

LUXURY AND LIFESTYLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

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Location

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Hyatt Studios brand

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Lufthansa Will Fly New Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner Between Frankfurt And Mumbai



Synopsis

In its latest schedule update, Lufthansa scheduled its new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft on the Frankfurt-Mumbai route from 29 October. For now, the 787-9 will operate the daily LH756 rotation until 14 January, which is when the Boeing 747-400 will once again fly the Frankfurt to Mumbai service.

Until now, Lufthansa's 787-9 operations were heavily focused on North America, including 787-9 flights to Austin, Detroit, Newark, Dallas, Denver and Montreal. The 787-9 is Lufthansa's latest long-haul aircraft.

Boeing data through 31 July shows that the German airline has 34 additional 787-9s in its order book. Until these arrived, Lufthansa inducted five initial 787-9s that were initially destined for Hainan Airlines.

This initial batch features different interiors than those aircraft in the pipeline which will be customised with Lufthansa's upcoming new Allegris business class. The Frankfurt-Mumbai route will see one of these initial five 787-9s deployed. These seat 26 in business class across a 1-2-1 configuration; 21 in the premium economy across a 2-4-2 configuration; and 247 in the standard economy

across a 3-3-3 layout.

In other Lufthansa Asia-Pacific schedule updates, also from 29 October, the Star Alliance founding member will increase Munich-Osaka to daily operations, up from three times a week currently. The A350-900 is flying Munich-Osaka.

As previously announced, the Airbus A380 will take over from the A350-900 on the daily Munich-Bangkok rotation, commencing 28 October. Furthermore, the A340-600 will continue operating the daily Frankfurt-Hong Kong service this winter. The route was initially set to be downgraded to the smaller A340-300.

The latest update from Lufthansa reveals the introduction of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner on the route between Frankfurt and Mumbai. This shift follows the successful operations of the aircraft in North America and

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promises a new level of travel luxury.

In a recent update to its flight schedule, Lufthansa announced the deployment of its brand-new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft on the Frankfurt-Mumbai route starting on October 29.

This action signifies a substantial expansion of the aircraft's operations beyond its previous emphasis on North American routes.

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner will serve the daily LH756 rotation between Frankfurt and Mumbai, providing passengers with an enhanced travel experience. This deployment will continue until January 14, after which the Boeing 747-400 will resume service between Frankfurt and Mumbai.

Concentration on North America

Lufthansa's initial Boeing 787-9 operations focused predominantly on North American cities, including Austin, Detroit, Newark, Dallas, Denver, and Montreal. This expansion onto the Frankfurt-Mumbai route signifies a significant transformation in the airline's global strategy.

Modern Long-Haul Aircraft

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner is the newest addition to Lufthansa's fleet of long-haul aircraft, promising improved passenger comfort and operational efficiency. Notably, 34 additional 787-

9s are scheduled to enter the airline's fleet within the next few months.

Unique Interior Design and Layout

The initial batch of Boeing 787-9s added to Lufthansa's fleet, which were originally intended for Hainan Airlines, feature unique interiors. These aircraft will shortly feature Lufthansa's forthcoming new Allegris business class design, establishing a new benchmark for luxury travel.

Premium Seating Arrangements

On the Frankfurt-Mumbai route, passengers will have the opportunity of flying on these specially configured aircraft. The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner features 26 business class seats arranged 1-2-1, 21 premium economy seats arranged 2-4-2, and 247 standard economy seats arranged in a comfortable 3-3-3 configuration.

Expanded Operations in the Asia-Pacific

Lufthansa is demonstrating its dedication to enhancing its Asia-Pacific operations by increasing the frequency of its Munich-Osaka route from three times per week to daily. Using the A350-900, this service enhancement will be implemented.

Transitions in the Fleet and Winter Operations

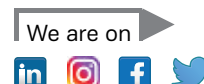
Lufthansa will replace the Airbus A350-900 with the Airbus A380 on the daily Munich-Bangkok rotation beginning on October 28 as part of its ongoing fleet optimization.

In addition, the A340-600 will continue to operate the daily Frankfurt-Hong Kong service throughout the entire winter season, despite earlier intentions to downgrade the route to a smaller A340-300.

The strategic decisions Lufthansa has made to expand its aircraft operations and improve the passenger experience demonstrate the airline's commitment to providing exceptional travel services across its global network. Lufthansa's introduction of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner on the Frankfurt-Mumbai route exemplifies its commitment to innovation and consumer satisfaction.



DEVENDER GROVER





Painting the Town Red!

Virgin Hotels Glasgow opens its doors at the Iconic Clydeside Location



Virgin Hotels' second U.K. location redefines luxury hospitality with an enticing array of amenities and features

GLASGOW, Scotland, Travel Span, -- **Virgin Hotels**, the luxury lifestyle hotel brand by Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson, today announced the opening of **Virgin Hotels Glasgow**, the Group's second European destination. The hotel, set upon the banks of the iconic River Clyde and just a stone's throw away from Central Station, features a prime location ideal for exploring the city. Boasting Virgin Hotels' beloved Chamber design, an array of modern dining and drinking venues, and influences from the local culture, the Glasgow hotel combines the brand's celebrated hospitality standards with distinctive experiences that reflect the soul of the city.

The hotel is home to 240 exquisitely decorated Chambers, each flooding with natural light and brimming with thoughtful features that optimize the space. Wood-sliding doors separate the sleep and relaxation lounge from the dressing area in every room, giving guests optimum privacy. The dressing room features a stand-alone vanity unit with a mounted illuminated mirror, and the lounge itself has a Virgin Hotels' patented and ergonomic bed with a channel-tufted headboard; Hypnos™ mattress; a red SMEG® mini-fridge generously stocked with local products; plugs in all the convenient places; an HDTV and a yoga mat.



