himalaya views en route are magnificent, most treks are not actually allowed to stay at Everest Base Camp – it requires specific permission. Most hikers visit their 5,340m goal for a ‘been there’ photo op, then descend to nearby Gorak Shep to sleep.

However, a few special departures do offer the chance to overnight at the iconic camp. Also, these trips may be timed to coincide with peak summit-attempt season, when groups of climbers are also in residence.

It’s a unique opportunity, to both sleep in the shadow of the mighty mountain and to speak to the brave/mad souls making their final preparations; you might even see teams setting off up the notorious Khumbu Ice Fall, the start of their push for the top.

**How to tick it off your bucket list:** Summiteers usually arrive at Base Camp April/May, so plan your trip accordingly. Keep yourself healthy, too, as trekkers with illnesses will not be allowed to stay at Base Camp to avoid potentially infecting the climbers.



## 4. Trek to Machu Picchu, Peru



Machu Picchu

**Why Machu Picchu?** It's more satisfying than the train, and there are lots of options. It's virtually impossible to make a bucket list that doesn't include Machu Picchu. A secret city, never found by those pesky conquistadores, perched in the mountains, swirled by mists and mysteries – it's the stuff of travel legend.

The trouble is, when you've seen so many, many photos of the Inca citadel, there's a danger it'll be a bit of a let-down. And that's one reason why, if you can, you should go on foot. The city deserves the slow build, the accumulated excitement, that trekking there provides.

Also, deciding to lace up doesn't mean you have to hit the Inca Trail. There are plenty of alternatives to the classic: you can hike via the much less-visited ruins of Choquequirao; head along the dramatic and diverse Salkantay Trail (with posh lodges en route); or tackle the tough Vilcabamba Traverse.

**How to tick it off your list:** Hikes vary in length, altitude and difficulty, so you'll need to acclimatise before setting off. Remember, dry season (the best time to go) is April to October. You also need a permit for the Inca Trail. Only a limited number are released each year and they sell out quick.



## 5. Hike the Milford Track, New Zealand



Waterfall along the Milford Track

**Why the Milford Track?** Complete one of New Zealand's Great(est) Walks in great style. New Zealand has nine official Great Walks (**with a new one recently opened**), and the Milford Track is arguably the greatest of the lot.

This four-day, 53.5km hike from Lake Te Anau to Milford Sound slices through the splendour of Fiordland National Park, taking in lakes, waterfalls, ice fields, forest and plenty of pioneer history, and tops out at the panoramic Mackinnon Pass (1,154m).

In the peak summer trekking months (November to April), it's always oversubscribed; camping is not permitted and numbers are limited by the bunk-space available in the three DOC lodges en route. That is, unless you opt for an upgrade. Ultimate Hikes operates a series of private lodges (with both dorms and doubles) that enable hikers to tramp the track, with a guide, in a little more comfort.

You still have to carry your own bag, but – unlike those in the DOC huts – you get hot showers, duvets, drying rooms and hairdryers; breakfasts, lunches and three-course dinners are cooked up for you; each lodge even has a well-stocked bar. Cheers to that: a great hike, indeed.

**How to tick it off your list:** Make sure you're prepared fitness wise before the October to April hiking season commences, and whenever you go, prepare your packs for all weather conditions.

## 6. Sleep under the stars in NamibRand, Namibia



The NamibRand under a night sky

**Why the NamibRand?** To experience some of the world's best celestial sights. Sure, leave the big city and you can see stars almost anywhere. But the experience will be extra heavenly if you travel somewhere very dark, very clear and very remote.

Namibia's vast NamibRand Nature Reserve is one of only a few gold-certified Dark Sky Reserves. Simply, it has some of the world's best dark skies. There are no towns or settlements inside it, or even nearby – Namibia is one of the planet's most sparsely populated countries. And the dry climate means cloudless skies are the norm.

By day, explore NamibRand's ochre-hued wilderness of dunes, mountains and plains, looking for oryx and Hartmann's zebra. Then, after a blazing sunset, it's time to turn your eyes skyward.

**How to tick it off your list:** It may seem difficult to get to the desert, but the reserve is around 375km from Windhoek. So, you can always start from the capital, and find your way to the reserve.

## 7. Swim with turtles in Ningaloo, Western Australia



A green turtle at Ningaloo Reef

**Why Ningaloo Reef?** To take a dip with endangered species. Western Oz's Ningaloo Reef isn't as big as the Great Barrier, on the opposite coast.

But it's still attracts around 500 species of fish; best of all, in parts it lays only 100m offshore, making its underwater riches extremely accessible – the snorkelling is superb, too.

**How to tick it off your list:** Three of the world's seven species of marine turtles nest on beaches and islands near Ningaloo between November and April: green (listed as endangered), hawksbill (critically endangered) and loggerhead (vulnerable).

However, turtles swim offshore year-round, their lumpen on-land movements transformed into a graceful ballet once they're in the water. Good spots include Shark Bay, the Muiron Islands and Turtle Bay on Dirk Hartog Island.



## 8. Visit an endangered tribe in the Amazon, Ecuador



Two young girls from huaorani tribe in the amazon rainforest, Yasuni National Park, Ecuador

**Why the Ecuadorian Amazon?** To glimpse a unique culture, but to do it sensitively and responsibly. Understandably, many struggling minority tribes don't want to be gawped at by tourists passing through – the arrow-firing Sentinelese of the Andaman Islands being a case in point.

But for some such groups, tourism is providing a cultural lifeline, and travellers staying at lodges or booking tours owned and run by the tribes themselves are helping to keep endangered traditions alive (and protect their much-threatened environment from developers), while also giving visitors an authentic insight into how the peoples have existed for centuries: everybody wins.

The indigenous peoples of Ecuador's Oriente seem to have mastered this kind of community eco-tourism; there are several well-regarded options. For example, the Cofán – one of the oldest Amazonian tribes have been running community-based ecotourism in northern Ecuador since 1978. Trips here include canoeing and piranha fishing, sleeping in traditional thatched huts and trekking into the wildlife-dense rainforest with Cofán guides – with optional overnight camping trip for the adventurous minded.

**How to tick it off your list:** Trips to the Cofán community at Zabalo depart from Lago Agrio (seven to eight hours from Quito by bus).

## 9. Spot a snow leopard in Ladakh, India



A snow leopard in India

**Why Ladakh?** Few have seen this endangered cat. There are thought to be just 4,000 to 6,500 snow leopards left in the wild. Coupled with the fact that these charismatic big cats tend to live in cold, inhospitable, rocky clifftops at altitudes above 3,000m, they're not that easy to spot.

This makes a sighting very special, and most trips that venture into their domain – largely Tibet, the Himalaya and the 'Stans – make it clear that you'd be fortunate to see even a paw-print. However, in recent years Ladakh's Hemis National Park has gained a reputation as the world's snow leopard capital, with hundreds of leopards, and as time passes, local guides gain an ever better understanding of their habits.

There are still no guarantees, but in Hemis's Husing, Tarbuns and Rumbak Valleys, sightings are relatively common; Husing is on a well-known snow leopard corridor. Visit in winter, when the snow brings the cats to lower ground and, with the help of local knowledge, trained trackers and spotting scopes, you might be in luck.

**How to tick it off your list:** Flights connect Delhi to regional hub Leh, which is 40km from Hemis NP. There are six villages in the park; accommodation is in homestays or camping.



## 10. Descend into a volcano, Iceland



Thrihnukagigur magma chamber

**Why Iceland?** For a unique descent into the Earth's belly. To inject some Jules Verne adventure into your bucket list you need to head to Iceland. It's a strange, singular place; a newborn babe in geological terms, you can virtually see it being formed before your eyes – the land groans, hisses and spews.

This makes delving beneath the surface quite exciting indeed, though something that's been easy to achieve since 2012, when commercial tours began plunging into Thrihnukagigur volcano.

Clipped on to what's essentially a window-cleaner's lift, you're slowly lowered 120m into another world – a magma chamber uniquely drained of its magma. Lights reveal a cavern of many colours – bruise purples, sulphur yellows, blood reds.

Water drip-drips from above, while breaking into song demonstrates the excellent acoustics. It is wonderful, and very weird. Thrihnukagigur is dormant, last erupting over 4,000 years ago. There's no sign that it's about to spring into life, but tours are only announced on a year-by-year basis because, well, you never know...

**How to tick it off your list:** Tours run 10 May to 31 October, so book your trip accordingly.



## 11. Visit St Helena, South Atlantic



### St Helena

**Why St Helena?** Even though the Royal Mail Ship departed on its last trip to St Helena last year, it's still not too late to visit this far-flung isle. With an airport now on the island, it is now arguably easier than ever to visit.

The South Atlantic speck is a crumple of glorious geomorphology – small, but riven with deep gullies, gulches and volcanic after-effects, and swept with semi-tropical lushness.

The waters are brim-full of dolphins; the skies wheel with myriad birds. Make the most of the large congregation of whale sharks by snorkelling alongside these gentle giants from January to March. But it's the human story that is most fascinating – less than 5,000 people live on this lonely isle, in settlements little changed since Georgian times. Explore it all by foot by walking some of the Post Box walks, which vary in difficulty but all offer views of the most scenic and untouched parts of the island. You will get a log book and a stamp at the end to prove you've completed them. Or go on a historic ramble to get to know Napoleon's influence on the isle.

**How to tick it off your list:** Plan your trip's dates based on your biggest interests - here's **what to do when in St Helena**, and a few more **essential things to do**. Do your research before you book, too - as the isle's Post Box walks vary in difficulty, and even the easier ones can be tricky.

## 12. Sleep on a private isle in Scotland



The Summer Isles, Scotland

**Why?** Who doesn't fancy an island to themselves? Sadly, most of us don't have a Branson-sized budget – but that doesn't mean you can't claim your own patch of sea-lapped solitude.

Thanks to the fact that Scotland has almost 800 islands, as well as a favourable attitude to wild camping, it's possible to tick this must-do off the list without spending a penny. Tiny Tanera Beag, the second-largest of the 20-odd north-western Summer Isles, has never been inhabited – though you might be joined by a few sheep, occasionally brought here to graze.

You can sea kayak from the mainland, over Badentarbet Bay and around larger (inhabited) Tanera Mor to reach Tanera Beag. Once you've hauled ashore, look out for seals in the lagoon by Eilean Flada Mor, climb to the island's 83m high-point for views over the nearby rock stacks and skerries, and pitch your tent amid the heather to feel like a laird for the night.

**How to tick it off your list:** Achiltibuie, on the coast of Wester Ross & Sutherland, is the best access point. Tanera Mor is three km offshore; Tanera Beag is just beyond. Plan to visit in spring, summer or autumn.

## 13. Visit Antarctica



Whale in the Weddell Sea, Antarctica

**Why Antarctica?** Antarctica is a land of grand voyages. Powerful, dangerous, but undeniably exciting. The chance to venture where so few others have visited is perhaps the very reason it tops so many wish lists.

To visit a place even less well known to travellers, embark on a cruise into the Weddell Sea to the east. The crashing icebergs, vast ice floes and often unpredictable and treacherous conditions will show you what real adventure looks and feels like.

Spot a variety of wildlife including impressive baleen whales just under the surface and colonies of penguins and seals clustered on the thick ice on top.

**How to tick it off your list:** Weddell Sea voyages are limited to just a few a year. If you want to go, you need to be organised and plan well in advance.



## 14. Climb Kilimanjaro, Tanzania



Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

**Why Kilimanjaro?** It's travel's greatest trekking summit – and it could well be losing its snows. Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro deserves to be on every travel bucket list.

No other mountain manages to combine such a wealth of wow-factors to tick all those boxes: it's an aesthetically awesome monolith poking out of the African plains; it's a tough but achievable challenge; at 5,895m, it's the roof of a continent; it's a climatological oddity, proving snow can sit virtually on the equator. Tick, tick, tick, tick.

But just to add an extra bit of tock to all those ticks, doom-sayers predict that those snows might be gone in just a few decades – all the more reason to tackle Kili quick.

**How to tick it off your list:** Kilimanjaro cannot be climbed independently. Choose a longer trip to allow more time for acclimatisation and increase your chances of success.

## 15. Tour Havana in a classic car, Cuba



Classic cars in Havana, Cuba

**Why classic Havana?** Hop in an iconic vintage motor before they get scrapped. It's all change in Cuba. A gentle thaw in relations with their big neighbours to the north means that some travel to the island has become (slightly) easier for American citizens and some trade restrictions have been lifted. And with 2019 marking the 500th anniversary of the founding of Havana, there's never been a better time to visit.

For now, Cuba remains quite unique, with an intoxicating *je ne sais quoi* that's strong of culture and loose of hips. Perhaps the most iconic Cuba image, though, is of a classic 1950s car bumping down a Havana backstreet.

While you can, take a tour in vintage motor, listening to its retro roar as you glide by the capital's crumbly grandeur.

**How to tick it off your list:** You can't self-drive a classic car, but several companies offer tours with driver/guides. Do some **Havana reading** to make sure you're prepared for your journey, too.

## 16. Cuddle a whale in Baja California, Mexico



A grey whale calf in Baja

**Why Baja California?** Closer encounters with massive mammals. You can see whales in lots of places, but there are few spots where you can actually give one a hug. From December to April grey whales gather in Baja California's San Ignacio Lagoon to mate, calve, nurture their young and – so it seems – have a jolly old time with the weird human creatures that sail out to see them.

Despite having been hunted to near extinction, these greys bear no grudge; indeed, they bump into boats and surface within touching distance, inviting pats and strokes. However, there's only a short window of opportunity to see the greys here each year, with February, March and April the best months, and good trips sell out far – often years – in advance.

**How to tick it off your list:** Activity varies by month, so time your visit perfectly. In February you see more breaching adults; calves grow more confident in March to April, approaching boats more frequently.



## 17. Capture the Northern Lights on camera



Photographing the Northern Lights

**Why the Northern Lights?** To record a spectacular photo of the Northern Lights that you saw. In this age of instant images and selfies, it's not good enough anymore to just see the planet's most spectacular light show – to hopefully be in the right place at the right time – now you have to snap a frame-worthy photo of it too.

One way to increase your chances of filling that memory card is to join an aurora photography tour. You'll not only get tips from pros on how to snap the show – sharpening up those DSLR skills for those future travels – but they'll also be attuned to where those spectral waves are most likely to start pulsing through the night.

Your daylight hours will then be spent exploring the wild Arctic terrains that best yield luminous results – Finland, Norway, Sweden or Canada.

**How to tick it off your list:** October to November and February to March are the best times to see the Northern Lights. Remember that dark skies yield better displays, you're best off avoiding the full moon, and you'll have to be flexible during your trip. The Aurora Borealis may not appear on the night of your schedule tour, but they could be out in full-force the next night - so be prepared to change your plans at a moment's notice.

## 18. See an eclipse in Argentina, Antarctica or Australia



A total eclipse

**Why the eclipse?** To be in the best place when the world goes weird. Total eclipses – when the moon blocks out the sun, basking the earth in an eerie glow – happen roughly every 18 months. But you need to be in the right place, ideally somewhere in the path of the solar maximum, to fully appreciate the effect, and you’d have to wait an average of 375 years to see two total eclipses from the same spot.

Sometimes being in the path of an eclipse is simple. On 21 August 2017, the total eclipse swung right across the middle of the USA, visible in states such as Wyoming, Nebraska and South Carolina; its point of greatest eclipse just north-west of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, where totality lasted for over two minutes.

Sometimes, though, it’s a bit trickier – the eclipse in March 2015 was best viewed in the snowy wilderness of Svalbard. Part of the battle is securing a place on a good, expert-led eclipse-watching trip: these specialist departures can fill up well in advance.

**How to tick it off your list:** The next total solar eclipse is due on 14 December 2020, visible in Chile and parts of Argentina. 26 May 2021 will be the next lunar eclipse, visible from Australia. There is also a total eclipse in Antarctica in December 2021. Cloud cover will affect the quality of eclipse-viewing; if possible, check forecasts and head for clearer skies. **The NASA Eclipse site** is a mine of information.

## 19. Leaf-peep on the Appalachian Trail, USA



Autumn in New Hampshire

**Why New Hampshire?** You'll get to see fall colours without the other people. The idea of visiting New England in autumn, wending between comely white clapboard houses, verges lined with pumpkins and forested hillsides completely aflame, is a romantic notion. Now add in hiked prices and all the other cars and coaches trying to get to the same scenic lookout, and it isn't quite so dreamy.

Arguably the best way to appreciate the glorious death of New England's trees is to stride among it, camping out each night. So, why not combine a smidgen of the Appalachian Trail – the East Coast's seriously long long-distance hike, bucket list-worthy in itself – to see the leaves without the crowds.

The 70km stretch between New Hampshire's White Mountains and the Vermont border is particularly renowned for its fabulous fall foliage – think maples smouldering crimson, dogwoods turning purple and birch trees burning gold.

**How to tick it off your list:** Fall colours usually start to appear in New England from mid-September. Shelters and campsites along the trail are basic.



## 20. Drive through Glacier National Park, USA



### Glacier National Park

**Why Glacier National Park?** A rare, time sensitive chance to see retreating ice from a capricious drive, that's why. The Going-to-the-Sun Road somehow carves an 80km-long furrow through the mountains of north-west Montana. It's also notoriously difficult to clear of winter snows. Portions of it remain open year-round, but the very earliest in the season that the entire length might be accessible is mid-June.

Then, by late September, parts are off-limits all over again, leaving a brief window for a traverse. It's worth trying though: the road slices through the parks most dramatic sections, with hair-raising hairpins and a haul over 2,026m Logan Pass.

You can also see the park's rapidly retreating Jackson Glacier from the tarmac, which you should certainly pull over for – it's estimated that Glacier NP may be entirely glacier-free by 2030.

**How to tick it off the list:** Hire a car and drive the road. Without stopping, the journey will take you around two hours. **Keep your eyes peeled for road accessibility updates.**

## 21. See a spirit bear in British Columbia, Canada



A white spirit bear

**Why British Columbia?** These rare bears roam only here. Even for a country big on big empty, Canada's Great Bear Rainforest takes some beating. What the GBR does have, though, is lots of lovely wildlife: grey wolves, grizzlies, cougars, orca, sea otters, humpback whales and, uniquely, Kermode – or spirit – bears.

These unusual ursines are black bears with a recessive gene, which renders about 10% of them creamy-pale. Like spirits, though, they're tricky to spot – fewer than 400 are thought to exist. But if you head to the right part of this roadless, fjord-cut, river-riven rainforest, you might be in luck. The area around Klemtu is a known Kermode hang-out, and lodges accessible only by floatplane have guides expert in tracking them down.

**How to tick it off your list:** The best time to visit is late August to mid-October, when returning salmon tempt bears to the rivers.



## 22. Ride the Trans-Siberian, Russia-China



The Trans-Siberian passing through Mongolia

**Why the Trans-Siberian?** To take the slow route across Siberia. What's the old adage? It's better to travel than to arrive? Could have been written for the Trans-Siberian train journey.

If you were that desperate to get between Moscow and Beijing (the route of the network's Trans-Mongolian branch, arguably the most interesting), you could fly it in under eight hours. But no, it's this six-night, 7,621km train that is slow travel at its most atmospheric, an unhurried spooling of endless birch trees, Lake Baikal shimmer, grassy steppe, Gobi Desert, yurt camps, camel herds and station-traders selling sweets and sausages.

The train provides a cosy confinement within that vastness, where your cabin-mates could be Buddhist monks or Russian businessmen, where vodka flows freely and the hot-water samovar is always steaming, ready to make a brew.

**How to tick it off your list:** Make note of where you want to stop off. Remember, there is no hop-on hop-off option; to make stopovers, you must buy separate tickets for each leg.



## 23. Raft the Zambezi River, Zambia



Hippos in the Zambezi River

**Why the Zambezi River?** Run the great river, while you can. The Zambezi is one of the world's most iconic waterways, slicing its way through south-eastern Africa and famously plunging over Victoria Falls.

Rafting it – whether you choose a short trip from Livingstone or a multi-day, beach-camping expedition – is up there with the world's greatest river journeys. You'll tackle hair-raising rapids called things like Oblivion and The Devil's Toilet Bowl. You'll might spot hippos lazing in the channels and even crocs on the banks.

**How to tick it off your list:** Book your trip to the Zambezi for sometime between August and December - that's low water season, and the best time for rafting.

# The 100

## greatest travel experiences

Over the years, you've told us your ultimate travel experiences – so here it is, the definitive travel wish list...



Marine iguanas, Galápagos Islands

### **1. Cruise the Galápagos Islands, Ecuador**

One day you're watching giant tortoises mate in swirling mists, then you're nose-to-nose with a seafaring marine iguana, or snorkelling with a group of penguins. As Darwin appreciated, neighbouring islands have sub-species that have developed differently, leading to one of the most important, world-changing discoveries ever known: evolution.

**Make it happen:** The best way to explore is by boat. Although three- or four-night cruises are available, try to go for a week at least.



## 2. Arrive in Timbuktu, Mali

The small, dusty town of Timbuktu has long been a byword for isolation. Visit the bustling market, where salt was once worth as much as gold, and then cool down with sweet tea as you barter for silver with the Tuareg nomads. Come sunset, venture out into the desert by camel, and drift to sleep under a million stars.

**Make it happen:** Note that the FCO currently advises against travel to Timbuktu. If you choose to go, you can fly from Bamako to Timbuktu airport, or take a Niger River trip.



Tuaregs in Timbuktu



Mountain gorillas in Uganda

### **3. Meet mountain gorillas, Rwanda/Uganda**

Alan Wood, one of our readers put it perfectly when he said, “Imagine our surprise when we came upon the family of gorillas all sleeping peacefully with only the silverback on watch. We sat enchanted at their feet and, after a while, they started to wake and stretch just like a human family in the morning. He was unperturbed by our presence and we felt privileged to be visiting.”

**Make it happen:** fly to Rwanda or Uganda. For Rwanda, fly to Kigali, and for Uganda, fly to Entebbe, near Kampala. In both countries, gorilla-trekking permits start from US \$500.

#### 4. Discover wildlife in Madagascar

Madagascar is the oldest island on earth, and its flora and fauna have evolved in isolation over tens of millions of years. Madagascar developed lemurs, a gentle primate. There are 86 different species recognised, ranging from mouse lemurs up to the indri, the size of a chimpanzee. A stunning 90% of Madagascar's flora and fauna is endemic, and don't miss the chance to see spectacular baobab trees.

**Make it happen:** Fly to capital Antananarivo (known as Tana). Apr/May and Oct/Nov are the best times to visit.



Baobab trees, Madagascar





Snorkelling in Bora Bora

### **5. Snorkel in Bora Bora, French Polynesia**

There's no need to don your diving gear - just bring a mask and snorkel, immerse yourself in the shallow lagoon and wait for a graceful giant to glide silently by. While you're exploring this underwater garden, don't be surprised if you bump into a bat, leopard or eagle ray – the waters here host some of the most diverse marine life on earth.

**Make it happen:** Bora Bora is 250km north-west of Tahiti. Daily flights from Tahiti's Faa'a airport take 45 minutes; some stop at the islands of Moorea, Huahine and Raiatea.

## 6. Iguazu Falls, Argentina/Brazil

A fine force of nature straddling the border between Argentina and Brazil, this chasm is one of the widest waterfalls in the world, consisting of 275 cascades spread in a horseshoe shape over 3km. Make the journey on foot and let your anticipation build with the growing roar before emerging to soak up the spray on a walkway or boat ride.

**Make it happen:** Puerto Iguazú, Argentina, is a 90-minute flight from Buenos Aires. Buses run to the visitor centre; from here, walk or take a quick train ride to the falls.



Iguazu Falls





Paradise Bay, Antarctica

## **7. Appreciate all that ice, Antarctica**

The notorious sail to Antarctica across the Drake Passage can be a tough one, but that's swiftly forgotten as you start to see more and more 'bergy bits'. Of course, the wildlife is a reason to go to Antarctica too: the various penguins steal your heart while sightings of whales, leopard seals and snowy shearwaters will make any trip memorable.

**Make it happen:** Expedition cruises leave from Ushuaia (Argentina), Christchurch (NZ) and Hobart (Tasmania).



## 8. Sit on the summit of Stromboli, Italy

The climb up takes two to three hours, moving through fig trees, oleander and broom at the base to sparse shrubs further up and finally nothing but black volcanic rock. If you set off in the afternoon, you reach the summit at dusk. Hard-hat on, you spend an hour ooh-ing and ahh-ing as magma bubbles through the volcano's vents.

**Make it happen:** Stromboli is a four-hour ferry or 1.5-hour hydrofoil journey from the Aeolian Island of Lipari. There is no airport.



Stromboli, Italy



Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia

### **9. Salar de Uyuni salt flats, Bolivia**

In the dry season these vast expanses appear as an endless patchwork of hexagonal shapes, white as the Arctic; in the rainy season (December to April) the area becomes a 9,000 sq km mirror, giving the sensation of travelling across the sky. Drive out over the plains in a jeep and stay in a hotel made out of salt – beds, chairs, tables, the lot.

**Make it happen:** The hub-town of Uyuni is a seven-hour bus ride from Potosí; 12-15 hours by bus from La Paz. The seven-hour train ride from Oruro is a scenic option.

## 10. Venture to Shibam, Yemen

In the words of our Wanderlust reader Jane Baxter, “As you approach Shibam by plane, you get spectacular views of the mud-brick towns of the Hadhramaut built high into the rugged flat-topped mountains. Shibam dates from the fourth century and all the houses – which rise up to nine storeys – are made from mud-brick, with decorated doors and windows.”

**Make it happen:** Yemen is currently off-limits: the Foreign Office advises against all travel to the whole of the country.



Shibam, Yemen





Bagan, Myanmar

### **11. Visit the temples of Bagan, Myanmar**

It's the sheer scale that astounds: the remains of 2,217 ancient stone temples, scattered across a vast, barren, copper-coloured plain. From the 11th to 13th centuries this 41 sq km complex was the biggest religious and cultural centre in the world. Now dusty and abandoned, what is left is best toured by bicycle or by horse and cart.

**Make it happen:** Bagan is 140km south-west of Mandalay.

## 12. Watch the sun rise over Angkor Wat, Cambodia

It's the combination of beauty and scale that provides the wow factor for this temple, the principal monument in a complex that includes Hindu and Buddhist temples in their hundreds. Arrive early to catch the sunrise and miss the crowds, and make the most of that famous view from across the moat, where Angkor Wat is reflected in the water.

**Make it happen:** Siem Reap is the hub town for Angkor, served by flights from cities including Bangkok and Hanoi.



Angkor Wat, Cambodia



Petra, Jordan

### **13. Get a glimpse of ancient Petra, Jordan**

Deep in the Jordanian desert, hemmed in by sandstone crags and approached along a slither of a canyon, suddenly an ancient facade looms out of the rock. And not a weathered outline: a crisply-defined colossus, six mighty pillars guarding the entrance as if the Nabateans (who built them two millennia ago) had just popped out for lunch.

**Make it happen:** Allow two days (or more). See our Petra travel guide for more information.



#### 14. Take a mokoro through the Okavango Delta, Botswana

Traditionally carved from a tree trunk, the mokoro was the common means of transport of the Bavei tribe. Today, fibreglass is increasingly common, rather than wood, but these canoes are still the best ways to explore the channels and waterways of the largest delta in the world.

**Make it happen:** Maun is the gateway into the region. Pick up a safari there, or pre-book with a specialist.



Okavango Delta, Botswana



Karakoram Highway, Pakistan

### **15. Travel the Karakoram Highway, Pakistan**

This is the stuff of travel legend. The route wriggles from north of Islamabad to Kashgar in China, and there are plenty of adventures on the way: you'll drink tea with polo players, see peaks soaring over 7,000m and spot ancient rock art by the roadside. You'll be whiplashed, bruised and exhausted. You'll have the time of your life.

**Make it happen:** UK nationals require a visa to enter Pakistan.



## 16. Trek to Machu Picchu, Peru

How did they do that? How did those 15th century Inca architects construct a city of mortarless stone, 2,500m up in the Andes? This is engineering of the tallest order, in the most dramatic of settings – one so remote even the conquistadores couldn't find it. Today, access is a little easier – but the views and the achievement no less impressive.

**Make it happen:** The classic 43km Inca Trail hike from Km88 to Machu Picchu takes 3-4 days; permits are necessary – independent trekking is not allowed.



Machu Picchu, Peru





Perito Morena Glacier, Argentina

### **17. Watch the Perito Moreno Glacier, Argentina**

Sail up to Perito Moreno's terminus to appreciate its scale: the white-blue cliff is up to 70m high, advancing into Lake Argentino. Keep a safe distance: every now and then the glacier heaves, and huge chunks calve off into the water below.

**Make it happen:** Los Glaciares NP is 78km from El Calafate, accessible by car or bus. Boat tours can be taken from Puerto Bandera;

## 18. Hike the Tongariro Crossing, New Zealand

It's touted as New Zealand's – if not the world's – best day walk. It's a manageable challenge – at six to eight hours it will test but not break you. Then there's the variety: from the shrubby Mangatepopo Valley, to the lunar Red Crater, the sulphurous sparkles of Blue and Emerald Lakes and, finally, the descent into lush forest.

**Make it happen:** The Crossing starts from Mangatepopo Roadend, 6km off Highway 47; it finishes at Ketetahi Roadend. Local operators can arrange transfers.



Tongariro Crossing, New Zealand





Easter Island, Chile

### **19. Meet moai in Easter Island, Chile**

Polynesians first arrived on the isolated outcrop of Easter Island around AD 300. And here they stayed, unbothered by anyone, until Europeans arrived in the 18th century. In that time, they got creative, constructing nearly 900 stone moai. Believed to represent ancient ancestors, many of these spirits continue to watch over the island today.

**Make it happen:** Easter Island is 3,800km west of mainland Chile. Flights from Santiago take around five hours; onward flights to Tahiti are around five hours.



## 20. Lounge on islands, Malaysia

These coral-fringed islands offer lush forest scenery, unspoiled white beaches and plentiful opportunities for scuba diving in their pristine turquoise waters. Get hands-on with turtle conservation projects or stretch your legs on a trek through inland jungle brimming with wildlife (including exotic birds, monkeys and giant monitor lizards).

**Make it happen:** The Perhentian Islands can be accessed by boat from Kuala Besut, 110km north of Kuala Terengganu. Ferries to Tioman run from Mersing.



Perhentian Kecil, Malaysia



Tikal, Guatemala

### **21. Marvel at the Mayan ruins of Tikal, Guatemala**

Today, deep in the tangled interior of the Petén Basin, it feels like time has stood still: climb the iconic Jaguar Temple and watch the sun set over the primordial jungle for an ancient overview. Just don't leave your bag unattended: the local coatis, raccoon-type creatures, have light paws and a penchant for muesli bars.

**Make it happen:** Flores is the gateway town for Tikal, serviced by flights from Guatemala City. The Flores-Tikal minibus ride takes around 75 minutes. Tikal is open 6am-6pm; stay overnight so you can catch sunset and sunrise at the site.



## 22. Delve into the dunes of Sossusvlei, Namibia

There are sand dunes, and there are sand dunes. And the Namib Desert's offerings in this arena are the Himalaya of the granular world: the dunes here tower up to 300m, massive undulations that shape-shift with the wind. They're not just big, they're beautiful – gracefully curved, rippled, and apricot-orange under a perennial blue sky.

**Make it happen:** Sossusvlei is 590km west of Windhoek. It's accessible by 2WD; a 4WD is necessary for the final 5km to Sossusvlei Pan (or walk from the car park).



Namib Desert, Namibia





Trans-Siberian Railway, Russia

### **23. Ride the Trans-Siberian Railway, Russia**

Beginning in European Russia, the railway rolls eastwards, through the Ural mountains and the vastness of Siberia, finally ending in the Russian Far East, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Or maybe not. Veer off after Lake Baikal and make for Mongolia or the north of China on the railway's Trans-Mongolian and Trans-Manchurian offshoots.

**Make it happen:** Most travellers begin in Moscow due to ease of access. Trans-Siberian high season runs May-September.

## 24. Roam the remains at Hampi, India

In the state of Karnataka lies Hampi, capital of the once great Vijayanagara Empire. The city was destroyed in 1565, but even in its present state – a vast ruin among incongruously shaped boulders – the scale of the achievement still reverberates. Get here early, hire a bicycle, and marvel at a city that was said to rival Rome.

**Make it happen:** Bangalore (Bengaluru) is the closest major hub with direct flights from the UK. Take the Hampi Express night train to the ruins.



Hampi, India



King penguins (iStock)

### **25. Sit among 100,000 king penguins, South Georgia**

This spectacularly beautiful island is often summed up as being like Switzerland dropped into polar waters. You may have been told to keep 5m from the creatures, but they didn't attend the same briefing! Expect overload at Salisbury Plain, where 100,000 king penguins crowd the beach. At Gold Harbour, get close to the giant elephant seals.

**Make it happen:** Join an expedition cruise to Antarctica from Ushuaia (Argentina) that takes in South Georgia.



## 26. See wild orang utans, Borneo

Waiting in anticipation on the forest floor, you scan the canopy above for a flash of orange. After listening to the guide's orang utan calls, you suddenly lay eyes on these human-like creatures as they make their long-limbed way through the trees. Sanctuaries such as Sepilok and the Semenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre in Sarawak are the easiest places to get a good glimpse; in the forest you'll need lots of luck.

**Make it happen:** Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary is 23km from Sandakan; public buses run to within 1.5km of the sanctuary, or you can take a tour. Sepilok is open 8am-5pm; orang utans are fed twice daily, at 10am and 3pm.



Wild orangutan



A safari in Botswana

### **27. Go on a bush safari, Botswana**

Desert, delta, forest, big skies: Botswana is the safari destination par excellence. Here, you can gallop on horseback alongside herds of zebra, sway on elephant-back above feeding antelope, or canoe the Selinda Spillway, currently full of water after being dry for 30 years.

**Make it happen:** Fly to Maun and pick up a safari, or cross the border from Zambia (having visited Victoria Falls en route), South Africa, Zimbabwe or Namibia.



## 28. Get close to Mount Everest, Nepal

Given that it's the world's highest mountain – an 8,848m behemoth – Everest is surprisingly accessible. Not its summit perhaps: tough training, 70 days and £30,000 are needed for that. But you can get intimate in other ways: 32km from Kathmandu, Nagarkot offers non-trekkers a breathtaking panorama, while short flights from the capital take you within touching distance.

**Make it happen:** The dry season (October-May) is best for clear skies. This is also peak trekking season. October-November are best; nights are cold December-February.



Mount Everest viewed from Gokyo Ri, Nepal





Victoria Falls

**29. Feel the spray, Victoria Falls, Zambia/Zimbabwe**

As the Zambezi River encounters the 1,700m-wide edge of the Victoria Falls gorge on the Zambia/Zimbabwe border it tumbles 100m into the depths below. You'll fall head over heels for the world's largest waterfall, as cascading torrents roar into deep pools, producing giant clouds of mist which glisten like diamonds in the African sun.

**Make it happen:** Victoria Falls' water levels are highest April-June, but this is also the wet season; visit July-September for a good flow, but drier weather and better views.

### 30. Glimpse Torres del Paine, Chile

The sharp-shard peaks of Torres del Paine National Park, granite horns piercing the wilds of southern Chile, are fearsome. But there's majesty and drama on a romantic scale in these mountains. Head to the lookout of Mirador Ferrier, via a winding beech-lined path from Lago Grey, for a panorama of the whole massif.

**Make it happen:** December to March are warmest; October to November are best for wildflowers. The Circuit hike takes 7-9 days, covering an average of 15-20km a day



Torres del Paine, Chile





Alaska, USA (iStock)

### **31. Plunge into the wilderness, Alaska, USA**

North America is renowned for dishing up huge portions, but it's outdone itself with Alaska. The Last Frontier State is the USA's biggest – but its least densely populated. It has 17 of the country's 20 tallest mountains, topping out at the formidable 6,194m Mt McKinley, plus 70,000km of coastline, 300 rivers and around 100,000 glaciers.

**Make it happen:** May-August is the best time to visit; winters are long and cold, and snow can make some areas inaccessible.



### 32. Catch your first sight of the Taj Mahal, Agra, India

Yes, it's familiar, but the Taj – its graceful white curves, misty reflections, exquisite inlaid stone – does not disappoint. You'll be fighting the crowds so make your first sight special: get to the gates for dawn, to be first in to watch as the mausoleum transforms from picture-on-a-poster to living, breathing 3D beauty under the rising sun.

**Make it happen:** The Taj is open daily from sunrise to sunset (closed Friday); entry costs Rs750 (£10).



Taj Mahal, Agra, India



Cappadocia, Turkey

### **33. Explore Cappadocia, Turkey**

Around AD 600, early Christians burrowed into the Anatolian plateau's soft volcanic rock, creating underground homes, churches and monasteries. The result: a unique cultural adventure playground. Take a balloon ride to see the patchwork unfold beneath you. Or spend a night in your very own cave hotel.

**Make it happen:** Kayseri is the gateway city – fly via Istanbul, or take the train. The laid-back village of Göreme is a good base for hikes and ballooning.

### 34. Visit the Jokhang and Potala Palace, Tibet

Jokhang Temple, in the centre of old Lhasa, is proof of the nation's spiritual life. It's a kaleidoscope of colourful prayer flags and trinket stalls where monks and farmers jostle for position on the pilgrim path that surrounds it. At its heart sits a temple where each morning crimson-robed monks chant in the glower of a thousand yak-butter candles.

**Make it happen:** Trains run from Xining to Lhasa; journey time is around 24 hours. Overland tours run from Nepal.



Potala Palace, Tibet





Pantanal, Brazil

### **35. Jaguar-spot in the Pantanal, Brazil**

The Amazon has size and fame, but it's in the Pantanal – Brazil's lesser-known great green wilderness – that you're more likely to meet the residents. A lot lives in this vast wetland: giant otter, giant anteater, giant water lilies, huge caiman, umpteen birds. And jaguars, which – incredibly for this elusive cat – are regularly spotted.

**Make it happen:** In the north, the Transpantaneira Highway runs for 145km from Poconé (near Cuibá) to Porto Jofre; Campo Grande is the main access point for the southern areas of the Pantanal.

### 36. Look out for bears, Canada

Here, beasts weighing up to 450kg might be seen in the mountains or, come salmon-spawning season, standing mid-river, mouths open, waiting for lunch to jump right in. A special treat is an encounter with a blonde-furred spirit bear, a rare sub-type that inhabits the vast Great Bear Rainforest, and holds a special place in Native Indian legend.

**Make it happen:** Generally, May-October is best for bear-watching. Obey the rules: clear up rubbish, keep food in a bear locker, never surprise or approach a bear.



Polar bear



Etosha National Park, Namibia

### **37. Waterhole-watch in Etosha National Park, Namibia**

A smatter of ungulates – zebra, impala, oryx – takes watchful slurps. A warthog trots by, tail raised like a radio antenna. Three lions, with blood-stained chops, demolish an unfortunate creature under a mopane tree – until a huffy elephant decides to ruin their picnic. Just another day at the waterhole...

**Make it happen:** Etosha is a six-hour drive north of Windhoek. Three government camps within the park have floodlit waterholes for nighttime wildlife-viewing.



### 38. Fly over the Skeleton Coast, Namibia

Namibia's Skeleton Coast is a no-man's land of starkly spectacular proportions. It's a place where bleached whale bones and the rusting hulks of shipwrecks line miles of empty sand; where shores sparkle with gem stones; where a few resilient animals – jackal, oryx, desert-adapted elephant – patrol the dunes.

**Make it happen:** The 200km from Swakopmund to the Ugab River is the National West Coast Tourist Recreational Area; no permits are required. Skeleton Coast National Park begins at the Ugab; the far north can only be visited by fly-in tour.



Skeleton Coast, Namibia



Himalayas

### 39. Glimpse the peaks of the Himalaya

There's nothing bigger – nothing more wobble-you-in-your-walking-boots awesome – than the high Himalaya. The entire range spans 2,400km, from Pakistan in the west to India in the east; much of it lords over 7,000m, some of it over 8,000m – a height not approached elsewhere on the planet.

**Make it happen:** Himalaya hub cities include Kathmandu, Lhasa, Islamabad, Paro, Delhi and Guwahati; take the train to Shimla from Delhi (via Kalka; approx 12 hours) for easily accessible views.



#### 40. Climb to Tiger's Nest, Bhutan

This tumble-tiered fortress of white-washed walls and fluted roofs dangles 1,000m above the Paro Valley. It's built on the site of a sacred cave, which Lotus-born Buddha, Guru Rinpoche, was said to have flown to on the back of a tiger; today, the temple in his honour looks like it might fall if not for the Buddha's blessing.

**Make it happen:** Tiger's Nest is 5km from Kyerchu. The road ends at 2,600m; a one-hour walk leads to a café and viewpoint (2,940m), followed by a steep climb to the observation point (3,140m).



Tiger's Nest, Bhutan





Wildebeest migration

#### **41. See the Great Migration, Kenya/Tanzania**

The Masai Mara National Reserve and Serengeti National Park are famous for the Great Migration: two million wildebeest trek in a constant search for food. From June to September the herds bottleneck at the crossings of the Grumeti and Mara rivers, creating a feast for waiting carnivores.

**Make it happen:** Fly to Nairobi (Kenya) or Arusha (Tanzania). Pick up a safari locally, or pre-book with a specialist.

## 42. Walk the Great Wall of China

The experience of walking along the entire Great Wall of China would be life-changing indeed. Seek out the less crowded sections. The Gubeikou to Jinshanling stretch is still accessible from capital Beijing, and showcases the barrier at its best: rugged walking via Wall and watchtowers as it snakes over the mountains.

**Make it happen:** Gubeikou is a three-hour drive north of Beijing; the walk to Jinshanling (10km) takes around five hours. Or head to Simatai, north-east of Beijing, for views of the Wall clinging to sheer Yanshan Mountain.



The Great Wall of China



Angel Falls, Venezuela

### **43. Paddle to Angel Falls, Venezuela**

With a drop of 979m, Angel Falls makes Niagara look like a garden water feature. Approach by dugout canoe from Canaima Camp, floating through lush rainforest, before a jungle trek to the vantage point of El Mirador de Laime. Adrenalin-junkies may choose to scale the canyon's face before base-jumping off the top.