The attention to detail continues throughout the rest of the hotel. **Teddy Mayer**, creative director and vice president of design at Virgin Hotels, worked closely with Silk Property Group to pay homage to Glasgow's rich history and prominent shipping industry. The hotel's nautical elements are infused with modern twists, elegantly capturing Glasgow's vibrant spirit from a contemporary perspective. Upon entering the hotel, guests are met with stunning design features that open up the space and ignite their desire to explore, including vaulted ceilings, antiquated glass, and a grand staircase. Public areas feature open floor plans, velvet chairs and sweeping views of the city, creating a warm and convivial ambiance for conversation between new and old friends alike.

In collaboration with Visto Art, the hotel has also been decorated with beautifully bespoke artwork, all created by local Scottish illustrators, painters, and photographers. Each of the diverse pieces is inspired by the city's rich heritage, from an impressive mural spray painted by several of the city's most creative street artists to the friezes that depict Glasgow with an abstract eye.

At the heart of the hotel lies **Commons Club**, the flagship restaurant offering eclectic food and beverages in a playful yet sophisticated space. Under the direction of Executive Chef Jean-Paul Giraud, Commons Club boasts a contemporary restaurant menu with global inspirations, serving unexpected and bold flavors with locally sourced ingredients. At the bar, guests can indulge in signature craft cocktails, as well as an impressive range of Scottish whiskies, liquors, beer, and wine.

Another standout of the boutique hotel is **Highyard**, located on the mezzanine level of Commons Club with breathtaking views of River Clyde. The dining and entertainment venue features a retractable roof, great for basking in the warm sunshine during brunch or sipping on cocktails under a starlit sky. Better yet, the Highyard terrace has been fitted with two



living walls, creating the atmosphere of a lush forest retreat in an urban oasis. Together, Commons Club and Highyard deliver elevated day-to-night hospitality experiences that will establish Virgin Hotels Glasgow as the city's newest and most exciting hotspot.

Guests can expect additional options for expertly crafted food and beverage as a variety of dining and drinking spaces launch in the coming months, including Funny Library Coffee Shop and Rocks on Fox Street, a luxurious whisky bar set to have one of the finest whisky collections in Glasgow.

Virgin Hotels Glasgow also offers an array of state-of-the-art meeting and event spaces, like the dynamic Bonnie and Clyde meeting rooms and the intimate Shag Room, which is decked in luxurious fabrics. Each space can be seamlessly tailored to suit everything from social occasions to corporate gatherings, posing as the perfect environment for any gathering or activation.

Virgin Group Founder Sir Richard Branson said: "I'm absolutely

thrilled to announce the opening of Virgin Hotels Glasgow, our second European location. Glasgow holds a special place in my heart, as one of the first record shops we opened was on Union Street and my wife was born and brought up here. With Virgin Hotels Glasgow, we aimed to capture Glasgow's unique spirit, offering visitors and locals an unparalleled experience. The hotel's design truly reflects this as well as the city's rich history and we look forward to welcoming everyone to the hotel to enjoy all that we have to offer. Well done to the team for creating magic, yet again."

Virgin Hotels Collection CEO James Bermingham added: "Today marks a momentous occasion as we proudly unveil our Glasgow location, a remarkable addition to our growing family of hotels. At Virgin Hotels, we are driven by our passion for delivering innovative design and heartfelt service, and our latest opening is no exception. Every detail has been curated to reflect the dynamic and diverse essence of Glasgow, and we hope the hotel will not only be a home away from home, but a door to the incredible experiences within this exciting city."

Goa

Best places
to visit in

on your next trip



Goa is a shining jewel in the crown of India's vacation destinations, nestled along the Arabian Sea coastline. Goa, which is notable for its sun-kissed seashores, energizing nightlife, interesting history, and convincing society, gives an

appealing combination of relaxation and investigation. The state offers attractions for many vacationers, from its beguiling towns to its bustling commercial centers and from old sanctuaries to contemporary coastline clubs. In this post, we'll explore some

of the must-see locations of Goa that help to make it such a unique travel destination.

1. Beaches: Goa's radiant shore is complemented by an assortment of lovely ocean drifts that cater explicitly



to different explorers. The coastlines of Goa have something for everybody, whether you're looking for isolation, water sports, or energetic nightlife.

- **Baga Seaside:** Baga Oceanside is a protected house for partygoers given its enthusiastic environment

and unruly nightlife. As the sun sets, the oceanside shows signs of life with music and moving, while the shacks speaking the coastline serve flavourful fish and experience luxury at Alila Diwa Goa with stimulating beverages.

- **Anjuna Sea side:** Notable for its

energy, the Anjuna Ocean side is where wayfarers gather to see the worth in swap meets, unrecorded music, and momentous full-moon parties. The seaside's unpleasant turns of events and stunning sunsets make it a visual craftsman's bliss.

- **Palolem Sea side:** Expecting quietness is what you search for, Palolem's sickle-shaped seaside and calm waters are appropriate for loosening up. Palm-lined shores and clear waters set up things for kayaking, swimming, and just relaxing.

2. Verifiable and Social

Marvels: Goa is known for its rich history that traces back to old times, notwithstanding its seashores. Portuguese pioneer impact might in any case be found in the nation's design, temples, and tired towns.

- **Bom Jesus Basilica:** The human bones of St. Francis Xavier are kept in this sixteenth-century church, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visitors looking for both supernatural and unquestionable encounters are drawn to the district by its stunning Elaborate plan and calm climate. Se Place of Petitioning Heaven is quite possibly the best church in Asia and a stunning outline of the Portuguese-Manueline plan. Its "Splendid Toll of Goa," which is made of gold, is a sight to behold.

3. Nature's flood: Goa's run-of-the-mill prominence interfaces past its shores, uncovering rich scenes and shocking circumstances that solicit investigation.

- **Dudhsagar Wellsprings:** Moving from a level of more than 300 meters, the Dudhsagar Wellsprings make a stunning show amid the rich Western Ghats. The falls, appearing to be a flood of milk, are a heaven for nature fans and wayfarers.

- **Bhagwan Mahavir Untamed life Safe space:** Crossing more than 240 square kilometers, this shelter is a protected house for typical life darlings. It is home to different species including tigers, panthers, and two or three sorts of deer, making it a must-visit for nature fans.



4. Experience: Goa gives an assortment of experience sports and outdoor pursuits for those needing an adrenaline rush.

- Water sports: The seashores of Goa give a wide assortment of water sports exercises that are reasonable for the two fledglings and trained professionals, including plane skiing, parasailing, and banana boat outings.

- Scuba jumping: Explore the flourishing marine life that dwells underneath the Middle Eastern Ocean's surface. Jump spots in Goa incorporate chances to see energetic coral reefs, wrecks, and a different scope of oceanic creatures.

5. Goan cooking and markets: A visit to Goa is divided without partaking in its delicious food and researching its clamouring markets.

- Close by Food: Experience the unique blend of flavours in Goan cooking, affected by its arrangement of encounters and waterfront region. Do whatever it takes not to miss getting a charge out of dishes like vindaloo, bebinca, and Goan fish curry.

- Markets: Anjuna's Wednesday Flea Market and Mapusa Market are unmistakably appropriate for searching for mementos, close-by-made works, pearls, and dresses. These business areas offer a piece of clear information about the local culture and creative mind.

6. Nightlife and diversion: After the sun goes down, Goa transforms into a rambunctious party objective that gives an invigorating nightlife experience.

- Tito's Path is a famous nightlife objective in Baga known for its lively environment. A few bars, clubs, and parlours offer moving open doors for benefactors.

- Gambling clubs: Goa's drifting gambling clubs on the Mandovi Stream provide guests with a sample of Las Vegas. Locally available these drifting marvels, partake in shots in the dark, live exhibitions, and rich encounters.

7. Goa's fortifications: The strongholds of Goa give stunning all-

encompassing perspectives on the shore and the Bedouin Ocean while going about as calm observers of the area's fierce past.

- Aguada Post: Built in the seventeenth 100 years by the Portuguese, Aguada Stronghold is eminent for its glorious design and a freshwater spring that is situated on its grounds. Picture-takers and history buffs will cherish the stronghold's perspective on the serene Aguada Oceanside.

- Bollywood films helped Chapora Stronghold, which roosted on a slope sitting above the Vagator Ocean side, become notable.

8. Flavour Ranches: A few zest estates can be tracked down in Goa's verdant hinterland, offering guests a total drenching into the universe of flavours.

- Sahakari Flavour Homestead: This office, which is near Ponda, gives direct visits with the goal that visitors can find out about different flavours and plants. A customary Goan supper and social diversion are ordinarily remembered for the excursion, making it a total encounter.

- Guests might wander through fragrant homesteads of flavours including cardamom, nutmeg, and cinnamon at this ranch, which is concealed in the Western Ghats. A tasty Goan lunch is regularly filled in as the visit's finale.

In conclusion, Goa is a magical place that can satisfy any traveller's needs, whether they are for rest, adventure, history, culture, or nightlife. Don't forget to escape to Alila Diwa Goa, where serenity meets luxury in a coastal haven of relaxation. A location ought to be on each voyager's list of must-dos due to its wonderful sea shores, rich legacy, and an assortment of attractions. Goa ensures an encounter that stays in your heart long after you leave its shores, whether you're visiting old houses of worship, tasting provincial food, or moving under the stars. Pack your luggage, enjoy the laid-back charm, and travel to Goa to experience this tropical paradise.

Hyatt unveils first locations for extended-stay Hyatt Studios brand



Hyatt has revealed that the US states of Alabama and California will be home to the first properties from its extended-stay brand, Hyatt Studios.

The company launched the upper midscale brand in April and signed letters of interest for more than 100 Hyatt Studios hotels in the Americas.

The debut property from the brand will open in late 2024 in Mobile, Alabama, thanks to a franchise agreement with 3H Group, Inc. This will make Hyatt's first branded hotel in the area and will be located near Mobile Bay's Gulf Coast, providing guests with access to the port city. The company says that the city will not only

attract tourists but also those across industries such as manufacturing, aerospace, and retail.

This will be followed by a 113-room Hyatt Studios hotel in downtown Marysville, located in Yuba County in California, as part of a franchise agreement with Presidio Hotel Development LLC. According to Hyatt, the city is an ideal location for the brand due to its growth in recent years which has led to "increased demand in the midscale segment".

Expected to open in 2025, the property will feature a custom buildout, including dedicated meeting spaces.

Dan Hansen, global head of Hyatt Studios, commented: "Hyatt's entry into these new markets with Hyatt Studios hotels exemplifies our commitment to developers, guests, and World of Hyatt members.

"We've learned that when Hyatt guests stay with a competing brand, they appear to do so for one of two reasons: the absence of a Hyatt hotel within five miles or the choice to stay at a lower chain scale. By enabling guests to choose a Hyatt hotel in new markets, we grow brand loyalty without intra-brand competition and present more white-space options to developers."

Each Hyatt Studios hotel plans to fit approximately 122 rooms "with the flexibility to scale up or down", all of which will include a kitchen, while facilities will include a grab-and-go breakfast offering and a 24-hour market.