**Make it happen:** From Caracas you can travel to Ciudad Bolivar by bus; from there the only way into Angel Falls / Canaima is to fly.



#### 44. Motorbiking or biking, Vietnam

You don't have to be crazy to want to cycle or motorcycle in Vietnam, but it helps. Ho Chi Minh City is a maelstrom of scooters, cycles and cyclos. If you see a break in the traffic, go for it. Just make sure that the guy with a dozen live ducks hanging off his handlebars doesn't beat you to it.

**Make it happen:** The best time to visit Vietnam is November-April, the dry season – though the highlands can be chilly at this time.



Motorbiking, Hanoi



Franz Josef Glacier, New Zealand (iStock)

#### **45. Hover over Franz Josef Glacier, New Zealand**

There are more than 60 glaciers sliding down to the west coast of New Zealand's South Island.

Franz Josef is one of the most impressive, galloping from the 3,000m highs of the Southern Alps to sea level in a few kilometres. Swoop over in a helicopter – look down on chilling crevasses, towering seracs and sculpted caves.

**Make it happen:** Several operators offer helicopter trips over Fox and Franz Josef glaciers; scenic flights last 20-40 minutes (with snow landing), heli-hiking tours last three hours.

#### 46. Raft the Zambezi, Zambia

The Zambezi divides Zimbabwe and Zambia. After it takes a 100m-plus tumble over Victoria Falls, it squeezes through a narrow gorge for 120km, boiling up into the biggest sequence of Grade V rapids in the world. Make sure you hold on tight or you'll be in the Zambezi – along with the hippos and the crocodiles...

**Make it happen:** The best time to raft the Zambezi is when the water levels are lower and more rapids are accessible, between August and mid-October.



Rafting on the Zambezi





Utah, USA

#### **47. Rock out in Utah's canyons, USA**

The national parks of Zion and Bryce Canyon are the most popular and, beyond simply gawping, are great for hiking, adventure sports and wildlife – you'll see coyote, mule deer, bighorn sheep and, if you're really lucky, mountain lion.

**Make it happen:** Fly to Salt Lake City. Hire a car and use Utah's Scenic Byways to link the parks.

#### 48. Walking safari in South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

This is one of the best places in the world to see leopards. This was also where the concept of the walking safari was born, and exploring on foot will really help you appreciate the bush. Once you've sampled Luangwa, safaris elsewhere will be spoiled forever.

**Make it happen:** Mfuwe is the gateway to the park; there are daily flights from Lusaka and Livingstone.



Bee-eaters at South Luangwa National Park



Banff National Park, Canada

#### **49. Explore Banff National Park, Canada**

In winter, skiers love the sheer scale of it, the flinty vistas spread out under cobalt sky. Oh, and the skiing, of course. In the summer, a drive down the Icefields Parkway has you floored in admiration, with spectacular views of mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, glaciers, icefields and, if you're lucky, the occasional brown bear.

**Make it happen:** Fly into Vancouver and then take the Rocky Mountaineer train, a two-day journey east to Banff.



## 50. Gawp at the Grand Canyon, USA

Not surprisingly, Arizona's world-beating Grand Canyon – up to 29km wide and 1.6km deep – featured varied and often among your top travel experiences: you climb it, hike it, raft it, fly over it or simply palpitate on the edge of it, consumed by the ineffable geological scale.

**Make it happen:** The Canyon is accessed via the nearby cities of Las Vegas (approx 450km) and Phoenix (370km). Plane and helicopter trips leave from these hubs; otherwise expect a four to six-hour drive, depending on which Rim you're aiming for.



Grand Canyon, USA



Kilimanjaro, Tanzania (iStock)

### **51. Climb Kilimanjaro, Tanzania**

Whether you rate a schlep up Africa's highest mountain as a 'great travel experience' depends on when you're asked. Ask the climber making the final push to the summit – an ascent from 4,000-ish metres to 5,895m – and they'll likely say not. At that moment it's a tough, cold, nauseating, exhausting hell. But ask them six hours later, when they're grinning like an idiot on the roof of a continent, and the answer will be very different.

**Make it happen:** There are five main routes up Kilimanjaro: Machame, Marangu, Lemosho/Shira, Rongai and Umbwe. Climbs take 5-9 days; longer treks allow better acclimatisation.

## 52. Get up-close with elephants, South Africa

You're standing opposite a young bull elephant that may or may not be about to charge. Even as a junior jumbo, it's very, very big – perhaps a third bigger than the Asian elephants you may have seen in Thailand or India. Emotions are at their most intense on a walking safari, getting you back to your roots rather than encased in a jeep.

**Make it happen:** Addo Elephant Park on the Eastern Cape is the third-largest national park in SA and home to the densest population of elephants in the world.



Elephants in Addo Elephant Park, South Africa





Northern lights over Tromsø, Lapland

### **53. Be bewitched by the northern lights**

In the words of our reader James Kemp, "We huddled expectantly outside the dimly lit hut at Abisko, Sweden. The cold was forgotten as the clouds parted and we were all stunned into silence as the greens spread across the sky before they were joined by reds. It was easy to see why in older times people revered them as signs of the gods."

**Make it happen:** As well as Kiruna, good places to see the northern lights include Svalbard, Tromsø (Norway), Yellowknife (Canada) and Wiseman (Alaska).

#### 54. See a solar eclipse

Most of us at one time or another have squinted through a pinhole in a piece of cardboard or donned a pair of particularly dark glasses to get a look at a solar eclipse. But some travellers are eclipse-chasers, traversing the globe in search of total solar eclipses (which come around every 18 months on average).

**Make it happen:** A number of tour operators run trips combining eclipse-watching with soft adventure



Solar eclipse



Abu Simbel, Egypt

### **55. Temple-gaze at Abu Simbel, Egypt**

These big, old and beautiful monuments are so great they were actually built twice. Originally carved out of a cliff to honour Ramses II in the 13th century BC, the Great Temple and smaller Temple of Hathor were then cut up and relocated, block by block, in the 1960s to save them from the waters of the Nile, caused by the creation of Lake Nasser. Secure on the new riverbank, the 33m-high facade impresses and interrogates visitors, just as it has for thousands of years.

**Make it happen:** There are sound and light shows 7pm-10pm, which add another dimension. Avoid visiting in the afternoon, when temperatures are at their max.



## 56. Husky mush in Lapland, Sweden

“We were taken out on the sleds, with six to eight dogs leading and the guide steering the sleighs. It was incredible. But the real fun was the next day when we did it ourselves. We were on shorter sleighs with three dogs each, and after a quick run we were off, racing over frozen lakes and through the trees.” – Liz Davies, Wanderlust reader

**Make it happen:** Numerous tour operators offer dog-sledding trips in Sweden – check out Trip Finder Wanderlust’s recommended companies.



Husky sledding in Lapland



Orca breaching on Canada's west coast

### **57. Sea-kayak with orca, Canada**

You sometimes hear them before you see them: the whoosh of air as they draw breath before diving. Or you'll see the huge dorsal fin of an adult male as he slices through the water, and then realise there is in fact a whole family pod. Out on the water, you in your flimsy-seeming kayak, you realise just how big and powerful they are.

**Make it happen:** June to October is best for orcas. Fly to Vancouver, then take the ferry to Vancouver Island; there are plenty of local outfitters who can arrange kayaking trips



## 58. Salsa in Havana, Cuba

Through the cigar smoke comes the sound of feet stamping, hands clapping, dresses swishing. Two women sashay towards their partners, men wearing neatly positioned bowler hats and wicked smiles. “Aquí, aquí!” they shout, and the women move towards them, while other Cubans holler and cheer, moving to the beat. Now who wouldn’t want to be part of that vibe?

**Make it happen:** Don't just leave it to the professionals: many tour operators offer dance classes for travellers.



Salsa in Cuba





Fiordland, New Zealand

### **59. Kayak in Fiordland, South Island, New Zealand**

This glacially gouged chunk of South Island's south-west is riven with inlets, well rinsed by waterfalls, and receives 8m of rain each year. Kayaks are the ideal vessel – for paddling into coves and bays unreachable on foot, and for meeting the seals, penguins and bottlenose dolphins that call it home.

**Make it happen:** Te Anau is Fiordland's main hub. From there it's a 20km drive to Manapouri, followed by a 30km boat trip across the lake to reach Doubtful Sound.

## 60. Stroll old Cartagena, Colombia

One of the finest colonial cities in the Americas, Cartagena was once a strategic shipping post for the vast riches amassed by Spanish plunder. Today, much of the original walls (built in 1616) remain, topped by cannons and flagpoles. Stroll amid the attractive plazas, grand mansion houses and charming cobblestone streets.

**Make it happen:** Colombia's dry season is December to March, with a second dry season June-August. Visitors typically fly in via the US and Bogotá.



Cartagena, Colombia





Yosemite National Park, USA

### **61. Yomp around Yosemite National Park, California, USA**

Yosemite has been a national park since 1890, and every year hordes descend on its riverside meadows, pine forests and rockfaces. Set up camp, stash comestibles in your bear locker and hit one of the many hiking trails; plan your trip for autumn, when most areas of the park are still open but the crowds have gone home.

**Make it happen:** Yosemite is 314km from San Francisco. The park is open year-round but some roads are inaccessible Nov-May.



### 63. Fancy-free back-packing, Australia

It's an adventure for a gap year or a career break, a turning point in your life. Somehow, you have a month – maybe three months, or more – and nothing to hold you back. Australia beckons, its vast red blanks on the map as enticing as the coastal cities you'll start from...

**Make it happen:** Hire a campervan from Maui or Britz; or browse second-hand vehicles for sale at [gumtree.com](http://gumtree.com).



Exploring Uluru, Australia



Hoi An, Vietnam

#### 64. Browse Hoi An, Vietnam

Hoi An is an elegant waterfront harbour of 18th-century merchant houses, ornate pagodas and French colonial airs. You'll nose into museums, sip café au laits overlooking the Thu Bon River – and then you'll buy clothes. Suits for £20, cocktail dresses, shirts... and before you know it, you have fitting appointments all over town.

**Make it happen:** Hoi An is halfway between Saigon and Hanoi; the nearest train station is 30km away at Danang. Remember to leave space in your bags for a new wardrobe.



## 65. Have fun on Fraser Island, Queensland, Australia

Fraser feels like nature's theme park, a place where lakes, dunes and streams seem built for human fun. Four-wheel drive across the beaches to access the 'rides' – Champagne Pools' fizzing surf, the dark depths of Lake Wabby, a gentle float with the fish down Eli Creek and the perfect-blue shallows of Lake McKenzie.

**Make it happen:** Fraser is 15km offshore from Hervey Bay, 300km north of Brisbane. A 4WD is necessary to drive the island's beaches and inland roads; purchase permits before arrival.



Fraser Island, Australia





New York, USA

### **66. Feel like a movie star in New York, USA**

The first time most people see the Manhattan skyline there is, ironically, something unreal about it. Here you are in soft-focus taking a romantic stroll over the Brooklyn Bridge; now you're glamping it up amid the neon-lit fizz of Times Square; come the morning you'll be brooding on a boat across from the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

**Make it happen:** Get to know the city through a local's eyes (for free) – go to [bigapplegreeter.org](http://bigapplegreeter.org).

## 67. Stand atop the rock city of Sigiriya, Sri Lanka

Woven into a 150m-high pillar of rock, this incredible feat of human ingenuity dating to the fifth century AD was once home to kings and, later, Buddhist monks. Explore the water garden, boulder garden and terrace gardens, and ascend through the levels of the city to see the ancient fresco paintings that make this a Unesco World Heritage site.

**Make it happen:** Sigiriya is a 90km drive from the city of Kandy, which has bus and rail links to capital Colombo.



Sigiriya, Sri Lanka





The Mekong, Laos.

### **68. Boat up the Mekong, Laos**

Any boat trip on the fabled Mekong has a certain allure, but when you're heading for Luang Prabang, there's an additional dose of anticipation. Laos' celebrated town of temples and colonial villas hugs the river's banks.

**Make it happen:** Slow boats depart daily for Luang Prabang from the Thai border at Huay Xai – you can overnight at Pakbeng. Speedboats (6 hours) and luxury cruises are also on offer. Alternatively, start your boat trip from Luang Prabang.



### 69. Sail out on Milford Sound, New Zealand

Cruises out into the Milford Sound fiord pass its steep rock sides, carved by ancient glaciers, plus you'll see your fair share of charging waterfalls and local residents: fur seals, dolphins and little penguins among them. Book an overnight sail to drop anchor in a remote cove, for a magical Sound sleep.

**Make it happen:** Milford Sound is a 2.5-hour drive from Te Anau or a 35-minute scenic flight from Queenstown.



Milford Sound, New Zealand.



Atacama Desert, Chile (iStock)

### **70. Atacama Desert and El Tatio geysers, Chile**

"A trip to the geysers requires a very early start. Waiting in the freezing cold at 6.30am, at over 4,000m, with steam pouring from the earth, it felt as if we'd landed on another planet. We finished our visit by leaping into a small thermal pool for a dip, then headed back to San Pedro de Atacama, with sightings of llamas, vicuñas and various cacti." – Nicola Robson, Wanderlust reader

**Make it happen:** San Pedro de Atacama is 98km from the nearest airport at Calama. Aim to spend at least four days, not least to adjust to the altitude.

## 71. Dive the cenotes, Yucatán, Mexico

The jungly Yucatán peninsula, devoid of obvious lakes and rivers, is dimpled instead by thousands of soggy cenotes – sinkholes fed by underground springs. Popular chasms include Ik-Kil, near Chichén Itzá, deep and inky Azul and Kankirixche, atmospherically riddled with tree roots. Dive in to float above strange rock formations.

**Make it happen:** Swim sensitively - wear biodegradable sunscreen; do not touch or break off bits of rock; be wary of hitting stalagmites with flippers.



The cenotes, Mexico





The Vatican

## 72. Roam Rome and the Vatican, Italy

If Rome was a gelato (a food, incidentally, in which the city excels) it would be tutti frutti – a confection of countless fruits and flavours. It's a metropolis-sized museum, endlessly intriguing. The big sites are obvious: Colosseum, Forum, the Vatican's St Peter's. But it's the cumulation of so much old in one place that makes Rome so delicious.

**Make it happen:** One ticket (€12, valid for two days) covers entry to the Colosseum, Forum and Palatine Hill sites. Admission to the Vatican Museums, including the Sistine Chapel, costs €15.

### 73. Watch whales in the Gulf of St Lawrence, Canada

Despite a history of whalers firing their harpoons here, the deep and krill-filled St Lawrence River remains one of the world's greatest whale-watching waterways. Come here to see acrobatic humpbacks, 25m-long blues, almost-as-massive fins and seemingly smiling belugas. Hop in a kayak and paddle out into the whales' world...

**Make it happen:** Peak season is May-Sept. Boat trips leave from spots such as Tadoussac and Baie-Sainte-Catherine. Spot from land on the 900km Whale Route along the North Shore.



Whales on the Gulf of St Lawrence, Canada



Yellowstone National Park, USA (iStock)

#### **74. Admire Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, USA**

Take a trip into the heart of the Rocky Mountains and you'll find an extraordinary wilderness ruled by extremes of fire and ice. Fed by the energy of a volcanic caldera, half of the whole world's geothermal features are located in Yellowstone. They include burbling mudpots, sulphurous cauldrons and the explosive Old Faithful geyser.

**Make it happen:** From the nearest international airport at Salt Lake City, Yellowstone is a 625km drive. Domestic flights to Jackson or Cody in Wyoming will take you within 80km of the park. Visit the US National Parks site for brochures, maps and trip planners.



## 75. Watch whales and dolphins, New Zealand

Where waters collide – tropical hot and Antarctic chilled – so too do fish. And where fish gather, so too do mammals that like to eat them. Thus it is that the seas off New Zealand are a hearty stew of wildlife, the waves thick with dusky dolphins, orca, humpbacks, sperm whales, even the mighty blue.

**Make it happen:** Kaikoura (South Island) is a marine-mammal hotspot. Sperm whales are seen year-round; Jun-Jul is the best time to see humpbacks.



Humpback whale



Kakadu National Park, Australia

### **76. Go wild in Kakadu National Park, Australia**

This vast park (at 20,000 sq km, the country's biggest) is the sweltering Outback, croc-infested wetland, roo-hopped scrub and art-daubed rock of your Oz imagination. Here, cliché becomes spectacularly three dimensional; you can feel millennia of red dust and Aboriginal history hanging in the air.

**Make it happen:** Kakadu is a three-hour drive from Darwin. Some areas are inaccessible in the Wet (Oct-Mar); Jun to mid-Aug is best for wildlife-watching.

## 77. Climb Table Mountain, Cape Town, South Africa

Not one for the indecisive, there are more than 350 routes to the top of Table Mountain – such is the lure of the squat, cloud-shrouded monolith that lords it over Cape Town and the Atlantic beyond. The route you choose depends on your skill level: some options are for experienced climbers only, but many are manageable by more casual walkers.

**Make it happen:** Visitors to Table Mountain National Park must pay a standard conservation fee on entering: R80 (£7.20) a day for adults, R20 (£1.80) for children.



Table Mountain, South Africa





Road trip, USA

### **78. Get your motor running on a road trip, USA**

When we think of the all-American road trip, it's difficult not to view it as a series of nostalgic vignettes: a cherry-red Chevy; a roadside burger joint straight out of an Edward Hopper painting; the neon sign for some remote church glowing with the promise of redemption. And the great thing is, you'll find it all (and more) when you hit the highway...

**Make it happen:** For inspirational route ideas and information on logistics, see [roadtripusa.com](http://roadtripusa.com). Hiring an RV motorhome can keep down costs; check out [cruiseamerica.com](http://cruiseamerica.com).

### 79. Watch sunrise and sunset at Uluru, Australia

Set your alarm early to see the inky Outback sky turn purple, and the sleeping monolith awaken, its nighttime shadow brightening to warm browns and rich reds with the rising sun. At midday, rays spotlight Uluru's every crag and crevice (best seen on the 10km round-rock Base Walk). Come dusk, old Ayers blazes orange – a last hurrah.

**Make it happen:** There are various sunrise/set viewpoints within the national park: Talinguru Nyakuntjaku lookout offers views of Uluru and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas).



Ayers Rock, Australia





Kerala, India

### **80. Kerala's backwaters, India**

On a kettuvallam houseboat, floating along some of the 900km of lagoons, canals, rivers and lakes, a meditative calm descends. Meals are included on a standard cruise, and the quality is usually excellent. Make sure you try some of the local fish known as karimeen – it will be among the tastiest things you'll ever eat on the subcontinent.

**Make it happen:** Most backwater cruises depart between Kollam and Alappuzha; stay at least one night on the backwaters.



## 81. Spice things up on Zanzibar, Tanzania

Your full-sensory experience of the fabled spice island of Zanzibar starts at the harbour, when you first catch a whiff of nutmeg and cinnamon stacked in hessian sacks on the dock. And it continues throughout your stay. Watch the sunset while cradling an icy beer as lateen-sailed dhows float by.

**Make it happen:** Fly to Dar es Salaam, and then take a boat or a prop-engined plane to the island.



Zanzibar, Tanzania



Corals in Belize

## **82. Swim in marine-life heaven, Caye Caulker, Belize**

No need for diving: the snorkelling here is world-class. Float above the coral to spot tonnes of technicolour tropical fish, toothy barracuda and glum-mouthed groupers. For even bigger specimens, flipper around the aptly named Shark Ray Alley and Shark Ray Village, where schools of nurse sharks and flapping stingrays play in abundance.

**Make it happen:** Reach Caye Caulker from Belize City by plane (15 minutes) or water taxi (45 minutes). The Caye is small enough to get around on foot.



### 83. Get spiritual on the Ganges, India

Mata Ganga, or 'Mother Ganges', is central to India's sense of itself, a river that's also the spiritual backbone of the subcontinent. From its source high in the Himalayas, the river cuts west to east, emptying into the Bay of Bengal 2,510km later. Along its route lie some of India's most sacred cities – Haridwar, Varanasi and Allahabad among them.

**Make it happen:** Many airlines fly direct to Delhi. From here, take a train to Haridwar and use buses or taxis to visit nearby Rishikesh.



Ganges river, India





Sydney Opera House, Australia

#### **84. Climb Sydney Harbour Bridge, Australia**

Kitted up in camouflaged climbing suits, you'll see Sydney Harbour from a unique spot on a climb up its iconic bridge. At the top, you're afforded astounding views over the city, including the Opera House. The views are especially magical on the dawn and twilight climbs: watch the bustling metropolis come to life far below or wind down in the dusk.

**Make it happen:** Guided climbs are offered exclusively by Bridge Climb Sydney

### 85. Hike Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia

At 130 million years old, the Taman Negara rainforest deserves respect when you step under her canopy. Lying 150km north-east of Kuala Lumpur, this jungle is home to elephants, Orang Asli hunter-gatherers and mysterious caves and rivers. Walkways are slung between trees, where gibbons and hill squirrels slouch in the branches.

**Make it happen:** Kuala Tahan is the gateway town – get there from Kuala Lumpur by train or bus via Jerantut. Tours can be booked locally or in KL.



Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia





Lake Titicaca, Peru

### 86. Live local on Lake Titicaca, Peru

“My experience of Lake Titicaca started with a trip to the floating Uros Islands, and then on to Taquile, where we ate delicious fried trout, and took a look round the local market, which has amazing woven products, all traditional. Then I took a boat to a tiny village, where I was treated to food, drinks, and plenty of music and dancing!” – Eleanor Mawer, Wanderlust reader

**Make it happen:** Lake Titicaca’s two hub towns are Copacabana (Bolivia) and Puno (Peru) – the latter is busier. You can arrange homestays on the lake at either.



### 87. Go wild on the Falkland Islands

Thousands of albatross, southern petrels and king cormorants ride the breeze, while down on the beaches platoons of king and gentoo penguins and elephant seals waddle and posture. Add in the Lego-like buildings of Stanley, the moving war memorials, and the appeal of hopping between islands by light aircraft, and you'll agree there's nowhere remotely like it.

**Make it happen:** It can be tricky to get to, but it's well worth the effort. See [falklandislands.com](http://falklandislands.com) for details.



The Falkland Islands



Wadi Rum.

### **88. Sleep out in Wadi Rum, Jordan**

Jordan's russet landscape is one of the world's great, accessible desert adventures. By day, Wadi Rum overwhelms with its scale, but by night the star-strewn sky will leave you speechless. Tents are optional – unfurl a blanket, gaze up at the infinity of lights above, feel the dying embers of the Bedouin cooking fire – and then sleep like a rock.

**Make it happen:** Wadi Rum is one hour's drive from Aqaba.



### 89. Spot rhinos in Royal Chitwan National Park, Nepal

For many readers, sitting atop an Asian elephant has been a favoured way to explore Royal Chitwan, allowing you to spot rhino, gaur, sloth bear and even tigers from a lofty spot. However, in recent years, a number of readers have raised concerns about the elephants' welfare, so you may want to consider a walking tour instead.

**Make it happen:** Chitwan is a six-hour drive from Kathmandu. Jan–Mar, after the long grasses have been cut, are best for wildlife viewing; Jun–Sept is very hot and wet.



Rhino, Royal Chitwan National Park





Halong Bay, Vietnam

### 90. Hang out in Halong Bay, Vietnam

Vietnam's biggest attraction has commercialised fast in recent years, but this waterworld of ghostly limestone crags, caves and floating villages – seemingly lifted from a watercolour – still has the power to enthrall. Vietnam War-era sites on Cat Ba island add a less fairytale dimension.

**Make it happen:** Budget one/ two-night tours from Hanoi are two-a-penny. For a more leisurely experience, take the ferry to Cat Ba island and explore by kayak or foot.

## 91. Visit Auschwitz, Poland

Great travel experiences aren't necessarily great fun. Take Auschwitz: you don't exactly enjoy walking through the corridors and scrubby wastes of the former concentration camp, but it will certainly make a lasting impression. The horror still echoes around the walls; the cabinets full of used toothbrushes, Zyklon B canisters and human hair send shivers down the spine.

**Make it happen:** Oswiecim (for Auschwitz) is on the Katowice-Kraków train line; Auschwitz 1 is a ten-minute walk or short bus ride from the station.



Auschwitz, Poland





InterRail around Europe

## 92. InterRail around Europe

How many travelling lives have started with a scrimped-and-saved-for InterRail ticket and a copy of the Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable? Since 1973, the hop-on-hop-off continental rail pass has been a rite of passage for Europeans, the budget Grand Tour – and every InterRailer has their tale to tell.

**Make it happen:** InterRail passes are now available for all ages and various durations: see [interrail.eu](http://interrail.eu)



### 93. Uncover Kyoto, Japan

“Kyoto really sums up what I had imagined Japan to be – full of beautiful ancient temples and traditions, with a thriving culture. My friend and I had three days in Kyoto to explore and could easily have stayed a week; there is so much to see! A high point was Kinkaku-ji, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion.” – Annabelle Wilkins, Wanderlust reader

**Make it happen:** Fly to Tokyo; Kyoto can be reached by car, train or plane.



Kyoto, Japan



Venice, Italy

#### **94. Get lost in Venice, Italy**

Away from the bustling masses of the Rialto Bridge lies a maze of courtyards, cafés and canals. Front doorsteps lead into the water, and what you might at first construe to be a dead end could turn out to be an idyllic spot to watch the gondolas float by. When you're bewildered, take a water taxi out of the labyrinth into the lagoon.

**Make it happen:** Many airlines fly to Venice's Marco Polo airport, from which you can catch a connecting bus or boat to take you into the city. High summer is best avoided.

## 95. Spot polar bears in Spitsbergen, Norway

The island of Spitsbergen is home to the northernmost settlements on earth, thanks to the moderating influence of the Gulf Stream. But there are more polar bears (around 3,000) than humans (2,700), which is what makes it so attractive to travellers, most of whom spy a bear on the shores or floes.

**Make it happen:** Fly into Longyearbyen. Either take an expedition cruise (summer), or stay on the iced-in schooner Noorderlicht (winter).



Spitsbergen, Norway





Kathmandu, Nepal

### **96. Explore the backstreets of Kathmandu, Nepal**

Start amid the tiered-roof temples of Durbar Square – former seat of the country’s monarchy, and the old city’s heart – before plunging off-piste, down alleys where dogs are decorated with marigolds, dim shrines flicker with butter lamps, prayer wheels spin, shops sell wool carpets and Gore-Tex jackets.

## 97. Whitewater rafting, Nepal

Nepal is a-froth with rapids that offer access to glorious gorges and riverbank camps impossible to reach by other means. The Trisuli River is near Kathmandu, ideal for the time-poor, while the Kali Gandaki, nearer Pokhara, is wilder with fine peak views. For a frontier feel, head out west to the Karnali: expeditions offer tough rapids.

**Make it happen:** Rivers are dangerous at the height of the monsoon (Jul-Aug); the best time is Oct-Nov, when water is fast but manageable.



Rafting in Nepal





Outer Hebrides, Scotland

### **98. Roam the Outer Hebrides, Scotland**

Ringed by some of the UK's loveliest white-sand beaches and crystal-clear waters, these islands are a mecca for marine wildlife, with whales, dolphins, porpoises and basking sharks visiting year-round. Hikers and bikers will find trails galore, or you could take to the skies and kitesurf over Barra's beach airstrip, the only one in the UK.

**Make it happen:** Buy a rover ticket and island-hop on the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry. Avoid June - August to dodge the dreaded Highland midges.



## 99. Dive the Great Barrier Reef, Australia

2,600km of coral hugging Australia's east coast, from Bundaberg in the south to beyond Cape York. Simply, the biggest reef in the world. It has options for all: novice divers can learn in safe waters, yet still see plenty of the reef's 1,500 fish species during lessons. More experienced divers should sail to the Outer Reef for pristine coral gardens.

**Make it happen:** Key hubs for diving trips out to the reef include Port Douglas, Cairns, the Whitsunday Islands and Airlie Beach.



Great Barrier Reef, Australia



Santorini, Greece

### **100. Soak up Santorini, Greece**

This mini-archipelago in the Cyclades was once a huge volcano, but a super-eruption around 1640BC saw it sink into the sea, leaving only remnants of its craggy caldera to be lapped by the Med. The result is pure Greek-isle fantasy: white-washed houses, steep-stepped alleys leading to old harbours, and traditional tavernas serving fish suppers.

**Make it happen:** Ferries connect Santorini's island of Thira with other islands, including Crete (5hrs), Mykonos (2.5hrs) and Rhodes (16hrs). Santorini also has an airport.

# 50

## Nice Experiences



## 1. Go on Safari in Tanzania



Boasting one of the biggest and baddest national parks in Serengeti and 16 national parks in total, Tanzania is the perfect place to watch the annual wildebeest migration. Watching baby elephants playing with their moms and pops in the muddy Rufiji/Tarangire River is one of the epic lifetime experiences to keep in your memories bright for decades. Fees start from \$60 per visit and you can check the full list [here](#).

## 2. Heli-skiing in Girdwood, Alaska



Now if you have enough skills and bald courage, heli-skiing is one of the life changing experiences! Named as best for “Off-the-beaten-path powder hounds with an aversion to glamour” by Nat Geo, Girdwood has loads of incredible hills and off-pistes where you can be the first one to shake off the powder. Day trips with 16,000-18,000 vertical feet of skiing guaranteed start from \$1,275 per person.



### 3. Drink beer at Oktoberfest in Munich



The days when the Germans lose all their stiffness and the whole city Munich goes on one crazy beer party! Oktoberfest will start on September, the 19th this year and last till the 4th of October. Check out more details at the official website. A liter of beer is priced around 10€ on average.



## 4. Throw tomatoes at La Tomatina in Spain



Spain's brightest feast is held on the last Wednesday of August when the whole town of Bunol goes covered in gooey red tomato paste. Early in the morning many trucks full of ripe tomatoes arrive to the city center. As the first brave soul climbs up into the back of the truck and throws a tomato – the Biggest Food Fight in the World officially begins! Yet La Tomatina is not all about practicing your accuracy by throwing tomatoes at random folks. It is actually a week-long festival also featuring music bands, parades, dancing, and loads fireworks. Right on the night before the great tomato fight, everyone is invited to compete in a paella cooking contest. Participation fee: 10€ (~\$11.77).

## 5. Find your mojo at a yoga retreat in Pune, India



Meditate with a view of gorgeous Lake Mulshi, while nourishing your body with special foods and your soul with healing practices. Yoga holidays will bring the much needed balance back into your life and allow you to discover something new about yourself. Besides, you can't miss some of the most amazing temples in whole India – Shreemant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanik Ganpati and iconic ISKCON NVCC Temple!



## 6. Take a pastry cooking class in France



Among the things French know best is how to create perfectly delicious, work-of-art-styled pastries, desserts and sweets! Step closer to the culinary magic and learn to bake macaroons or crunchy lemon tarts during your next visit to France. Best memories come in taste, right? Prices start from 95€ for a two-hour class (~\$112).



## 7. Meet the Moai at the Easter Island



One of the mysteries humanity failed to solve is who, how and why created a series of huge statues made of solid rock and how they were transported and erected at various places around the island? Spectacular Easter Island is 3,800km west of mainland Chile with flights from Santiago taking around five hours and cost 650€ (~\$765) return.

## 8. Marvel the Northern Lights in Sweden



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Get absolutely bewitched by this incredible phenomenon Mother Nature saved for northern dwellers! Green, indigo blue, yellow, purple – these are just a few colors to light up in the skies! Abisko National Park and Jukkasjärvi and the Torne Valley are among the best places to watch the wizardry happen!



## 9. Try new wine at Beaujolais days in France



Yes, there's a whole festival in France dedicated to the new wine, released each year on the third Tuesday of November, just a few weeks after the grapes were harvested. It's actually not even one, but 120 festivals held all around Beaujolais wine region with the most famous one – Les Sarmementelles – held in the city of Beaujeu with numerous wine and food tastings, competitions, live music and dancing for five days straight. This year the celebration falls on November, the 19th.

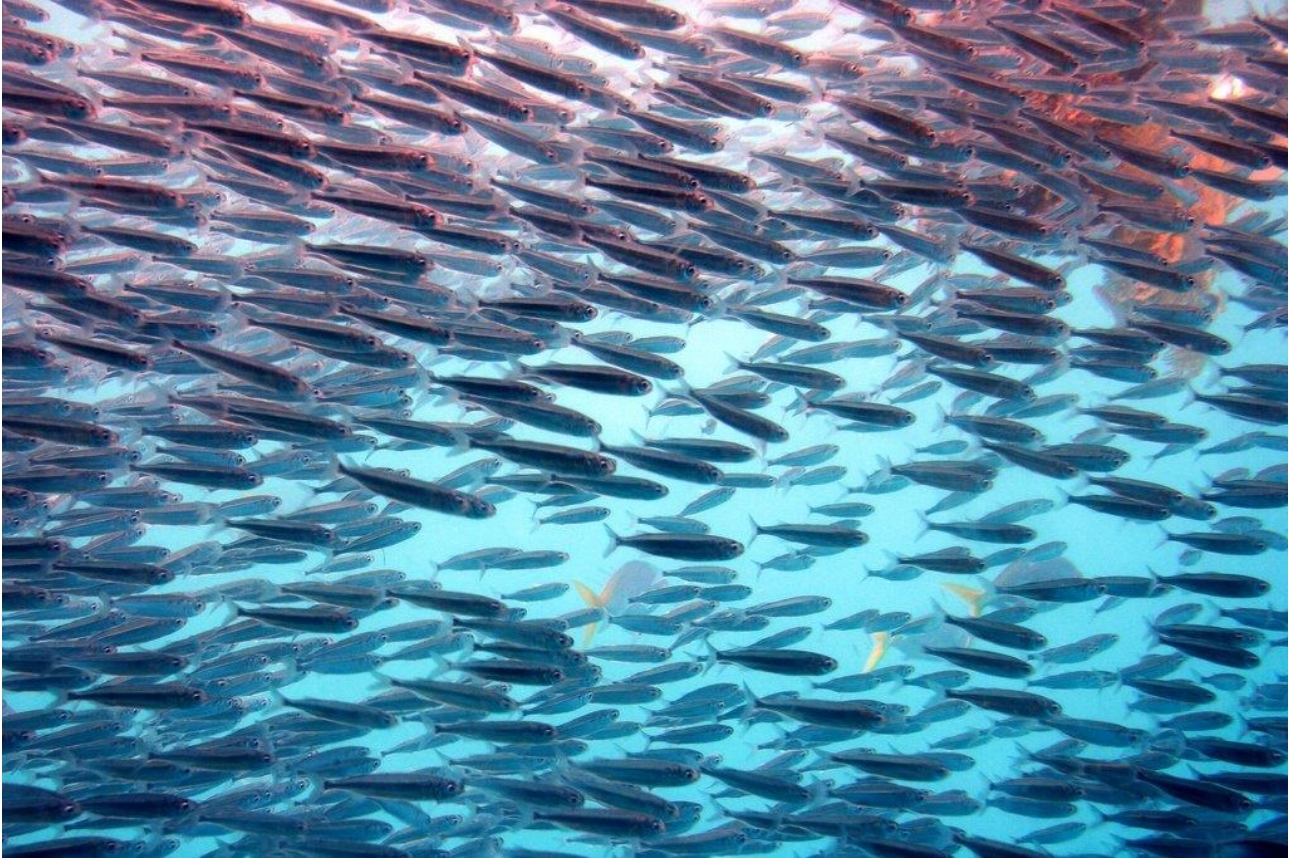


## 10. Try on a mask at Venice carnival



Venice is a grand and elaborate city to visit at any time of the year, yet during the carnival it bursts with even more colors when the local crowd dresses up exquisite costumes and masks. Held from Jan, the 31st till Feb, 17th, there are numerous performances and parties you cannot miss! Check out the carnival program to find out the best dates to visit!

## 11. Dive at the Great Barrier Reef



2,600km of fascinating coral formations of all shapes and colors, diving at the Great Barrier Reef is like getting into another universe! It does not matter whether you are a diving pro or are just planning to earn your certificate as the Great Barrier will leave you speechless in any case! Prices depend on your qualifications and start from \$150 per diver.



## 12. Visit Hobbiton in New Zealand



Plunge into the magical world of Middle Earth at Matamata in the North Island of New Zealand. Whether you are a Lord of the Rings fan or not, you need to see those perfect little hole-houses of Shire hidden in the emerald sloppy hills! Tours start from \$75 per adult.



### 13. See sunrise over Bagan Temples in Myanmar



Imagine over 2000 temples, lying down in the valley hidden in the morning mist. As the sun rises, they slowly emerge from the white covers and turn deep golden. It looks so beautiful that it hurts!

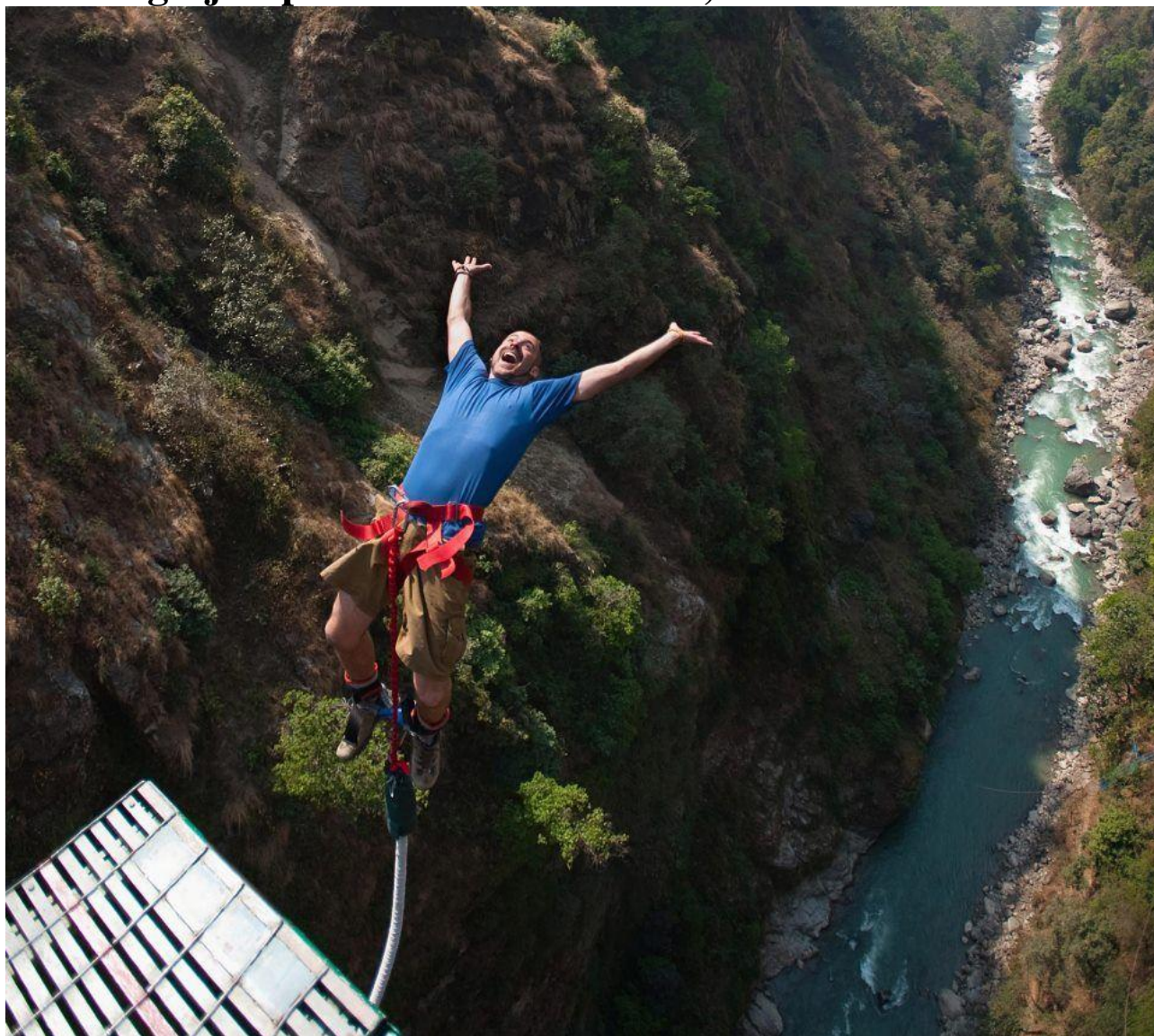
## 14. Climb Iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge



Get magical views of the Harbour and Sydney Opera Theater by getting over your trembling knees and going all the way up the bridge! Guided climbs are offered daily by Bridge Climb Sydney starting from AU\$ 148 (~US\$ 128).



## 15. Bungeejump at Bhote Koshi River, near Kathmandu



Named one the longest bungees in the world as you jump from the bridge, right into a scenic 160 meter deep river gorge! Prices start from \$145 per person.



## 16. Ride the Glacier Express in Switzerland



The slowest, yet the most scenic train route in the world. Glacier express connects two major mountain resorts of St. Moritz and Zermatt in the Swiss Alps. You won't get bored during 7.5 hour journey as you tour over 291 bridges, through 91 tunnels and across the Oberalp Pass on the highest point at 2,033m while watching (and snapping) breathtaking alpine landscapes outside the window. Get ready to pay \$146.23 one way in 2nd class and \$257 in 1st.

## 17. Watch Komodo dragons in Indonesia



The largest lizard species to be found on Earth, more specifically at Lesser Sunda Islands in Indonesia. Witnessing those huge lazy fellows soaking the sun is merely spectacular. The biggest population can be found now found in Komodo National Park. Entrance fee – just \$1.6, plus \$4 for your camera.



## 18. Hike Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia



Just 150km north-east of Kuala Lumpur, Tamana Negara park is the place where you can still meet a family of elephants while wandering through 130 million years old rainforest jungles. The entrance fee is ridiculously low: 1RM ~ \$0.28\$, plus 5 RM: \$1.4 for your camera.



## 19. Take a boat ride down Ganges at Varanasi



The Holy city of Varanasi exists for 2000 years already. It's a controversial, yet spectacular place where you can merely hop in the boat at one of the ghats and slowly sail along the shores to witness the whole cycle of life – from small kids learning to walk on the steps, to mid-aged men and women doing the laundry and bathing a few meters away, and finally funeral fires set at the most distant ghats where the passed-away are bathed in the Ganges for the last time and cremated on a holy fire. Prices for a boat ride highly depend on your bargaining skills, but shouldn't be more than 250 INR (~\$4).