The Hyatt Studios concept will join the existing Hyatt House extended stay brand, along with Hyatt Place and Caption by Hyatt in the group's select service category. The announcement comes as major hotel brands are increasingly focusing on the extended stay market, with Marriott, Hilton, and Radisson all unveiling new brands this year.

Boutique Wineries to Visit in Napa

The Napa Valley has been known for its beautiful wineries straight out of a storybook since the 1960s. While there are many popular tourist wineries in the area, there are also a few hidden gems that are more known for their intimate, boutique-style experiences. If you're headed to Napa soon, be sure to add these acclaimed boutique wineries to your itinerary.

With more than 450 wineries from top to bottom, the Napa Valley has a multitude of tasting experiences from which to choose. The valley is rife with household names in liquor stores across the country.





wines, it's not a surprise that St. Clement has become a must-visit stop on any tour of the Napa Valley.

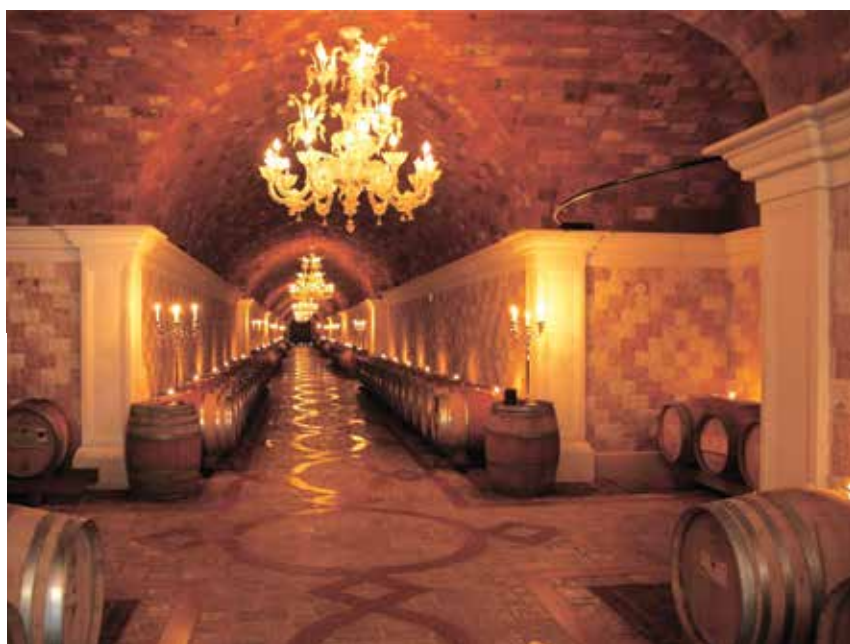
5. Del Dotto Vineyards

A small, family-run operation, Del Dotto focuses on producing premium, small-batch wines. Experimenting with both ancient and modern wine-making techniques, Del Dotto sources their grapes from family-owned vineyards scattered throughout the Napa Valley region, making for unique blends and flavorful wines that reflect the region's diversity. Renowned not only for wine, Del Dotto has also become a destination for those seeking a Napa Valley experience because of their award-winning hospitality. At both winery locations, cave tours and bar wine tastings are offered by reservation. You can also sample the Del Dotto delicacies, a food and wine pairing experience curated by the estate's executive chef. Both the food and wine pairing and the cave tour received Cellarpass Destination of the Year awards in 2015. For those particularly intrigued, the winery offers a VIP club, with additional events and special reserve wines for members.

6. St. Clement Vineyards

Despite its storied history, St. Clement has remained true to its focus as a boutique winery in the Napa Valley. The land was first used as a winery in 1878 and the current winery dates to 1976 and, since then, St. Clement has become a staple of the Napa Valley. With both its own vineyards and strong relationships with other local growers, St. Clement has focused on making vineyard-driven reds and crisp whites, without any additives or fillers that detract from the wines. The winery's signature Oropas, first vinted in 1991, has become something of a legend. Drop-in for a tasting between 11 am and 5 pm daily, or book a private tour and tasting. With a rich history and flavorful







4. Alpha Omega

One of Napa Valley's newer wineries, Alpha Omega opened its doors in 2006. Since then, the boutique operation has focused on creating balanced blends using appellations from around the valley, each reflecting the unique heritage of the region. With a Swiss winemaker and the famed Michel Rolland acting as a consulting winemaker, the vintages produced by Alpha Omega have been nothing short of world-class, even as they combine Old and New World traditions. The estate, in Rutherford, is surrounded by mountains and vineyards and boasts a number of panoramic views. The tasting room is open from 10 am until 6 pm every day, with standard wine tastings from \$30 per person and a "Red Only" tasting option as well. Private and group tastings can be booked in advance. Make a reservation for a weekday visit and pack a picnic lunch to enjoy during your visit!

3. Black Stallion Estate Winery

Located on the grounds of an old equestrian center, Black Stallion set up its winemaking operations in the remains of the indoor race track in 2007. Acquired by one of the region's family-owned winemakers in 2010, the winery has produced an array of award-winning selections, all while keeping a distinct local flavor and

family feels. A trip to the estate itself will only reinforce that sense of rustic charm, as the grounds are surrounded by century-old olive trees situated along the beautiful Silverado Trail. Once at the winery, guests can sample some of the offerings in the tasting bar or relax outside on the terrace. Private tours, tastings, and events can all be arranged, and Black Stallion plays host to a number of special events throughout the year, including luncheons, dinners, and art shows.

2. Outpost Wines

The fact that tastings are by appointment only and must be booked about a month in advance shouldn't discourage you from taking the time to visit Outpost; in fact, it should tell you something about the operation's reputation! Perched on Howell Mountain, Outpost is a 42-acre vineyard located 2,200 feet above the valley floor. Offering up a peaceful, rural setting, it's easy to see why the winery would want to keep groups small and appointments few to upkeep the intimate feel. Organically grown grapes go into every hand-crafted vintage, so you can be assured of quality and character when you taste one of Outpost's Grenache, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, or Petite Sirah varietal bottlings. The process is also important to Outpost's

wines, with no fining or filtering involved so as to preserve the full flavor of the wine.

1. Whetstone Wine Cellars

Although Whetstone's operation is quite new, the location has been making waves in the Napa winery industry. With a focus on face-to-face communication and Southern hospitality, Whetstone seeks to make visiting and tasting an experience unlike any other in the Napa Valley. Sourcing grapes from 6 vineyards in the Napa Valley, Sonoma Coast, and Russian River Valley regions, Whetstone has produced luxury wines, with a focus on iconic Pinot Noir blends. A French-style chateau, dating from 1885, serves as the 2-acre estate's tasting room. Fully restored in 2013, the historic distillery is similar to other iconic wineries around Napa Valley, including Chateau Montelena. Wine tastings are \$30 per person and the folks at Whetstone request 24 hours advance notice. Why wait to book? Whetstone's unique experience is a must, for both first-timers and experienced Napa Valley visitors.

Reservations at Most Napa Valley wineries (especially the smaller properties) are by appointment only, so plan ahead and make reservations early for the best experience

10 Amazing Things to See and Do in Phuket Thailand

Phuket province is located in southern Thailand. It is the biggest island in Thailand and sits on the Andaman sea. The nearest province to the north is Phang-nga and the nearest provinces to the east are Phang-nga and Krabi. Phuket has a large Chinese influence, so you will

see many Chinese shrines and Chinese Restaurants around the city. A Chinese Vegetarian Festival is held there every year. While the Chinese community is quite big, there are many other ethnicities bringing all their traditions and festivals from all over the world to Phuket.

Being a big island, Phuket is surrounded by many magnificent beaches such as Rawai, Patong, Karon, Kamala, Kata Yai, Kata Noi, and Mai Khao. Laem Phromthep Viewpoint is said to feature the most beautiful sunsets in Thailand.

It isn't all just beaches though, there





THAILAND



is also fantastic classical architecture such as the Goom Restaurant. That and the very welcome atmosphere and the famous Phuket nightlife, you can see why the island is a hotspot for tourists in Thailand.

Phuket Thailand is full of amazing things to do, whether you are looking to relax on a beach chair as the water slowly laps at your feet, or you're looking to become one with nature in the rainforest. Temples, night markets, and a historic town all await you on the island of Phuket as well as limestone cliffs that jut out of the ocean and tower above the sparkling emerald waters. Between hikes to the impressive marble Buddha that overlooks Southern Phuket and canoes through the mangrove caves, any visitor will consider themselves the luckiest person on the planet to be able to experience the jaw-dropping beauty. We have chosen just ten of the amazing things to do while you are in Phuket but these are just the start of the epic experiences that await you here.

10. Explore Phang Nga Bay

The most amazing thing about Phang Nga Bay is the scenery, and its beauty is truly jaw-dropping. From the sheer limestone cliffs that rise vertically out of the water to the sparkling emerald green waters, this landscape is the perfect backdrop for those stunning photographs you will send home. There are many different ways to explore Phang Nga Bay but none is more amazing than by canoe.

Become one with nature as your paddle glides effortlessly through the still waters, the only sounds are the chirping of the birds, the calls of the animals, and the splash of the water. Travel through rock caves that resemble something out of an Indiana Jones movie, have lunch on a deserted island, and swim in the sandy waters. Visit a fisherman's village, squeeze into a mangrove cave and soak up the beautiful surroundings. A visit to Phuket is not complete without exploring Phang Nga Bay and our favorite way is by canoe.

9. Climb to the Big Buddha

The Big Buddha is a staple landmark in Phuket and can be seen from pretty much everywhere in the south. The impressive 45m tall statue is layered with beautiful white marble that gleams in the sunlight. Although the Buddha has been under construction for the past 10 years and still has many more years to go; this epic statue is a true symbol of peace and hope. What makes this Buddha even better is the climb up.

The road to the Buddha has been completed but your journey to the top becomes even more amazing when you choose to hike up. Not for the weary hiker as it is a steep 4km hike from the base of the hill. Along the way, you will catch glimpses of amazing landscapes and if you have timed your hike correctly you will arrive at the top to see the sun setting over the city. Look around and you can see Chalong Bay, Phang Nga Bay, Kata Bay, and Kata Noi Bay. On the way down make sure to stop in for a nice cold beer at one of the restaurants that have popped up along the road. The Big Buddha and its enormity are truly appreciated when you are standing next to it after an epic hike up the hill.

8. Snorkel the Clear Waters

Boasting some of the clearest waters around, the area of Phuket has some incredible snorkeling conditions. Not all beaches are suitable for snorkeling and some of them are extremely overcrowded with tourists but if you can find that amazing beach with the right conditions; you will never want to get out of the water. Luckily we are here to help you with that:

Banana Beach is a well-kept secret beach in Phuket offering up great snorkeling in crystal clear waters along with large palm trees and excellent sand. Throw in a restaurant that has been around for years and only offers the freshest seafood (you often see the cooks carrying it up the beach) and you have yourself a winning beach. Ao Sane Beach is another hidden gem that not only offers great snorkeling but has a dive shop on-site where you can rent equipment and even take a lesson. The

rock formations divide it into three coves creating an underwater paradise for marine life. We cannot forget about the infamous Similan Islands which by far offer the clearest water and some of the world's greatest snorkeling. Pick a beach, grab your snorkel gear and head out to view some amazing marine life.