## 20. Spend a night at a deserted island



Basically, it could be anywhere in the world, but I would choose the Togian Archipelago in Indonesia. There are plenty of deserted, nameless islands around Kadidiri, including Karina beach islet where you can bathe at the shimmering golden waves at night when the glowing plankton comes close to the shores.



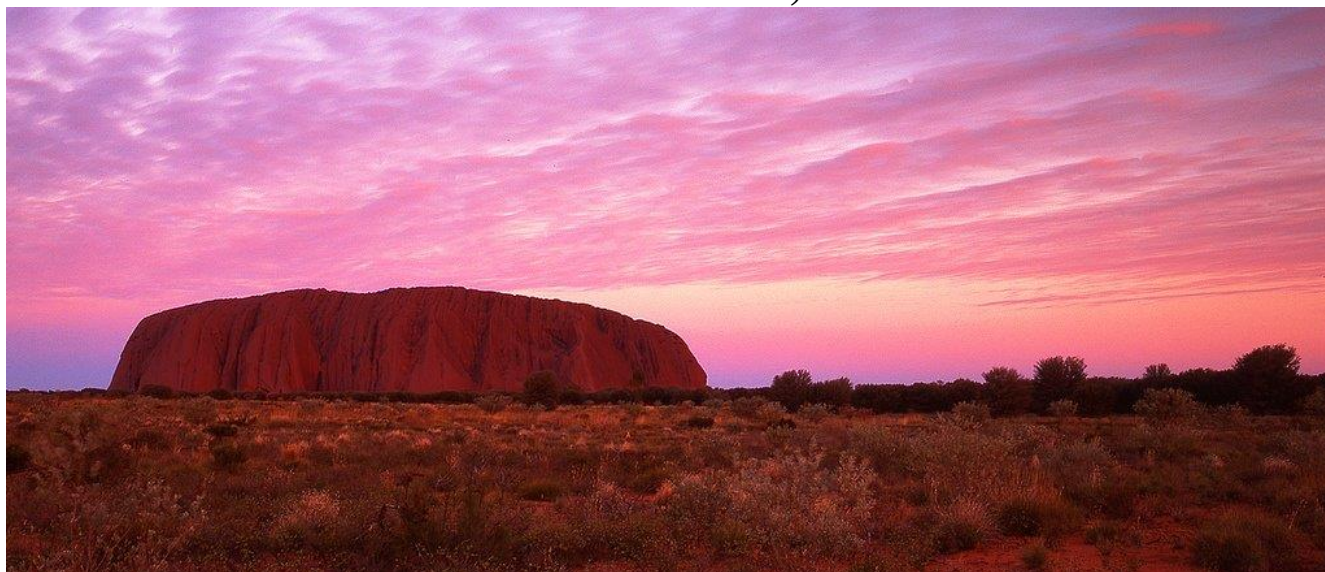
## 21. Swim at the infinity pool at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore



Needless to say how mind-blowing the views of the Singapore skyline are, right? Staying at Marina Bay Sands is a pretty expensive pleasure with prices starting from S\$632 (US\$ 479) per night. But it's all worth to splurge at least once in your life!



## 22. Watch sunrise and sunset at Uluru, Australia



Witness the magic happen at the sacred Uluru stone in Australia as it turns deep brown and red under the first rays of sun. Come back at sunset when the monolith colors bright orange! A standard three day path costs \$25 for adults and I bet you would return to watch Uluru color change each evening!

## 23. Climb Table Mountain, Cape Town, South Africa



There are over 350 routes to hike up the iconic Table Mountain to get a bird's eye perspective of Cape Town and nearby Atlantic down below. A day entry pass costs 80 Rands, approximately \$7.

## 24. Admire Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, USA



Take a trip to the kingdom of ice and fire hidden in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Yellowstone National Park leaves you deeply enchanted with its wilderness and unique, out of this world scenery! The entrance fee is \$25 for a vehicle and \$12 for each visitor entering by foot, bike, ski or snowboard.

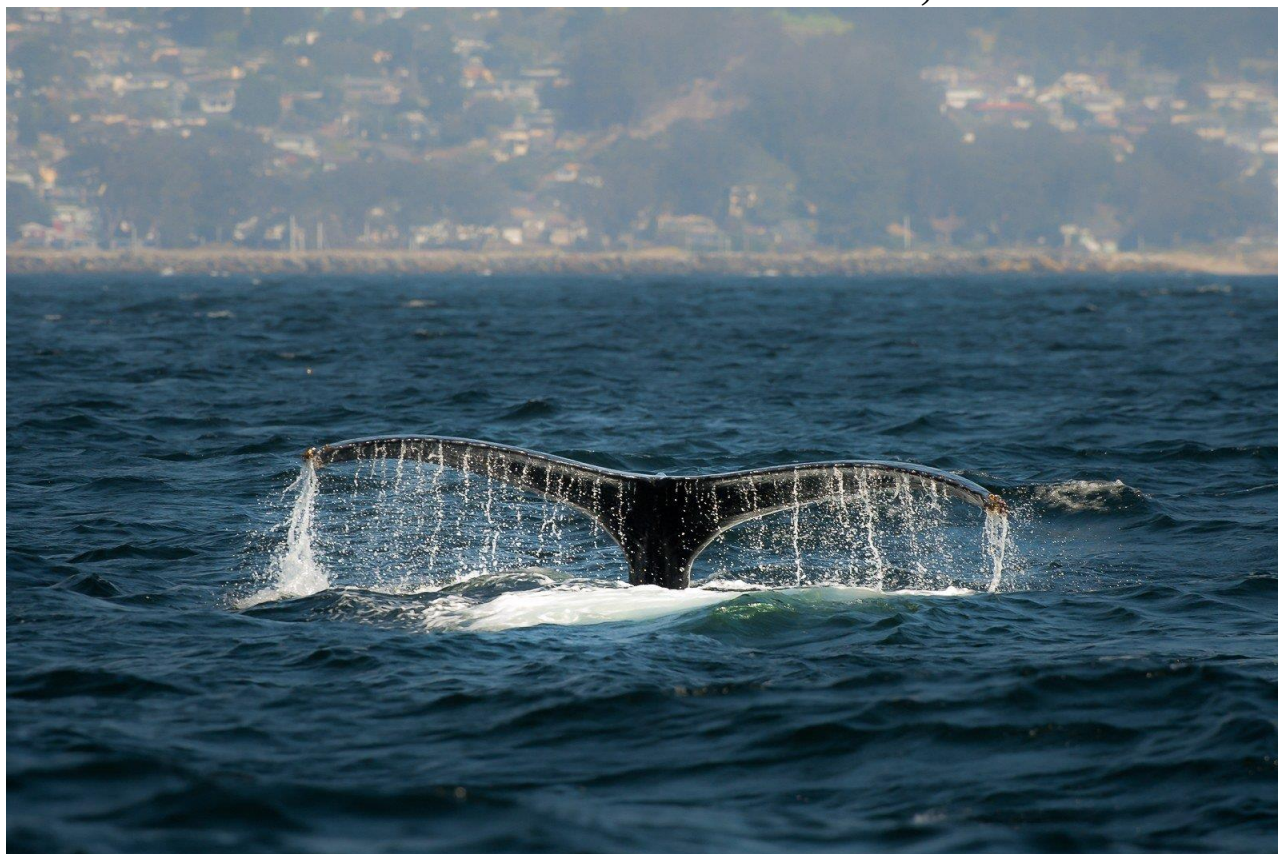


## 25. Swim at the Blue Lagoon in Island



Dip your toes into warm turquoise waters at this incredible geothermal pool in Grindavík and marvel the incredible landscapes around while your body soaks and relaxes. A standard ticket costs 35€ (~\$41.21) while premium packages can go up to 165€ (\$195) per day.

## 26. Watch whales in the Gulf of St Lawrence, Canada



Despite having a notorious history of whalers firing their harpoons here, St Lawrence gulf stays one of the best places in the world to watch seemingly smiling belugas and 25m-long blue whales! The peak season is May-September.



## 27. Observe mysterious Nazca lines in Peru



Mysterious ancient geoglyphs are another mystery mankind failed to unveil. There's still no proven data on why and more importantly how, those peculiar images were drawn in the southern Peruvian desert about 400km away from Lima. Tour packages vary in price and start from around \$180.



## 28. Explore the world's driest place: the Atacama Desert in Chile



Over a kilometer of sand stretched along the Pacific coast in Chile, Atamaca is known to have extreme temperature changes from  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  early in the morning going up to  $22^{\circ}\text{C}$  by midday. Dress appropriately if you plan to explore Valle de la Luna with scenery similar to the surface of the moon or watch mighty El Tatio geysers. Tours start from \$600 for a four day trip.

## 29. Take a slow ride up the Mekong in Laos



The life swirls around the Mekong in Laos! Take a *héua sáa* (traditional slow boat) to Luang Prabang from the Thai border town Huay Xai to spend the next two days watching how life goes on the shores and grab a few tasty delights from boat sellers approaching your vessel. One way ticket costs \$20 per person.



### 30. Learn to dance salsa in Havana, Cuba



Hop on the party vibe and learn to move the local way. Havana has vibrant parties held each other night at nearly each hole-in-the-wall bar where you can also grab a glass of fine mojito before going wild on the dance floor. If you feel like you need a bit of practice first, taking private lessons will cost you around \$6-9 per hour.



## 31. Husky mush in Lapland, Sweden



If you are brave enough, learn to ride a sledge yourself and go onto a race through the gorgeous frozen lakes and woods in Lapland! Prices depend on the tour providers and typically vary around 700-790€ (\$820-930) for a three day tour.

## 32. Temple-gaze at Abu Simbel, Egypt



Did you know that Abu Simbel temples were actually built twice? Originally carved out of a cliff in the 13th century BC, the Great Temple and smaller Temple of Hathor were taken piece by piece and moved a few kilometers away in the 60s to avoid damage by the rising waters of Nile. Do not miss a spectacular light and music show held daily at 7pm and 8pm in winter and at 8pm and 9pm in summer.



### 33. Climb Kilimanjaro in Tanzania



Hiking up over 6.000 meters will not be easy, yet if you can make it – this incredible experience will never bleach through the time. There are eleven main routes to attempt for reaching the summit ranging from 5 days up to two weeks. So it's up to you to decide how much time your adventure will take!



## 34. Go trekking around Annapurna circuit in Nepal



Arguably, one of the world's most spectacular tracks taking around 24 days to walk in full. The landscapes constantly change from emerald green lush rice terraces at lower elevations, to the lunar terrain northern and finally to the range of 6.000-8.0000 meters high snowy peaks of Annapurna I, II, III and numerous unnamed, yet as stunning peaks out there!

I highly recommend taking a bit practice at hiking lower terrains before making your first attempt to conquer the circuit as the temperature and elevation changes can seriously influence your well-being. The cost of the track will vary depending whether you are going to organize everything by yourself (around \$20-30 a day) or take advantage of ready-made adventure tours (starting from \$900 for 22 days).

### 35. Visit Baliem Valley in Papua, Indonesia



A lush green valley with a population of indigenous people stayed undiscovered till 1945 when a plane crashed here by accident. The ways of life haven't changed much since those days with local tribes still preferring peculiar traditional costumes to pants and sneakers and pigs being the main currency and estimate of one's wealth. Visit the valley in August when all of the tribes gather for a huge festival to show off their archery and skills.



## 36. Walk along the Great Wall of China



Set foot onto the mighty walls protecting the ancient empire and walk as far as you can to sense the glory of this epic UNESCO sight! It will be hard to walk it in full, yet you can always come back once again for more! Entrance fee: 45 RMB (~\$7.30).



## 37. Sneak to Tiger's Nest in Bhutan



One of the world's most remote temples, the Tiger's Nest (or Paro Taktsang) is all worth of time and efforts to get there. Not only is it stunningly beautiful and serene, but it gives you a chance to uncover yet another secret of happiness that Bhutanese people know.

### 38 Try on a maiko or geiko outfit in Kyoto, Japan



Getting wrapped up in layers of breezy silk, your hair decorated with elaborate accessories and face make-uped till you barely recognize yourself is a fun and unusual experience to have in the Land of the Rising Sun. Now you may need a bit of a practice to walk with grace in traditional wooden shoes and obi kimono, but it's all worth the time till you get carried into the Diary of the Geisha atmosphere at narrow Kyoto streets. Dressing up and a pro photo-shoot will cost you around 9500 yen (~\$80).



### 39. Marvel the palaces in Lhasa, Tibet



Imposing Potala Palace will carry you away with its numerous stairs, elaborate hallways and spectacular views of the Himalayas. Unfortunately you are not allowed to snap pictures inside, so keep your eye open wide and embrace each detail! Visitors are restricted to just 2.300 a day, so you need to come early and get in line for the tickets: RMB 100 (~\$16.15) in slack season (from December till May 1st); RMB 200 (~\$32.30) in peak seasons (from May 1st to November).



## 40. Ride the Trans-Siberian Railway across Russia



Board the train in cosmopolite Moscow to step out in a week at the Japanese seashore at Vladivostok. Alternatively, you can take a connecting branch heading to China, Mongolia or even North Korea. There's no right way to take the route – hop off at Lake Baikal or Ulan Ude, connect to the next train heading to Beijing or ride it the reverse way! The adventure can last as long as you desire. A bunk at a 4 bed sleeping compartment from Moscow to Vladivostok will cost you \$640 one way.



## 41. Cross the Salar de Uyuni salt flats in Bolivia



If you ever wondered where the sky meets the earth, it's here at the Salar de Uyuni – a 9,000sq km mirror made of salt platters covered with water in rainy season (December to April) or becoming an arctic white patchwork desert during dry season. The nearby town Uyuni is 10-12 hours away by bus from La Paz or 7 hours by train from Oruro.

## 42. Snorkel with manta rays in Bora Bora, French Polynesia



Bora Bora looks like a heaven on earth even without going underwater. Yet, you'd better not spend all your days beach bumming as the underworld has incredible treasures hidden for you! Grab your gear and get close to the huge floating beasts living in the nearby waters. Don't get too surprised when you find yourself surrounded with fish of all shapes and colors and meet the eagle, bat and manta rays!



## 43. Meet mountain gorillas in Rwanda



Step deep in the lush moisture jungle and track a few kilometers before all of sudden you bump into a family of gorillas leisurely playing at the lake shore. As there are just around 700 mountain gorillas left in Rwanda and Uganda, there's not much time left to experience this adventure! Entry permits to track cost \$500 and entail a group pass for eight people, supervised by a ranger.

## 44. Get carried away at Machu Picchu in Peru



It may sound like a popular tourist place, but you cannot skip seeing the great Inca temples once in Peru. Get lost among numerous polished dry-stone buildings erected centuries before concrete and cranes were invented, yet still standing tall and shining gloriously in the sunset rays. As visitors are restricted to just 400 a day you should plan your visit and purchase a ticket at the selected date in advance at the official website.



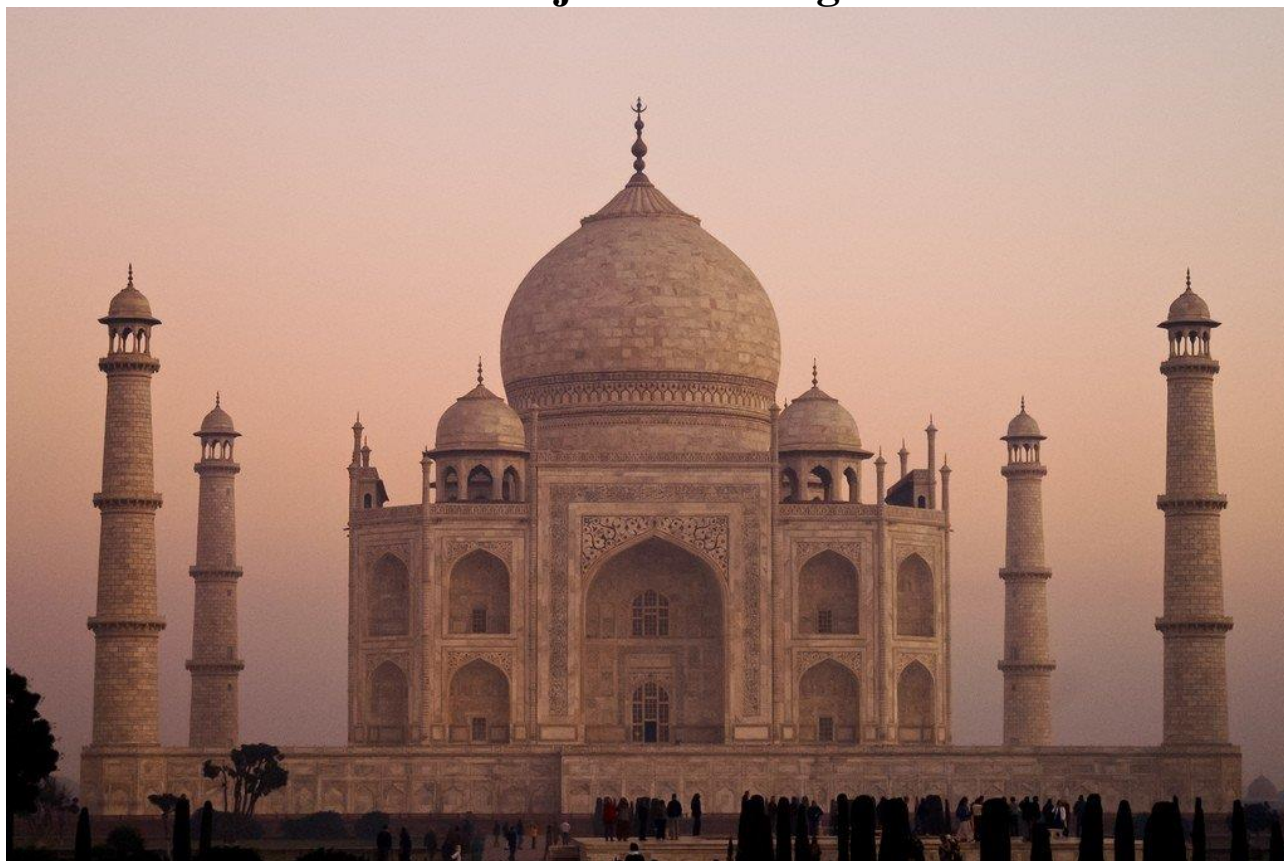
## 45. Visit a tea ceremony in Japan



The art of the traditional tea ceremony rules have not changed much since the Emperor days. The way how a tea ceremony is performed depends of the time of the day, season, venue and other considerations. All the guests have to take a sequence of special rituals before entering the tea house and keep a special code of conduct during the two-hour (or even four hour) ceremony. You can attend a guided ceremony where you will be explained all the subtleties at numerous venues in Tokyo. Prices start from 8.000 yen (~\$68) per person.



## 46. Catch the sunrise at Taj Mahal in Agra



A symbol of eternal love and devotion, the Taj Mahal gets fabulously colored during early morning hours. Besides, it's one of those times when you can see the least crowds. Entrance fee: 750 INR for foreign tourists (~\$12).

## 47. Admire Michelangelo paintings at Sistine Chapel, Vatican



How many hours can you spend marveling the paintings before your neck stiffens and your head starts to go round from this insane, dazzling beauty a genius once managed to create? The full admission fee is 16€ (\$18.84) with discounted rates offered for youths and scholars.



## 48. Treat yourself with spa at Bodrum, Turkey



Constant adventuring can be exhausting, right? And once in a while we all just wish to get a relaxing nourishing holiday before getting back on track. LifeCo at Bodrum offers incredible spa and detox programs, developed by a world-known specialist Amanda Hamilton starting from 913\$ per week of massages, relaxation and luxury care. Besides, you can't miss splashing in turquoise waters of the Mediterranean and work on your tan on the white sand beach nearby.



## 49. Meet sunrise over Angkor Wat in Cambodia



Again, the temples of Agkor are a pretty well-known destination, yet by no means it devalues their majesty! Get up early and head across the moat to catch the mind-blowing view of the temples reflected in the golden lake waters. Entrance fees: one day pass – 20\$, three day pass valid for a week – 40\$ and seven day pass valid for a month – \$60.

## 50. Step close to the edge at the rock city of Sigiriya, Sri Lanka



Built in the 5th century AD inside a 150 meter solid rock, the city of Sigiriya was once inhabited by ancient kings and afterwards Buddhist monks. Get lost in the numerous gardens and secret passageways before making your way to the very top where dazzling views of the nearby planes open up! Not to miss ancient mural painting in the inner caves.

The festive season is upon us, and many stores around the globe are bracing themselves for frantic discounts and crazy sales. Did you know that in 2014 the average person spent \$380 on Black Friday?! Did you also know that you could instead take a 10 day trip to Barcelona from London for around \$250? While of course there are many wonderful reasons to buy gadgets and other material possessions around the holidays, we humbly offer a wanderlusty alternative. After all, even science

says that experiences are better than things      Whether you're able to gallivant across the globe, or you're better suited to explore your own country, here are 50 travel experiences that are WAY better than material things.

# Escape

99 :

## The ultimate travel to-do list

We scoured the globe and came up with the ultimate list of travel experiences to bring you the Escape 99. We then asked you what No.100 should be. Scroll down to find out what suggestion was chosen for the coveted final spot.





### **1. BATHE WITH SNOW MONKEYS IN JAPAN'S HOT SPRINGS**

Well, you can't actually get in and bathe with the monkeys, but you can watch them bathe (in a totally non-creepy way) at one of Japan's onsens (natural hot springs). There are plenty of guesthouses built right up against the springs so you can see the blissed-out monkeys up close without getting in their way.



## **2. GET COLOUR-COATED AT INDIA'S HOLI FESTIVAL**

This ancient Hindu festival has gone mainstream, attracting party goers from around the world with its coloured powder-throwing, laughter-inducing, springtime-celebrating frivolity.





### **3. WATCH THE NORTHERN LIGHTS IN AN IGLOO IN FINLAND**

Watch mother nature's sensational light show from the warmth and comfort of your own igloo. Settle in, look up, and witness the colours of the Northern Lights dance across the sky through the windows of your glass cocoon. Picture: Kakslauttanen Arctic Resort





#### **4. SAIL ON A FELUCCA DOWN THE NILE RIVER**

Make your way down Egypt's Nile like Antony and Cleopatra once did - in a traditional felucca. Sail down the famous river, winding through Egypt's golden deserts, sandy hills, bedouin villages, and ancient riverside temples.



##### **5. SHARE THE BEACH WITH WILDLIFE AT GALAPAGOS ISLANDS**

Every nature-lovers ultimate bucket-list destination and where history's most famous naturalist, Charles Darwin, discovered his Theory of Evolution. The Galapagos are a freak archipelago, formed by chance and inhabited by dense populations of species found nowhere else on Earth.





## 6. GET SWEEPED UP IN SUPERBOWL FEVER

America's NFL championship game is the ultimate bucket list event for any sports fan. But it's so much more than a football game - it's four hours of entertainment, pyrotechnics, star power, and of course football, all coming together for this epic spectacle.





## 7. GET SCRUBBED CLEAN AT A TURKISH HAMMAM

No time for modesty. Commit yourself to the full experience of a true Turkish bath inside one of the country's many magnificently opulent arabic spas. Undress. Hot shower. Steam room. Lay on heated marble slab. Be scrubbed head to toe. Rinse. Be scrubbed again. Shower again. Hot bath. Towel. Redress. Exit. You have never, and will never, feel this level of clean again. Picture: [hometurkey.com](http://hometurkey.com)



#### **8. WITNESS THE POWER OF ICELAND'S GREAT GEYSIR**

This erupting hot spring is one of only a handful in the world. She's a shy beast, though, so a performance cannot be guaranteed. But while this one is the original and the best, luckily there are a few more nearby so if you miss out, another chance is just a short walk away. Watch your step - the water in this geothermal area's pools and mud pots reaches 100C.





## 9. MEET THE GREAT BARRIER REEF'S 'GREAT EIGHT'

Dive below the surface and swim alongside the Great Barrier Reef's 'Great Eight' iconic species: the Clownfish, Giant Clam, Reef Shark, Manta Ray, Humpback Whale, Maori Wrasse, Potato Cod, and Sea Turtle.





## 10. VISIT VATICAN CITY

World headquarters of the Catholic Church. Home of the Pope. A city-state all of its own. The site of St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel. Spend a whole day exploring, or just briefly step into the piazza and take it all in. Either way a visit to Vatican City is a one stop shop for anyone who appreciates history, museums, and art.



### **11. STAND ON NORWAY'S TROLLTUNGA**

Standing at the very end of 'Trolltunga' (the troll tongue), a rocky promontory jutting 700m out from the cliff face it so seemingly precariously clings to, is one for the thrillseekers. It's enough to get the palms sweating just thinking about it, but think of the bragging rights.





## 12. SLEEP WITH THE FISHES IN THE MALDIVES

Forget overwater bungalows, go one better and stay under the surface in the Maldives' underwater hotel. Guests can book suites on the floor of the Indian Ocean, cocooned by glass, with fish and other marine life just cruising by. There's also an underwater restaurant.





### 13. SLEEP IN A POD ON A PERU MOUNTAINSIDE

Get a good night's sleep while hanging hundreds of metres above the ground in a see-through capsule clinging to the side of a cliff. The Sky Lodge Adventure Suites are as extreme as sleeping gets. When you wake up, casually rock-climb your way across the mountainside to the communal dome (also hanging from the cliff) for breakfast.



#### **14. CLIMB MOUNT KILIMANJARO**

It's Tanzania's huge snow-capped mountain that looks like a painted backdrop over the Serengeti. And if you rate hiking up 5895m as an amazing travel experience then Mt Kilimanjaro is for you. The tough hike winds through four different landscapes but the smiles from those on the summit outrates all.



### **15. DUNE BUGGY ON LIWA DESERT'S SAND DUNES**

Ride the dunes UAE-style. A quick buggy lesson and you're set loose on these giant sand dunes on the outskirts of Abu Dhabi. If slipping and sliding up and down golden sands as far as the eye can see doesn't get your adrenaline going, nothing will.





### **16. ROW THROUGH CAPRI'S BLUE GROTTO**

Getting into this illuminated sea cave is like threading the eye of the needle. Luckily a local oarsman will do it for you. Jump in a row boat, lay flat, and be strategically maneuvered through the tiny 1m-high entrance.



### 17. BE SEDUCED BY SPICES AT ISTANBUL'S GRAND BAZAAR

The sights, sounds, and smells of Istanbul's Grand Bazaar are a sensory overload, consuming every inch of the massive maze of ancient walls and alleyways. Here the shops selling traditional ingredients are as much of a feast for the eyes as they are for the tastebuds, with vibrant-coloured piles of middle eastern herbs, spices, and dried fruits piled high in the stall's cascading stands.





### **18. ENCOUNTER POLAR BEARS IN MANITOBA**

The best place on the planet to encounter mumma polar bears and their adorable fluffy white cubs is in Canada's Manitoba - a favourite denning region for the arctic animals. Jump on an all-terrain tundra buggy safari to see them up close in their natural habitat. Picture: Alamy





### **19. TAKE A TOPDECK BUS TOUR OF LONDON**

Think you're too cool for a topdeck tour? Put your reputation aside, put on your tacky tourist hat, grab your camera, and get onboard. This is the best, easiest, most efficient way to see all the sights of London. Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Tower of London, 10 Downing Street, The Shard, London Eye, Westminster Abbey... tick, all done.



## 20. HOMESTAY IN RURAL VIETNAM

Tucked into the bright green rolling hills of northern Vietnam, the village of Sapa is home to the country's traditional mountain tribes. Here you can experience rural life and even stay as a guest in local homes, surrounded by terraced rice paddies, farms, and forests.



## 21. SEE CHICHEN ITZA'S SERPENT ILLUSION

The Pyramid of Kukulcan is the stand-out attraction at Mexico's Chichén Itzá, the site of an ancient Mayan city. During equinox the sun creates an illusion of a snake climbing its stairs. In the offseason, a light show creates the same affect.





## **22. DRIVE IRELAND'S CAUSEWAY COAST**

This is not your average scenic route. The stretch of road from Belfast to Londonderry hugs the Atlantic coast taking in Ireland's famously stunning scenery as well as an embarrassing amount of pull-over-to-have-a-better-look sights such as cliffs, caves, beaches, causeways, suspended walkways, ancient bridges, lighthouse, cottages, castles, and even walled cities.



### 23. CRUISE TO ANTARCTICA

A visit to the other-worldly (and inhospitable) continent of Antarctica was once only achievable by hardcore explorers and scientists. Now we can cruise there. See the epic icebergs and glaciers, watch colonies of penguins, seals, and a plethora of other wildlife, all from the comfort (and climate control) of a cruise ship. Of course, adventurous cruisers can jump onto smaller boats for more intrepid shore adventures.





#### **24. EXPLORE NEW MEXICO'S CARLSBAD CAVERNS**

Hidden beneath the surface of Chihuahuan Desert are a network of more than 100 limestone caves - of all shapes and sizes - just waiting to be explored. The biggest is the largest single cave chamber in all of North America, creatively named 'The Big Room'.





## 25. CHILL OUT AT THE WORLD'S BEST AIRPORT

Airports are a traveller's means to an end. But not Singapore's Changi Airport. This is a holiday destination in itself, complete with massage parlours, spa rooms, koi ponds, cinemas, slides, gourmet restaurants, cocktail bars, gaming centres, rainforest lounges, butterfly gardens, a 24-hour gym, an epic indoor waterfall, and even a rooftop resort-like swimming pool. Picture: Changi Airport



## **26. SEE KOMODO ISLAND'S DRAGONS**

The largest lizards on earth, Komodo Dragons were named after their Indonesia island habitat, Komodo. Here these massive meat-eaters still roam free. Growing up to 3m-long and weighing up to 100kg, they are the star attraction of the island, best admired from a safe distance.





## **27. GO GAGA OVER GAUDI AT BARCELONA'S PARK GUELL**

Famous architect Antonio Gaudi was hired (by Count Eusebi Guell- hence the park's name) to design a whole residential housing estate in the hillside of Barcelona. Alas, two homes in and construction came to a grinding halt. But what's left is the magnificent Park Güell which is like a modernist art-nouveau game of hide and seek. Spot the wild shapes and animals amongst spectacularly colourful pottery, tile, and glass.





## 28. FLOAT IN THE DEAD SEA

Israel's iconic lake is so salty you'll just bob around on the surface like a cork. Not only is it hypersaline, it's also hyper-rich in minerals, so you can give yourself a natural mud mask, lay back, and float away.



## **29. JOIN A CAMEL CARAVAN THROUGH THE SAHARA DESERT**

There's a reason cross-desert camel caravans are so synonymous with exotic Arabian tales. Traveling as part of a herd, bouncing softly up and down with each of the camel's footsteps, looking out across golden sand dunes all the way to the horizon, will make you feel like you've stepped back in time. Except now your objective is to enjoy the experience, not to merely survive the treacherous journey.



### **30. SNORKEL IN PALAU'S JELLYFISH LAKE**

Every day millions of golden-coloured jellyfish move across this marine lake, and back again, a never-ending cycle of movement attracting hundreds of thousands of snorkellers every year. Needless to say, these jellyfish don't sting. But the \$100 pass to access the lake might.





### 31. HAVE BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

More than five decades since Audrey Hepburn did it on the silver screen, you too can now have Breakfast At Tiffany's. Just last year the jewellery company opened a cafe at its flagship Manhattan store. Overlooking Central Park and dishing up American classics (and yes, danishes), the Blue Box Cafe is decorated in the Tiffany & Co. signature shade of *robin's egg* blue. Picture: Tiffany & Co.



### **32. GET ONBOARD A EUROPEAN RIVER CRUISE**

Take a voyage from Amsterdam to Budapest onboard a luxury European cruise ship along the Danube River. Soak up all the creature comforts of your floating hotel while lapping up the passing scenery and stopping for shore excursions along the way.





### **33. SEA SCOOTER OVER COOK ISLANDS' CORAL REEFS**

Zoom through the crystal clear waters of the Cook Islands, soaring above the living coral reefs with a sea scooter, the best invention since the snorkel. These water-propelled gadgets help underwater explorers keep up with the sea turtles! Picture: Cook Islands Tourism Corporation



### **34. SEE PRAGUE'S AUTUMN COLOURS**

Check out the Czech Republic's fall foliage in postcard perfect Prague. Watch as the change of season completely transforms this charming capital city.





### **35. ROAST MARSHMALLOWS OVER GUATEMALA'S PACAYA VOLCANO**

It's a tough two-hour climb to the top of this active volcano but once you're there visitors are allowed to reward themselves with marshmallows. Not just any marshmallows, but ones roasted over the heat of open lava flow vents. This is lolly-eating with a side of danger.





### 36. HELISKI IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

If you're going to hit the ski slopes, why not take it to the next level and add a helicopter into the mix. One of the world's best places to heliski is in Canada's British Columbia. The region is popular for its visitor packages combining skiing, lodging, and local guides, making it a one-stop-shop for the ultimate skiing adventure. Picture: Mike Watling



### 37. GET SNAPPING AT SASARAN BEACH

In the middle of the Straits of Malacca Sea, when the tide is just right, a sandbar emerges at Sasaran Beach, with its shallow waters perfectly mirroring the sky. This illusion provides the perfect photo opportunity, attracting visitors keen to take the ultimate hashtagable social media snap. Picture: Tourism Malaysia.



### **38. HANG OUT WITH FLAMINGOS AT LAGUNA COLORADA**

No need for rose-coloured glasses here. Bolivia's shallow salt lake has a hue of pink thanks to its brightly-coloured algae blooms. Fun fact: this same algae turns the feathers of the local flamingos pink too, they're naturally actually white. Here these flamboyant birds gather in their hundreds, their pink bodies frolicking in the pink lake creating a stunning scene of... pink.





### 39. FLY FIRST CLASS

Air travel is often just a means to an end, an uncomfortable necessity before the good times begin at your holiday destination. But flying first class makes the journey itself an experience. The food, the wine, the entertainment, the ample space - the most pampered anyone can be while travelling at 35,000 feet.



#### **40. HIKE NEW ZEALAND'S TONGARIRO CROSSING**

This 18.5km alpine crossing is so special that it's not only a World Heritage Site, it has dual status, recognised as having natural and cultural significance. The area's volcanic features attracted the natural gong, while the land's Maori and spiritual associations earned it the cultural recognition.



#### **41. CAGE DIVE WITH SHARKS OFF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COAST**

Picture a school of wild great white sharks circling a tiny cage in the middle of the open ocean with you inside, separated by only a few steel bars. Sounds fun, right? Head to South Africa's Cape Town for this once in a lifetime experience. Some of the world's best cage diving sites are just offshore.





#### **42. SEE ALASKA'S SLED DOG RACES**

See the world's best tackle the 1000-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race through Alaska's chilly wild landscape. Every year teams of adorable huskies and their human mushers (drivers) embark on the epic journey, taking them up to 15 days to complete. Cheer them on from the starting line in downtown Anchorage, Alaska's largest city.



#### **43. ROAD TRIP ALONG TAJIKISTAN'S PAMIR HIGHWAY**

Travelling along the fabled Pamir Highway is not your average scenic drive, taking a good week to experience properly. The road winds through Tajikistan's raw and wild landscape, hugging the border of Afghanistan, passing through mountain passes, valleys, rivers, alpine lakes, farms, meadows, and local villages. Accommodation along the way ranges from roadside hotels, to family-run guesthouses and homestays, to traditional yurts. Throw in a few stops at ancient palaces and fortresses and this is one epic road trip.



#### **44. SWIM WITH WHALE SHARKS AT NINGALOO REEF**

People travel from all over the world to Australia's west coast where these gentle giants congregate in large groups on Ningaloo Reef. Whale sharks grow to a massive 18m-long, but are harmless, making them perfect swimming companions.





#### **45. SEE A TENNIS MATCH AT WIMBLEDON**

Don your best tennis whites and head to Centre Court during Wimbledon - the world's most iconic tennis tournament. Whether you're a big tennis fan or not, you'll enjoy the intoxicating atmosphere. Take your spot in the sun-drenched stands, sit back, and watch the best tennis players go head to head on this famous grass court. Picture: Images



#### 46. EAT PIZZA IN NAPLES

Almost every country has its own version of this universally-loved food, but it all began in Naples, Italy. Here the Italian style of pizza we all know and love was born in the 1890s when Raffaele Esposito used tomatoes, basil, and mozzarella cheese to emulate the red, white, and green of the Italian flag. Full disclosure, some dispute this story. But what's not disputable is just how delicious Naples pizza is. Buon appetito!



#### **47. RUG UP FOR CHINA'S ICE AND SNOW FESTIVAL**

What started as a quaint little ice lantern show is now the world's largest ice and snow festival, attracting around 20 million people every year. It's worth braving the bitter cold to see this winter wonderland of weird and wonderful ice sculptures. Spanning across 60ha, it's like a magical mini city that comes and goes each year. Picture: AFP





#### **48. RIDE CAPE TOWN'S TABLE MOUNTAIN CABLEWAY**

Cape Town's iconic cableway has been running up and down the Table Mountain summit since 1929. The rotating circular cars ensure every passenger gets a 360-degree view. And with each massive car holding up to 65 people, this is important! The ride only takes five minutes, but it's a five-minute experience that's so good, almost one million people do it every year.



#### 49. PARTY AT RIO CARNIVALE

It's the largest party on the planet. And the biggest drawcard - the parade. Millions of people line the streets of Brazil's Rio de Janeiro every year to catch a glimpse of the colourful costumes and crazy characters as they make their way through the crowds, wildly singing and dancing the whole way. Picture: Images





## 50. FOLLOW THE OLD SILK ROAD

Travel from China to Uzbekistan, following the way of the old Silk Road. The full path takes in five countries, all with remaining relics of the ancient trading route to visit along the way. Travellers can not only immerse themselves in the historic journey, but experience the unique landscapes and cultures of modern-day Central Asia. Picture: Intrepid Travel





### **51. TAKE A QUOKKA SELFIE ON ROTTNEST ISLAND**

No one can resist a selfie with the world's happiest animal, not even superstar Roger Federer (see photo). These smiley creatures inhabit Australia's Rottnest Island where they are so used to visitors that they're more than happy to stop and strike a pose. Picture: Images



## 52. GO GEISHA SPOTTING IN KYOTO

The best place to see real-life Geishas is in Kyoto's historical Gion precinct. Here, as the sun sets, these revered icons of Japan elegantly and swiftly make their way through the cobbled-stone alleyways, heading to their evening engagements.





### 53. RIDE CANADA'S ROCKY MOUNTAINEER

The rough and rugged terrain of the Canadian Rockies is easily accessible thanks to the famous Rocky Mountaineer. Sit back, relax, and take in the spectacular scenery through the glass roof as the train carves its way through canyons, hugs hillsides, and scales mountains - all while you're lapping up the luxury. Picture: Rocky Mountaineer





#### **54. HOT AIR BALLOON OVER UTAH'S MONUMENT VALLEY**

The striking landscape of Monument Valley in America's Wild West boasts an embarrassing amount of natural wonders - deep gorges, stunning rock formations, windswept tablelands, and of course, the iconic uniquely-shaped sandstone buttes. Sure, you can hike here, but floating above at sunrise or sunset is magical.



### **55. TAKE A GUIDED TOUR OF AUSCHWITZ**

A visit to Auschwitz is a confronting one but a tour of this former Nazi concentration camp provides insights into the dark chapter of history unrivalled by any other WWII experience. Parts of the original buildings still remain, housing a museum exhibiting personal items left behind by holocaust victims.

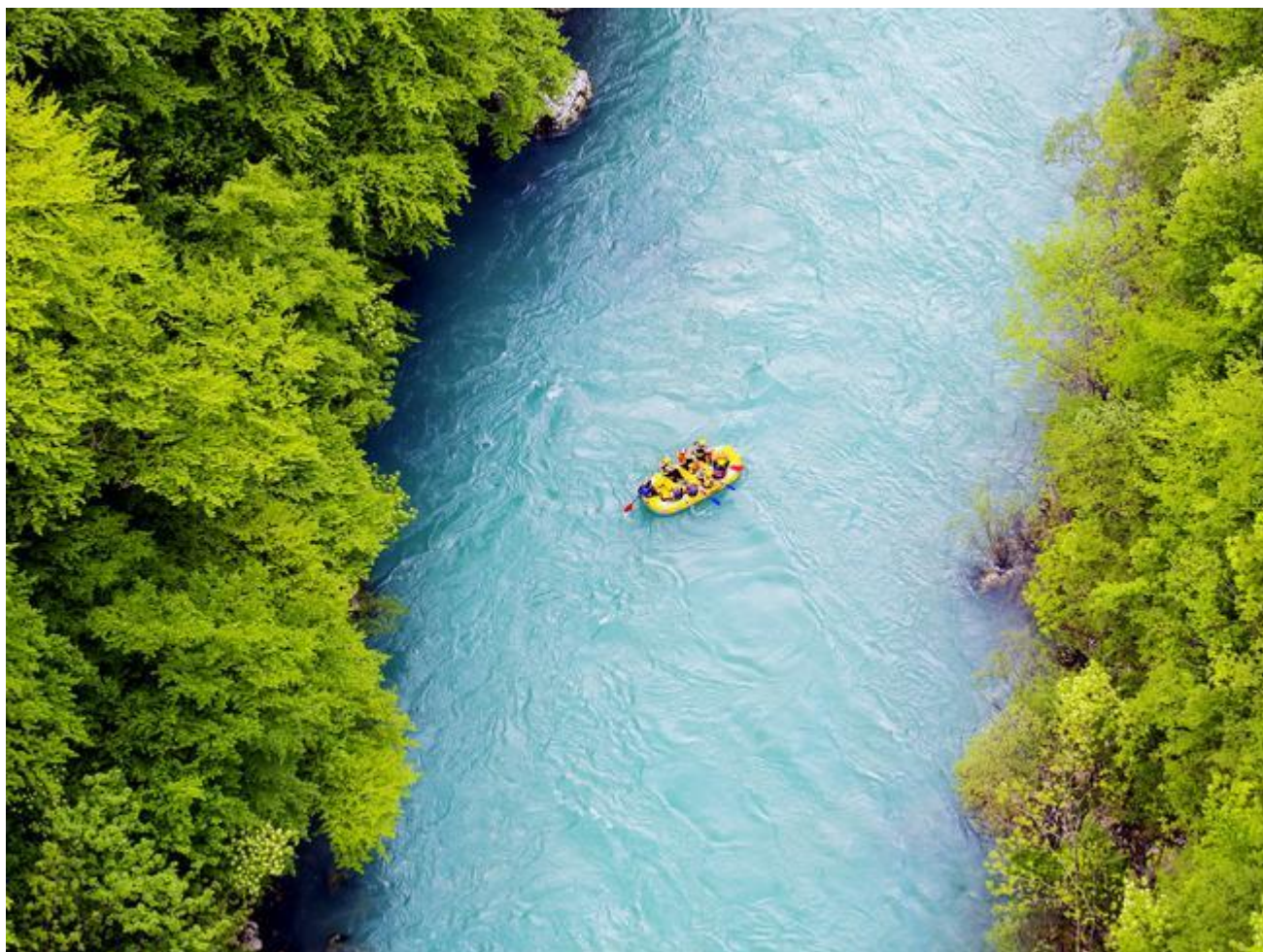




## 56. WALK ACROSS TREE ROOT BRIDGES IN INDIA

It looks like they emerged from the pages of a fantasy novel, but these bridges formed by living root systems are a real-life phenomenon, found in India's north-eastern province of Meghalaya. The intertwined roots of these rubber trees are so strong, some can hold 50 people at once. They didn't form this way all on their own. Local tribespeople used branches to guide the roots across the rivers as they grew.





### **57. WHITE WATER RAFT IN MONTENEGRO**

A tumble in the rapids of Montenegro's Tara River is a must for any intrepid traveller. Winding through the second deepest valley in the world (after Grand Canyon), the bright blue waters flanked by walls of green forest provide the picture perfect setting for a rafting adventure.



### 58. ENTER THE TOMB OF TUTANKHAMUN

Tutankhamun's golden sarcophagus lies within a burial chamber, within an underground tomb, within a network of secret tunnels and rooms, within Egypt's Valley of the Kings. Unfortunately these layers of protection couldn't stop grave robbers stripping the place of treasures all those years ago. But thanks to a nine-year preservation project (completed in early 2019), visitors can now get a glimpse of the once opulent final resting place of the young king.





### **59. TRACK MOUNTAIN GORILLAS THROUGH THE CONGO**

More than 200 wild mountain gorillas call the Congo's Virunga National Park home. Here they live in family groups, each led by jaw-droppingly impressive (and massive) male silverbacks. Tracking these troops is best left to the professionals. Rangers guide visitors to the best (and safest!) spots to ensure close encounters.





#### **60. MAKE A SPLASH WITH BEACH-LOVING PIGS IN THE BAHAMAS**

On a tiny uninhabited island in the middle of the Bahamas, a local colony of wild pigs have made themselves the star attraction. Tourists flock to the aptly-named Pig Beach to see the animals roll around in the sand, play in the shallows, and of course, beg for treats.



#### **61. CELEBRATE THE DAY OF THE DEAD IN MEXICO CITY**

Día de Muertos, Mexico's Day of the Dead, has forever fascinated outsiders with its simultaneously festive yet morbid celebrations. Oaxaca is where parading paper mache skeletons, candy skulls, candles, toys, and bright flowers flood the city square. Top off the experience with a trip to the cemetery where snacks and drinks are consumed to fuel the graveside mariacci dancing. Picture: AFP





## 62. SLEEP IN A SWAG IN THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK

Channel your best Banjo Paterson and head bush. There's nothing more Australian than camping out under the stars in a swag - red earth below, southern cross above. Canine companion optional. Picture: Alamy





### **63. TOUR TEA PLANTATIONS IN SRI LANKA**

The highlands of Sri Lanka is where the Lipton Tea empire was born, and where Ceylon Tea production still thrives. Join a tour or rent a tuk-tuk to explore the lush green tea fields, have a go at picking leaves, and of course, enjoy a cuppa right where it is made. Tourists can even visit ‘Lipton’s Seat’, the exact spot once frequented by Mr Tommy Lipton himself, where he would sit and admire his tea fields.



#### **64. THROW TOMATOES AT LA TOMATINA**

Forget the Running of the Bulls, Spain's La Tomatina festival has all of the excitement, with none of the fatal gorings. You will, however, be hit by some of the 150 tonnes of over-ripe tomatoes thrown every year. Why? No one actually knows exactly how it started, but who needs a reason to have this much fun?





## 65. BELT OUT A BANGER IN ONE OF SOUTH KOREA'S NORAEBANGS

In Japan they have Karaoke, in South Korea they have Noraebang. Translating as 'singing room' that's exactly what it is - a private room where you and your friends can sing as loudly (and as badly) as you like. Usually accompanied by flowing rounds of soju, these nights get pretty loose!



**66. SEE A SHOW AT RUSSIA'S BOLSHOI THEATRE**

The home of the largest and arguably best ballet company in the world, you don't even have to be a ballet fan to enjoy a performance at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre. The historic building itself is resplendent inside and out, creating an electric atmosphere and sense of occasion.





## 67. TREK THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

Most adventurers head straight for Everest Base Camp but there are so many other treks to do in the Himalayas. Different routes take in forests, alpine meadows, glaciers, desert, mountain villages, tea houses, temples, and of course, the highest peaks in the world.





### **68. FEEL THE HEAT AT HAWAII'S VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK**

Hike across Hawaii's lava fields, feeling the heat rise from the cracks as you pass by erupting craters. Go underground to explore flowing lava tubes or venture up the active volcano of Kilauea to witness its mighty rumble.





### 69. STAND BENEATH COLOMBIA'S GIANT PALM TREES

Colombia's Cocora Valley looks straight out of a cartoon. Crazily tall (60m) pin-straight wax palms are flanked by steep mountains with bright blue skies above, and cows munching the fluorescently green grass below.



#### **70. STOP TO SMELL THE... TULIPS IN HOLLAND**

All you have to do is jump on a commuter train during tulip season (end of March to mid May), for a front-row seat to these patchwork quilt-like fields of colour, blooming with millions of Holland's famous national flower. To top off the iconic scenery are windmills dotted across the countryside.





## 71. LAUGH AT EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Scotland's Edinburgh Fringe Festival is the holy grail of comedy gigs. Not only do the shows deliver plenty of ROFLs, but the whole city comes alive with street performances and frivolity for the whole three-week festival.



## **72. FEEL SMALL AT PATAGONIA'S TORRES DEL PAINE**

Feel completely dwarfed by nature in the shadows of Torres del Paine ( 'Towers of Paine'), three massive granite pillars in the heart of Patagonia. This region is so hot right now in hiker circles, but its drawcards - the bright white glaciers and icebergs, neon blue lakes and lagoons, golden grasslands, and horn-shaped peaks are - are all ancient masterpieces of mother nature.





### **73. HORSE RIDE THROUGH MONGOLIA**

No gates, no fences, just open wilderness to explore and warm Mongolian hospitality. You can ride for days through vast shrub and grasslands, rugged mountains and valleys without seeing any evidence of development. Then seek out a nomadic farmer, help herd the livestock, and stay the night in a traditional felt yurt. Back to basics at its best.



#### 74. HIT THE STRIP IN LAS VEGAS

Leave your inhibitions in the desert and follow the light pollution orb to Sin City. Choose your poison at any of the plethora of outrageously themed attractions, or head into an outlandishly OTT casino and try your luck at the tables. You have to do it at least once in your life. Remember, “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas”.





### **75. WATCH THE SUNSET IN SANTORINI**

This famous Greek island looks extraordinary in the brochures. Actually being there is next-level. Find a restaurant with a view, settle in with a plate of moussaka, keep the Vinsanto flowing, and soak in the stunning surroundings.



## 76. DRINK BEER AT GERMANY'S OKTOBERFEST

Parades, concerts, costumes, food, dancing, but it's really all about the beer. And drinking lots of it. Do this is one of the dozens of beer tents, the most famous being Hacker-Pschorr (pictured). Know where to place your bow strings - different sides mean single or married, etc. There's also an option for 'none of your business, don't touch me'. Less miscommunications with the opppsite sex, more drinking and dancing!





## 77. SALSA DANCE IN HAVANA

Let your hair down and dance in the streets of Havana, the birthplace of the Cuban salsa. Here live music and dancing are just part of the everyday.



### **78. EXPLORE THE DEEP JUNGLES OF BORNEO**

Both nature-lovers and adventure-seekers are drawn to Malaysian Borneo where endangered animals and indiegenous tribes still live side by side in the thick ancient rainforest. Best explored with a local guide, a journey through this jungle promises close animal encounters and visits to hidden villages. Picture: Rohan Kelly





### 79. GO THE WAY OF ST JAMES

You don't have to be religious to enjoy this Christian pilgrimage. It's a great way to see the sights of Spain with an abundance of world-heritage sites, charming villages, and spectacular natural wonders along the way. There are different routes you can take, but all paths lead to the magnificent Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela (believed to be built over the tomb of St James).



#### **80. GO ON A WILDLIFE SAFARI IN KRUGER NATIONAL PARK**

If David Attenburpugh has taught us anything it's that the safari plains of South Africa are amazeballs (OK, not his exact words!). A visit to Kruger is like stepping through the television screen into your own up-close nature documentary.





### 81. TAKE A TUK TUK RIDE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Tuk tuks, rickshaws, saamlaws, remorks, bajajis - they're known as many things across South-East Asia and come in just as many different forms. Whatever the variety, they're the best way to see the sights and meet the locals, while getting from A to B.



## **82. PEEP INTO NORTH KOREA FROM THE DMZ**

Get a glimpse into the secretive dictatorship from the safety of the DMZ - a buffer zone between North and South Korea. From platforms on the southern side you can see into the North Korean village of Kaesong. Picture:





### 83. STARGAZE IN SCOTLAND

The skies above Scotland's Galloway Forest are the darkest in the UK, making it the perfect spot for stargazing. Head to the hilltop Dark Sky Observatory for an even closer look at the galaxy above. Picture: VisitScotland



#### **84. WITNESS AFRICA'S GREAT WILDEBEEST MIGRATION**

Get a front row seat to the world's largest migration of animals. Every dry season millions of beasts make the journey from the Serengeti to the green grass of Masai Mara. The best place to watch the action is as they cross the Mara River, dramatically dodging hungry crocodiles.





### **85. TRAVEL THROUGH RUSSIA ON THE TRANS SIBERIAN RAILWAY**

It's the longest railway in the world. The full journey from Moscow to Vladivostok takes 15 days onboard the Trans Siberian Express - the crème de la crème of luxury train travel. Picture: Zarengold



### **86. TAKE A SCENIC FLIGHT OVER EVEREST**

You don't have to climb it, or even tackle the base camp trek, but the world's tallest mountain? - you should definitely see it with your own eyes. Take a scenic plane or helicopter ride through the peaks and valleys of almighty Everest and surrounding Himalayan ranges.





### **87. WADDLE WITH PENGUINS ON SOUTH GEORGIA ISLAND**

This is an unforgettable wildlife spectacle. The Salisbury Plains of South Georgia are home to one of the largest King Penguin rookeries in the world. Here you can stand right at the edge of the colony, looking into the massive gathering of hundreds of thousands of penguins, all shuffling about with their mating partners and babies. Head to high ground to see a sea of black and silver moving like one lifeform.



### 88. RIDE SWITZERLAND'S GLACIER EXPRESS

It's been dubbed the world's slowest express train, connecting the mountain resorts of Zermatt and St. Moritz not quickly, but without stopping. Travelling right through the heart of the Swiss Alps, the Glacier Express' tall panoramic windows offer unobstructed views of glaciers, mountain peaks, alpine lakes, and meadows.





### 89. TAKE A FRENCH COOKING CLASS IN LYON

Lyon is the discerning foodie's go-to destination for French cuisine. Meet a local chef and learn some culinary tips and tricks to make french favourites like coq au vin, soupe à l'oignon, soufflé, and crème brûlée. Most cooking classes include preparing three courses, followed by the really good part - sitting down and tucking in with a paired french wine.



#### **90. WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE ANZACS AT GALLIPOLI**

Standing at Gallipoli's ANZAC Cove, it's hard to imagine so many deaths took place at such a beautiful spot. It's a sobering experience, but being at the site of the ANZAC's legendary WW1 landing makes the stories from our history books so much more tangible. Luckily the Turkish people have kept this place, the memorial, and the graves of soldiers, so well-preserved for us.





### **91. HAVE A WATER FIGHT WITH AN ELEPHANT IN THAILAND**

The Buddhist Songkran Festival traditionally used water to mark the beginning of the Thai New Year, but now it's really just a free-for-all. Crowds (of both locals and tourists) roam the streets throwing buckets of water and using water pistols to spray anyone in the vicinity. Elephants also play a major role, their trunks being ultimate water fight weapons. Prepare to get very wet.



## 92. CONQUER THE SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE CLIMB

Why just admire Sydney's world-famous Harbour Bridge from afar when you can climb it! Reaching the top not only delivers coveted bragging rights, but unbeatable views across Sydney's other icons - the harbour and Opera House.





### **93. WATCH THE CHRISTMAS ISLAND CRAB MIGRATION**

Look closely. All that red? Yep, it's crabs! Once a year Christmas Island's resident crustaceans cross the island to the ocean to mate and spawn. The result is a sea of red not only moving through the island's forest floors, but through towns, and over major roads. It's a sight you really need to see to believe.



#### 94. CYCLE AROUND AMSTERDAM

Bicycles are ingrained in the culture of Amsterdam and the city's flat roads, ample cycle lanes, and plethora of bike hire shops make cycling the easiest way to get around. Explore the Netherland capital's old-world charm as you pedal through the labyrinthine of canals, bridges, and gorgeous old buildings.





#### **95. GET INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT AT A EUROPEAN CHRISTMAS MARKET**

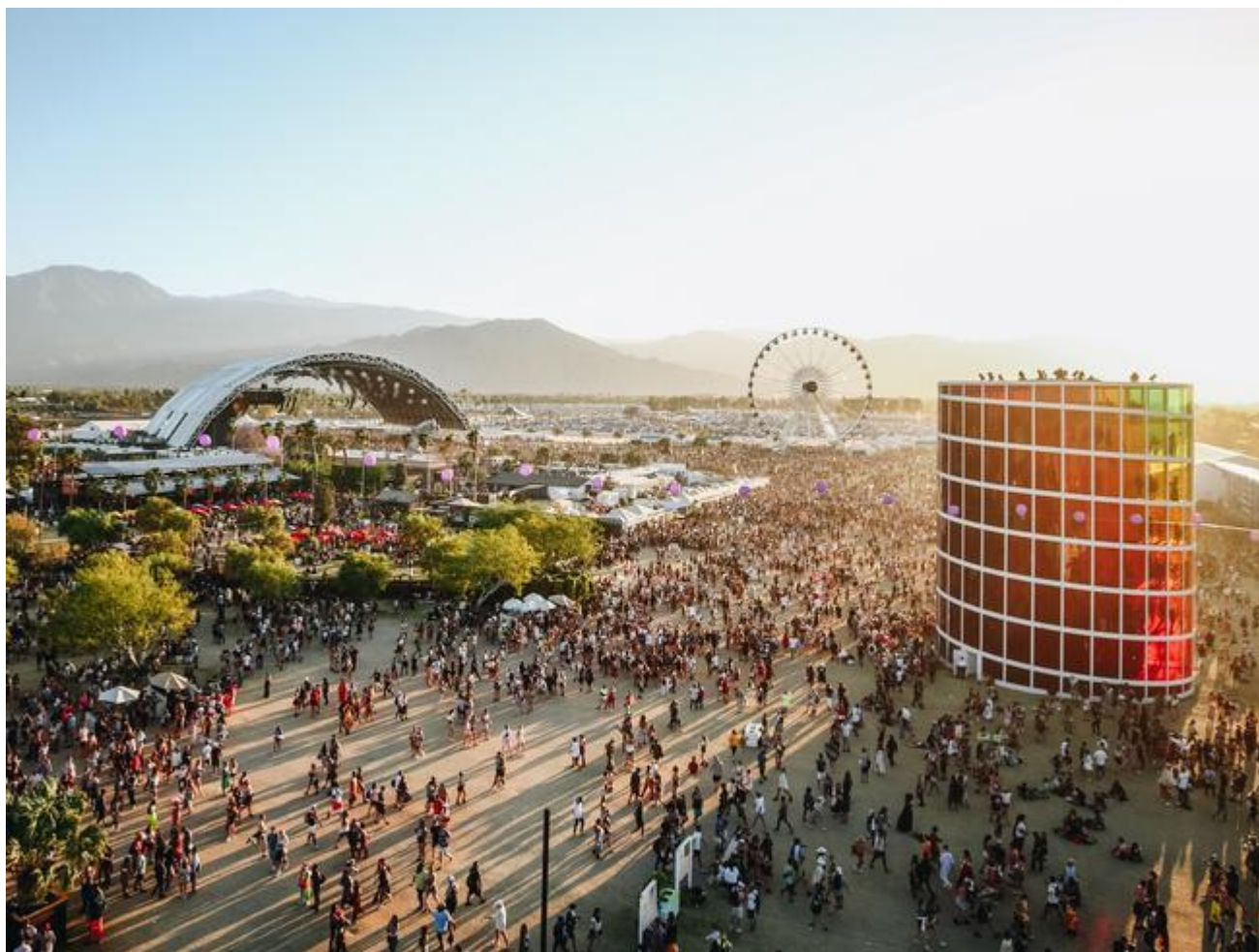
Europe's Christmas markets are next-level and you'll find some of the most extravagant in Vienna. Follow the sweet smell of Glühwein to one of these giant gatherings of Christmas cheer where wooden chalets cluster together selling decorations, handicrafts, gifts, and tasty treats.



## 96. CRUISE ALONG THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD

Take it slow and take a few days to cruise along Victoria's spectacular Great Ocean Road. Winding along the wild and woolly windswept coastline, the drive takes in views of epic cliffs, turbulent ocean, cute little seaside villages, rugged nature, and the star attraction - the famous 12 Apostles.





### 97. REVEL AT COACHELLA

Dance, sleep, repeat. This massive music and arts festival takes over California's Coachella Valley every year, transforming the desert into a melting pot of revellers from all walks of life, coming together with one thing in common, the intention to party. Hard.



#### **98. SIP ON A SINGAPORE SLING AT RAFFLES SINGAPORE**

No visit to Singapore is complete without a visit to the grand 19th century hotel, Raffles. And no visit to Raffles is complete without having a Singapore Sling. The hotel has been serving up its iconic signature drink since one of its bartenders invented it back in 1913.





### 99. BUNGY JUMP IN QUEENSTOWN

New Zealand's Queenstown is an adrenaline junkie's paradise, known for its outdoor adventure sports and nail-biting thrills. The most hand palm sweat-inducing experience of them all has to be bungee jumping. In Queenstown you can jump from a platform overlooking the city and lake, or another popular (and picturesque) option is leaping from Kawarau Gorge Suspension Bridge (pictured) over the bright blue water below.



## 100. FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS, BUY YOUR TICKET, AND JUST GO!

We asked our readers what No.100 should be. The winning suggestion came from Ray Sunshine, who wrote: “I have had some fabulous travel experiences, those unexpected moments of sheer joy & wonder at this glorious world of ours. To me, the most memorable was my first day of my first overseas trip when I was 45. Having planned & saved for 4 years the overwhelming emotion as I walked the streets of Berlin, seeing the word “Strabe” & hearing the German conversations around me will stay with me forever. Therefore, to me, Number 100 can only be to follow your dream, buy your ticket & just GO!”



# The 9 world's most unusual travel experiences

As travel experiences go, Native Eye offer some of the most unusual on the planet. Go eagle hunting with tribal Kazakhs in Mongolia, visit a state which doesn't officially exist, celebrate Africa's most spectacular dating festival, hunt for mammoth bones in Siberia, visit the City of the Dead, witness a Bwiti initiation ceremony.

You thought your bucket list was complete? It is now...





## 1. Go hunting with eagles in western Mongolia

Deep in the Altai mountains, spend three days with the Kazakh eagle hunters, going out hunting with them each day and staying with them and their families at night. The hunters use female eagles for hunting as they are larger and more aggressive than the males, and are trained to catch fox, wolves, rabbits and wild cats. It's an unforgettable experience, and one which few tourists have ever taken part in.



Experience the thrill of eagle hunting in Mongolia on our small group tours

## 2. Visit the ‘capital’ of Transdniestr – a state which doesn’t officially exist

The breakaway republic of Transdniestr is one of Europe’s oddest entities and something of a throwback to the days of the Soviets. Transdniestr, or Transnistria, is a tiny breakaway state within Moldova between the River Dniestr and the Ukrainian border. Its unrecognised by other nations but to all effects and purposes functions as a completely separate country. It has its own government and army. Explore the ‘capital’ Tiraspol with its stark monuments and also visit the town of Tighina, once an important trading centre and with an impressive 16th century fortress to explore.





### 3. Experience a Bwiti ceremony in southern Cameroon

For hundreds of years, the Fang people have participated in healing and initiation ceremonies which includes ingesting the psychoactive root bark of the iboga plant, to promote radical spiritual growth, stabilise the community and family structure and meet religious requirements. Held in the high temple, and led by the spiritual leader, the N'ganga, you'll be witness to a dramatic performance involving the whole community, with intensely loud drumming, dancing with fire, chanting and an electric atmosphere which goes on all night, sometimes longer.



Witness a Bwiti ritual, Cameroon

#### 4. Enjoy a wine festival with descendants of Alexander the Great

Tucked away in three valleys of the Hindu Kush is a tribal population who unlike the rest of the countries they are surrounded by are pagan, not Muslim. According to legend the Kalash are descended from four of Alexander the Great's generals, to whom Alexander gave the Chitral Valley as a reward. Whatever the truth, they look very different from most other Pakistanis, with fairer skin, blue-green eyes and distinctly Eurasian features. Join them as they celebrate Uchao, a festival to celebrate and give thanks for a successful harvest, drinking wine brewed from mulberries and some delicious cheese. It's one of the most colourful celebrations in Pakistan.



Join in the Uchao celebrations in Pakistan's Chitral Valley



## 5. Visit the ‘City of the Dead’, North Ossetia

Often referred to as the ‘City of the Dead’, the village of Dargavs is considered to be one of the most mysterious sites in Russia. Hidden away in the Caucasus mountains, the “city” is actually an ancient necropolis full of tombs or crypts. From a distance, it looks like the remains of a medieval village, with almost 100 ‘dwellings’ grouped together on a grassy hill. Go closer, and you realise there’s no-one – living, that is – here. For hundreds of years, residents of nearby villages have been burying their dead in this necropolis, with each crypt holding skulls and bones. There’s many myths and legends surrounding the site, and until recently, local people refused to go there in case they didn’t come back alive. A burial site for medieval plague victims is perhaps the most likely explanation, though.



Visit the mysterious, ancient necropolis of Dargavs

## 6. Spend the night at the 'Door to Hell', Turkmenistan

The 60 metre crater of Darwaza, Turkmenistan, is one of the most unusual sites in Central Asia, a vast opening in the earth where natural gas has been set alight and has been burning for more than forty years. This was originally a site where Soviet geologists drilled for gas – not knowing what to do when the drilling rig collapsed, they set it alight for fear that poisonous gas would seep into the atmosphere and contaminate a nearby settlement, expecting that it would burn itself out in a matter of days. Forty years on, it's still burning, with flames up to 15 metres high. Its otherworldly appearance have led local people to name it the 'Door to Hell', camp overnight here (guess what's the campfire?) for an experience you'll never forget.



Camp overnight at Turkmenistan's 'Door to Hell'



## 7. Witness Africa's most colourful 'dating' festival, Chad

Although Native Eye specialise in tribal adventures, if we had to pick a favourite, this would be it. Each year the semi-nomadic Mbororo people gather for a week of incredible celebrations known as the Gerewol, a colourful festival that is one of Africa's most spectacular. Few westerners are privileged to see this, but you'll travel to a remote part of the Sahel to stay with these intensely traditional people, joining them as they congregate for feasting, racing, dancing and finding lovers. Chad's Gerewol is renowned for the way in which young Mbororo men decorate themselves, donning make up and jewellery and 'displaying' to young women in search of a partner.



Witness one of the world's most unusual travel experiences, the annual Gerewol festival

## 8. See the flaming mountains of Azerbaijan

There's mountains, and then there's flaming mountains (we know which we'd rather visit). Jutting out into the Caspian Sea, the Absheron Peninsula is home to some of the country's finest sights, all within a day trip from the capital, Baku. One of the most unusual is the 'flaming mountain' of Yanardag, another of Azerbaijan's bizarre geological features where natural gas seeps from the rock, accidentally ignited in the 1950s and burning to this day. At Ateshgah, the 'temple of the fire-worshippers' surrounds an eternal flame, another reminder of why this country is often called the 'Land of Fire'.





## 9. Visit the hottest place on earth, Djibouti

It's smelly (sulphur fumes), colourful (minerals, chemicals and potash making for a spectacular display) and, with an average annual temperature of 34°C, renowned to be the hottest inhabited place on earth. The hot springs at Dallol are a must – see, if you can stand it. During a visit, look out for the long 'caravane de sel', camel trains loaded with salt.

**How:** Djibouti and the Danakil Depression and Djibouti, the Danakil Depression & Somaliland



See the springs at Dallol, the hottest inhabited place on earth

## Unusual travel experiences – next step

Get in touch with our knowledgeable team by phone or email if you feel inspired by these unusual travel experiences. Native Eye offers some of the most exciting and groundbreaking holidays and group tours on this planet. We'd love you to join us.

# 100

# Travel Experiences

If you needed any more proof that the world is filled with wonder and drama and colour and inspiration, look no further than this countdown.

Created by our hand-picked panel of travel experts, your bucket list absolutely starts here!



## 1. Go on an epic African safari

There's something utterly magical about Africa and there's no experience quite like coming face-to-face with its Big Five.

These five most dangerous animals to track on foot (that's where the Big Five name comes from) are the most majestic animals to observe in the wild.

Whether it's watching a pride of lions doze in the shade, seeing elephants strip branches bare of leaves, following a sleek leopard as it stalks its prey, spotting a family of rhinos camouflaged in thick bush, or sitting amongst a herd of hundreds of buffalo, an African safari will leave you in awe. Add to that zebra, giraffe, hippo, hyenas, impala, wildebeest and more, and you're in a wildlife wonderland.

The best three parks for the Big Five are Kruger National Park (South Africa), Serengeti National Park (Tanzania) and Maasai Mara National Reserve (Kenya).

The latter two are also where the annual Great Migration takes place – a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle when millions of wildebeest, zebra and gazelle stampede across the plains each year (from July to October).

On slow days, you may spend hours following tracks that zigzag in and out of the bush, but the exhilaration of finally getting up close to some of the world's most powerful and uniquely beautiful animals makes every moment worth it.

Besides, just driving about in a safari truck with the sun rising or setting on the vast African sky, with desolate plains stretching as far as you can see, is as magical an experience as encountering the wildlife itself.



Go for a ride-along through Africa on a safari trip.

## 2. Hike in Torres del Paine National Park, Patagonia

No stranger to lists: Torres del Paine was voted the fifth most beautiful place in the world by National Geographic. No argument from us there.

The park, located in Chilean Patagonia, is a dramatic landscape of jutting granite spires and behemoth sharp-edged mountain ranges rising out of green plains.

Over 140,000 people visit each year, hiking on the trails that snake through the park.

You can choose to take a day trip into the park or it will take you roughly nine days to trek the entire circle of mountains and towering peaks while staying on-site.

Refugios are offering basic accommodation throughout or you can pitch a tent and camp out (there is also a luxury hotel located near the gates if you are that way inclined).



Take a hike through Torres del Paine National Park.



### 3. Trek to see the mountain gorillas of Africa

With mountain gorilla numbers in decline due to dwindling habitat, civil unrest and poaching, seeing these hulking, majestic primates in their natural surroundings does represent a once-in-a-lifetime experience, one that future generations might tragically never have a chance to witness.

Guided treks are the only option for viewing the mountain gorillas in their lush habitat, with tours conducted out of Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which offer one precious hour at a time watching silverbacks, females and mischievous juveniles as they go about their normal routine.



Take a trek to see the mountain gorillas of Africa.

## 4. Explore the Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

This archipelago of volcanic islands on either side of the equator in the Pacific Ocean formed an Ecuadorian province, a national park and a biological marine reserve.

The Galápagos' staggering number of endemic species fascinated Charles Darwin during his Beagle voyage and led to his history-altering theories of evolution and natural selection.

Travelling between the islands will present a dizzying array of animals, birds and reptiles, from lava lizard to marine iguana to boobies to sea lions to whales – and countless more.

The most helpful hint we can give you? Make sure you have plenty of space on your memory card!



Travel through the Galapagos Islands.



## 5. See the Amazon Rainforest

The figures are staggering when it comes to the Amazon rainforest: covering most of the Amazonian basin, or a staggering 5,500,000 square kilometres of South America, and can be found in Brazil (it has the biggest chunk), Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana.

There are reportedly 2.5 million insect species spread throughout its thick, humid reaches and thousands of birds and mammals.

There are also some pretty famous reptiles and fish: giant anaconda prowl here and piranha are thick in the water in some places.

A lot less vicious are the plants, of which there are a lot: a study found that a typical 25 hectares stretch of rainforest in Ecuador supports over 1100 different species of trees alone.



The beloved Amazon Rainforest is filled with over 1000 tree species.

## 6. Follow the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, Peru

Today's Inca Trail is not technically the Inca Trail: it's actually the spectacular last leg of the Incan Road as it enters the crowning glory of Machu Picchu, the Inca city spread across a mountain clearing at the top of the world.

Although famed as the Lost City of the Incas, it wasn't actually lost.

After being built in the 15th century in the classic Incan style, the site was abandoned a century later at the height of the Spanish Conquest, and while it was well-known among locals, outsiders didn't become aware of it until it was brought to world attention in 1911 by American Hiram Bingham.

By 1976, 30 per cent of the UNESCO World Heritage Site had been restored, with work continuing to this day.

There are two ways to take in the Inca Trail and Machu Picchu: by trekking the 43 kilometres over four days or via train, which leaves four times a day from Cusco and 13 times daily from Ollantaytambo.



Join this hike and see the beauty of history.



## 7. View the Taj Mahal at sunrise, India

The story of the Taj Mahal is a legend: a giant mausoleum, it was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favourite wife Mumtāz Mahal.

The mammoth building of white marble (there were also precious stones attached throughout but most have disappeared) took 17 years to complete and is one of the most visited sites in India, so arriving at sunrise is perfect in two respects: it is at this time that the burgeoning sunlight gives the building an ethereal glow that is picture postcard perfect and the enormous crowds that flock to the monument on a daily basis haven't yet arrived, allowing time to see it in relative peace and tranquillity.



Nothing in this world compares to watching the sunset and rise at the Taj Mahal.

## 8. Walk the Great Wall of China

One of the most instantly recognisable sites on Earth (and before you ask, no it's not visible from space), parts of the Great Wall of China were started in the 3rd century BC, although the majority of the wall as we now know it dates from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the wall is 8850 kilometres long (6259 kilometres of actual wall, 359 kilometres of trenches and 2232 kilometres of natural defensive barriers) and is made up of stone, brick and tamped earth.

You aren't going to walk the whole thing, so it's good to know the hotspots to visit: Juyongguan is closest to Beijing; Badaling is close but crowded; Mutianyu is further away and less crowded, so probably the pick of the bunch.

Spend at least three hours on the wall to get a feel for its sheer size and scope, and avoid summer when it is stiflingly hot and weekends and public holidays when it's crowded.



It's impossible to walk the entire Great Wall in one day.



## 9. See the beauty of Petra, Jordan

Petra is impressive on so many levels: impressively old (it is mentioned in the Book of Exodus), impressively large, impressively beautiful.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site is a vast city carved into the sheer pink rock face by the Nabataeans, who settled in the area more than 2000 years ago.

A national treasure of Jordan, the city is a collection of gargantuan royal tombs (the more modest houses that the population lived in have long since been destroyed, largely by earthquakes).

The fact that there are no motorised vehicles allowed in the ancient city leaves you with the choice of walking or hiring a horse-drawn carriage to take you through the one-kilometre trip to the site; and once inside you can explore on foot, by a donkey or, rather more evocatively, on camelback.

Four to five days is suggested by tour operators as the amount of time needed to see everything there is to see at a leisurely pace, although it can be done in much less time.



Delve deep into Petra's incredible history.

## 10. Spend a week in New York, USA

No surprises here; a show of hands would have New York coming out on top as one of the best cities in the world (if not the best). The city, with its five boroughs – Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, The Bronx and Staten Island – is a veritable cornucopia of things to see and do; so many things that the nominations were very specific.

### **Attend a Broadway show**

You can't leave New York without attending a Broadway show. There are hundreds of theatres throughout the city, but the very best is Belasco Theatre, Walter Kerr Theatre and Eugene O'Neil Theatre (home to Tony Award winners at The Book of Mormon).

### **Shop 'til you drop!**

If you are looking for luxury head to Fifth Avenue; for something a bit more hip try SoHo, Chelsea and Greenwich Village; for fresh produce, the Union Square Greenmarket (Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 8 AM to 6 PM); and everything vintage can be bought at Brooklyn Flea every weekend.

### **Check in to the Plaza**

Do as Eloise does in New York's most famous hotel, The Plaza (sitting on the corner of 5th and West 59th Streets)

New York offers myriad experiences, which combine to make one ultimate experience.



Jam pack a whole lot of culture into one week in the concrete jungle.



## 11. Admire the natural beauty of Iceland

Iceland has made it on to many a must-visit list this year on the strength of its incredible scenery – volcanoes, lava fields, geysers, thermal pools – its chocolate-box-pretty cities, like the capital of Reykjavík, and its people, who have been described by many as some of the friendliest anywhere.

There's certainly plenty to do: whale watching at Reykjavík (March to October); ogle at the active Strokkur geyser, which shoots water up to 40 metres into the air; soothe your muscles at Grindavík's Blue Lagoon, complete with spa treatments and a swim-up bar; and indulge in 'New Nordic' cuisine proliferating Reykjavík's restaurant scene.

Hint: take a phrasebook with you so you can point at mind-boggling names like Asmundarsafn and Hallgrímskirkja.



Iceland is home to some of the most beautiful natural attractions in the world.

## 12. See the Northern Lights in the Arctic Circle

The mystical Northern Lights, or aurora borealis, is a breathtaking natural wonder caused, in layman's terms, when electrically charged particles from the sun (solar winds) collide with magnetic particles in the Earth's atmosphere, producing sheets of coloured light that flit and dance across the night sky.

Most vivid during the winter months, they can be seen from Norway, Iceland, Greenland, Sweden, Finland, over northern Canada and Alaska, and above the Orkney Isles, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides in Scotland.

The intensity of the lights is cyclical, based on 11-year solar cycles.



Witnessing the aurora borealis is breathtaking.



## 13. Spend an awe-inspiring week in Paris, France

Does this need any explanation? The culture, the food, the architecture, the history, the wine, the joie de vivre! It's all there. But while many of the nominations for Paris took an 'any time, just because' approach to this most romantic of cities, it seems we want to consume it like a local.

Not necessarily staying in the insane five-star hotels that proliferate in the city (The Ritz, Hôtel Plaza Athénée, George V, Hôtel Le Bristol and The Peninsula, to name a few) but finding an apartment in a suitably evocative neighbourhood and forging out from there in search of coffee and culture.

Search in Le Marais, Montparnasse or the family-friendly Batignolles.

Vive la France!



Say oui to the wonderful city of Paris.

## 14. Explore The Andes in South America

Running like a spine for 7000 kilometres through seven South American countries: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina, the jagged beauty of the Andes' peaks is punctuated by plateaus where some of the highest elevated cities on Earth bustle and thrive; places like Medellín, Bogotá and La Paz.

Explore the cities to find out how life ticks at such a heady atmosphere (you might want to research altitude sickness before setting out) or forge out on all manner of adventures, from trekking to camping to mountain biking (downhill, we hope).



The Andes heads through 7,000 kilometres of 7 South American countries.



## 15. Wander the Hermitage Museum, Russia

St Petersburg's legendary State Hermitage Museum presents something of a quandary – do you view the three million (no, that's not a typo) artworks spanning the Paleolithic to the present day, or the grand architecture housing the art – the splendid confection of the Winter Palace with swathes of gold on walls, columns and ceilings?

According to those in the know, if you spent a minute looking at each exhibit, you would need 11 years to see them all.

So while wandering will certainly allow you to see a lot of art, if you are looking for something specific you might want to opt for a guided tour instead!



Explore the wonders of the Hermitage Museum in Russia.

## 16. Cruise the Antarctic

Antarctica is a once in a lifetime experience, but it is one that rewards visitors with a true end of the Earth experience.

The cruising season generally takes place during the southern hemisphere summer months from November to January, with vessels setting off from Ushuaia in South America and wending their way in a loop that takes in the remote Falkland Islands, South Georgia and then the Antarctic Peninsula.

Those who have made the journey are rapturous about the frigid scenery and, of course, the wildlife including seals, whales, birds and lots and lots of penguins.



Spend your vacation with the penguins down in Antarctica.



## 17. Discover the temples of Angkor in Siem Reap, Cambodia

Quite simply, this UNESCO World Heritage-listed monument has to be seen to be believed. Angkor Wat, dating from the 12th century, is the crown jewel of Asia's grand temples, and the proud symbol of Cambodia.

Located five kilometres from Siem Reap's centre, this intricate, sprawling complex of ancient buildings is considered the high point of Khmer architecture and while it was originally dedicated to the Hindu deity of Vishnu, it is today a Buddhist shrine.

Every morning at dawn, thousands flock to see the magnificent light show played out against the temple's stone walls as night turns into day. But locals insist the best time is actually at sunset, when not only are the crowds smaller but the change of lighting is far more dramatic.



Trek through the Temples of Angkor.

## 18. Visit the remote kingdom of Bhutan

Sitting at the top of the world in the Himalayas, Bhutan (Druk Yul in the local vernacular) for many years held the distinction of being the happiest place on Earth (apart from Disneyland, of course) with a population that was coddled and protected by an absolute monarchy.

Its isolation and resolutely inward vision allowed the pace of life to go on here as it had for centuries, in a languid cycle of life and prayer.

The most compelling reason for visiting here, apart from actually landing at the mountain-top airport, is seeing the stunning Buddhist temples that proliferate in this deeply religious land.

Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) monastery is the most iconic, sitting precariously on a sheer mountain face; faith and craftsmanship are the only things keeping it in place.

The trek to its heights is challenging but worth the effort, taking you that much closer to heaven in an already divine destination.



Deep within the Himalayas lies the happiest place on Earth, Bhutan.



## 19. Revel in the majesty of Alhambra in Granada, Spain

Granada is one of the most evocative cities in Spain's Andalusia region, and the Alhambra Palace – a glorious execution of the Moorish architecture that makes this region so removed from the rest of the country – is the most striking destination in the city.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the sun-drenched 9th-century palace complex (it was restored in the 11th and 19th centuries), with its geometric patterns and elegant arabesques, sits atop a mountain planted with wildflowers and punctuated by manicured walled gardens of shallow ponds and trickling fountains.



Alhambra Palace is the most striking destination in Granada.

## 20. Get drenched in colour at Holi festival, India

India's crazy, colour-saturated Holi festival takes place every around March (but the dates may vary) and celebrates creation and renewal.

It's a celebration that has garnered a lot of interest due to the bright colours and amazing imagery that is produced each year, but beyond the colour and the celebration, is a rich meaning and cultural emphasis that travellers should know about.

### **What is Holi Festival all about?**

Holi Festival is a celebration of the victory of good over evil. This is brought about by the burning and destruction of the demoness named Holika. It is performed in a bid of devotion to the Hindu god of preservation, Lord Vishnu. The festival marks the end of winter and the beginning of the upcoming spring harvesting season.

### **What happens at Holi Festival?**

On Holi eve, bonfires are set and the festivities stretch into the small hours; the next day erupts into an orgy of colour as brightly hued powder and dye is launched indiscriminately at friends, family and strangers alike.

### **Where is it celebrated?**

Holi Festival takes place nationally, all over India. So the advice is to choose the city you want to be in and don't wear your Sunday best. Traditional Holi celebrations are the biggest at Mathura and Vrindavan, four hours from Delhi. The week-long celebrations at Banke Bihari temple in Vrindavan are also legendary and culminate with the throwing of colours in the morning on the day before Holi (the next one being March 20, 2019).



Don't wear your favourite clothes to Holi.



## 21. Journey to the pyramids in Giza, Egypt

A journey to Egypt to gaze upon the famous pyramids has undoubtedly made it onto every history buff's bucket list.

From the mesmerising tales taught in history lessons to the logistical mystery of their construction, the pyramids and their ancient culture still have a magical hold on curious explorers.

Egypt's top attraction, the three pyramids of Giza (the Great Pyramid of Khufu, the Pyramid of Kafhre and the Pyramid of Menkaura) can be reached by taxi or tour bus from Cairo, and for those who are brave enough (and not afraid of superstition); you can venture inside the tombs of the great kings of the past.



Travel by camel to visit the Pyramids of Giza.

## 22. Spot polar bears

There are very few destinations on Earth to witness these giants (some weigh up to 540 kilograms and reach three metres tall when standing on their hind legs) lollop about in the frigid wilderness. Greenland, the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, Alaska and Canada, wherein the town of Churchill every October and November, the usually solitary creatures gather in impressive numbers to wait for Hudson Bay to freeze over, providing them access to seal hunting.



These furry friends can stand to almost 3 metres tall when on their hind legs.



## 23. Walk the sand dunes of Namibia

The desolate and surreal sandscape of Sossusvlei in Namibia's Namib-Naukluft National Park has been the setting of a raft of futuristic films, its oxide red dunes rising and surrounding flat clay pans – the perfect balance of beauty and otherworldliness.

Four-wheel-drive tours are the best way to see the collection of dunes and marsh (vlei) – Elim, Dune 45 and Big Daddy; Sossusvlei, Deadvlei, Hidden Vlei – or you can stay at any number of luxury resorts located in Sesriem and the neighbouring town of Solitaire.