7. Khao Sok National Park

Although not technically located in Phuket, this national park is just too amazing to leave off our list. Southern Thailand's largest virgin forest resides here and is older and more diverse than the Amazon Rainforest offering numerous exotic animals, plant species, and breathtaking scenery. Huge limestone cliffs, deep valleys, exciting caves, and breathtaking lakes make this destination truly amazing.

For a truly amazing opportunity head to Cheow Larn Lake located in the heart of this National Park. Here you can spend the night in one of the floating raft houses or luxury tents. Surrounded by crystal clear water that begs you to dive in, sounds of wild elephants and monkeys in the distance; you can't get much better than that. There are plenty of tour operators offering treks throughout this forest whether you are looking to do it by foot, canoe, or even truck. We do recommend staying away from elephant tours as the treatment of elephants in Thailand is not always the greatest. However you choose to explore this National Park; the scenery, animals, and serenity will blow you away.

6. Stroll the Historic Roads in Old Phuket Town

Located away from the beaches lies a section of town that was once a hub of activity but is now considered the historical section of Phuket. Consisting of five roads and several smaller streets Phuket's old town is teeming with fabulous architecture, Chinese temples, crumbling mansions, and culture. Explore this area on foot as it proves difficult in a car and makes sure to either grab a map of the area or join the historical walking tour.

Make sure to visit the Shrine of the

THAILAND



Serene Light; where a beautiful garden and colorful temple welcomes you. Thalang Road offers plenty of batik shops run by local Malays and Indians and a look at some of the renovated buildings that gleam in the sunlight. A colorful Chinese shrine, a fresh food market, and the Thai Hua Museum are all found throughout this maze of roads. Hip shops, restaurants, cafes, and even bars have been popping up all over Old Phuket Town and it is worth the time to come and experience this history-rich area.

Phuket Old Town was built on the prosperity of tin mining in the last century. It is compact enough to stroll around and witness grandiose Sino-Portuguese-style mansions and shophouses with beautiful facades. The unique architectural style reflects the mixed influences of various cultures in Phuket. The Thai-Hua Museum on Krabi Road is one of the best places that tell interesting stories of Chinese descendants and heritages on the island.

5. Visit Wat Chalong

The most important temple of the 29 Buddhist temples in Phuket is definitely worth a visit and is absolutely amazing in its beauty and meaning. This temple is dedicated to two monks who led citizens in the fight against the Chinese Rebellion in 1876 and who helped many injured people with their knowledge of herbal medicine. Please remember to dress appropriately when visiting any of the temples and respect that although many tourists come here; it is an important place of worship for the locals.

Take your time to explore this temple noticing details such as the dragons painted in vibrant colors along the staircases and the painted ceilings. Make sure to see the famous Poh Than Jao Wat statue located in the old hall of the temple along with the statue of a local that is said to have won the lottery after consulting the Poh Than Jao Wat statue. The upper level is the Grand Pagoda and is said to house a fragment of Buddha's bone. This area is breezy, beautiful and contains many images of

the Buddha and paintings that depict his life. There are many beautiful and amazing temples in Phuket and we encourage you to visit as many as you can but if you only have time for one, make sure you come here.

4. Gibbon Rehabilitation Project

Escape the ordinary and travel to the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project's visitor center at Bang Pae waterfalls. The goal of this project and its organizers is to rehabilitate unwanted or confiscated gibbons from the pet trade and tourist industry. These highly endangered animals are often used for photos with tourists in Phuket but visiting this center will have you thinking twice about stopping to snap a picture with these cute animals.

Open daily with no admission to the center (although it is located in a national park that charges an entrance fee), and full of lively and passionate volunteers; the center is a learning opportunity for locals and visitors alike. Discover why these apes are highly endangered, what you can do to help and catch a glimpse of them from the viewing platforms. Listen to the songs that the Gibbons sing out, appreciate the hard work these volunteers do, and perhaps consider adopting one of these endangered species. A visit to the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project is a unique way for any visitor to learn, support, and appreciate the wildlife of Phuket.

3. Simon Cabaret

Simon Cabaret is the largest transvestite show on Phuket Island and you can't travel here without seeing the famous ladyboys of Patong. From the elaborate stage designs to the brilliant costumes to the bright lights this is one grand show that is simply a must. The Simon Cabaret is often compared to a Las Vegas quality show and these performers lip-sync to popular songs and dance the night away; all while visitors try to glimpse a masculine feature on one of these very convincing looking "ladies".

This show is suitable for kids and adults and it is recommended

to buy your tickets ahead of time at a discounted rate. The movie-style seating in the theater along with free drinks makes it an enjoyable place to watch the show. Most visitors to Phuket will do this once and then over-the-top extravagant costumes and performances are the reason why people come to see it. Stick around after the show to grab some photos with some of the stars, just remember to tip them.

2. Visit the Night Markets

Hundreds of stalls teeming with clothes, shoes, crafts, and everything Thai; the night markets offer a break from overpriced souvenir shops and the chance to haggle with shop owners. Don't worry, the vendors price their merchandise accordingly and fully expect locals and tourists to bargain over prices; although the Thai still get the absolute best prices. Located just outside Phuket Town visitors should come hungry and ready to spend.

The various rows of stalls are protected from the rain with tarps overhanging; which is excellent unless you are taller than about 5'8. Prepare to duck as you wander through the bracelets, earrings, shoes, cell phones, live animals, and pretty much everything else you can ever imagine that can be sold. The food is to die for here at the market and be sure to try the butter dripping corn on the cob, exotic fruits, and even some deep-fried insects; all washed down with a nice cold beer. Plenty to see, plenty to buy, and a part of the local culture all await you at the wonderful Night Markets in Phuket Town.