4WD tours are the best ways to see the dunes.

## 24. Be seduced by Sicily's beautiful landscape

Those who have visited will know why Sicily is on this list: blossoming fruit trees; gorgeous olive groves; ancient sites like the glorious Ortigia in Syracuse; the hulking form of Mt. Etna inevitably puffing smoke; lacy wrought-iron balconies clinging to classic architecture; church-dominated town squares; delicious food, all rustic and unfussy; staggering history (the Greeks, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Moors, Normans, Catalans and Spanish have left their mark over time) and defiantly proud people (they'll tell you they're Sicilians first, Italians second), desperate to show off their beautiful island to all comers.



Explore the island of Sicily and all it has to offer.



## 25. Be surprised by Iran

Politics have played a large part in Iran's tourism isolation since the 1980s, but the majesty of the landscape and its people has not been diminished by decades of bad press.

Slowly the country is opening up again to the prospect of tourism and those who travel there come away telling stories of engaging locals and glorious sites.

Travelling through the country by road can be attempted in a private car but possibly the best way to see it is on a small tour, one that loops around from Tehran and takes in places like Isfahan with its incredible Islamic architecture of azure-tiled mosques and minarets, Yazd (it was good enough for Marco Polo), Shiraz (the city of poets, literature, wine and flowers) and the ancient ruins of Persepolis.



Iran is home to incredible sites.

## 26. Gaze in awe at Sagrada Familia Barcelona, Spain

If any person has stamped their personality and creative vision so completely on a city, it is Antoni Gaudí on Barcelona.

The Catalan city is liberally dotted with the architect's distinctive fantastical version of Art Nouveau, from the Park Güell to the Casa Batlló museum.

But his design tour de force is the Sagrada Família, which he began work on in 1883 (construction itself began in 1882 under another architect) and which is still a giant work in progress today since no taxpayer money has been used to fund it.

As an expiatory church, it is paid for by donations and the admission price paid by the millions of tourists who visit.

Optimists have construction finishing sometime in the first third of the 21st century, but it might be too early to hold your breath on that just yet.



The expiatory church is still a work in progress even today, relying on donations and admission prices.



## 27. Watch a final on Centre Court at Wimbledon

The championships at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, otherwise known as Wimbledon, take place each year in June and July.

One of the four Grand Slam tournaments (along with the Australian Open, French Open, and US Open) winning at Wimbledon still represents the pinnacle of tennis sporting prowess.

Demand for tickets to any of the games in the tournament is huge so if you are looking to secure some you will either need to go into a public ballot (introduced back in 1924) and keep your fingers crossed that the computer picks you at random, or book through a reputable sports tour company.

But be warned, getting guaranteed Centre Court tickets to the finals will cost you big time – in some cases upwards of \$6000!



Enter into the public ballot for your chance to win tickets to any Wimbledon Grand Slam.

## 28. Explore Basque Country in Spain

### Where?

Located in Spain's north, bordering The Bay of Biscay to the north and France to the east, its major cities include San Sebastian and the capital of Bilbao.

### What?

Basque Country is an autonomous community, fiercely proud of its heritage and cultural independence from the rest of Spain, with its language and its unique cuisine – El Bulli's Ferran Adria once commented that San Sebastian had the best food in the world.

### Why?

One of the main reasons to visit Basque Country is, in fact, the food, with the region famous for its version of tapas called pintxos (pinchos), small finger foods that are put on display for ease of pick and mix choice; you can even learn the art of making pintxos in workshops held in San Sebastian. Wine is also made and loved here: Rioja Alavesa wines are famous around the world and its wine route is a great way to spend an afternoon.



Explore the cities of San Sebastian and Bilbao within The Bay of Biscay.



## 29. Take the Orient Express from Paris to Istanbul

There is something wildly romantic about travelling by train, especially one as storied and luxurious as The Orient Express (officially known as the Venice Simplon Orient-Express).

While there are various routes available within Europe and to the English capital of London, the journey nominated for this year's 100 list is Paris to Istanbul.

Boarding at Paris's Gare de l' Est, the six-night, five-day journey takes in Budapest (where you spend one night) and Bucharest (another night off the train) as well as short stops in the Romanian town of Sinaia and the Bulgarian countryside before arriving into the magical Turkish city of Istanbul.



Just don't read the book before you hop on the train.

## 30. Cruise the Arctic Circle

While the Arctic Circle refers to an invisible ring that halos the top of the Earth, it also encompasses the countries that can be found in the northern reaches of the globe: Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Scandinavia, Siberia and the Russian Far East, as well as thousands of small islands in the Arctic Ocean.

Cruising the area allows you to witness summer's endless midnight sun and the perpetual darkness of Polar Nights, as well as wildlife of all shapes and sizes – polar bears, walruses, seals, Arctic foxes and myriad seabirds.

It is also another way to hunt down the Northern Lights.



The Arctic Circle is an invisible ring that halos the top of the Earth.



## 31. Adventure to the Altiplano, Bolivia

Another wonder of the Andes, the Altiplano (Spanish for ‘High Plain’), is located in the mountain ranges most rugged reaches.

It is the most extensive area of high plain outside of Tibet and takes in Cuzco and the Bolivian capital of La Paz, as well as Lake Titicaca on the border with Peru, the Salar de Uyuni salt plain, and various rumbling, gurgling volcanoes.



Wander through the Andes to Altiplano in Bolivia.

## 32. Wander the streets of Seville, Spain

The Spanish region of Andalucía is a riot of stunning towns and cities (two made it onto this list).

But the capital of Seville is a pinnacle: a city of soaring historic buildings reflective of its imperial past (it was the capital of the Moorish kings and subsequently became the seat of the Castilian rulers); of ornate bridges across the wide Guadalquivir river; of bijoux brightly tiled squares shaded by orange trees heavy with fruit; and a style of living that takes delight in a slower pace (siesta is still God in these parts) and savouring the good things in life like food, drink, family and friends.

A wandering pace is ideal when setting out to explore, allowing the beauty of the Alcázar Palace, the lofty cathedral, La Giralda watchtower and, political correctness be damned, the Plaza de Toros de la Real Maestranza de Caballería de Sevilla, the oldest bullfighting ring in the world.



Stroll through the streets of Seville before your siesta.



### 33. Join the Carnival in Rio, Brazil

Considered the biggest street party in the world (it's estimated that two million people per day take to the streets of the Brazilian capital during the festivities), the Rio Carnival takes place each year before Lent, during which time the city erupts into four days of colour and dancing and music and revelry.

Parties and celebrations are held on the streets, in neighborhood squares, in bars and restaurant, all culminating in the iconic Carnival Parade, traditionally known as the Samba Parade, with its enormous, over-the-top floats and riot of feathers, sequins and skin.

And with hundreds of thousands of visitors flooding into the city to take part in all the fun, those in the know advise booking accommodation well in advance to make sure you have somewhere to lay your head when you have danced yourself to a standstill.



The biggest street party in the world.

## 34. Stay in a Tuscan villa in Italy

A common thread in the nominations this year is our desire to go beyond the hotels of the tourist enclaves and get to the heart of a destination by sampling the routine of day-to-day life.

And the place most of us want to do this? Tuscany.

From its undulating vistas of verdant fields and pin-sharp fir trees to the rustic beauty of the villas that dot the landscape, everything speaks of hazy, hot days under the Tuscan sun and languid nights of alfresco dining and cold Prosecco.



You will be under the Tuscan sun (literally).



## 35. Walk the El Camino de Santiago in Spain

There are two main reasons that most people set forth on the walk along the Camino – it is either a pilgrimage for the true believer or a challenge that gets caught in the imagination.

You can choose to test your faith or your feet by starting in the French Pyrenees and walking to the Atlantic Ocean but most people choose to complete just a section; walking through rugged Spanish scenery by day and finding repose in any number of quaint towns at night.

An endless chain of yellow arrows point walkers in the right direction and there is a camaraderie bred from a shared experience that is heartening in this day and age, with walkers bidding each other ‘Bon Camino’ whenever they pass.



An endless chain of yellow arrows points walkers in the right direction.

## 36. Drive round New Zealand's South Island

New Zealand's South Island ticks all the boxes: jaw-dropping scenery, adventure pursuits to leave you hoarse from screaming, luxury lodges and lungs-full of fresh air.

Start your drive in Christchurch to see the urban renewal after the 2011 earthquake; head down to Central Otago and cycle the vineyards; across to Queenstown for an adrenalin fix; then a spot of world-class skiing at Mount Cook to finish you off.



Head from Christchurch to Mount Cook in a hire car.



## 37. Island-hop in Greece

An essential part of the Greek experience, island hopping around some of the most beautiful islands on earth, is all about sun, surf and unforgettable sunsets.

Whether you are after the glamour of Mykonos, the multicoloured cliffs of Santorini or the cobbled streets and ancient history of Rhodes, deciding where to go next is half the fun.

A true blend of culture and bliss, you will never hear anyone complain about the awful time they had in the Mediterranean, and that we can guarantee.



Pop on a boat and hop from island to island in Greece.

## 38. See the Mayan Ruins of Chichen Itza in Mexico

Located in Mexico's Yucatan state, the ancient Mayan city of Chichen Itza is one of the most visited archaeological sites in Mexico, as well as being handy day-tour distance from the beaches and cocktails of popular Mayan Riviera cities like Cancun and Playa del Carmen, making it a compelling add-on to a sun-and-sea getaway.

Believed to be one of the civilisation's great cities, it is dominated by impressive step pyramid temples such as El Castillo (the Temple of Kukulcan), the Temple of the Warriors and The Osario, as well as palaces, rows of columns and even ball courts.



Step into the Temple of the Warriors and bathe in the intense history.



## 39. Board the Trans-Siberian Railway

### Where?

Moscow to Vladivostok, Russia.

### What?

The longest railway line in the world (9289 kilometres of track) travels through the wilds of Siberia taking six nights to travel from Moscow to Vladivostok, and also branching off along the way into the Trans-Mongolian and Trans-Manchurian railways from where you can travel to Beijing, China, and then by connecting train to Vietnam and even Singapore if you are patient.

Or if you have some time on your hands, you can go on by ferry to Japan and Korea.

### Why?

No matter where you eventually end up, it's one of the great train journeys of the world.



Heading across Russia, from Moscow to Vladivostok.

## 40. Stay in a Japanese Ryokan

Approaching a traditional ryokan in any modern Japanese city is a compelling proposition: passing neon signs and state-of-the-art vending machines jam-packed with cute and kooky things until you happen upon an old wooden door.

Crossing the threshold is like stepping through a portal back in time, where beautiful and painstaking age-old traditions are glorified.

Some can be a little disconcerting to creature-comfort lovers – forever taking off your shoes, sleeping on futon mattresses on the floor – albeit soft, spongy tatami matting – and, of course, the his-and-hers communal bath, with its scolding hot water and full-frontal assault. But if you choose to revel in the idiosyncrasies, you will never look at a mattress and private ensuite the same way again.

Ryokan can be found all over Japan but the ancient capital of Kyoto has the greatest number and arguably the most exquisite examples.



For a more exquisite Ryokan stay, look in Kyoto.



## 41. Uncover the mysteries of Easter Island

Easter Island or Rapa Nui is a Polynesian island in the southeastern Pacific Ocean (it is actually a special territory of Chile, having been annexed by the South American country in 1883) famous for the 887 grim-faced statues or moai which are dotted throughout its landscape.

With the tallest statue measuring 10 metres in height and the heaviest weighing 86 tonnes, there is no written record of how the monoliths were constructed and moved around the island by the Rapa Nui people, a fact that has enhanced the mystery surrounding them for centuries.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, much of the island falls within the Rapa Nui National Park, and highlights include the quarry of Rano Raraku which is scattered with moai in various stages of construction.



The tallest statue measures at 10 metres in height.

## 42. Live it up in the south of France

When we are talking the south of France, we are talking a big area, but it's easy to narrow it down to what most people are interested in: the beaches.

Some of the most glamorous stretches of sand in the world can be found in the likes of Cannes, St Tropez, Cap Ferrat, Cap Antibes, Villefranche-sur-Mer; this is where the beautiful flock.

If you want to maximise your star-spotting potential, time your visit to coincide with the Cannes Film Festival, one of the most celebrity-drenched events in the world, which takes place every May.



One word: beaches.



## 43. Cruise (in a car) along the Amalfi Coast in Italy

It's not hard to see why the Amalfi Coast made it onto this year's list: if you had to picture the perfect Italian getaway, this would be it.

Pastel-hued towns verdant with greenery and flowers and lemon trees (a symbol of the region) tumbling down hillsides towards the blue waters below: Ravello, Minori, Amalfi, Positano, the names are renowned for sunshine and style.

The best way to see it all is to drive the 40-kilometre stretch of the Strada Statale 163, which runs from Vietri Sul Mare to Positano and represents one of the chicest road trips in the world, especially from behind the wheel of a vintage Fiat Cinquecento.



Travel through the 40 kilometre stretch of Strada Statale 163.

## 44. Drive through the Scottish Highlands

When I state that driving in the Highlands is a truly wondrous experience, you can be sure it's based on the sheer dramatic beauty of the countryside with its soaring mountains and icy dark lochs, the wistfully romantic ruined castles, the heather that casts a vague purple haze over the landscape in spring, and the warm and welcoming small-town pubs.

Less obvious one-track roads will take you to gems like Nairn, Keith and Plockton and through the Cairngorms National Park.

And Speyside, with its Whisky Trail of distilleries, is a must for fans of single malt – but it's best to do this from the comfort of a bus!



The Highlands cast a vague purple haze over the landscape in spring.



## 45. See the dragons in Komodo National Park, Indonesia

A short jaunt from the tourist favourite of Bali, the rugged eastern Indonesian islands contained in the Komodo National Park (the major ones are Rinca, Komodo, and Padar plus numerous smaller ones) are inhabited by a population of over 5,500 giant lizards, officially known as Komodo monitors but more famous as Komodo dragons.

Completely unique to these islands, Komodo dragons (it seems they earned the dragon moniker due to their aggressive behaviour) are the largest living species of lizard in the world, with some reaching lengths of two to three metres.

You can view the lizards on Komodo Island itself, but the crowds are much smaller on Rinca Island.



The Komodo Dragon is the world's largest living species of lizard.

## 46. Climb Annapurna in Nepal

Let's face it, this is real bucket-list stuff: this section of the Himalayas in Nepal consists of Annapurna I to IV and numerous other intimidating snow-capped peaks.

But beware, Annapurna I has the highest fatality rate of any of the mountains over 8000 metres in the world – so good luck with that!



Annapurna has the highest fatality rate of any other mountain around it's size.



## 47. Volunteer in a foreign country

### What?

Voluntourism has gained in popularity over the last few years, offering travellers the chance to make a real difference, whether restoring historic houses, working on infrastructure projects, helping out in animal sanctuaries or working for children's charities.

### Where?

The destinations are varied and wide, taking in third-world as well as developing nations, as are the organisations that specialise in the placement of overseas volunteers, from charities to trade unions.

For information to help you decide on a volunteer organisation and program that will ensure your experience is positive and worthwhile for both you and the charity or community.



Take yourself into a developing nation to volunteer.

## 48. Sleep under an Arabian Sky

It's all so romantic to imagine sleeping under a blanket of stars contrasted against the inky blackness of a desert sky.

Whether you lean towards luxury (like Abu Dhabi's Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara, pictured) or favour a more traditional version, here's where you might want to look into laying your head. The Wahiba Sands in Oman; Wadi Rum in Jordan; Merzouga in Morocco; and Dubai Desert in the UAE.



Across Oman, Jordan, Morocco and Dubai, you'll have ample opportunity to sleep under an Arabian sky.



## 49. Explore Milford Sound in New Zealand

Rudyard Kipling (an English journalist and poet) described New Zealand's stunning Milford Sound as the "eighth wonder of the world", and you can see what he is talking about.

Located on the west coast of the South Island, the area was carved into the landscape during the last ice age, leaving a stunning vista of fjords rising out of dark moody lakes.

Kayaking the still, reflective waters is a perfect way to appreciate the scope and beauty of it all, while a more relaxing pace is set on the many day and overnight cruises here.



The area was carved into the landscape it is today during the last ice age.

## 50. Stand at the top of Table Mountain, Cape Town

With views over Cape Town, the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and the stunning South African landscape, standing on top of this natural beauty truly makes you feel on top of the world.

Especially if you visit between October and March when there are blue skies galore.

Ironically, it is the summer south-easterly winds which create the legendary ‘tablecloth’; Table Mountain’s very own layer of cloud cover.

If you correctly time your journey to the top, either by cable car or various hiking routes, you will not only be rewarded with conquering Cape Town’s most iconic landmark but the city’s unpredictable weather.



Visit between October and March because the skies will be as blue as the ocean.



## 51. Visit the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain

We already addressed the food and wine scene in the Basque Country of Spain at number 28, but here's where the region goes for an overload of culture, The Guggenheim Museum.

This sublime Frank Gehry-designed building – considered one of the finest pieces of architecture of the late 20th century – on the Nervión River in Bilbao houses an expansive collection of modern and contemporary art from the likes of Willem de Kooning, Gerhard Richter, Cy Twombly and Andy Warhol, while Jeff Koons' iconic and whimsical Puppy dominates the museum's plaza.



Frank Gehry designed the building, considered the finest piece of architecture of the late 20th century.

## 52. Tour Ireland by Road

Getting out of the cities and into the lush countryside is one of the great pleasures of Ireland.

Given its size, distances are short and the road system is comprehensive. Hire a car out of Dublin and dip into County Clare, County Galway, County Kerry and Cork, which cover big-ticket sites like Blarney Castle and the Dingle Peninsula.

But the real fun is folding up the map and exploring the road less travelled.



Leave the map in the glovebox and follow the road less travelled.



## 53. Get up close to giant pandas in China

There are two ways to get up close to these cute and critically endangered creatures.

Guided tours in Foping National Nature Reserve, high in the Qinling Mountains in Shaanxi province, allow for days of tracking in the hope of seeing a panda in its natural habitat; while at the Bifengxia Panda Breeding Centre in Chengdu, the country's largest panda base in Sichuan province, you can spend a day as a volunteer keeper allowing close contact with these creatures as you clean out the enclosures, prepare their food, and collect and weigh their faeces!



Book a guided tour to see these furry animals live in their habitats.

## 54. Take in the sunrise at El Tatio Geysers in Chile

### Where?

El Tatio, or ‘the grandfather’, is a geyser field on the Chilean Andes, a staggering 4320 metres above sea level.

### What?

The highest geothermal field in the world, El Tatio has over 80 active geysers constantly letting off steam and spouting water, sometimes up to seven metres into the air.

There are also thermal baths on-site, heated to a toasty temperature by all the volcanic activity taking place underground and rich in minerals deposits.

### Why?

The early rise to make it to El Tatio for sunrise is well worth it; at this time of the morning, the cold mountain air condenses the hot steam puffing from the earth, creating a landscape of wispy white clouds set against the slowly lightening sky.



El Tatio is 4320 metres above sea level.



## 55. Celebrate Christmas in New York

New York is an amazing city to visit at any time of the year and for myriad reasons, but Christmas in New York holds its own unique appeal.

It can get bitterly cold in these parts at this time of year, but all the resulting snow endows the metropolis with a fairytale feel that can be indulged in pursuits such as ice skating or snowman building in Central Park, viewing the gigantic Christmas tree in Rockefeller Plaza with its 30,000 twinkling lights or pressing your nose up against the glass to see the Bloomingdales holiday window displays.



Be the star in your own rom-com while spending Christmas in New York.

## 56. View the unique landscape of Yellowstone National Park

One of the best reasons for visiting the USA's Rocky Mountains state of Wyoming is to explore the oldest national park in the world, which dates back to 1872.

Yellowstone National Park occupies the north-west corner of Wyoming, offering the highs of mountain peaks and waterfalls to the lows of meadows and geothermal wonders like the Old Faithful geyser, which erupts sky-high every 90 minutes.

The real joy is its unspoiled natural beauty, where wild elk and buffalo roam across almost one million hectares.

There's comfy hotels, lodges and cabins across the park, while the adventurous can camp in areas like West Thumb Geyser Basin.

Just keep an eye out for the grizzly bears that call this park home.



Wild elk and buffalo roam across almost one million hectares of land.



## 57. Climb to the top of Stromboli, Italy

Sitting at the outer reaches of the Aeolian Islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea, Stromboli is not so much an island as an active volcano (which has erupted almost constantly for 2000 years) with luxe stays and brilliant restaurants dotted at its base.

The five-hour hike starts at a leisurely pace but things get a lot more challenging the higher you climb.

By the time the summit is conquered the pitch-black night sky provides the perfect backdrop for the violent beauty of the lava spewing from the crater.

The journey back down is exhilarating as you slide through pumice dust with only the stars to punctuate the blackness.

Finish the adventure with a debrief and an ice-cold Limoncello shot.



This active volcano has been erupting constantly for over 2000 years.

## 58. Get lost in the cobbled streets of Venice, Italy

With its narrow alleyways and cobbled streets snaking away from the bustling watery thoroughfare of the Grand Canal, Venice is the perfect place to get utterly and completely lost.

Ask most people who have ever been there and they will regale you with at least one anecdote about losing their bearings while searching for any number of gorgeous sites that proliferate in the city.

But inevitably the conclusion of the story will detail the wonderful little shop, museum, café, neighbourhood they happened upon along the way and how finding it was the highlight of their visit (OK, maybe after St Mark and the Bridge of Sighs).



Wander through the cobble-stone steps of Venice that surrounds the Grand Canal.



## 59. Drive the Pacific Coast in California, USA

Hugging the coastline from San Francisco to Los Angeles, the Pacific Coast Highway is best driven south to north for far better gawk factor.

It's a mix of outrageously laidback luxury in Carmel-by-the-Sea (stay here as long as the credit card can take it!), the true remote wilderness of Big Sur where mountains cascade into the Pacific Ocean, and the glitzy wine countries of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.

Don't forget to keep an eye on the Pacific as whales plume so very close to the shore.



Want to go from the San Diego to The Bay Area? Hop on the Pacific Coast Highway to travel in style.

## 60. Shop in the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, Turkey

You're preaching to the converted here: IT editor Leigh-Ann Pow nominated this labyrinth of markets in Istanbul as her ultimate travel experience of a lifetime.

One of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world (construction began in 1455), the Grand Bazaar is almost a city within a city: it has 60 streets and 5000 shops selling everything from spices to carpets to jewellery to antiques, two mosques, two hammams and various cafés and restaurants dotted throughout.

Our advice? Wear comfy shoes, take lots of small notes and be polite but bargain hard.



The Grand Bazaar is one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world.



## 61. Take an arctic safari through Canada

Few places on this planet lend themselves to a safari experience like this.

Putting the 'wild' in wildlife, Canada's Arctic wilderness stretches from the northern reaches of the Yukon in the west – thriving with Canadian lynxes and Alaska-Yukon moose, to the rugged Hudson Bay coastline in the east, home of the great white bears.

Of course, venturing further north through the Northwestern Passages provides no shortage of stunning glaciers and towering icebergs, as well as a wealth of Arctic creatures: wolves, caribou, black bears, grizzly bears, polar bears, belugas and seals...

With unique migration patterns also to behold, it's little wonder the region has been dubbed the 'Serengeti of the Arctic'.



Venture through the Northwestern Passage to witness glaciers, icebergs and mix of Arctic creatures.

## 62. See Wadi Rum in Jordan

The second Jordanian entry on this year's list, Wadi Rum is a wildly romantic desert landscape, known as the Valley of the Moon (wadi means valley in Arabic).

The land of the Bedouin and Lawrence of Arabia (Wadi Rum is referenced in T.E Lawrence's *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*), lures many a traveller with its jutting sandstone and granite rock formations, many of which feature ancient rock paintings and inscription by the people who have inhabited the area since pre-history and others presenting the perfect challenge for climbers.



It's also known as the Valley of the Moon.



## 63. Cycle the Tour de France

The Tour de France is as famous for the scenery it passes through as it is for the bad behaviour of its riders over the years.

An endless cycle (pardon the pun) of distractingly pretty cities and towns, deep fields of golden sunflowers, historic architecture and soaring mountains, following the race in the saddle, albeit at a much more leisurely pace than the peloton, represents a perfectly balanced French experience – one where you can stop at all the bistro and boulangerie your heart (and stomach) desires along the way, and then work it all off again with pedal power.



An endless cycle of pretty cities and towns.

## 64. Four Seasons Sultanahmet, Istanbul, Turkey

How clever are they? The Four Seasons took a century-old former Turkish prison – a rather lovely neoclassical prison at that – and turned it into an impeccably elegant urban hotel.

It has a fantastic sense of place – light-filled interiors weave Ottoman-influenced fabrics, colours and textures with marble columns and oriental motifs. It's right in the heart of Istanbul's oldest quarter but also a mere stroll to Hagia Sophia, the breathtaking Topkapi Palace and the Blue Mosque.

Istanbul is always humming but you can retreat to the herb-filled garden courtyard and terrace. If you can stretch to a suite with terrace views – do it!



Rest your head in a century-old former Turkish prison.



## 65. Drive through Monument Valley, USA

Located between Arizona and Utah, Monument Valley is an iconic personification of the American Wild West, with its oxide red buttes rising out of the sands of an otherwise scrubby, desolate landscape.

Part of the Navajo Nation reservation, the valley is readily identifiable thanks to the films of director John Ford, including the cinematic classic *The Searchers* starring John Wayne.

The best way to see it in all its glory? From behind the wheel of a vintage Mustang cruising Highway 163, which cuts through it in an endless line of black bitumen.



The valley is located between the dry states, Arizona and Utah.

## 66. Stay in an Ice Hotel

The ephemeral beauty of ice hotels can be discovered throughout the winter months in any number of freezing cold destinations.

With each one presenting like a fairytale set from the Disney hit Frozen, here are five ice hotels you might want to put on a few extra pairs of socks for:

### **ICEHOTEL**

The original and longtime partner of Absolut, with its ice bar complete with ice glasses.

**Address:** Marknadsvägen 63, 981 91 Jukkasjärvi, Sweden

### **Kirkenes Snowhotel**

Visit for its over-the-top ice sculptures.

**Address:** Sandnesdalen 14, 9910 Bjørnevatn, Norway

### **Hôtel de Glace**

Previous plans for this hotel have included a cinema and outdoor tube slide.

**Address:** 1860 Boulevard Valcartier, Saint-Gabriel-de-Valcartier, QC G0A 4S0, Canada

### **SnowCastle**

The theme here is all medieval chic.

**Address:** Lumilinnankatu 15, 94100 Kemi, Finland

### **Kakslauttanen Arctic Resort**

Where thermal sleeping bags and woollen socks come with the booking.

**Address:** Kiilopäantie 9, 99830 Saariselkä, Finland



Located in a number of chilly destinations, staying in an Ice Hotel is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



## 67. Admire the splendour of Yosemite National Park, USA

Renowned for its granite cliffs and waterfalls, Yosemite National Park is a hikers' and photographers' dream.

Tucked into the mountains of California, the valley is open all year round to adventurers, with Glacier Point claiming the title of the best view.

America's third-oldest national park and home to the country's highest waterfall, dramatic scenery is in abundance; think high meadows filled with rivers, lakes and wildflowers, deep valleys and sheer cliffs.

Yosemite is nature in all its marvellous splendour; along with its many wild bears!



Get your camera ready to spot some iconic Yosemite wild bears (but don't get too close).

## 68. Explore beautiful Provence, France

It's difficult to find a bad view in Provence: it is, after all, so unrelentingly stunning and French.

Travelling through the region, located in the south of the country, you come across charming cities and towns such as Avignon, Aix-en-Provence, Arles and Nîmes, pass by endless purple fields of lavender, and spot rustic sandstone farmhouses almost hourly.

Add the sublime food to be found in these parts, the wines that have been produced here for over 2500 years and you have the ultimate triple threat.



Pass by endless purple fields of lavender.



## 69. Crane your neck in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican City, Italy

Located in the Apostolic Palace, the Pope's official residence within Vatican City, the Sistine Chapel's fame comes from the vividly beautiful frescoes that decorate its interior, most notably Michelangelo's *The Last Judgement* and *The Creation of Adam*.

While the temptation is to crane your neck to take in these legendary works and then shuffle out in search of other wonders, spending a little extra time will reward you with equally brilliant works by Botticelli, Ghirlandaio and Rosselli.



You could spend hours gazing up at the chapel's masterpiece.

## 70. Island-hop the Maldives

Even if you're not much of a beach person, when you daydream about laying on pure white sand next to achingly blue waters, you probably imagine something like this.

With almost 1200 islands, of which only 200 are actually inhabited, island-hopping the Maldives is that dream come true.



Wade through the crystal blue waters on the Maldivian islands.



## 71. Drive from coast to coast across the USA

### Where?

From New York to San Francisco.

### What?

Driving coast to coast across the US on Interstate 80 takes roughly 10 days and passes through a staggering 11 states and endless amazing vistas.

### Why?

National Geographic has called it the “Modern American Odyssey”.



Head from New York to San Francisco, or make your own route.

## 72. Explore Cinque Terre, Italy

Perched on an unspoilt stretch of the Italian Riviera coast, the cinque towns that form the Cinque Terre are Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola, and Riomaggiore.

Each one is a gorgeous jumble of houses built one above the other in a pretty patchwork of terraces that stretch to the top of the rugged hills they are perched on, and connected at street level by narrow lanes and streets uninterrupted by traffic (cars can't access any of the towns).

There is a network of paths that runs from one town to the next (trains and boats are the other forms of transport in these parts) making this heaven for hikers who like a more sybaritic pace and ample pretty views when they walk.



Part of an unspoilt stretch of the Italian Riviera coast.



## 73. Explore the Palace of Versailles in France

### Where?

The town of Versailles in the Île-de-France region of France, 20 minutes by train from Paris.

### What?

The gigantic, gorgeous, gilt-edged Château de Versailles is the former palace of French kings, and now a museum to this ultimately tragic dynasty.

### Why?

One of the most spectacular examples of French 18th-century architecture and art, Versailles is legendary in its proportions, grandeur and opulence.

From the Hall of Mirrors to Marie Antoinette's private playground of the Petit Trianon, wandering the rooms, the halls and the grounds of this confection is an endless exercise in thrilling the eye.



Only 20 minutes from Paris by train, lies the Palace of Versailles.

## 74. Witness the Holy Land

Revered by Jews, Muslims and Christians, the Holy Land roughly stretches from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, with the jewel in the crown is the ancient city of Jerusalem, containing as it does the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Christianity), Temple Mount (Judaism) and the Dome of the Rock (Islam).



Stretching from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.



## 75. Sail the islands of Tahiti

Floating on the balmy trade winds of Tahiti does represent a true ultimate.

Spread across four million square kilometres in the South Pacific Ocean, Tahiti is a bounty of blissful islands and atolls, including a roll call of super-luxe locations such as Bora Bora, Moorea, Rangiroa and the Marquesas.

Sailing these waters on a bareboat allows for dipping in and out of island life at any of these paradises, as well as offering up maximum indulgence in pursuits such as snorkelling and reef diving while cruising with one of the more boutique operators is an equally stunning option.



Tahiti is spread across four million square kilometres of the South Pacific Ocean.

## 76. Go bareboating in Croatia

Cruising the Adriatic Sea along the Dalmatian Coast was a constant theme on Instagram this Northern Hemisphere summer, with the jet-set well and truly discovering the wonders of this sun-drenched part of Europe.

Whether you are DIY sailing or have a crew on board, bareboating is an idyllic way to consume this stretch of coastline, deciding one day to walk the UNESCO World Heritage-listed town of Split, to have lunch overlooking the harbour in Hvar or admire the sheer beauty of Dubrovnik.

Life's tough.



You can't miss out on Croatia's glorious seas while you're there.



## 77. Experience the charms of Corsica in France

A delicious combination of French history, outdoor fun and an island setting in the Mediterranean Sea, there's not much that Corsica doesn't offer in terms of a summer holiday destination.

Set just over 200 kilometres south-east of mainland France, it stretches some 180 kilometres long and 80 kilometres wide, with an assortment of landscapes ranging from vast beaches (there are 200 to choose from), buzzing cityscapes, dense forests to towering granite peaks, making it a popular playground for beach dwellers, divers and hikers alike.

Despite being officially tied to France for over 200 years, Corsica feels decidedly removed and shines in its unique way.



Just off the coast of France, lies Corsica.

## 78. Trace history at the Acropolis in Athens

Athen's skyline is dominated by this ancient citadel perched on a rocky outcrop.

The site consists of many significant buildings, the most celebrated being the Parthenon, the temple dedicated to the Greek goddess Athena.

Construction of the Parthenon, the Propylaia, the Erechtheion and the temple of Athena Nike began in the fifth century BC



Wander through to spot the Parthenon, Propylaia, Erechtheion and the temple of Athena Nike.



## 79. Soak in the baths of Pamukkale in Turkey

If there was no other reason for including the thermal baths of Pamukkale on this year's list, it would make it for the name alone, or rather its translation: it means 'cotton fortress' in Turkish.

The moniker fits perfectly: the landscape is a white oasis of terraced pools brimming with mineral-rich warm blue waters which appear to be soft and fluffy but are formed when the calcium in the water hardens and builds up layer upon layer.

It has been a spa retreat since Roman times, and the ruins are worth a tour when you have finished soaking your cares away.



The number one natural spa destination to visit.

## 80. Visit an onsen in Japan

With more natural hot springs than anywhere else on Earth, Japan is sprinkled with steamy onsens and the resort towns that come with them.

Heated by geothermic activity under the Earth's surface, various types of rock impart different minerals that are dissolved in the water, believed to provide health benefits from relaxation, to healing skin conditions and even cancer.

It's not just the minerals that distinguish these public baths either – they can be indoors or outdoors, gender-separated or mixed.

This is one dip with a difference.



The Onsen's are filled with natural hot springs.



## 81. Rise above Cappadocia in a hot air balloon

Turkey makes the list again: the region of Cappadocia, located in the heart of Anatolia, is a riot of amazing natural beauty and compelling history.

With its whimsical Fairy Chimney rock formations and iconic cave houses at Urgup, Goreme, Guzelyurt and Uchisar, the whole area looks like the set from a Hobbit movie.

And one of the most popular ways to consume the landscape is by hot air balloon.

Each morning the clear dawn skies are peppered with colourful, bulging balloons that float silently above the spectacular scenery below for about an hour, before putting down in the middle of it all for a spot of breakfast (champagne optional!).



The hot air balloons of Cappadocia are unlike anything you've ever seen before.

## 82. Laze about in Bora Bora

Bora Bora's reputation has distinguished this relatively small island as the ultimate oasis in the South Pacific.

You wouldn't be human if you weren't enticed by the idea of relaxing in a beachside hammock (yes, tied up in between two palm trees) as turquoise waters lap at the white sands outstretched in front of you.

But Bora Bora's allure is not all about sunbaking and napping, and if you can drag yourself away from your hammock, there are villages and mountains to explore.

Although no one will blame you if just moved from the hammock to the sand.



If you can dig enough change out of your pocket (and perhaps a lot more), venture out to Bora Bora.



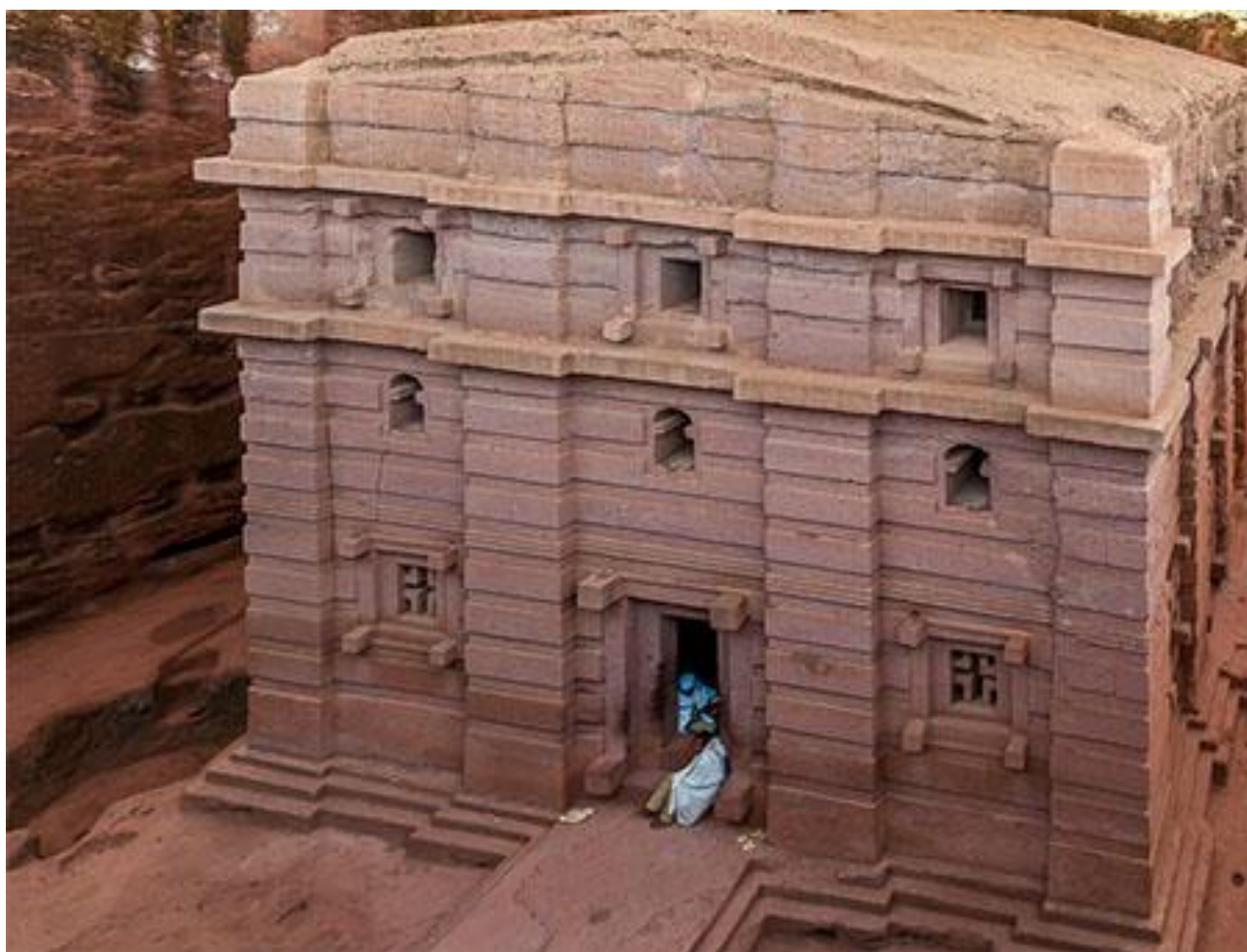
## 83. See history at Lalibela, Ethiopia

In northern Ethiopia is this traditional village famous for its many churches, incredibly carved out of rock more than 800 years ago.

These non-traditional churches are sites to behold – and not just for their architectural awe. Commissioned by King Lalibela in the 12th century, his goal to create a ‘New Jerusalem’ resulted in 11 medieval monolithic rock-hewn churches rising from within the ground.

The sites are extremely well preserved, as are the traditional vernacular circular houses in the surrounding area that illustrate the ancient village’s layout.

Visit during Timkat (mid-January) and watch in awe as thousands of Ethiopians in white descend to worship at the UNESCO World Heritage-listed site.



The sites here are extremely well preserved.

## 84. Take a stroll around Cadaqués in Spain

Located on the Costa Brava, Cadaqués has long been a playground for artists and writers: Salvador Dali said of the former fishing village, “I spent a delicious summer, as always, in the ideal and dreamy town of Cadaqués. There, beside the Latin sea, I have gorged myself on light and colour”.

The village population of 2000 people swells in the summer months but the town has retained a white-washed charm in spite of this, with not a high-rise hotel in sight.

Days here can be passed stretching out on the pebble beaches lapped by the Mediterranean, strolling the narrow cobblestoned streets ducking into small shops and restaurants or hiking in the rustic nature reserve that surrounds the town.



With only a village population of 2000, you can expect that number to grow during summer.



## 85. Take a wander through Paris' other museums

While the Louvre, with its flashy glass pyramid and the enigmatically smiling Mona Lisa, lures staggering numbers of visitors, there are myriad smaller museums tucked into majestic old châteaux and buildings throughout the city that are just as compelling and a lot less crowded.

### **Musée Rodin**

The French sculptor lived and worked in the glorious Hôtel Biron which houses the museum. There are more than 6500 sculptures, including his famous *The Thinker* (Le Penseur), which dominates the pretty gardens attached.

### **Musée d'Orsay**

Housed in a former train station, this expansive museum boasts an impressively diverse collection of works from the likes of van Gogh, Cézanne, Renoir, Monet, and the list goes on.

### **Musée de l'Orangerie**

The museum houses a vast collection of Impressionist and post-Impressionist art, including Monet's *Water Lilies* series, which was installed here in 1927 to the artist's exacting specifications.

### **Musée Picasso**

Located in The Marais in the grand 17th-century Hotel Sale, the collection here comprises 5000 works.



Skip past the massive queues at the Louvre and head to these lesser-known gems.

## 86. See the view from the top of Sigiriya, Sri Lanka

This is sure to rocket to the top of many bucket lists: Sigiriya is a palace complex built on the summit of a 180-metre-high rock column that punctuates the lush landscape surrounding it.

Steps carved into its hulking mass and flanked on both sides by giant lions' feet lead past endless colourful frescoes painted on the face and a section of highly polished rock known as the Mirror Wall.

At the summit are the ruins of the fortified palace itself, its cisterns and sculpture, as well as a breathtaking view of the surrounding countryside.



Reach the summit to catch a jaw-dropping view of the countryside.



## 87. Celebrate the Carnival of Venice in Italy

This magical city becomes even more evocative when the carnival comes to town.

Held on different dates each year to correspond with Shrove Tuesday (40 days before Easter), this is perhaps the world's most famous masquerade party and has been celebrated in the floating city since the 15th century.

Almost everywhere you go, you'll see locals and visitors alike dressed in extravagant baroque-style costumes and masks, so the people-watching is worth travelling for alone.

But there's plenty more going on from parades, jousting tournaments, street performers, a procession of decorated gondolas and masquerade balls across the city.

So mask up, learn the quadrilles and join in the festivities!



Join in the fun and grab a mask for Carnival!

## 88. Trek the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea

No other trek will fill you with that revered Aussie spirit more so than the Kokoda Track.

Linking the southern and northern coasts of Papua New Guinea, the 96-kilometre walk follows the same path Australian soldiers took to defend our country from Japanese invasion.

Arguably Australia's most important stance during World War II, trekking the Kokoda (which is still very much like it was in 1942) will challenge you physically and mentally as it winds through mountainous rainforest and thick jungle, over rushing streams, into deep gorges and through narrow crests – but it also fills you with unwavering respect for the Diggers who experienced it in much graver circumstances.

A definite bucket-list item for any Australian adventurer.



This trek is for Aussie readers.



## 89. Go diving in Palawan, the Philippines

We're not quite sure how Palawan has managed to escape under the radar for so long, so it is fitting it has made it into the list this year.

Why? Because it is beautiful! An island province of the Philippines, it has a compelling history stretching back 22,000 years and encompassing Spanish rule, American rule and Japanese invasion; stunning and unique flora and fauna; towering limestone karsts rising out of deep lakes and protected coral reefs that deliver spectacular diving adventures.



Palawan has a history of 22,000 years but has remained largely unnoticed.

## 90. Bike through the Pinar del Río in Cuba

### Where?

Pinar del Río is in Cuba's western-most province, sticking out like a tail on the Caribbean island.

### What?

The landscape of the Pinar del Río is one of the steep limestone hills, called mogotes locally, that give way to flat valleys of green.

### Why?

Cycling the Pinar del Río is more a journey for pleasure's sake than a physical challenge, with the quiet roads that criss-cross the region leading to small rural villages and ample fresh air and scenery.



Bike through the Caribbean island.



## 91. Climb Hawaii's volcanoes

Thousands of years of volcanic eruptions have left large parts of Haleakalā National Park on the Hawaiian island of Maui like a lunar landscape.

Hike the trails through the area in half a day or overnight on-site. Meanwhile, on the Big Island, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park is the home to Kilauea volcano, one of the most active in the world where molten lava can be seen creeping towards the sea, before disappearing in a cloud of steam.



Hike through these active and dormant volcano sites for a big Hawaiian hike.

## 92. Sail down the Nile, Egypt

Whether it's on a luxury cruise ship or a traditional felucca, sailing the longest river in the world past ancient sites, vast landscapes, and the activity of rural life is a unique way to experience Egypt.

More than 200 boats cruise this famous waterway, most starting in Luxor (home to archaeological sites like the Luxor Temple and Valley of the Kings, where Tutankhamun was discovered) and ending 200 kilometres south in the small city of Aswan (where you'll find the unfinished obelisk, perhaps the largest stone ever quarried, and colourful markets).

Here, it is also said the river is at its most majestic, as it curves through desert and granite rocks and around lush green islands.

A languorous cruise along the Nile is a welcome break from the hustle and bustle that is Egypt as you sit back and watch the world go by.

The best time to do a cruise is between October and April, when the weather is at its most pleasant (i.e not stiflingly hot!).



Sail down the longest river in the world to experience true Egypt.



## 93. Journey from Delhi to Nepal by train

Travelling from Delhi to Nepal can be done by plane, but there's no challenge in that; a better way for you to experience what long-distance travel is all about in India is to hop on a train.

The first leg of the journey – at about 12 hours – will take you to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh; from there you will need to take a three-hour bus or shared jeep ride to the border in Sunauli; then it's on to another bus or jeep to reach the famed city of Kathmandu.

We told you it wasn't easy but it's certainly an adventure.



The first leg of the journey takes 12-hours, prepare for a big one.

## 94. Tour Berlin by foot

Every footpath in Berlin has lived a million tales – and that is just in the past century.

The best way to get up close and personal with Berlin's history is on a walking tour, where you can tread the same paths as Prussian kings, Nazi forces, Jewish refugees, Red Army soldiers and Berliners confined by the infamous Berlin Wall.

This resilient city changed a lot since 1989 when its two halves were reunited.

Whether you have one hour or one day, a Berlin walking tour taking in sites like the Brandenburg Gate, 1920s Cabaret Mile, Hitler's Bunker and the wall, will share insights that will linger for a lifetime.



The city has changed immensely since 1989 and a guide will let you in on the history.



## 95. Catch your breath in Fiordland, New Zealand

Encompassing Milford Sound (which came in at number 49 on this year's list), Dusky Sound and Doubtful Sound, Fiordland National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage site located on New Zealand's stunning South Island.

The landscape encompasses waterfalls, ancient rainforest, soaring mountains, granite peaks and eerily still lakes, all of which present the perfect proposition for anyone with a love of the great outdoors given the ample opportunity for trekking, biking, kayaking, walking and wondering in awe.



Stroll passed waterfalls, an ancient rainforest and soaring mountains.

## 96. Swim in Samoa's To Sua Ocean Trench

To Sua' means 'giant hole' but that's not quite how we would describe this place. We think 'Lagi' is more appropriate – it means 'heaven'.

Yep, we could see ourselves cooling off in this heavenly aquamarine waterhole and admiring the lush green surroundings as we serenely float about.

The pool – which is located near Lotofaga village on the south coast of Upolu island – is fed through a natural tunnel that leads out to the ocean, which washes in refreshingly cool water.

To get here, it's a bit of an adventure – you need to follow some small, inconspicuous signs and climb down the 20-odd-metre ladder to a platform from which to dive, pin drop or cannonball – whatever takes your fancy.

And there's a rope from which to swing too. Weee!



Climb up on the rope swing and fling yourself into the stunning waters.



## 97. Travel from Geneva to Vienna by train

Journeys don't get much more picture-postcard than this: setting off from the Swiss city of Geneva, the 10-hours-plus train journey to the picturesque Austrian capital of Vienna passes through some of the most sublime mountain scenery on Earth.

After changing trains in Zurich, you wend your way through Liechtenstein, with its chocolate-box castles and towns, then forge on to Salzburg, Linz and into Vienna itself, from where you can experience the refined charm of this historic city – and recover with a slice of Sacher-Torte and a coffee.



This 10-hour plus journey will guide you through memorable scenic views.

## 98. Be happy in Disneyland California, USA

It's known as the happiest place on Earth for a reason; it's obvious that the thought of Disneyland fills many people with a sense of pure joy.

With parks in Hong Kong, Paris, Tokyo and Florida, the original and the best is still the land that Walt Disney built in Anaheim, California, back in 1955, with the fairytale Magic Kingdom castle dominating the horizon as you approach and a world of wonder laid out beyond.

While the best ride in the place is up for debate – It's A Small World versus Space Mountain, the iconic spinning teacups versus Pirates of the Caribbean, the carousel versus the Matterhorn Bobsleds – the happiness they represent is the enduring attraction of this most fun of fun parks.



Truly the 'happiest place on Earth'.



## 99. Wander around the Natural History Museum of London

The design of this extraordinary building is a strong competitor to the collection of many treasures contained within its walls.

London's Natural History Museum, with its classic Romanesque architecture, has been described as a work of art in its own right, while others have likened the grand arches and spirited towers to a Harry Potter movie set.

Beyond the impact of the building, the museum contains one of the world's best collections devoted to the sciences of zoology, botany and minerals, with its famous gallery of dinosaur skeletons.

A far more interactive experience is in the Volcanoes and Earthquakes gallery, complete with an earthquake simulator. Hands down, this is the best place to get shaken up in the British capital.



The museum houses the famous gallery of dinosaur skeletons.

## 100. Be amazed by the Isles of Scilly in England

Proof that the impossible is possible, this tropical paradise is located in the Celtic Sea. That's right – although the name may sound more Italian than English, the Isles of Scilly are just under 50 kilometres from the south-west coast of England.

Think unspoilt islands, turquoise seas, and the choice to do absolutely nothing or explore as much as you like.

Made up of five inhabited islands (only 2200 people call the Isles home), each one is different in its own right.

From the untamed beaches of England's final frontier, St Agnes; the romantic castle ruins of Tresco; and the central hub of St Mary's, the Isles of Scilly is the most perfect escape from The Old Smoke if ever we saw one.



England isn't normally known for their beaches, but the Isles of Scilly is proving us wrong.



# 30

## Adventures to Have in a Lifetime

Every traveller has their ultimate list of experiences. Those experiences can include everything from eating street food in Singapore to seeing an opera in Vienna, but we're fans of beefing up your list with outdoor adventures. With this in mind, we at *Traveler* put together a list of the ultimate trips for intrepid travellers, including a mix of epic hikes, extreme sports, and creative ways to see some of the planet's most beautiful landscapes. Whether it's hot air ballooning over Turkey or swimming with dolphins in the Atlantic, these 30 activities are guaranteed to thrill—and change your entire outlook on life.



## **1. Climb to Machu Picchu, Peru**

No travel bucket list is complete without Macchu Picchu, an Incan citadel located in the Andes. While the site can be accessed via bus ride, more adventurous travelers can take the five-day trek along the entire 26-mile-long Inca Trail. Or, thanks to local tour operator Sam Travel Peru, you can get dropped at kilometre marker 104 and do the whole experience in 24 hours.





## 2. Hunt for glaciers in Greenland

Greenland is relatively expensive and tricky to get to, but well-worth the effort—especially since it's one of the most untouched landscapes on the planet. Exhibit A: the hundred-year-old icebergs and glaciers floating off the mainland, which you can get up close and personal with during a cruise excursion.



### **3. Hot air balloon over Cappadocia, Turkey**

A hot air balloon ride over central Turkey's Cappadocia region provides 360-degree views of the famous limestone spires and "fairy chimneys"—something you can't get at the ground level. We recommend booking with Kapadokya Balloons.





#### **4. Swim the Great Barrier Reef**

Divers and snorkelers everywhere need to move the Great Barrier Reef to the very top of their bucket lists. Not only does the site have more than 400 different types of coral and 1,500 species of fish, but the natural wonder has been rapidly eroding, thanks to coral bleaching and global warming. In other words? Visit this one while you can.



## 5. Climb Mount Everest

Mount Everest looms large, known around the world by hikers and non-hikers alike. But this is one behemoth that is best left to truly experienced travelers. According to alpinist Adrian Ballinger, who attempted the climb in 2016, "You need to climb at least three 20,000 peaks, one 23,000 peak, and one 26,000 peak before considering Everest." But hey, if you're one of the lucky few who has the experience, time, and funds needed to reach Everest's summit, then by all means, do it.





## 6. Dogsled in Siberia

Siberia in the winter may not sound like the most relaxing of vacations, but the appeal increases exponentially when you add in husky dogs, who can take you on sled rides around across frozen Lake Baikal and endless white masses of land. Sure you can always take a Trans-Siberian train ride, but that's simply not as adorable.



## 7. Trek the Great Wall of China

Everyone knows and loves the Great Wall of China, as witnessed by the masses of selfie-taking tourists swarming the landmark each day. Different sections of the wall offer different experiences, whether you're looking for a strenuous hike or an uncrowded place to take photographs. The Great Wall Adventure Club offers excursions up to 12 days long, giving you the chance to walk around 50 miles and camp overnight in the structure's watchtowers. For a different type of once-in-a-lifetime experience, take a day trip with Opposite House Beijing, a hotel that offers guided tours specifically of the Wall's uncrowded stretches. Walking from tower to tower with no one else around you? Sign us up.





## **8. Go on a canoe safari in the Okavango Delta, Botswana**

Going on safari in Africa is a bucket list no-brainer, but where exactly do you start? Botswana's Okavango Delta is a must for first-timers and experienced safari-goers alike, thanks to its wealth of wildlife and topographical diversity. Hop on a mokoro canoe for the best, most intimate look at the roaming elephants, antelope, and cheetahs, among others.



## 9. Sleep under the Northern Lights

Ah, the elusive Northern Lights. So many factors are at play when it comes to seeing the technicolor phenomenon—location, time of year, weather conditions—but you can't lose with an excursion to Finnish Lapland. The arctic area is one of the planet's best for lights viewing, especially if you get to sleep in an igloo hotel or mobile Aurora Bubble Sled.





## 10. Boat under the Iguazú Falls

South America's Iguazú Falls, located on the border of Brazil and Argentina, make all other waterfalls look like mere trickles. The system of more than 200 cascades (reaching heights of around 270 feet) can be viewed from surrounding walkways and catwalks, but we're fans of the more adventurous vantage-point—hopping on an Iguazú Jungle inflatable raft and going directly under the exhilarating, high-pressure falls.



## 11. Climb Mount Fuji

Solitary Mount Fuji is probably Japan's most iconic natural wonder, rising 12,388 feet above villages and reflecting on lakes' surfaces. You can get views of the landmark from many places, like Lake Kawaguchi in Fujikawaguchiko and the Park Hyatt Tokyo, but it's the views *from* the mountain that give you the most bragging rights. Visit from early July to mid-September to take advantage of the official climbing season, when the designated trails and paved roads are free from snow.





## 12. Swim through Mexico's cenotes

Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula features a wealth of unique natural beauty, particularly when it comes to its cavernous cenotes. Floating in one of these natural sinkholes is an incredible experience, as is diving through the underground cave systems. When in Tulum, visit Dos Ojos ("Two Eyes") to view one of the planet's most beautiful underwater sites (bonus points for water visibility), or Gran Cenote for rock formations that resemble Gothic architecture.



### **13. Sand surf in the Sahara**

The dunes of the Sahara are colossal, untouched, and tailor-made for extreme sports. The desert's rows of barchans (meaning "crescent-shaped dunes" in Turkic) have ideal shapes for sand surfing (descending the slopes on a surfboard) and sandboarding (descending the slopes on a snowboard)—and those views don't hurt, either.





## **14. Paraglide over the Blue Lagoon in Oludeniz, Turkey**

Oludeniz has one of the most beautiful beaches in Turkey, with pebble shores and a "blue lagoon" of aquamarine hues. The beach also happens to be one of the world's best places to paraglide, thanks to stable weather and gorgeous panoramic views. The launch site for most companies is from Babadağ mountain, with jumping-off points reaching 6,000 feet above sea level.



## 15. Spot a spirit bear in the Great Bear Rainforest

Canada's Great Bear Rainforest is the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world—and one of the most magical, with elusive species like sea wolves and spirit bears roaming its 21 million acres. Outer Shores Expeditions will take you on a nine-day excursion aboard a schooner, departing from British Columbia's aboriginal First Nations community of Bella Bella and stopping for sea kayaking along the way.





## 16. Snorkel between continents at Thingvellir National Park

Iceland is one of the best countries in the world for adventure travel, with opportunities for everything from glacier hiking to snorkeling and diving. For the latter, head straight to Thingvellir National Park along the country's Golden Circle route, where two tectonic plates slowly pull apart at the rate of about two centimeters per year. The phenomenon results in the Silfra fissure, a stunning rift valley where travelers can snorkel or dive in impossibly clear (and cold) waters. Tour company DIVE.IS offers awesome tours for divers and every level of snorkeler (including those with zero experience), and will snap an underwater photo of you touching two continents at the same time.



## 17. Road trip through America's National Parks

There's perhaps no better way to explore America than with a good old-fashioned road trip. Many of the country's national parks are perfect for a multi-day drive, like Virginia's Shenandoah National Park and Alaska's Denali National Park. But if we had to pick just one itinerary, we'd go with the Mighty Five, the cluster of Utah's national parks that include Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Arches, and Canyonlands. The Mars-like landscapes here must be seen to be believed, and the journey can start anywhere from Salt Lake City to Las Vegas.





## 18. Heli-ski in Switzerland

Any winter sports enthusiast has either tried or wants to try heli-skiing—off-trail skiing that is accessed by helicopter as opposed to a ski lift. Switzerland offers some of the best off-trail skiing in the world in Alpine villages like Grimentz and Zermatt, which are as charming as they are epic.



Courtesy Aqua Expeditions

## 19. Float along the Amazon

Some remote destinations are best seen from the deck of a boat, and that includes the upper Amazon River. Aqua Expeditions' luxury cruises through the Peruvian stretch of the river tour the area's wildlife and culture at a delightful, leisurely pace. Looking for something a little less luxe? Amazon Adventures offers kayaking trips along some Amazon tributaries, where you can fish for piranhas and camp out in the jungle.





Dan Herrick

## 20. Go "volcano boarding" on Cerro Negro

If you're looking for action sports and adventure, we recommend booking a flight to Nicaragua right now. Here you can kayak, surf, zipline through the jungle, and even sled down the side of an active volcano. Intrepid travelers love to climb up the 2,388-foot Cerro Negro and then "volcano board" back down (an activity where you sit or stand on a piece of plywood and slide your way down the slopes). Definitely go with a guided group tour with this one. Bigfoot Hostels is one of many companies available—for \$30, you get transportation to the volcano, boards, safety equipment, snacks, and your speed clocked by a radar gun.



## 21. Camp in Antarctica

Antarctica is truly the final frontier when it comes to adventure travel, providing untouched landscapes, unique wildlife, and more activities than you'll know what to do with (cruising, caving, and thermal spring soaking—oh my!). If you can get yourself to Punta Arenas, Chile, Antarctic Logistics & Expeditions will fly you to Antarctica for three days of skiing and hiking before setting you up for a South Pole sleepover.





## 22. Walk the Chadar Trek frozen river in India

The Chadar Trek is an approximately 50-mile journey across the Zaskar River when it freezes solid during the January and February. Travel company Big Planet offers nine-day treks out of Leh, with trip that include hiking, guided tours, and overnight camping on the ice.



## 23. Surf "The Pipeline" in Oahu

Oahu's Banzai Pipeline (commonly referred to as "The Pipeline") is easily one of the most sought-after surfing spots in the world. Located off the coast of the island's north shore in Ehukai Beach Park, the surf reef break averages waves measuring nine feet high. Pro tip: This activity is definitely not for beginners, but even non-surfers will get a thrill out of the watching the many surf competitions that take place at The Pipeline—all from the safety of a sunny beach.





## 24. Zip line over Niagara Falls

The 2,200-foot MistRider opened in Ontario in the summer of 2016, and has been attracting daring travelers ever since. The ride goes from the top of the Niagara Gorge to nearly the bottom, with four ziplines reaching speeds more than 40 miles per hour.



## **25. Bungee jump above the Kawarau River, New Zealand**

New Zealand practically invented adventure sports when the Kawarau Bridge Bungy opened in 1988. Here you join 38,000 annual visitors to take the 140-foot jump from the South Island's historic, steel-framed Kawarau Bridge.





## 26. Dive Belize's Great Blue Hole

Known for its circular shape and strikingly deep blue color, the Great Blue Hole is a 1,000-foot-wide sinkhole in the middle of Belize's Lighthouse Reef. While an aerial shot is enough to convince anyone of its beauty, scuba divers are the ones who get to experience the wonders that lie beneath—massive, 40-foot limestone stalactites and stalagmites that formed during the last glacial period.



## 27. Soak in Devil's Pool at Victoria Falls

Located on the border of Zimbabwe and Zambia, Victoria Falls attracts thousands of tourists each year. One of the biggest draws here is the Devil's Pool, a naturally formed eddy sitting at the very edge of the falls, where daring swimmers can splash around between August and January (depending on water levels). Given that a slippery rock barrier is the only thing separating you from going over the edge, this site is easily the planet's most extreme infinity pool.





## 28. Swim with wild dolphins in the Azores

We can't get enough of the Azores, a group of nine islands located some 900 miles off the coast of Lisbon. The incredibly scenic archipelago is the perfect getaway for adventurers, letting travelers go canyoning on steep cliff walls, paraglide over vineyards, and swim with both migrating and native dolphins. And thanks to Delta's new direct flights from the U.S. to the island cluster in 2018, there's never been a better time to plan a visit.



## 29. Float in Darwin Lake, Galápagos Islands

The Galápagos Islands, off the coast of Ecuador, are one of the world's most famous bucket list destinations, thanks to their melange of unique wildlife and otherworldly landscapes. The chain of 19 islands offers many once-in-a-lifetime activities, from hiking on volcanos to relaxing in the saline Darwin Lake with nearby tortoises and iguanas.





### **30. Scale Half Dome at Yosemite National Park**

The Half Dome trail through Yosemite may be one of the most intense hikes you'll ever take, stretching for 16 miles and ascending more than 5,500 feet. The final 400 feet are the trickiest—hikers must climb up the steep slope with two steel cables as their only support—but the breathtaking views from the top make the effort (and terror) worth it.

# The 20 most haunted places in the world

From a ghostly castle in France to a paranormal pub in Britain, these 'possessed' destinations are guaranteed to spook even the most sceptical of travellers...



## 1. Château de Brissac, Maine-et-Loire, France



The Castle of Brissac, a renaissance castle rebuilt in the 15th century by one of the ministers to King Charles VII

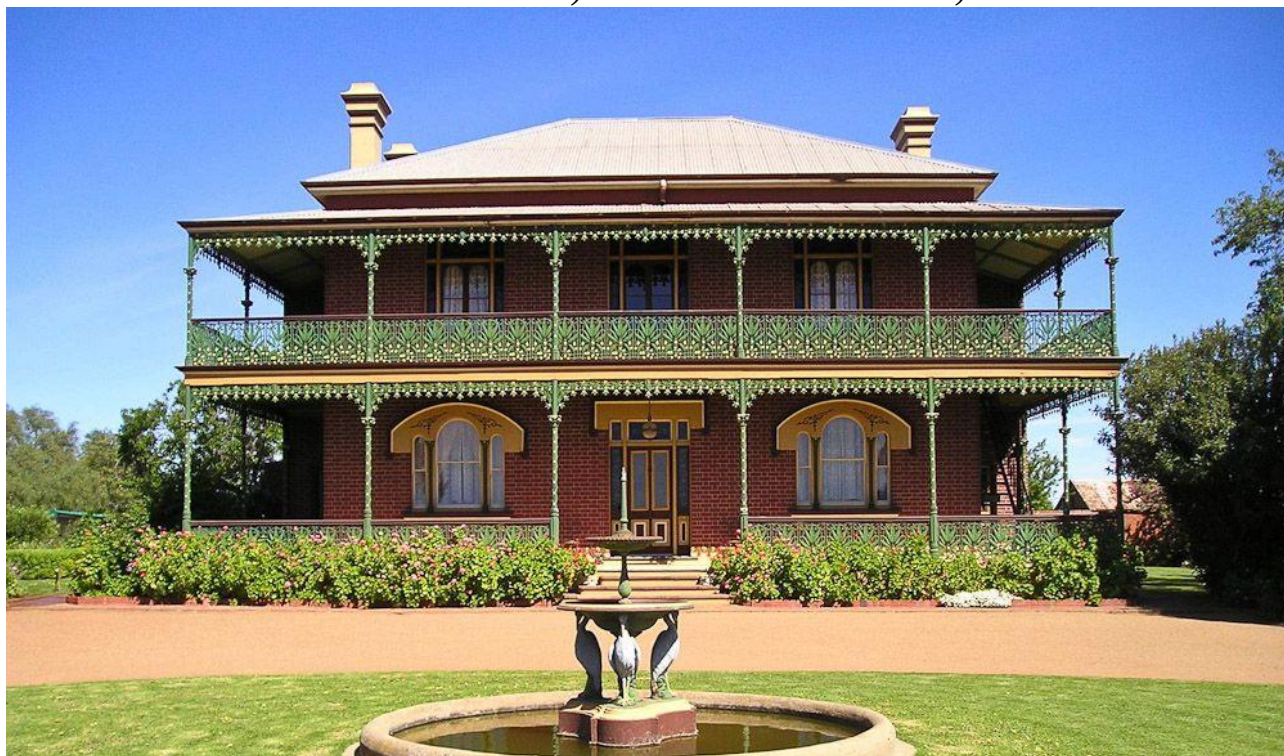
**The site:** Dubbed as the ‘Giant of the Loire Valley’ this is the highest castle in France boasting seven floors, 204 rooms, numerous portrait galleries, and a private opera house which seats 200 people. It was a fortress built by the Counts of Anjou in the 11th Century and King Louis XIII dropped by in 1620.

**The ghosts:** The most active is La Dame Verte, (Green Lady), who was apparently the illegitimate child of King Charles VII and was later murdered by her husband in the château in the 15th century after he caught her having an affair. She is often seen in the tower room of the chapel, wearing her green dress, with gaping holes where her eyes and nose should be. When not startling guests by her appearance she can be heard moaning around the castle.

**Current situation:** The château is a popular hotel that hosts special events such as a Christmas market and tastings of the well-regarded wines, produced from its own vineyards. Guests who are brave enough to stay overnight enjoy rooms lavishly decorated with period furniture.

**Learn more about Château de Brissac**

## 2. Monte Cristo Homestead, New South Wales, Australia



**The site:** A late Victorian mansion, with intricate cast iron lattice work, built by wealthy landowner Christopher William Crawley in 1876. Reputedly Australia's most haunted house.

**The ghosts:** Take your pick. There's the young child who was dropped down the stairs, the maid who fell from the balcony or the stable boy who burned to death. The most active, however, is the ghost of the son of the caretaker who was found curled up next to the dead body of his mother and chained up for 40 years.

**Current situation:** The house currently operates as a B&B, offering dinner followed by a ghost tour where you can learn all about its gruesome past. Those who dare can spend the night in the haunted homestead.

**Learn more about Monte Cristo Homestead**



### 3. Bhangarh Fort, Rajasthan, India



Tourists visiting the ruined fortress in the ancient city of Bhangarh. This palace is said to be cursed and entry during night is prohibited

**The site:** The ruins of a fort city built in the 17th century, Bhangarh Fort consists of fort walls, bazars, havelis, royal palaces, and numerous temples, with three grand storeys you can explore. But do not be fooled by the beauty of these ruins as they are ranked as the most haunted fort in India.

**The ghosts:** A wizard called Singhia and a princess called Ratnavati who spurned his advances. Legend has it that the enchanted oil he hoped would make her love him turned into a boulder when she threw it away – and it crushed him. But not before he cursed the palace, condemning the inhabitants to death, without any hope of rebirth. Another story suggests a local ascetic cursed the fort because its shadow overpowered his property. And apparently, if anyone attempts to build a roof for the fort, it will collapse.

**Current situation:** Bhangarh Fort is now an archaeological site, known as the ‘House of Ghosts’. It is possible to hire a guide who can show you around the site and give you the details of its eerie past. Be sure to visit in daylight as the fort is closed between sunset and sunrise, with locals convinced that anyone who spends the night amongst the ruins will never be seen again.

**Learn more about Bhangarh Fort**

## 4. Myrtles Plantation, USA



Myrtle's Plantation has been called 'one of the most terrifying places in America'

**The Site:** Situated in the small town of St. Francisville, north-west of New Orleans is the mansion of Myrtles Plantation, boarded by a 125-foot veranda. The stained-glass front door leads into a grand foyer displaying a huge French crystal chandelier.

**The ghosts:** With 10 people being murdered in the mansion itself, it's no surprise there have been so many reported ghost sightings, the most famous of which is Chloe, who had her ear cut off by her lover. She wears a green turban, peering intently at visitors while they're in bed and has even appeared in a photograph. A more recent photo also shows another young girl, known as 'Ghost Girl' peering through the window of the house. More eerie sightings include a child bouncing on the beds, a soldier, a voodoo priestess and the ghost of a previous owner who was shot in the chest has been heard staggering up the stairs where he died.

**Current situation:** Despite being known as the most haunted house in America, the plantation is now a pretty Bed and breakfast offering 12 accommodations. Ghost tours are run from the site and you can choose between daily tours or the spookier and more popular evening tours. And soon a new restaurant on site will bring fresh, local food to visitors.

**Learn more about Myrtle's Plantation**



## 5. Dragsholm Slot, Denmark



Dragsholm Slot is a haunted hotel in Denmark

**The site:** Dragsholm Slot, or Dragsholm Castle, was originally built in 1215, making it one of the oldest castles in Denmark and reportedly the most haunted castle in all of Europe. In the 16th and 17th century parts of it were used to house prisoners of noble or ecclesiastical rank, and in 1694 it was rebuilt in a Baroque style.

**The ghosts:** The castle is thought to be home to at least 100 ghosts including the Earl of Bothwell, the husband of Mary Queen of Scots who died as a prisoner in the castle. You may also see the White Lady wandering the halls, who's skeleton was found encased in a wall by builders in 1930.

**Current situation:** The castle has been transformed into a luxurious hotel with lavish rooms and a Michelin-rated restaurant serving locally sourced food. The hotel offers their own guided tour explaining the history of the building but for a truly terrifying experience, book a ghost tour including a two-night stay, a tour highlighting the spooky occupants and dinner at the gourmet restaurant.

**Learn more about Dragsholm Slot**

## 6. Ancient Ram Inn, Gloucestershire, England



The Ancient Ram Inn in Gloucestershire

**The site:** Built in 1145, the inn was used by priests who kept slaves and workers in there to help build the St. Mary's Church. Located in Wotton-under-edge, it is situated on two ley lines, places believed to have spiritual energy from Stonehenge. It has also been reported that it was the scene of a child sacrifice and devil worshipping.

**The ghosts:** It is widely believed that the redirecting of water on the Ancient Ram property caused a portal for dark energy to open up, meaning many ghosts haunt the inn. The 'Witch's Room' is said to be haunted by a woman burnt at the stake in the 1500s as she was accused of being a witch. A high priestess has been spotted sitting on a bed, a centurion on horseback has been seen walking through the walls, the agonising screams of a girl heard, a monk in the most haunted room and even a succubus is said to slip into the beds of visitors.

**Current situation:** Despite being well known as one of the most haunted places in the world, featuring on TV programs such as 'Most Haunted' and 'Ghost Adventures', the inn has changed hands several times in the recent past, making the owners difficult to track down. However, many paranormal events are hosted at the inn.

**Learn more about Ancient Ram Inn**



## 7. Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa



An overview of the De Kat Balcony within the Castle of Good Hope which is South Africa's oldest structure

**The site:** Built in the 17th century by the Dutch East India Company, the Castle of Good Hope is South Africa's oldest building.

**The ghosts:** The first ghost was spotted in 1915 when the apparition of a tall gentleman was seen jumping off the side of one of the castle walls, and then walking between the bastions Leerdam and Oranje. Another famous ghost, the Lady in Grey, was often seen running through the castle holding her face and crying hysterically, but has not been seen since a woman's body was found during excavations.

Other unexplained events include the bell in the bell tower ringing of its own accord and the ghost of a black dog that pounces on unsuspecting visitors, then simply vanishes into thin air.

**Current situation:** Arguably one of the world's best preserved 17th century buildings, the castle is now a popular tourist attraction with three prestigious museums, a memorial to Krotoa the leader of the Khoi nation and an opportunity to learn more of the hidden history surrounding the castle on a guided tour. You can also eat in the restaurant in the front courtyard and watch the Key Ceremony and cannon firing.

**Learn more about the Castle of Good Hope**

## 8. Hell Fire Club, Montpelier Hill, Ireland



The ruin of former hunting lodge Hell Fire Club, atop Montpelier Hill in Dublin, Ireland

**The site:** The Hell Fire Club was a hunting lodge, built in 1925 for William Connolly, an Irish parliamentary speaker. The stones of the buildings are from ancient passage tombs, said to have angered the Devil, which first associated the site with the supernatural.

The lodge reportedly became a gathering place for a small group of Dublin elites who met for debauchery and devil worship. Its ruins sit atop the summit of Montpelier Hill in the foothills of the Dublin Mountains.

**The ghosts:** Tales of animal sacrifice, black masses, cloven-hoofed men and murder are linked to the structure. The most popular tale tells of a visit by a satanic creature, in the form of a man, who was only discovered when one of the players dropped a card and on picking it up, noticed the guest had cloven feet.

On his discovery, the creature disappeared in a ball of flames. There are stories about a big black cat, the size of a dog who took on a priest and haunts the lodge. The most regular ghostly visitor is a young lady, believed to have been placed in a barrel, set on fire and rolled down the hill for fun.

**Current situation:** The Hell fire club is a popular stopping point on a walking trail through the Dublin Hills. Ghost tours of the site are also available, with extra tours running for the week of Halloween.

**Learn more about the Hell Fire Club or watch the story of the Hell Fire Club**



## 9. Banff Springs Hotel, Alberta, Canada



View of the Banff Springs Hotel building in Canada's Rocky Mountains

**The Site:** Styled after a Scottish baronial castle, The Banff Springs Hotel in Alberta Canada, is one of Canada's great railway hotels and reportedly one of the most haunted buildings in the country.

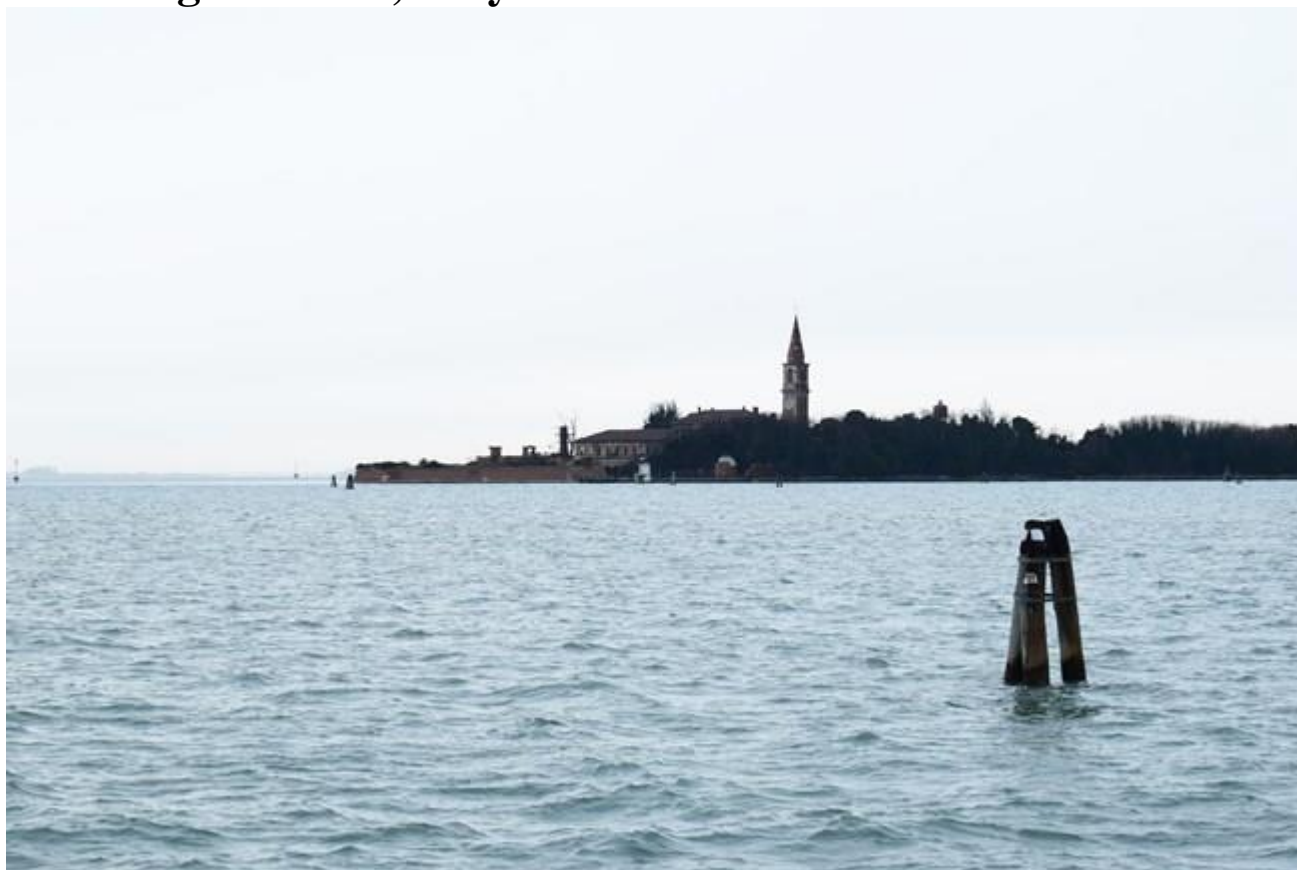
**The ghosts:** There's a bride who fell down the staircase breaking her neck after panicking when her dress caught fire. She is often seen in the ballroom dancing, with the flames coming from the back of her dress. A family were murdered in room 873. The door to this room has since been bricked up, but the family can still be seen in the hallway outside the room.

And former bellman, Sam Macauley who served at the hotel during the '60s and '70s still likes helping guests up to their rooms, dressed in his '60s uniform. If you try to tip him or make conversation, he disappears.

**Current situation:** Now part of the Fairmont chain of luxury hotels, the Banff Springs, also known as 'The Castle in the Rockies' still remains a landmark in the town of Banff, Alberta and remains a popular year-round resort.

**Learn more about Banff Springs Hotel**

## 10. Poveglia Island, Italy



Is Poveglia Island the scariest in the world? Well, we wouldn't be too surprised if it was...

**The site:** In the Venice Lagoon between Venice and Lido, this small island was a place where mainlanders fled to seek refuge from invaders. In the 14th century Venetians infected by the Bubonic plague were sent here to die – and, when they died, they were burned on giant pyres. The site was also used as a mental asylum during the 1800s where patients were experimented on and tortured.

**The ghosts:** Ask a local and they will tell you the island is full of ghosts and cursed with unhealthy spirits. Voices and screams are often heard, and visitors have reported seeing dark, fleeting shadows. Many visitors say they begin to feel an oppressive evil feeling as soon as they step on the island.

**Current situation:** Despite nearly being auctioned off to an entrepreneur, the island remains totally abandoned and off bounds to most visitors. Even if you were allowed to go to the island, you'd be hard to find someone willing to take you as many locals won't step foot on Poveglia for fear of being cursed and fishermen refuse to fish in the area, worried they'll drag up human remains.

**Watch the story of Poveglia Island [here](#)**



## 11. The Separate Prison, Port Arthur, Australia



The haunted corridors of the Separate Prison

**The site:** Until the late 1800s, the Separate Prison in Tasmania's secluded Port Arthur housed some of Britain's toughest criminals. Taking inspiration from the works of British writer Jeremy Bentham, this panopticon-style prison block thrived on completely isolating prisoners to a torturous degree.

The Separate Prison operated a 'silent system', where prisoners were hooded, placed in solitary confinement and forbidden to speak to anyone. Conditions were so unbearable that countless inmates would murder their fellow prisoners. They'd rather face the death penalty than spend another minute there.

**The ghosts:** Hundreds of hooded inmates are said to wander the halls at night, a handful of the thousand people buried in the unmarked burial ground.

**Current situation:** Port Arthur is now a historic site museum open to the public. There are (chilling) nightly ghost tours if you're feeling brave.

**Learn more about the Separate Prison**

## 12. La Recoleta Cemetery, Buenos Aires, Argentina



A tomb in Cementerio de la Recoleta

**The site:** Located in the Recoleta neighbourhood of Buenos Aires, the Cementerio de la Recoleta is regarded as one of the most beautiful cemeteries in the world. First built in 1822, it is full of ornately-designed tombs, elaborate sculptures and mature shady trees. Buenos Aires' best and brightest are buried here, including actress Eva Perón, the former First Lady of Argentina.

**The ghosts:** There are reportedly multiple spirits wandering the grid-like aisles of Recoleta. One of the most famous stories is of Rufina Cambaceres, a wealthy 19-year-old woman, the daughter of a beloved Argentine author.

Urban legend states that heavy rain postponed her burial. When the groundskeeper returned to the tomb to lay her to rest once the weather cleared, he found Rufina's coffin lid ajar, with scratch marks on the inside. The legend goes that she had been buried alive, and woke in her coffin after suffering a case of 'catalepsy'.

If you hear a jangling noise in the breeze, they may be the ghostly keys of David Alleno, a gravedigger who worked at the cemetery for 30 years. He killed himself at the cemetery, allegedly after his tomb was completed, and was buried on site.

**Current situation:** While still a functioning graveyard, Cementerio de la Recoleta remains a popular destination for locals and tourist alike. Pick up a map at the entrance to help you negotiate your way around the 6,400 graves.

**Learn more about Cementerio de la Recoleta**



## 13. Jazirat Al Hamra, United Arab Emirates



An abandoned building in Jazirat al Hamra

**The site:** Once a flourishing pearl fishing village, Jazirat Al Hamra near Ras Al Kaimah was completely abandoned in the 1960s. Some say it was because of tribal conflicts, while others blame the changing tides. The most popular theory is that the residents were driven away by ghosts.

**The ghosts:** Local legend has it that the ruins are haunted by malicious djinns who wander the dirt roads of the town disguised as animals. Visitors regularly hear strange noises and spot apparitions amongst the mud-coral houses.

**Current situation:** The ruins are regularly used as a film set by Hollywood directors, such as Michael Bay. Each year, residents of nearby towns and cities gather to have a party in the town.

## 14. The Langham Hotel, London, England



The Langham Hotel on Regent Street

**The site:** The 153-year-old Langham Hotel has long been a staple of the high life in London. Literary legends Oscar Wilde and Mark Twain stayed here. And the luxury accommodation provides the setting for a famous Sherlock story, *A Scandal In Belgravia*, by Arthur Conan Doyle.

**The ghosts:** As befits one of London's finest five star hotels, the ghosts that haunt the corridors here are a cut above, too. Reports have suggested that there are at least five ghosts in the 500-room establishment, with room number 333 rumoured to be the most haunted of all.

Given the size of the hotel and its lengthy history, you could potentially run into any number of spirits. However, your haunting encounter could potentially be with one of the Langham's most esteemed ghostly guests, such as Napoleon III, the first president of France, or a German nobleman, who was said to kill himself in the hotel.

**Current situation:** Re-branded as the Langham Hilton in 1991 after a £100 million refurbishment, the hotel remains one of London's most iconic hotels.



## 15. Teatro Tapia, San Juan, Puerto Rico



Teatro Tapia (Creative Commons: Bjoertvedt)

**The site:** First built in 1824, the Italian-style horseshoe-shaped opera house in San Juan, Puerto Rico has been the centre of the city's cultural life for over 100 years. Don't let its supernatural connection put you off. It's worth a visit for its unique design alone.