1. Visit a Viewpoint in Time for the Sunset

There are many lookout points in Phuket that hundreds of people travel to every day in order to catch a glimpse of the magnificent sun as it slowly sinks down and fills the sky with brilliant colors. The most famous viewpoint is Laem Phromthep which arguably offers the best sunset on the island and the flock of tourists that congregate on the hilltop each night seems to justify just that.

THAILAND

Although crowded we recommend heading to Laem Phromthep and heading off the beaten track to a secret location where you can enjoy the spectacular sunset in peace. The lighthouse at the top provides some peace as you climb to the top and have an elevated view away from the majority of the people. But for real peace and serenity, you will want to head down to the very south end of the viewpoint. Take the stairs that are placed in the opening of the wall that turns into a winding dirt path ending at the Southernmost tip of Phuket Island. Watch as the sky turns glorious shades of red, pink, and gold and as the sun sinks beneath the clouds you might just feel as though you have found heaven on earth. Make sure to head back before it gets really dark as the path can be hard to find.

Other attractions in Phuket include:

Laem Phromthep and viewpoints

Laem Phromthep, locally dubbed “Laem Chao”, is located on the southernmost point of the Island. With its breathtaking scenery and beautiful *Sunset* spot, the cape is one of the favorite locations for photography among tourists in Phuket. From the edge of the cliff, a line of palm trees inclines downward to the cape’s end, which features rocky reefs where the island, Ko Kaeo Phitsadan, appears at the front. It is also a site of the Laem Phromthep Kanchanaphisek Lighthouse, built on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of King Rama IX’s accession to the throne. The light from the lighthouse can be seen as far as 39 kilometers. Inside the lighthouse is showcased the exhibition about the lighthouse’s construction, keeping standard time, and the calculation and display of the times of the sunrise and sunset. From the top of the lighthouse, visitors can view the endless spectacular scenery.

Ko Racha and Ko Mai Thon

Located in southern Phuket, Ko Racha is composed of two Islands: Ko Racha Noi and Ko Racha Yai. Ko Racha Yai



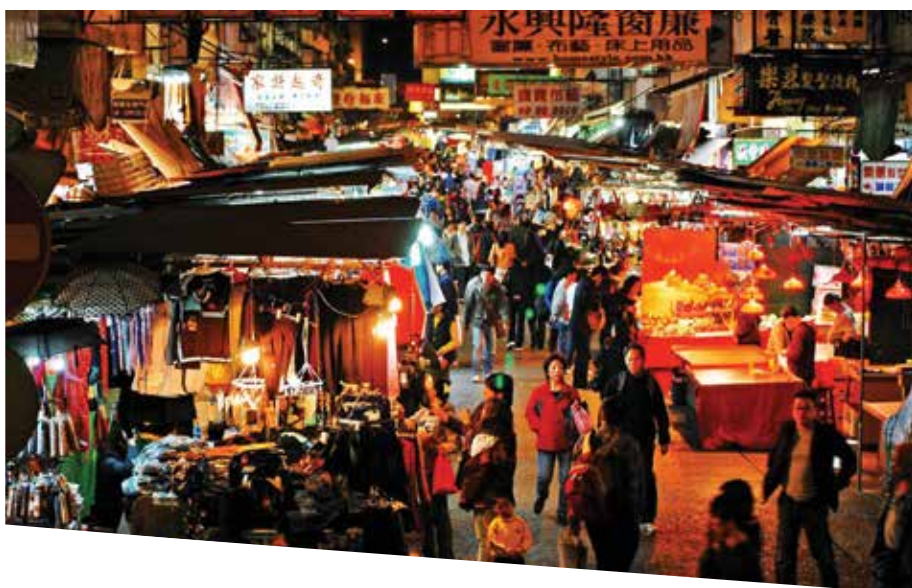
covers a white sandy Beach shoreline with crystal water. It is known as a paradise for tourists, especially, for those who are fond of diving. Equipped with full facilities, this island is ideal for staying over amidst nature. Ko Racha Noi is a popular diving spot, which is suitable for professional divers only. Divers will also have a chance to meet Manta ray or a great white shark here.

Ko Mai Thon, a small Island located in the *southeast* of Phuket, is rich with nature and features beautiful *Beaches*. It is, therefore, one of the destinations for tourists who have limited time

since it does not take long to *travel* by *speedboat* from a deep water port to get to this stunning island.

Hat Patong

The Beach features a wide curvy bay enhanced by clear indigo *sea* and a beautiful white beach that is suitable for any kind of marine-based sports. It is also internationally well-known and a center of tourists around the world. Patong Beach is almost like a small developed town that is equipped with hospitals, large department stores, a wide range of accommodation, and



restaurants, which offer from seaFood, Thai to international food. To get there: the Beach is 15 kilometers from Phuket town. Take Highway No. 4019 or Wichit Songkhram Road for about 9 kilometers, then turn left along the Highway (following the signpost of Hat Patong) for about 6 kilometers. The road is quite meandering and sloping.

Phuket Fantasea

Located at Hat Kamala, the show is one of the famous attractions in Phuket and the world's first Thai cultural theme park. The show's highlight is

the Performance called the "Amazing Kamala", which is a combination between Thai arts and Culture and cutting-edge special effects of light and sound including over 10 Thai elephants and other animals on the stage of the grand theatre. The services also include Dinner in an international Buffet style.

Phuket Night Shows: A fantastic night on the Island

When darkness covers the stunning sea, Phuket's attention shifts to the nightlife and night entertainment. The colorful

lights and lively vibe of Phuket can keep you awake all night long. After dark, there are abundant places to go to, but the ones listed below are fantastic.

Phuket Fantasea is one of the most famous shows in Phuket. Inspired by exotic Thai heritages, it showcases the beauty and traditions of the country. With over 400 casts and crews, 44 elephants, and many animals, the extravaganza show impresses the entire audience with a breathtaking Las Vegas-style theatrical show featuring new acrobatics, illusions, fireworks, stunts, aerial performances, and more.