**The ghosts:** The stalls here are said to be haunted by the spirit of an actress who fell to her death during a performance. She returned to haunt the venue from beyond the grave and can still be heard, at times, singing from the stage. There have even been reports of doors slamming shut backstage.

**Current situation:** Teatro Tapia, in addition to its fame as one of Puerto Rico's most haunted sites, hosts a full calendar of more earthly events including frequent ballet and opera performances.

## 16. Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, India



Ferries jostling in front of the Taj Mahal Palace

**The site:** Arguably the grandest hotel in Mumbai, if not India, the 560-room Taj Mahal Palace has been the place to wine, dine and sleep since the days of the Raj. It has put the tragedy of the 2008 terrorist attacks behind it, to take centre stage in the city again.

**The ghosts:** One of the hotel's architects, W. A. Chambers, threw himself from the fifth floor balcony. Apparently, he was distressed when he returned from a trip abroad to discover that the hotel's design had gone in a completely different direction in his absence. In a tragic twist of fate, his ghost is said to wander the halls and the Old Wing of the hotel.

**Current situation:** Still one of India's most glamorous hotels, rooms start from £200.



## 17. Carl Beck House, Ontario, Canada



Carl Beck House (Airbnb)

**The site:** This large, picturesque county house was built by Canadian lumber magnate, Carl Beck. After his wife died, his eldest daughter Mary took over as head of the household. Despite raising her younger siblings, she was left only a single dollar in her father's will. The rest of the estate was divided amongst the siblings that she'd given up her life to care for.

**The ghosts:** Guests staying at Carl Beck House have reported seeing a suited-up man being chased by a very angry woman wearing a dark-coloured blouse and skirt. No prizes for guessing who they are.

**Current situation:** You can spend the night Carl Beck House on Airbnb, with prices starting from \$98 a night. If you're unafraid of a thrill, that is. The house frequently lands on lists of the most haunted Airbnb properties you can stay in.

## 18. Chaonei Church, Beijing, China



The ruins of Chaonei Church (Creative Common: Daniel Case)

**The site:** Chaonei 81, commonly known as Chaonei Church, was first built in 1910, not as a church but as the North China Union Language School to teach Mandarin Chinese to missionaries from the West.

From the 1930s, the Chaoyangmen neighborhood of Beijing's most imposing house served as a Catholic church, until the communist government took control of the building in the 1950s. Truth be told, there's still a bit of dispute as to the building's true origins.

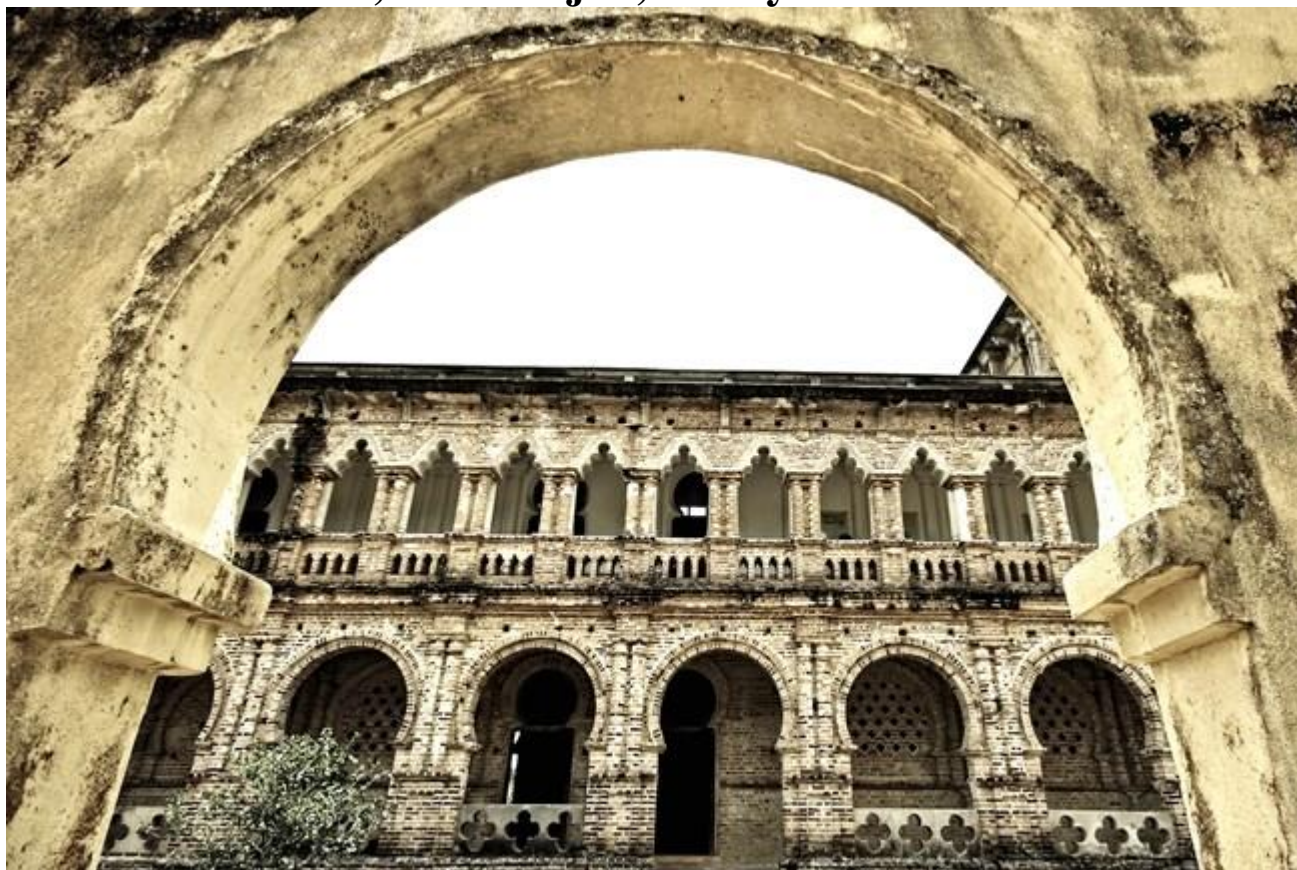
**The ghosts:** One grisly tale about Chaonei Church's origins suggests it was the home for a Chinese National Party official in 1949. That story didn't end so well.

So, depending on your luck, you'll either come across the government official's mistress, who killed herself there after their break up, or a group of three drunk construction workers who broke into the building and were never seen again. Eerily, the temperature of the house is said to be much colder than the rest of Beijing, even during the summer.

**Current situation:** The house is still abandoned, though. It's considered the most haunted place in Beijing, and is left undisturbed by the city's wider population, wary of the ghostly householders. Unless, of course, there's an opportunity to film a movie there...



## 19. Kellie's Castle, Batu Gajah, Malaysia



Kellie's Castle in Batu Gajah, Malaysia

**Site:** This unfinished mansion, built in a Moorish revival and Indo-Saracenic style, was started by a Scottish planter named William Kellie-Smith. It was meant to be a gift to his wife, but sadly he died of pneumonia in Lisbon, Portugal, where he was visiting to purchase a lift for the property. Neither his wife nor his children could bear to return to the property, and other family didn't wish to return to Malaysia, so it was left to decay and become derelict.

**Ghosts:** Photographers visiting the area for its nature and wildlife have claimed to see ghostly figures standing by the window frames. The man himself, Mr Kellie-Smith, despite dying in Portugal, is still said to haunt the second-floor hallway, no doubt disappointed his grand vision was never completed.

**Current situation:** Kellie's Castle still stands to this day, and you can embark on a private tour to fully explore the building and its history. Tours are available daily from Kuala Lumpur, which is two hours away.

## 20. Casa de la Poesia, Bogotá, Colombia



Casa de Poesía Silva, Bogotá, Colombia (Poesía Silva)

**The site:** Located in the Candelaria neighbourhood of Bogotá, Casa de la Poesía was the home of the great Modernist poet José Asunción Silva. He was known to be quite morbid, and lived through several personal tragedies, including the death of his beloved sister, Elvira. He also lost his many of finest works - handwritten manuscripts - during a shipwreck. José died in the house in 1896, at the young age of 30. In 1995, it was declared a Colombian national monument for its historic significance.

**The ghosts:** Señor Silva himself is said to still haunt his house. Visitors frequently report hearing the poet muttering under his breath from other rooms.

**Current situation:** Casa de Poesía Silva remains a listed national monument in Colombia. Visitors and locals alike can see the house during one of its regular poetry readings or literary workshops.



# The 50

## Most Beautiful Places in the World

Massive glaciers, staggering mountains, plains dotted with wild animals: We sure live in a big, beautiful world. And while pinpointing all of Mother Nature's greatest hits could take a lifetime, we think these 50 out-of-this-world landscapes and awe-inspiring wonders—from Arizona to Antarctica—need to move to the very top of your travel list.



Chris Linder

## 1. Angel Falls, Venezuela

Venezuela overflows with natural wonders, including the world's highest waterfall—the 3,212-foot cascades of Angel Falls, located in the UNESCO-protected Canaima National Park. Canaima is by far the country's most popular attraction, and the falls stretch an astounding 19 times higher than Niagara Falls. Bonus: Pixar animators used the location as inspiration for Paradise Falls in *Up*—so you know it's good.





Holger Leue

## 2. Antarctica

That's right, we put an entire continent on here. Although 99 percent of Antarctica is covered with ice, the landscape still manages to be stunningly diverse—surreal blue glaciers, active volcanoes, the rough waterways of the Drake Passage, and 360-degree views of untouched snow. And those views are made even better when an emperor penguin or humpback whale makes an appearance.



Brian Baril Photography

### 3. Antelope Canyon, Arizona

Antelope Canyon is a slot canyon (and serious Instagram darling) in the American Southwest. Its Navajo name translates to “the place where water runs through rocks”—an allusion to the canyon’s creation through erosion. The narrow, undulating spaces between rock formations allow for vivid patterns when sunlight filters through the striated stone.





#### **4. Atacama Desert, Chile**

Have you ever dreamed of exploring the moon? A trip to Valle de la Luna in Chile's Atacama Desert is a much shorter flight. Years of erosion have left behind jagged peaks, dry riverbeds, and a landscape startlingly similar to that of our favorite celestial body's.



TerenceLeezy

## 5. Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, Japan

Every traveler should experience the ethereal glow and seemingly endless heights of this bamboo grove on the outskirts of Kyoto. The experience even extends beyond the visual realm: In 1996, Japan's Ministry of the Environment included the sounds here—wood creaking, leaves rustling—as one of the top 100 Soundscapes of Japan.





Kieran Stone

## **6. Avenue of the Baobabs, Madagascar**

Separated from continental Africa by 250 miles of water, Madagascar is the greatest adventure you haven't had yet. The island nation's secrets include giant moths, bug-eyed lemurs, and places like the surreal Avenue of the Baobabs, where the centuries-old trees reach heights of nearly 100 feet.



## **7. The Azores, Portugal**

Roughly 900 miles off the coast of Lisbon, this Portuguese archipelago can inspire wanderlust with a single photo. The verdant valleys, steep ocean-side cliffs, rows of blue hydrangeas, and scattering of waterfalls make the Azores a paradise worth exploring—just make sure you visit before everyone you know beats you to it.





Chris Hepburn

## 8. Banff National Park, Canada

Easily one of the most beautiful spots in Canada, Banff National Park overwhelms with views of the Canadian Rockies and regular cast of wildlife. The park is also known for its abundance of beautiful lakes, including Lake Louise, Moraine Lake, and glacial Lake Minnewanka—each more pristine than the last.



Max shen

## 9. Boracay, Philippines

With its gentle coastlines and transporting sunsets, it's easy to see why Boracay was voted one of the best islands in the world by our readers. Unfortunately, it's become too touristed—the island closed for "rehabilitation" last year to compensate for overcrowding and unregulated development; it's since reopened to a limited number of visitors per day.





B&M Noskowski

## 10. Boulders Beach, South Africa

Located on the False Bay Coastline, about 17 miles south of Table Mountain, Boulders Beach shows off Cape Town's famously beautiful landscapes—bright blue water, granite boulders, and... penguins! Many people swim here just a few feet away from the adorable African penguin community, but feel free to just sit back and admire the beautiful coastline as well.



Jason Gilmore

## 11. Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

Home to 67 national parks, more than 5,000 miles of coastline, and landscapes ranging from deserts to snow-capped volcanoes, Mexico is so much more than the stuff of spring break clichés. Case in point: Cabo San Lucas. Venture outside of your all-inclusive resort to experience the region's turquoise waters, marine life, and iconic Arch of Cabo San Lucas, standing where the Gulf of California meets the Pacific Ocean.





Ascent Xmedia

## 12. Cappadocia, Turkey

Cappadocia, an area in Turkey where entire cities have been carved into rock, is pretty incredible on its own. But whenever hot-air balloons pepper the sky, its beauty level literally skyrockets.



Mbbirdy

### 13. Cliffs of Moher, Ireland

Few places exemplify the raw, untamed beauty of Ireland's west coast as this natural wonder, which tops 702 feet at the highest point. And while you might know them better as the Cliffs of Insanity from *The Princess Bride* (inconceivable!), in reality, the cliffs are located just south of Galway.





Daniel A. Leifheit

## 14. Denali National Park, Alaska

Despite controversies over name changes and a shrinking elevation, Denali's beauty is worth braving the extreme low temperatures. Make a road trip out of your visit, seeing as much of the 6 million acres of shimmering lakes and jagged mountains as you can.



Kai Wing Yiu

## 15. Disko Bay, Greenland

Greenland is icy, mysterious, and one of the most naturally beautiful places on the planet. Disko Bay perfectly illustrates the untouched allure of the island with its impressive icebergs, charming coastal settlements, and common sightings of breaching humpback whales.





Eachat

## 16. Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

Do we really have to explain the allure of the Galápagos? If you can, make your next travel goal to visit this of-another-time stretch of Ecuador, with dinosaur-like giant tortoises lumbering through the tall grass and real-life blue-footed boobies. Pro tip: A cruise is definitely the preferred way to explore the islands. Celebrity Cruise's *Xpedition* only ferries 100 passengers and holds nightly lectures by naturalists from Galápagos National Park.



Franckreporter

## 17. Grand Canyon, Arizona

Grand Canyon National Park kicked off its centennial celebration this year, and all signs are pointing to 2019 being an epic time to visit one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. Plan to hike some of the park's most scenic loops—like Horseshoe Bend and the South Rim Trail—to get views of the rocky badlands of the Painted Desert, Navajo Nation, and even a waterfall or two.





Maydays

## **18. The Great Barrier Reef and Whitehaven Beach, Australia**

Although the Great Barrier Reef—the largest living thing on Earth—can be seen from space, the best vantage point belongs to the avid snorkelers and scuba divers who visit each year. If you must resurface, do it at the Whitsundays—namely Whitehaven Beach, often considered to be one of the world's most beautiful beaches.



Haitong Yu

## 19. Faroe Islands

If you haven't heard of the Faroe Islands, you definitely will soon. With its grass-roofed houses, rocky coastlines, and abundance of puffins, the self-governed group of 18 volcanic islands is basically one giant photo op. Mulafoosur Waterfall might be the archipelago's most famous site—the cascade is like something from a fantasy novel, falling over the rocky cliffs of Vagar Island to the ocean below, with the green hills of Gásadalur village as a backdrop.





Natalia Valle

## 20. Fernando de Noronha, Brazil

This archipelago off the northeast coast of Brazil consists of 21 islands, featuring some of the best beaches and most beautiful landscapes in the country. Think waterfalls, towering cliffs, stretches of white sand, and—perhaps best of all—limited tourists.



Bruno De Hogues

## 21. Halong Bay, Vietnam

Halong Bay, located in northeast Vietnam, is beloved for its blue waters and spread of limestone islands, all occupied by tropical trees and wildlife. Board a Chinese junk boat to experience the beauty—and associated myths and stories—of the mist-shrouded emerald basin for yourself.





## 22. Isle of Skye, Scotland

With fairy pools and endless undulations of hills, the magical Isle of Skye is the stuff dreams are made of (regardless of whether you've binge-watched *Outlander* yet). While the nature here is timeless, the island has a food scene that's totally modern—we can't think of a more beautiful place to sample Michelin-starred cuisine.



dataichi - Simon Dubreuil

## 23. Lake Baikal, Russia

The oldest and deepest lake on earth—it reaches a depth of one mile in some spots—is also home to our planet's only freshwater seals. Come winter, the lake transforms into a wonderland, with jagged ice caves encircling what amounts to the world's largest ice skating rink.





Simonbradfield

## 24. Lake Tekapo, New Zealand

While purple, pink, and blue-hued lupin flowers may not be native to New Zealand (they hail from North America), they really do seem to bloom the most vibrantly on the nation's South Island. At Lake Tekapo, in particular, the flowers juxtapose against the backdrop of the water to create one of the country's most stunning vistas.



Agustavop

## 25. Laguna Colorada, Bolivia

About a three-hour drive north from Chile's San Pedro de Atacama, this salt lake in the shadow of the Andes is known for its blood-red waters—the result of algae that thrive in extreme heat. Flamingos (and the lake) look their best from December to April: the lake is full of water, making it more reflective for photos, and the birds are breeding. Be sure to try and catch the lake at sunset, when it's at its reddest.





Picturegarden

## 26. Machu Picchu, Peru

While the intricate stone ruins of Machu Picchu are the work of 15th-century Inca rulers, not Mother Nature, it's the site's natural setting that makes it so alluring. Perched atop the flattened peak of a mountain, the ancient Wonder of the World benefits from the famous backdrop of Huayna Picchu, lush green surfaces, and a barrier of Andean peaks that, despite the landmark's fame, makes you feel like you've stumbled upon a secret.



Matthew Williams-Ellis / robertharding

## 27. Milford Sound, New Zealand

New Zealand is no stranger to breathtaking landscapes, particularly on the west coast of the South Island. Case in point: Milford Sound, a mountainous fjord where you can live out all of your *Lord of the Rings* fantasies.





1001slide

## 28. Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

Africa's highest peak seems more striking than a lot of other famous mountains, because it's an ancient stratovolcano that's not part of any mountain range. That means the 19,000-foot summit drops down to vast, flat plains on all sides, making it a mirage-like blip on Tanzania's widespread topography. As an added bonus, the peak requires no technical mountaineering skills to summit, so even novice hikers can cross this item off their bucket lists.



Lin Lian Ching / EyeEm

## 29. Mount Fuji, Japan

It's hard to pick the single most beautiful place in Japan, but 12,388-foot Mount Fuji just might take the prize. Visit Lake Kawaguchiko in the spring for some of the best views of the mountain and cherry blossom trees—a postcard-worthy sight if we ever saw one. Or if you're an avid hiker, plan a trip for mid-July until the end of August, when the snow melts enough to allow access to Fuji's summit.





Martin Harvey

### 30. Namib Desert, Namibia

With its otherworldly landscapes and isolated luxury lodges—not to mention populations of rhinos, giraffes, and elephants—Namibia is like nowhere else on Earth. In fact, its red sand dunes and skeletal trees might make you think you've been transported to Mars instead of southwest Africa.



YinYang

### **31. Na Pali Coast, Hawaii**

Kauai has one of the world's most gorgeous coastlines, with towering waterfalls and isolated crescent beaches. Just be prepared to put in a little effort to soak up its wonders: Na Pali can only be seen from a helicopter, catamaran, or rather grueling hike.





Peter Adams

## 32. Okavango Delta, Botswana

The lush Okavango Delta—a 49-million acre river delta in northern Botswana—is like a real-world eden, where cheetahs, zebras, buffalo, and rhinos roam freely. Visit during Africa's winter (our summer), after the rains when the delta floods: The savanna's grasses are low, while growth along the waterways attracts tons of wildlife.



Gu

### 33. Pamukkale, Turkey

The 17 tiered pools of Pamukkale ("cotton castle" in Turkish) are as beautiful as hot springs get. The stacks of white travertine (a form of limestone) overlook the city of Denizli, and the still, 94-degree Fahrenheit waters perfectly reflect the cerulean Aegean sky.





by Marc Guitard

### **34. The Pitons, St. Lucia**

The scenery of St. Lucia can be summed up in one jaw-dropping site: a duo of striking spires known as the Pitons. The two volcanic peaks—Gros Piton and Petit Piton—are the most iconic landmarks on the island, and visitors can enjoy them in a variety of ways. A singular experience has to be actually hiking the mountains, an activity which takes the better part of a day; or if you prefer to keep your feet at sea level, plop a towel down at Sugar Beach, set dramatically (and conveniently) between the two Pitons.



### **35. Playa de Las Catedrales, Spain**

As a destination on Europe's Iberian Peninsula, Spain is renowned for its island paradises and semi-remote beaches. We're particularly big fans of Playa de Las Catedrales, a small stretch of sand on the Galician coast where natural stone arches form a walkable "cathedral" at low tide.





Oleh\_Slobodeniuk

### **36. Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia**

If you can make it through the crowds of selfie-taking tourists, you'll discover that Plitvice Lakes National Park more than lives up to the hype. The 16 terraced lakes of Croatia's most popular site are connected by waterfalls and vary in shades of blue, resulting in something that defies the imagination.



Cornelia Doerr

### **37. Provence, France**

The seemingly endless stretches of lavender fields make Provence one of the prettiest (and best-smelling) places in France. Distilleries—where the essential oil from the flowers are bottled or used to make soaps, lotions, and creams—dot the area, but the multitude of fields featuring unreal violet views are the real pride of Provence.





Afriandi

### **38. Raja Ampat Islands, Indonesia**

Raja Ampat is a chain of some 1,500 islands strung along nearly 29,000 square miles off the western coast of West Papua. The views here are downright prehistoric: jagged lava peaks clad in green jungle; palms sprouting out of sheer cliff walls; mist drifting in and out of deep canyons. The biodiverse islands are easily one of the most physically ravishing destinations on the planet.



Mantaphoto

### **39. Reynisfjara, Iceland**

If the moon had a shoreline, it would probably look something like Reynisfjara. Just a 20-minute drive from Vik in southern Iceland, jet-black sand and spectacularly shaped basalt columns make the this beach one of the most impressive sites in an already impressive country.





Joerg Fockenberg / EyeEm

## 40. Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia

Southwest Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni is the largest salt flat in the world, and is about as surreal as landscapes come. When dry, the flat is a sheet of blindingly white salt tiles. And during the wet season, the shallow lake mirrors the sky, creating a dreamy illusion of infinity.

v



Godong

## 41. Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

Tanzania's portion of the Serengeti is the ideal location for an African adventure. Visit between January and March to witness the wonder that is the Great Migration, an iconic phenomenon that sees 1.5 million wildebeest sweep through East Africa on an annual, 1,200-mile cycle. Even better? Watch the stampeding animals from a luxurious safari lodge, like Singita Mara River Tented Camp or Mwiba Lodge.



John M Lund Photography Inc

## 42. Socotra, Yemen

Nearly 350 miles off the southern coast of Yemen, Socotra has both the remoteness and surrealism of some strange, distant planet. The UFO-like dragon's blood trees are the island's most notable feature—we dare you to find *those* in your friendly neighborhood park.





Franckreporter

### **43. Torres del Paine National Park, Chile**

With its granite pillars, azure lakes, and steppes spotted with grazing guanacos, Torres del Paine is one of the most impressive sites in the entire Southern Hemisphere. It also happens to be an extremely popular destination for hikers: The ultra-ambitious can travel the Full Circuit—crossing the entire park—in nine days.



Guillaume Lecomte / EyeEm

## 44. Trolltunga, Norway

Any Pinterest or Instagram user has probably seen a photo of Trolltunga ("Troll's Tongue"), Norway's undeniable photography darling. The protruding rock sits about 2,300 feet above Lake Ringedalsvatnet, tempting travelers to inch out to the edge. Unfortunately, Trolltunga has fallen prey to "death by popularity" and local organizations have called for tourist caps to protect the site. But even if you don't get your once-in-a-lifetime profile picture on the rock's edge, you can still soak up some epic fjord views from the surrounding mountain area.



Anton Petrus

## 45. Ubud, Bali

As crowded as Ubud can get, the town is only minutes from dozens of authentic villages and peaceful countryside vistas. Rent a motorbike or bicycle at your hotel and get lost in the villages, tangerine groves, and rice paddies—kept alive by farmers who tend the terraces just as previous generations have done for millennia.





AGF

## 46. Uluru, Australia

No matter how you choose to view the 700-million-year-old Uluru (or Ayers Rock)—from above by hot air balloon, across the desert on a motorcycle, hiking at the base during the technicolor sunset—witnessing its majesty should be on every traveler's list.



Tamer\_Desouky

## 47. Victoria Falls, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Nothing compares to standing in front of the world's largest waterfall, which stretches in length for a full mile. Visit between February and May (after the region's rainy season) for the clearest views of the 500 million liters of water that pour over the falls every 60 seconds.



Tuul & Bruno Morandi

## 48. Wulingyuan Scenic Area, China

Scenic might be an understatement in this case. This 100-square-mile attraction in China's Hunan Province contains thousands of sandstone pillars that are nature's version of skyscrapers—some even stretch taller than the Empire State Building's midpoint.





Matteo Colombo

## 49. Zakynthos, Greece

Far less crowded than sister islands Mykonos and Santorini, Zakynthos has some of the most beautiful beaches in the Greek Isles—namely, Navagio Beach. Sheltered by cliffs, Navagio is only accessible by boat, and draws its name (“Shipwreck”) from a freighter that ran aground, was abandoned, and still rests in the beach’s white sands today.



Matteo Colombo

## **50. Zhangye Danxia Landform, China**

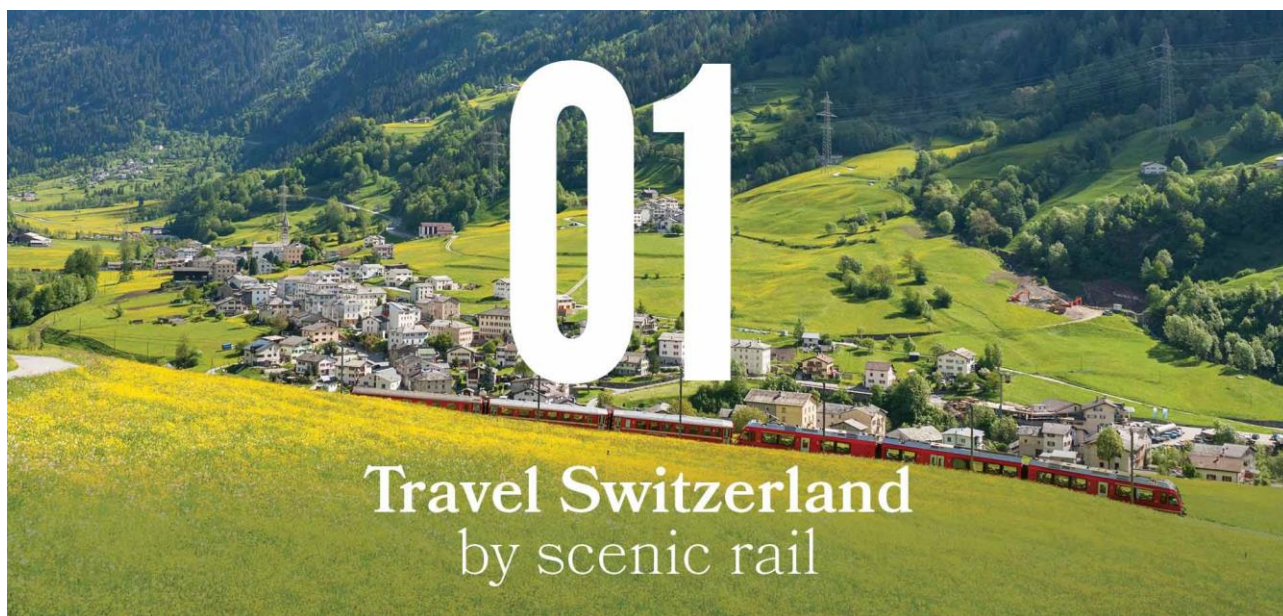
These striped, multicolored mountains are Mother Nature's answer to Photoshop. Red sandstone and mineral deposits have been building up in China's Danxia Landform Geological Park for more than 20 million years, causing the surreal layered effect.

# 50

## Travel Experiences

Every year we crunch the numbers, consult our industry contacts and tap into the collective know-how of our travel experts to bring you our 50 top travel experiences for the upcoming year and beyond, in no particular order – they're all amazing. Be inspired to see more of the world through these incredible experiences.

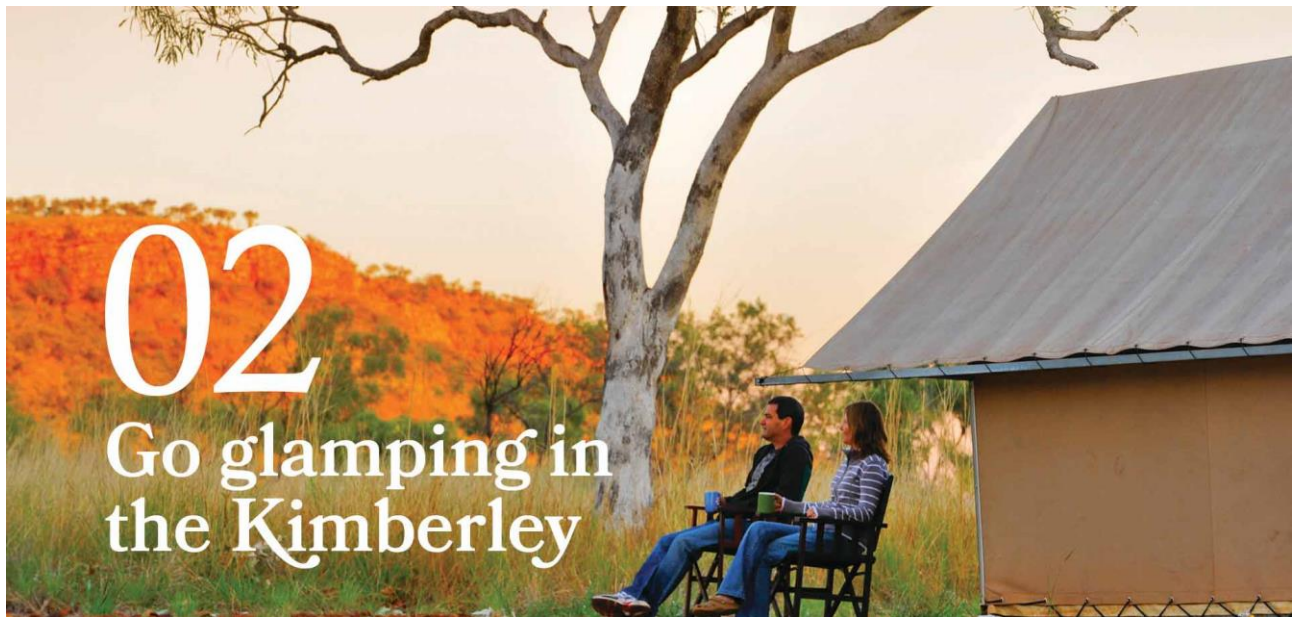




## 01.Travel Switzerland by scenic rail

**A small mountainous country in the heart of Europe, Switzerland is usually associated with chocolate, banking, knives and watches.**

This is a place for the organised, the efficient and the finer things in life. Yet, from the fertile valleys of the north across the Alps to the Mediterranean south, the spectacular scenery really is something special. There's no better way to explore than by rail. Imagine sitting with a glass of wine, informative commentary on your headset and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes.



## 02. Go glamping in the Kimberley

**The landscape is awash with colour – the bright-red dirt of the road framed by sparse, green foliage and the vivid blue sky.**

It's dry and dusty in this part of the Kimberley in June but the landscape is awash with colour – the bright-red dirt of the road framed by sparse, green foliage and the vivid blue sky. We're driving along the famous Gibb River Road, bumpy and shaky in parts, adding to the 4WD experience. Just 200m off the Gibb, an oasis awaits: Bell Gorge Wilderness Lodge. It's more glamping than camping, our luxury tented cabin is spacious with a fully equipped ensuite. We arrive late in the afternoon, just in time to settle into deck chairs with a drink to enjoy the sunset over the King Leopold escarpment.



### 03. See Thailand's floating pagodas

**The otherworldly white pagodas seem to hover mystically from their perch high on the mist-shrouded peaks**

Though their origins may look supernatural, the floating pagodas of the Wat Chaloem Phra Kiat temple, in Lampang Province, northern Thailand, started life via the very hike you'll do to reach the breathtaking heights at which they sit. In an awe-inspiring display of devotion, a much-loved monk led a team of around 50, who carried every piece of the temple to the mountain top, working each day for two years, completing the incredible project around 13 years ago. et and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes.





## 04. Set sail on a state-of-the-art ship

### **A new ship is set to revolutionise the ocean-going experience in 2020**

Celebrity Apex (launching in April) is the second ship to launch in Celebrity Cruises' Edge series fleet with a raft of innovative design and visionary spaces. While the exterior is certainly eye-catching, the interiors are just as stylish and modern with outdoor plunge pools for the two-storey Edge Villas. If that wasn't fantastical enough, the Magic Carpet is the world's first cantilevered platform that can move decks and up to a height of 13 storeys for a new perspective on cruising.



## 05. Climb an active volcano in Vanuatu

**The trip to Vanuatu's Mt Yasur volcano on Tanna Island is an experience in itself.**

Travelling in the back of a ute out of town, the bitumen road gives way to fertile dirt tracks that wind through the thick jungle before ash and dirt surround you. At the base of the mountain the chief of the local tribe gives us permission to stand on what is essentially a cliff of fire, the volcano. A ceremonial horn blasts, singing and dancing begin, and we're encouraged to join in. All the while thunder breaks around us, until we realise the sound is actually rumbles from the volcano above.



## 06. Drive the Wales Way

### **Discover the fascinating stories of Wales by taking to the roads**

Running through the mountainous heart of Wales, the five-day Cambrian Way begins in the Welsh capital of Cardiff and takes you north to the charming Victorian seaside town of Llandudno. Mountains, coastal villages, gourmet food tours and the fascinating history are waiting for you along the four-day North Wales Way. Following the shore of Cardigan Bay for 290km on a seven-day self-drive journey, the Coastal Way takes you to harbour towns, beaches, galleries and countless foodie ports-of-call such as gastropubs, farmhouse cheesemakers, distilleries, legendary fish 'n' chip shops and so much more.





## 07. Venture to the seventh continent in luxury

**The seventh continent enthrals visitors with its sparkling icebergs, glaciers and wildlife**

The seventh continent enthrals visitors with its sparkling icebergs, glaciers and wildlife and Antarctica is now more accessible than ever. Two new, state-of-the-art expedition ships are due to set sail to the Antarctic Peninsula in 2020 with each voyage carrying around 100 passengers. Aurora Expedition's The Greg Mortimer and Lindblad Expedition's National Geographic Endurance boast cutting-edge nautical and safety features, while providing a luxurious and relaxing onboard cruise experience. Adventurous guests can enjoy shore excursions or chill out on board with activities such as yoga.



## 08. Be a guest at an Indian wedding

**Imagine being surrounded by a riotous flurry of multicoloured decorations, elaborate silk saris in rainbow hues and catchy uplifting music as you're swept up in the joyous celebration of a multi-day Indian wedding ceremony.**

Wendy Wu Tours can organise a private tour that invites you to join in a couple's nuptial festivities in India to celebrate the commitment, religion, tradition and union of families. The details – hennaed hands and feet, flower garlands, intricate gold jewellery, exquisite Indian sweets and the significance of wedding rituals – seal the deal on a trip that offers an intimate look at Hindu customs rarely experienced by outsiders.





## 09. Soak up the rays at the world's first island beach club in Fiji

**Malamala Beach Club is the world's first beach club located on its own island – a perfectly circular island ringed by white-sand beaches and crystal-clear blue lagoons**

A day trip here is just 25 minutes via a South Sea Cruises transfer from Port Denarau, just off Fiji's main island, Viti Levu. Once there, you can enjoy all-day activities from swimming to snorkelling in pristine waters, kayaking, walking around the island or just relaxing in a private cabana.

Malamala Beach Club also offers an incredible menu of South Pacific-island inspired creations and a selection of handcrafted cocktails with a perfect side of paradisiacal views.





## 10. Check out NYC's newest neighbourhood

**Now open, Hudson Yards in Manhattan's Far West Side is definitely buzzworthy.**

New York City's newest neighbourhood was built from the ground up atop an open-air railyard.

The mixed-use district is poised as the cultural centre of one of the world's most dynamic cities with shops, dining and innovative art and design as well as green spaces. To visit the city's newest neighbourhood, jump on the 7 subway line, which lands you directly in the heart of the area.

Attractions include the Vessel, Thomas Heatherwick's structure of connected staircases between the buildings of Hudson Yards, or there's the seven-storey, shopping mall like no other retail in Manhattan.



## 11. Blend your own wine at d'Arenberg Cube

**Striking and modern in contrast to the rural backdrop of South Australia's McLaren Vale wine region, the d'Arenberg Cube demands your attention.**

The structure is reminiscent of an oversized, unsolved Rubik's Cube, reflecting the complexity of creating the perfect drop. Each level, a playground for the senses, is an attraction within itself at the award-winning, experiential venue. On the top level, the Blending Bench allows you play winemaker; tasting, mixing and bottling your own blend of grapes that ripened on the vines below. Name your blend and play sommelier at the next dinner party.

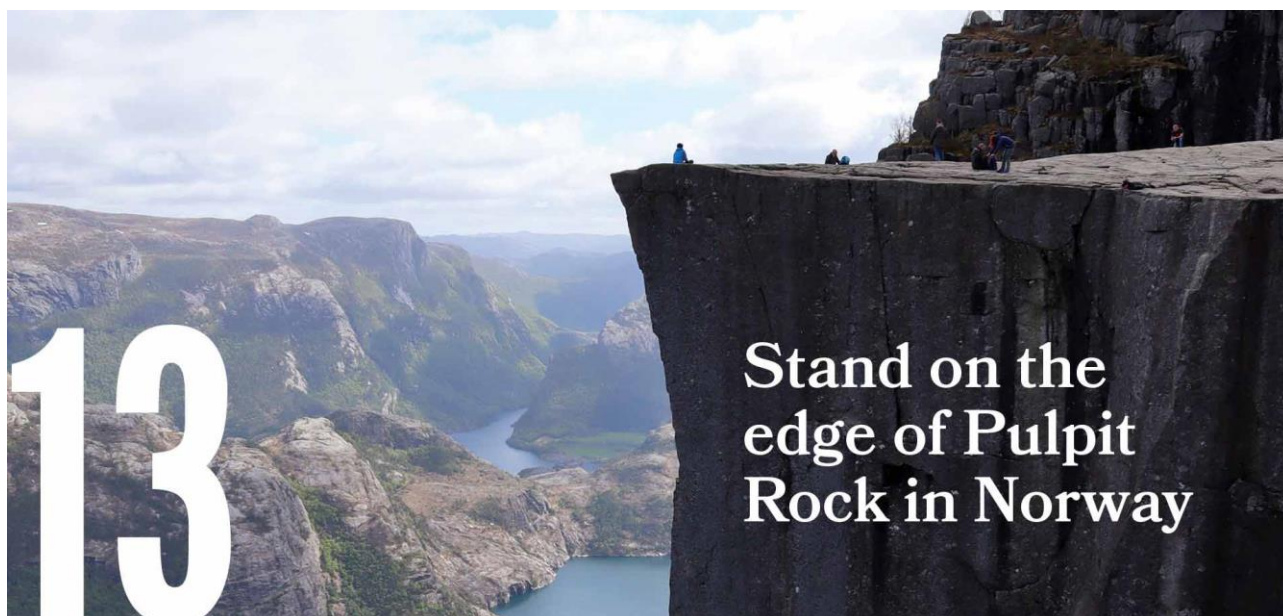


## 12. Dive the Great Barrier Reef

### **Under the water, it's a whole new world**

Taking a helicopter to the Great Barrier Reef, the view from the air is absolutely stunning. Flying over coral reefs with the ocean below glistening in 50 shades of blue, green and turquoise makes you realise flying is definitely a 'wow' way to arrive to Heron Island in the southern Great Barrier Reef. Under the water, it's a whole new world. The diversity of marine life and the colours of the reef and its inhabitants are astounding. On my first dive I swam amid hundreds of reef fish, multiple species of rays and a sea floor dotted with coral in many shades and colours. et and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes. [Read more ...](#)





## 13. Stand on the edge of Pulpit Rock in Norway

### **Want breathtaking views, literally?**

Pulpit Rock is a sheer cliff that towers 604m over the Lysefjord in southwestern Norway and one of the area's most famous natural attractions. The 8km round-trip trail starts with a steep climb, followed by a gentle walk along a mountainside before another steep rise up natural stone stairs. After a series of smaller ascents and descents, we're at a wooden walkway on the side of the cliff before the final leg of the trail up a smooth rock surface. Natural paths zigzag along the cliff face before a sheer drop down the fjord. Just up ahead is Pulpit Rock. Read more...



## 14. Kayak with orcas

### **Vancouver Island is one of the best places to witness orcas in the wild**

Seated in the kayak, I can see a murmuring on the surface of the water, bubbles surfacing and ripples forming into small waves. They're here. A slight bump on the underside of the kayak is the first greeting we receive from an orca (also called a killer whale). Breaching beside us, a formal hello is delivered in the form of a water spout showering me in cold water from the Pacific Ocean. Vancouver Island is one of the best places to witness orcas in the wild and Johnstone Strait, between Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia, is home to the largest resident pod in the world.



## 15. Beach yourself in Boracay

### White-sand, blue-water beach of tropical island dreams

Until Boracay closed to tourism in 2018 for rehabilitation, the island was one of the Philippines' top tourist draws, famous for its 4km-long White Beach – the white-sand, blue-water beach of tropical island dreams. Reopening in October, 2018 with a daily visitor limit, travellers now need to have proof of accommodation on the island in order to board the boat from Kalino to Boracay. White Beach has lost none of its lustre, the sandy stretch is still a popular spot with bars and restaurants along the beachfront and boutiques and local markets for souvenirs. There's a lively atmosphere and the beach itself is back to its pristine best.





## 16. Go scrambling on the Isle of Skye

**Rambling, by definition, is ‘walking in the countryside for pleasure’**

It’s wonderfully British. But when the ground you’re rambling across gets steeper and you find yourself using your hands to climb up a craggy basalt peak ... now you’re scrambling. Scrambling is also one of Britain’s favourite outdoor pastimes, and there’s nowhere more thrilling to get your scramble on than the Isle of Skye. With 22 peaks, Black Cuillin Ridge is known as the UK’s toughest mountain challenge. If that makes you a little nervous, don’t be. You don’t need to take on the most challenging climb to witness some of the most beautiful and dramatic scenery in the world.



## 17. Be wowed by the restaurant scene in Bali

**Exploring the culinary landscape Bali is hungry, but rewarding work.**

A host of esteemed international chefs has traded big cities for beach views, transforming Bali into a modern foodie mecca. With menus dishing up everything from Mediterranean to Mexican, Asian fusion, modern Australian and experimental fine dining, the more than 20 million tourists who grace Bali's shores annually are spoilt for choice. Dedicated foodies can indulge in a burgeoning dining scene that's equal parts sophisticated and adventurous. Venues such as Sardine take inspiration from local flavours in refined Balinese fusion dishes, while Italian Osteria Da Maria will have guests trading Bintang for burrata and bolognese. So, bring your appetite – exploring the culinary landscape Bali is hungry, but rewarding work.

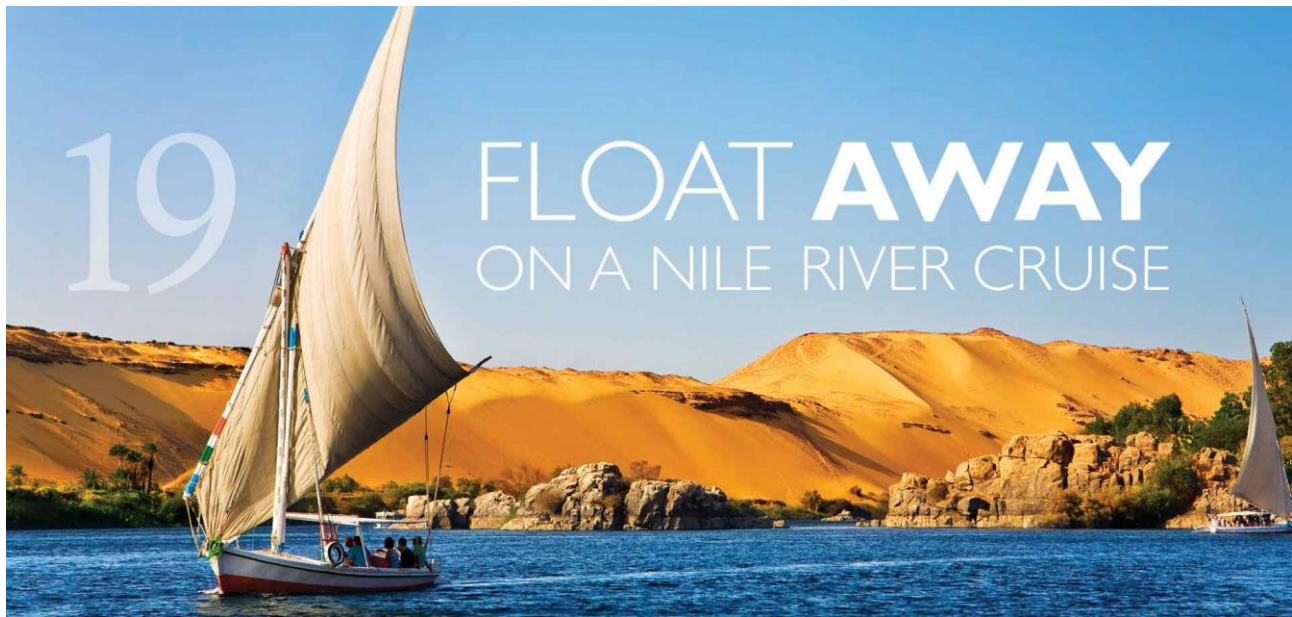


## 18. Go caving amid Mayan ruins in Belize

**It's not easy to get to, but as with most things, the more difficult the challenge, the greater the reward.**

Deep in the Belizean jungle, it's an hour's ride from San Ignacio and another hour's light trek on paths and through three rivers just to reach the Actun Tunichil Muknal cave (ATM cave). It's humid with smatterings of light rain, there's been a snake sighting and all we can hear are howler monkeys in the trees above us. How, we wonder, did the intrepid archaeologist who discovered the ATM cave in 1989 after more than 1,000 years of them being 'lost' even get here?





## 19. Float away on a Nile River cruise

**It's incredible how many Egyptian antiquities you encounter on a Nile River cruise.**

To be in the presence of the last Ancient Wonder of the World – the Great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx – is something I'll always treasure. On a nine-day cruise itinerary from Cairo, I was able to experience this ancient destination from the modern comfort of my luxury cabin, seeing the beautiful scenery and temples that line the banks of the Nile and waving to the locals as we coasted along. Watching the feluccas sailing in the sunset, it was a fitting ending to a trip back in time.



## **20. Stargaze the largest Dark Sky Reserve in the world**

### **Clarity of the cold night is endless**

On a chilly evening in September, I left the warmth of my accommodation at Lake Tekapo in New Zealand to travel to the brand-new Dark Sky Project Base on the lakefront, ready to stargaze the Southern skies. The Crater Experience at Cowan's Private Observatory is a five-minute bus ride from the base and it's soon evident why the South Island region of Aoraki Mackenzie has earned its reputation as the world's largest gold-standard International Dark Sky Reserve. With the clarity of the cold night and limitless sky, constellations and galaxies can be observed with the naked eye as well as through the powerful 14-inch optical telescope.



## 21. Watch the sun rise over Angkor Wat

**The darkness lifts, the sky slowly turns orange and the grand temple reveals itself little by little.**

We arrive to Angkor Wat in total darkness, unable to see anything beyond what our phone torches illuminate. We follow a guide to the base of the temple, which is a looming black silhouette in the pre-dawn light. Rather than jostle with the crowd at one of the famous reflection pools, we travel a little further around its edge and find a quiet place to sit on the grass. The darkness lifts, the sky slowly turns orange and the grand temple reveals itself little by little. The sun finally breaks over the central tower, rays flooding the grounds of the ancient temple, illuminating everything in the most glorious golden glow. et and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes. Read more...





## 22. Frolic on a private island

**Royal Caribbean International cruises has its own tropical island paradise and it's open for fun!**

Perfect Day CocoCay in the Bahamas is a fun-park-beach-getaway-chillout zone that's exclusively for RCI guests and accessible by tender from your ship. The overall vibe is relaxation with a side of adventure set on a remote island surrounded by crystal-clear water. Be adventurous zip-lining across the island, tackling Daredevil's Peak – the tallest waterslide in North America – and parasailing, or chill out on hammocks.



## 23. Trek Torres del Paine National Park

**The most spectacular part of Chile's Torres del Paine National Park is the diverse scenery.** And the famous W Trek encompasses everything Patagonia has to offer. On a seven-day walking adventure in what is virtually the end of the Earth, I trekked next to vast lakes, wooded forest and stark rocky outcrops. I had a view of a different glacier nearly every day, culminating with the giant granite towers the park is named for – three huge stone monoliths that are really worth the steep climb to get to the top. At the end of the W Trek, enjoy some downtime at the eco-lodge or luxury lodge with sweeping views over the park and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes.



## 24. Immerse yourself in France on a Viking river cruise

**France is the most visited country in the world for good reason – the art, culture and gastronomy, the iconic landmarks and the idyllic countryside elicit joie de vivre for all who travel there**

It's imbued with history at every turn and there's no better way to experience it than on an eight-day Viking cruise from Avignon to Lyon on the Rhone River. The south of France in summer is so ripe with beauty, aromas and charm you can easily see how this pocket of Provence has seduced and inspired artists for centuries. Even the sunrise from my tastefully furnished cabin aboard Viking Delling is like a watercolour painting – beautiful pink and orange shades reflecting in the river. Read more...





## 25. Deep-dive into the design of Chicago

**The city has a fascinating history, which is reflected in the design and stories**

The Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise is the most interesting activity you will ever do in Chicago, even if you're not an architecture buff. The 1.5-hour tour by Chicago Architecture Center's super-knowledgeable tour guides imparts stories of how Chicago grew from a small settlement into one of the world's largest cities in less than 100 years. The Windy City is also home to the world's first skyscraper. The city has a fascinating history, which is reflected in the design and the stories of more than 50 buildings and skyscrapers that line the Chicago River. et and uninterrupted views as you glide through villages and valleys over mountain passes and blue lakes. Trust me, it's even better than it sounds.



## 26. Stay on a coffee estancia in Colombia

**Colombia, the third-largest coffee-producing country in the world, is considered to have the ideal geography for growing our favourite stimulant**

The higher the elevation, the better the taste of the bean, so the so-called Coffee Triangle of the lush highlands of the Santa Ana Valley, between Salento and Medellin, is a coffee lover's nirvana. Staying at Hacienda Venecia coffee estancia (two hours' drive from Salento) on Intrepid's Cafe Colombia trip will get you closer to the bean and its connection with the local culture. From the brightly hued fruit on coffee trees to the roasted grounds and, of course, tastings of the different coffee types, you'll gain an understanding of the complex history of coffee cultivation.



## 27. Sail on a gulet in Turkey

### **Turkey is a destination where travel dreams become a reality**

It's morning three of our sailing adventure along Turkey's striking Turquoise Coast and I'm dreading waking from this dream when we disembark at the ancient city of Olympos. And this is certainly the stuff of travel dreams: sleeping on deck under the star-pierced sky, morning swims in the cerulean sea, exploring crumbling ruins (St Nicholas Island) and ghost towns (Kayakoy) hidden among olive shrubs and exploring the sunken city of Kekova. Setting sail from the port city of Fethiye, we've explored enchanting resort towns such as Oludinez and Kas, moored in picturesque bays to sleep and swim as our crew fish for dinner.





## 28. Safari in Sri Lanka

**Sri Lanka is where you'll find some of the densest concentrations of leopards and elephants in the world**

Flip the script on the traditional safari experience by going wild in Sri Lanka where you'll find some of the densest concentrations of leopards and elephants in the world. While Sri Lanka's north is a lush tropical jungle filled with Asian elephants and sloth bears, in the southeast part of the teardrop-shaped isle the terrain is open and scrubby – similar to the classic African savannah. Yala National Park is a 130,000ha nature reserve of grasslands, forests and lagoons that's home to 44 mammal species and 215 types of bird. Its most famous, and famously elusive, resident is the Sri Lankan leopard.

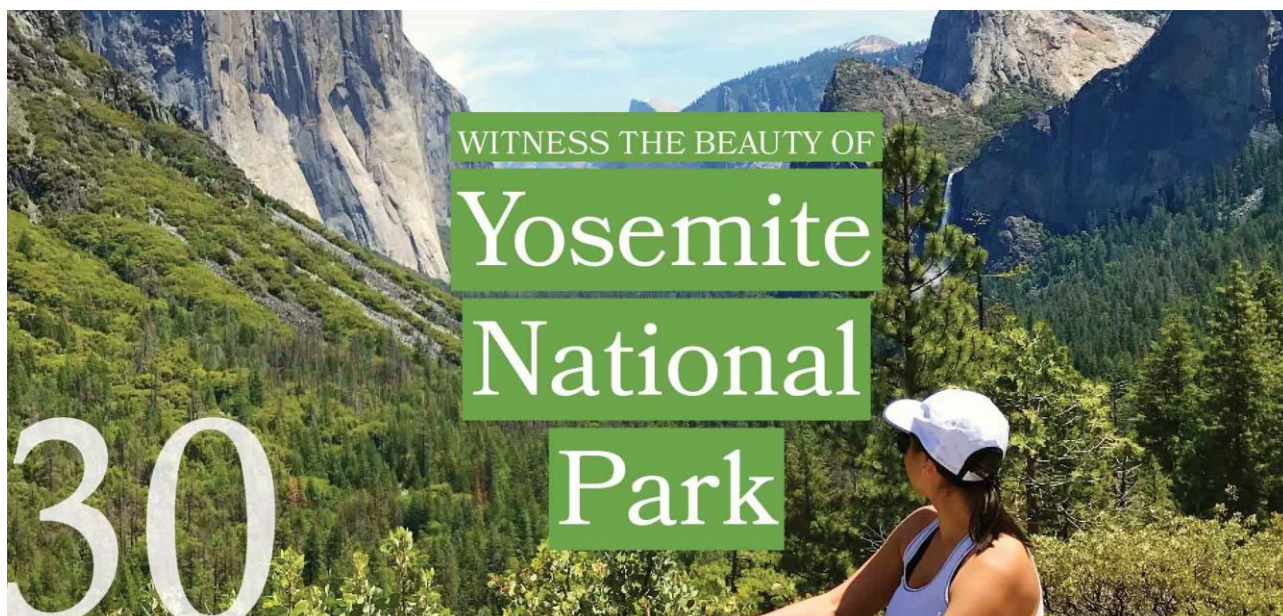


## 29. Traverse the Puglia Coastal Walk

**Tucked into the heel of Italy, Salento in southern Puglia is a region of natural beauty and stunning surrounds.**

Tucked into the heel of Italy, Salento in southern Puglia is a region of natural beauty and stunning surrounds. On a self-guided walk from Otranto, Italy's easternmost point, to Lecce along tratturi, sun-baked ancient footpaths and mule tracks once used by farmers that wind through fruit orchards and ancient olive groves, the Puglia Coastal Walk is a sensory experience. Ideal for those with moderate fitness, the rocky paths hug the coastline and include historic Roman sites, patches of wild herbs and secret swimming spots as well as glimpses of the Albanian mountains on a clear day.





## 30. Witness the beauty of Yosemite National Park

**Situated in the Sierra Nevada range in California, it's the most accessible national park for Aussie travellers**

Yosemite National Park is definitely one of the US national parks you've heard about, welcoming 4.2 million visitors annually, mainly from June to August, to an area that's the around the same size as the ACT. Situated in the Sierra Nevada range in California, it's the most accessible national park for Aussie travellers, a four-hour drive east from San Francisco, or a 4.5-hour drive south from South Lake Tahoe on the Nevada border. Exiting Wawona Tunnel – boom, out of the darkness, there it is – the breathtaking moment when Yosemite Valley is revealed: El Capitan and Bridalveil Fall in the foreground framed by Half Dome at the rear.

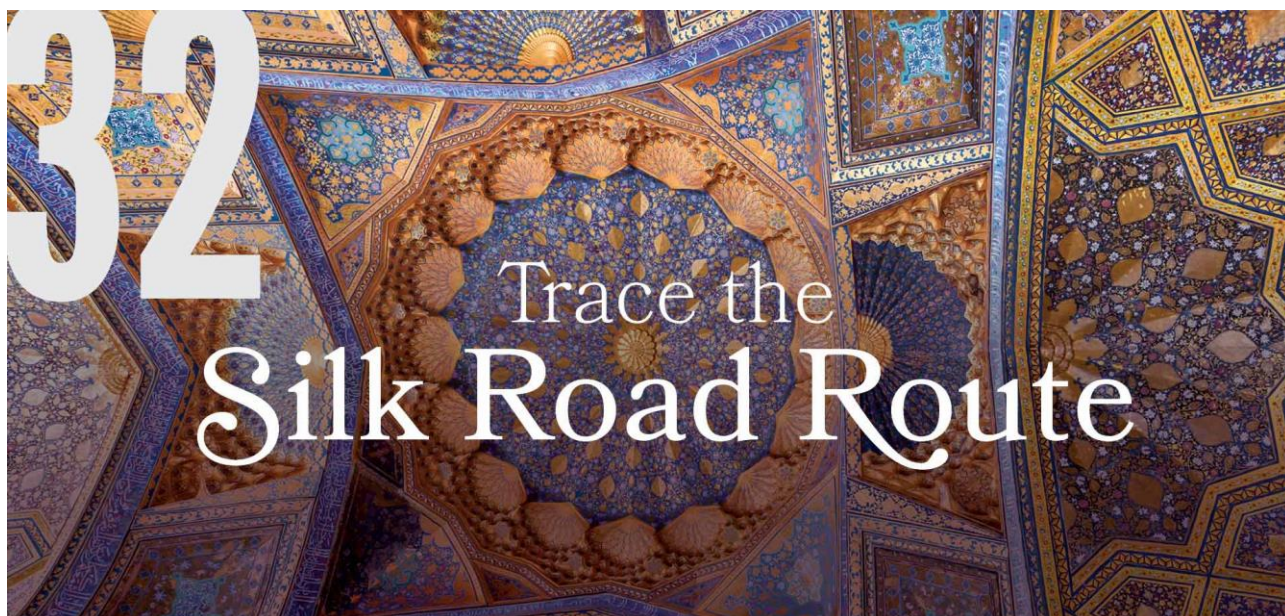




### 31. Learn local traditions in Japan

**Japan is an enigma – a thoroughly modern society rooted in traditions and handicrafts that date back thousands of years**

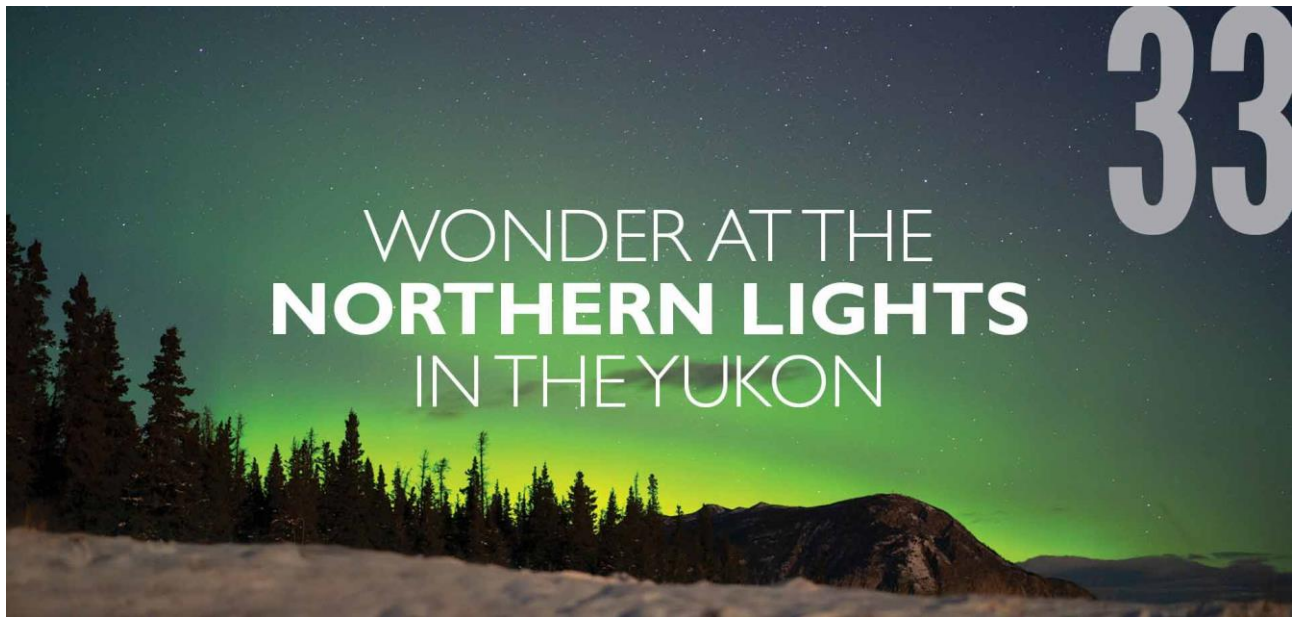
Some traditional rituals and historic practices are known outside Japan, such as tea ceremonies, martial arts practice, shodo (the art of calligraphy), origami and ikebana (floral arrangement), but to learn more about these centuries-old rituals and crafts, I travel to Kyoto. From the bamboo walls of the teahouses and the glowing lanterns of the Yasaka Shrine to the bustle of the main street of Hanami-Koji, experiencing Kyoto's ancient streets by night is an essential part of visiting Japan's city of tradition.



## 32. Trace the Silk Road route

**The ancient Silk Road trade route weaves its way from China to Turkey on the Mediterranean Sea through the Central Asia steppe, passing through the fascinating countries known collectively as the ‘Stans – Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan**

According to Intrepid Travel, these ‘undertouristed’ nations have some of the world's lowest tourism density ratios, so you’re guaranteed an authentic experience. We do as the locals do and travel mainly by train. The communal style of travel allows us to meet fellow travellers and locals – while not a lot of English is spoken, we have great conversations with just the odd word, plenty of hand signals and smiles. Read more...



### 33. Wonder at the northern lights in the Yukon

**The Yukon is a prime viewing point for the aurora borealis**

In the wilderness of Canada's Yukon Territory, nature puts on a spectacular show with the amazing aurora borealis. The Yukon is a prime viewing point for the aurora borealis and can be experienced any time between mid-August and mid-April. When the northern lights appear, a gradual green glow starts to rise on the horizon until suddenly, a nebula of light takes form. Splays of the aurora borealis dance across the sky and it's such a stunning, multi-dimensional phenomenon. It changes form and multiplies, dying down then exploding against





## 34. Immerse yourself in Ireland's 2020 cultural hub

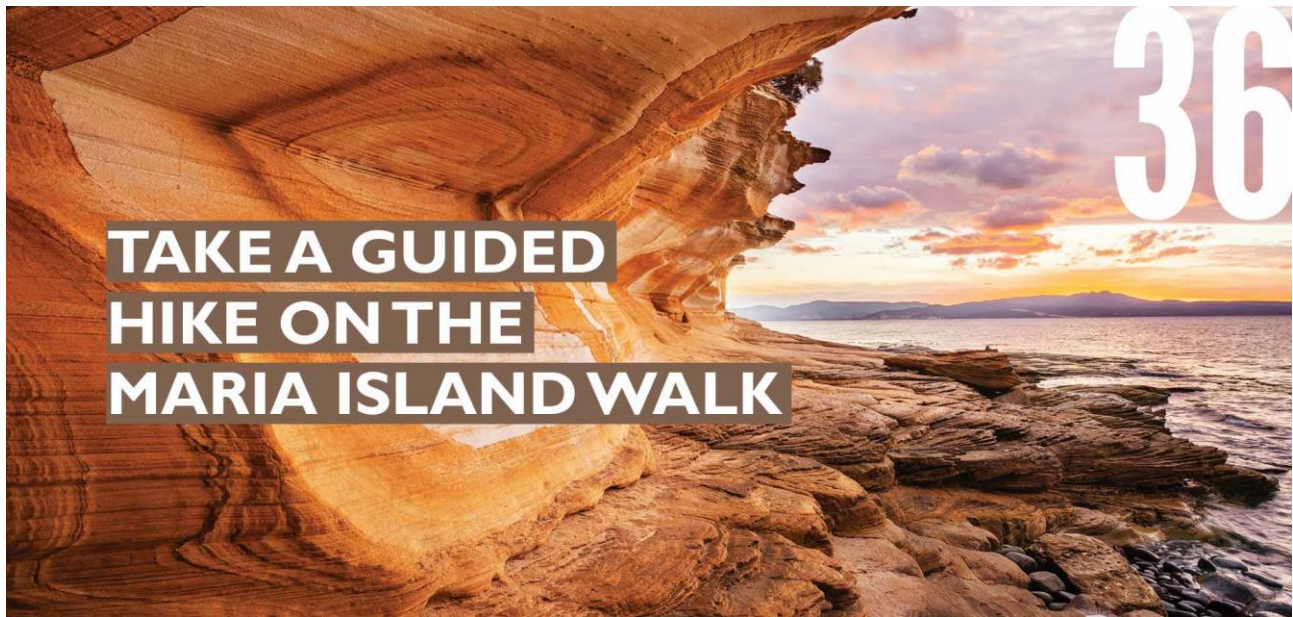
**Inspired by boundless creativity? Galway, on the Irish West Coast, is the place to be in 2020.** Designated as European Capital of Culture for the year, Galway is set to wow visitors and locals alike with an incredible lineup of arts festivals, exhibitions, workshops and music events. The cultural program begins on February 1, 2020 to coincide with the Celtic festival of spring, which celebrates new life and the re-awakening of the land. It's a fitting beginning, with Celtic traditions a central theme in the huge lineup of events highlighting the rich diversity of Galway's culture and people.



## 35. See the world on show in Dubai

**World Expo 2020 Dubai will see representatives from 190 countries – and millions of visitors**

For 173 days in 2020 and 2021, the warmth and tradition of Emirati hospitality will be on show as Dubai hosts the region's first World Expo. The largest event of its kind to be held in the Arab world, World Expo 2020 Dubai will see representatives from 190 countries – and millions of visitors – converge on the city. The theme 'Connecting minds, creating the future' celebrates the UAE's culture, collaboration and innovation. Dubai's popularity as more than a stopover is growing thanks to a raft of exciting cultural experiences and attractions; the city will come alive with events and installations making 2020 the perfect time to visit.



## 36. Take a guided hike on the Maria Island Walk

### **Befriend a wombat, stay in the old prison and learn about the original ancestors**

Experience Maria Island during a four-day guided walk of the mountainous isle, which is just a 30-minute ferry ride from Triabunna on Tasmania's east coast. As the entire island is a national park, it's no surprise the full 48km trek is significant in many ways – full of convict history, geological formations and wildlife. Mostly the terrain is flat, but surfaces may vary from beaches to tracks. Along the way, befriend a wombat, stay in the old prison and learn about the original ancestors, the Puthikwilayti people.





## 37. Go sledging on Kaituna River

**Drive 40 minutes from Rotorua on New Zealand's North Island to face nature head on.**

Battle the rapids of Kaituna River at eye level, clutching a purpose-built sledge. The first leap into the water will have you gasp, particularly in winter when temps can drop to 11 degrees Celsius. Your fitness level should be substantial, as you'll need to manoeuvre through the whitewater alongside local guides in a group. When the river provides a break, admire the ferns and moss, which grow right up to the water's edge, and marvel at this breathtaking outdoor thrill.



## 38. Feel blue in Morocco

**It's a destination that may take you out of your comfort zone but will lodge itself in your memories forever.**

The city of Chefchaouen was not always blue. It's believed the distinctive hue dates back to 1492 when the city in northwest Morocco was used as a hiding place for Jews during the Spanish Inquisition. The blue tone is said to be representative of the colour of the sky and the Jewish faith. Known as the 'Blue City', Chefchaouen was my main reason to visit Morocco and the highlight of my Intrepid tour. The Old Town of Chefchaouen is where the colour is most concentrated with small doorways, decorative windows and narrow staircases painted blue. It's a destination that may take you out of your comfort zone but will lodge itself in your memories forever.



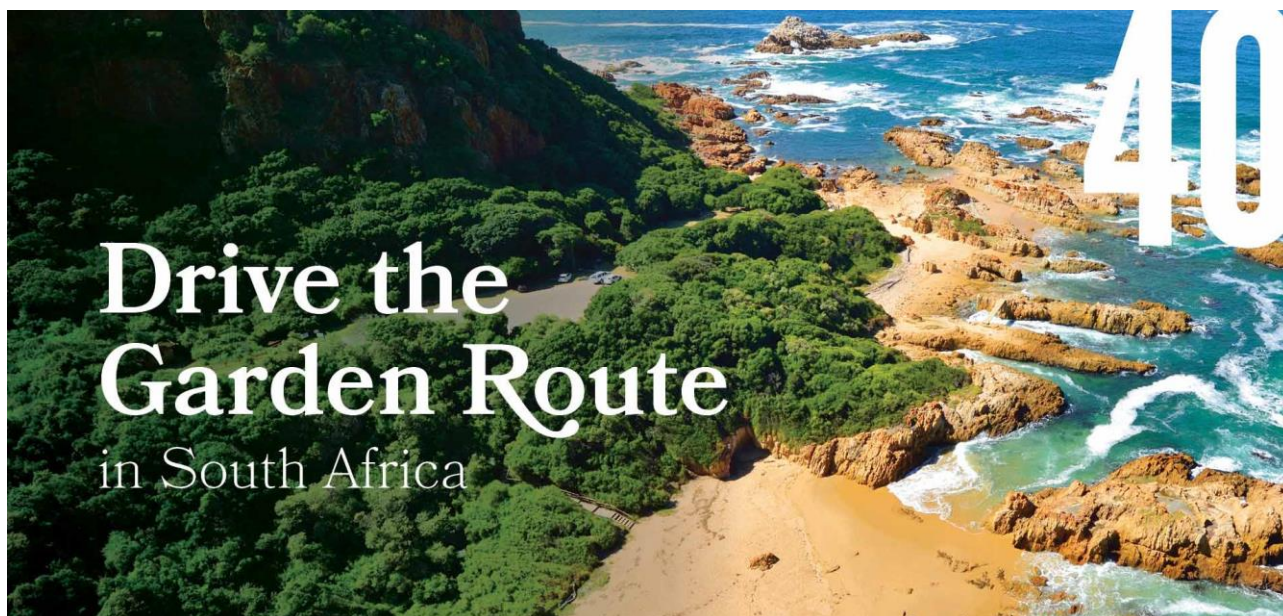


## 39. Discover the Mediterranean's best-kept secret

**Malta is in a world of its own.**

I could be in Greece, Italy, or even Spain with the Mediterranean architecture, lively streets and Roman ruins. But there is something different about this place. Malta is a rocky island nation between Italy and North Africa, and in a world of its own. The arid landscape is lined with chalky cliffs and spectacular swimming holes, while its culinary traditions are a mix of Italian, African and Middle Eastern. A stroll through the narrow streets will take you on a journey of occupation, from Roman fortresses of 4000BCE through Moorish times to the more recent French and British reigns. In short, Malta is the introvert's answer to Italy.





# Drive the Garden Route in South Africa

## 40. Drive the Garden Route in South Africa

### **Stunning golden beaches and wild, blue ocean, showcasing a different side to South Africa**

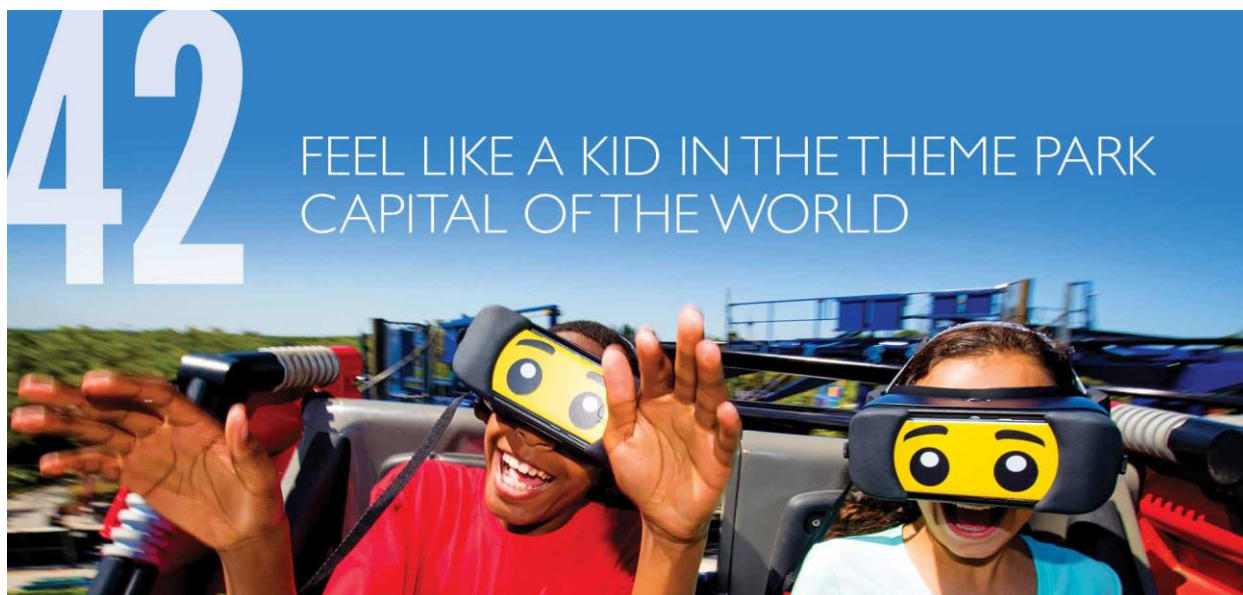
South Africa may be synonymous with safaris, but the coastline is just as impressive. The Garden Route seems somewhat of a misnomer – the Western Cape road trip sandwiched between the Outeniqua Mountains and the Indian Ocean in South Africa is, after all, most famous for its dramatic coastline. But on a nine-day, 750km self-drive trip from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, from behind the wheel I watch the landscape shift from national parks to forests and lakes, as well as stunning golden beaches and wild, blue ocean, showcasing a different side to the safaris and sun-baked terrain South Africa is known for.



## 41. Ski Japan & South Korea

### **The cool kids are setting sights to ski South Korea and Japan**

Japan has really taken off as a holiday hotspot for Aussie travellers in recent years, shifting from a seasonal to a year-round destination, thanks to competitive flights from Australia with a range of premium and low-cost carriers. Much of this demand for Japan is being driven by the snow-bound Millennial traveller, fuelled by cheap flights to Sapporo, which makes popular Hokkaido ski resorts easier than ever to reach. From Tokyo, snow bunnies can easily access Hakuba and the new ski resort hotspots of Shiga Kogen in Nagano and Naeba. Now the cool kids are setting their sights to ski South Korea.



## 42. Feel like a kid in the Theme Park Capital of the World

**Orlando is the Theme Park Capital of the World and it's truly the ultimate big kids' playground**

Orlando welcomed 75 million visitors in 2018, making this Florida city America's most-visited destination with five million daily visitors. It's also officially known as the Theme Park Capital of the World and it's truly the ultimate big kids' playground (it's also for the littlies, too). No other destination on Earth has more or more iconic theme parks than Orlando – Walt Disney World Resort has six theme parks alone, spread across 100sqkm (double the size of Manhattan). There's also SeaWorld Orlando, Universal Orlando Resort, Legoland Florida Resort and more. If that's not enough to float your boat, Orlando is also the ideal jumping-off point for Caribbean cruises.





## 43. Cycle Girona

**A cycling holiday in the Spanish city of Girona is one of the best ways to enjoy the warm European summer with myriad cycling routes on offer from leisurely rides through to technical descents**

Known worldwide as the cyclists' favourite destination and home to much of the professional peloton, its proximity (close to Barcelona), pleasant climbs and scenic beauty make Girona a cycling hotspot. The highlight of the trip was riding along the curvy and jaw-dropping coastline leading out of Tossa de Mar along the fabled Coastal Loop, a vista made sweeter with an obligatory pastry stop at Dulce Pikika, a favourite of the pros.



## 44. Channel your inner archaeologist at Petra

**Weaving through a mountainous maze of sandstone in the ancient Nabatean city of Petra, Jordan, I could never imagine the hidden surprise awaiting me at the end**

There are so many ways to make your way through Petra to the main attraction of the Treasury (Al-Khazneh) based on your preferred level of physical activity. My Topdeck guide, Ahmad, led our exploration of Petra, assisted those wanting to enter Petra via the traditional entrance of the Siq on horseback or foot, while also guiding the more intrepid travellers tackling the difficult Madras Trail Loop, nicknamed the 'Indiana Jones Way' (scenes from Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade were filmed here).



## 45. Cruise to Russia's almost uncharted Far East

**It's remote, uncharted and a definite 'wow' experience for adventurers.**

Russia has been trending as a cruise destination for a few years now with river cruise itineraries that offer the opportunity to see the treasures of the tsars from waterways between Moscow and St Petersburg. But there's a part of Russia that is one of the least explored regions on the planet, due to restricted travel for Westerners for most of the 20th century – Russia's Far East. It's remote, uncharted and a definite 'wow' experience for adventurers. For its untouched nature and remoteness, this region has been compared to wild habitats such as the Galapagos and the Arctic.

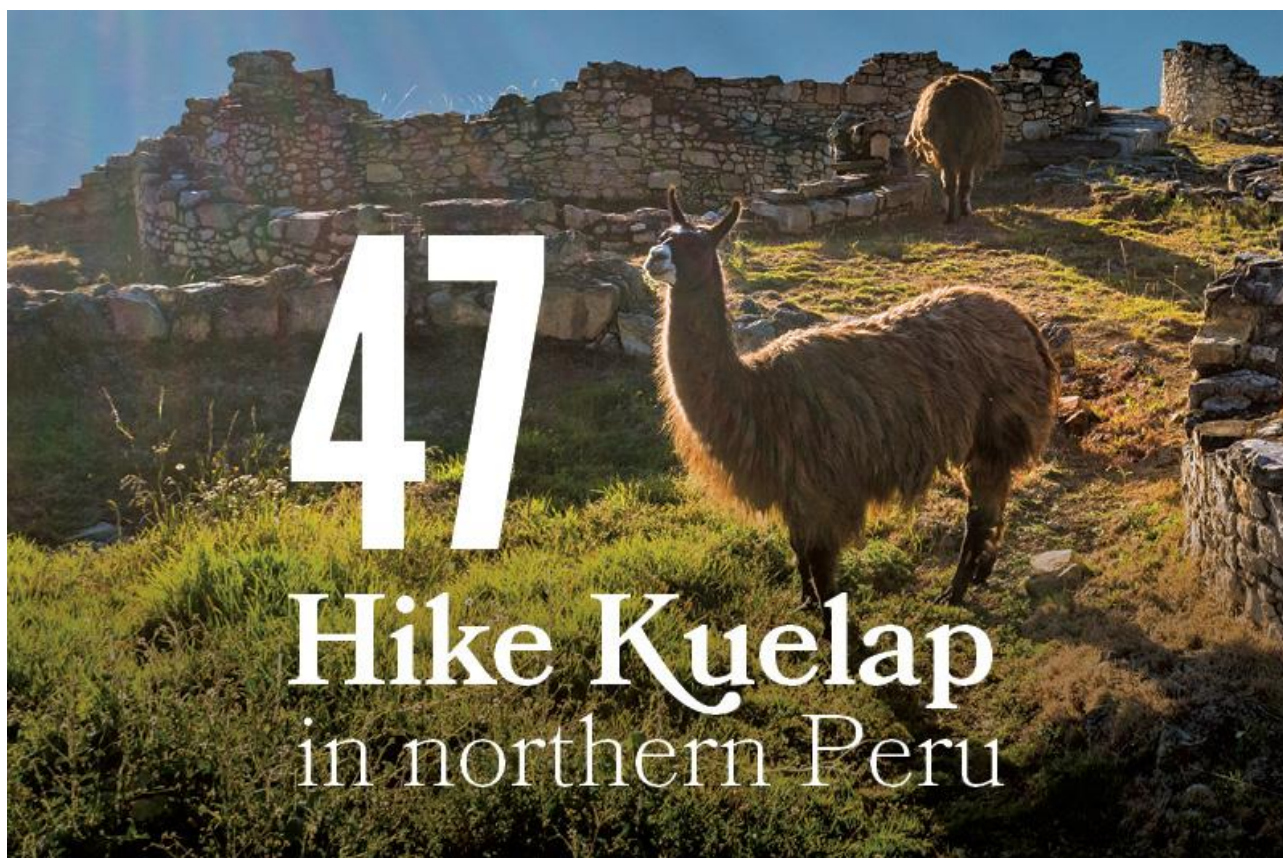




## 46. Swim with whale sharks in Mexico

**I'm close enough to see the spotted marks of their skin and watch their wild abandon.**

After an hour of boating at high speed on the Caribbean Sea, I see them. We're so far out there is no land in sight, but I can see whale sharks – at least 58 that we can count. It all happens quickly – we don our goggles, snorkel, life vest and fins and jump off the boat into the water two at a time with our guide. It's a lifelong ambition of mine to swim with whale sharks and off the Cancun coast is one of the world's largest populations of these magnificent creatures. I'm close enough to see the spotted marks of their skin and watch their wild abandon.



## 47. Hike Kuelap in northern Peru

**High in the clouds of the Andes in northern Peru lies one of the world's secret wonders.**

Touted as an alternative to Machu Picchu, the impressive ruins of Kuelap were built by the Chachapoyas or Cloud Warriors around 600 to 900 years before the famous Incan citadel to the south. I follow the outskirts of the massive fortress walls to the top, looking over clouds high in the Andes. Wandering through the round, stone bases of homes and temples scattered throughout the walled city, I close my eyes and feel the history of the site where more than 5,000 people lived on this secluded mountaintop. It's now easily accessible by cable car and hiking up to the site, but still feels a world away.





## 48. Enjoy all-access luxury in the Maldives

**An oasis of white sandy beaches, blue lagoons and more than 1,000 coral isles**

The 26 ring-shaped atolls of the Maldives sparkle in the Indian Ocean, an oasis of white sandy beaches, blue lagoons and more than 1,000 coral isles. Once the exclusive domain of loved-up couples and honeymooners, the barefoot luxury of the Maldives is now more accessible than ever with daily connecting flights via Singapore from most Australian cities. Connecting boat transfers straight from airport in the capital, Male, to nearby islands make the Maldives an ideal island-hopping destination. The best time to go is between November and April, while for surfers the peak time is between March and October.





## 49. Go on a historic London pub crawl

**Here's cheers to London's newest protected historic drinking holes.**

The title of London's oldest public house is a contentious one, but if an establishment has survived fire, war and hipsters to lay claim to centuries of longevity, we'll drink to that. Some worthy contenders include Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese on Fleet Street (rebuilt in 1667), The Prospect of Whitby (1520) in Wapping and The George (1583) in Borough, which counted Shakespeare among its patrons. Tower Hamlets borough in East London recently granted 37 historic pubs protected local listing status with several 'drinking palaces' dating back to the 1800s. Thankfully the ales are fresh.



## 50. Layover at Singapore Changi Airport

**The multi-award-winning Singapore Changi Airport is worthy of lingering in, thanks to the addition of seven-storey precinct, the Jewel**

The Crystal Clouds installation – bringing the outdoors inside – sparkles above. At the Jewel's centre is the world's tallest indoor waterfall, the HSBC Rain Vortex, a dramatic feature day or night. The Jewel is full of attractions, gardens, shops and eateries for a taste of Singapore without leaving the airport. No need to visit the markets for chilli crab, dig in on arrival. Bounce on the Manulife Sky Nets, or play in clouds of mist at the Foggy Bowls and lose yourself in the mirror maze.