Families are entertained with a carnival Village with games, parades, and a large themed Restaurant with 4,000 seats which offers one of the best buffets in town.

Siam Niramit offers a full evening with a fabulous 70-minute show featuring great choreographies, songs, as well as a great international and Thai restaurant. The nonstop fancy show shows the History of Thailand, traditional lifestyle, and beliefs, especially of heaven and hell.

Simon Cabaret is one of the city's most famous "ladyboy" cabaret shows, offering a music show with stunning costumes, expensive sets, and great sound systems.

If these shows are not your favorites, then Muay Thai Boxing is probably the right choice. Phuket hosts stadiums and shows where you can enjoy watching the sport at its best. The main venue in Phuket is the Boxing Stadium at Saphanhin District.

Bangla Boxing Stadium is another interesting choice. Although its unusual decoration and beer bars, which give the impression that this is another tourist trap, the stadium offers the right fights.

How to get there

Phuket is 690 kilometers south of Bangkok. Many airlines operate several daily flights from Bangkok.

FINLAND

the ideal
post-pandemic
destination





Recognized for its stellar reputation as a destination committed to providing healthy and safe travel for residents and visitors, Finland has proven to be the ideal post-pandemic destination for travelers looking to visit countries that provide the perfect balance between sustainable practices and immersive experiences. With pent-up demand for international travel growing, Finland offers the space, cleanliness, and stand-out offerings that allow travelers to truly enjoy immersive Finnish experiences. From remote and stylish forest hideaways and off-the-grid lakeside retreats, Finland is the perfect place to escape from everyday life and reconnect with nature.

FINLAND

*"Visit Finland is eager to welcome travelers back to the Happiest Country in the World. Post-Pandemic the destination offers an opportunity to visitors to explore its forests and lakes, sea and cities, saunas and cottages, and above all happiness and calm. "Our destinations are doing their utmost to ensure that your experience with us is safe, healthy, and comfortable. We don't yet know exactly when we'll be able to welcome you, but we are hopeful that it won't be too long. See you soon!" says **Kristiina Hietasaari, Head of Visit Finland.***

Finland is already known for its amazing destinations and outdoor adventures, and the country is expanding its offerings to include new, off-the-beaten-path places to recuperate and explore this year where space, privacy, and the great outdoors come as standard. Here are the top six new places to keep top of mind when planning a nature-bound vacation in Finland.

The new *Barö Archipelago Hotel* located in Uusimaa, Barösund, Inkoo, Finland opened on June 1st, 2021. This luxury boutique hotel is only an hour away from Helsinki and will showcase the beauty of the surrounding archipelago including the Elisaari area, the site of one of the largest natural oak forests in Finland. The hotel has 20 separate rooms with incredible panoramic views and the option of a suite with a private sauna and hot tub. The hotel also has contactless check-in and check-out systems, digital food ordering and activities can be booked via an app to minimise contact.

Luxury meets the wilderness at this new adults-only resort in Saimaa, Finland, the first one in the country. You can stay in one of the 16 elevated private villas in *Kuru Private Resort*, situated on the edge of Lake Saimaa surrounded by nature. These secluded retreats include a private sauna and allow guests to completely switch off with no televisions and optional Wi-Fi in the rooms. Guests can also make the most of the pristine wilderness throughout the year with experiences such as ice fishing, ice swimming,





hiking, and seal spotting safaris to catch a rare glimpse of the endangered Saimaa Ringed Seal.

Bringing nature to Helsinki, *Haltia Lake Lodge* is located in Nuuksio National Park, just a 20-minute drive outside of the city. The hotel offers guests experiences such as a two-day kayaking safari, an expert-led Spring birding trip, or even a simulation exercise for surviving a snowstorm. What's more, sustainable practices and environmental values are at the heart of the hotel and the property runs on 100% renewable energy, doesn't use any plastics, and aims to be carbon negative by 2023.



Off the coast and off-grid, *Majamaja* is a minimalist's dream, offering a secluded retreat in the heart of the Helsinki archipelago. The inspiration for Majamaja comes from the Finnish archipelago itself and its minimalistic tradition. At Majamaja, guests may wake up to the subtle sounds of seabirds and the gently rolling waves of the Baltic sea. A blend of harmony and coastal nature is combined with the wooden Majamaja design, it offers a comfortable shelter as well as a sophisticated, yet modest, immersion in nature.

Located in a private forest setting in the tranquil area of Pyhä in Lapland, *Sunday Morning Resort* is an exclusive lakeside holiday resort. The resort is located about a 5-minute drive away from Pyhä ski resort and Pyhä-Luosto National Park. The resort consists of a spacious and stylish main lodge and four hotel apartments made of old pine timber, and all the interiors are newly renovated. The resort is carbon neutral due to its eco-friendly heating systems and surrounding 6-acre forest, plus guests can enjoy carbon zero-emission activities such as electric snowmobile safaris and tours with electric fat bikes. Whether you are looking for a peaceful holiday spot or an active getaway, The Sunday Morning resorts offer the best of Lapland all year round.



Home to more reindeer than it is people, Finnish Lapland is the perfect place to escape the crowds and relax in privacy. *Ollero Eco lodge*, sits in a secluded beauty spot by the Ounasjoki



river, allowing guests a 'wilderness feel' despite being only a 10-minute drive from Rovaniemi city centre. Comprised of three separate buildings in total (main cottage, glass igloo, and sleeper cabin), Ollero Ecolodge is a completely eco-friendly retreat, its design combining comfort with local building heritage. Ollero Eco Lodge is ideally placed to chase the famed Northern



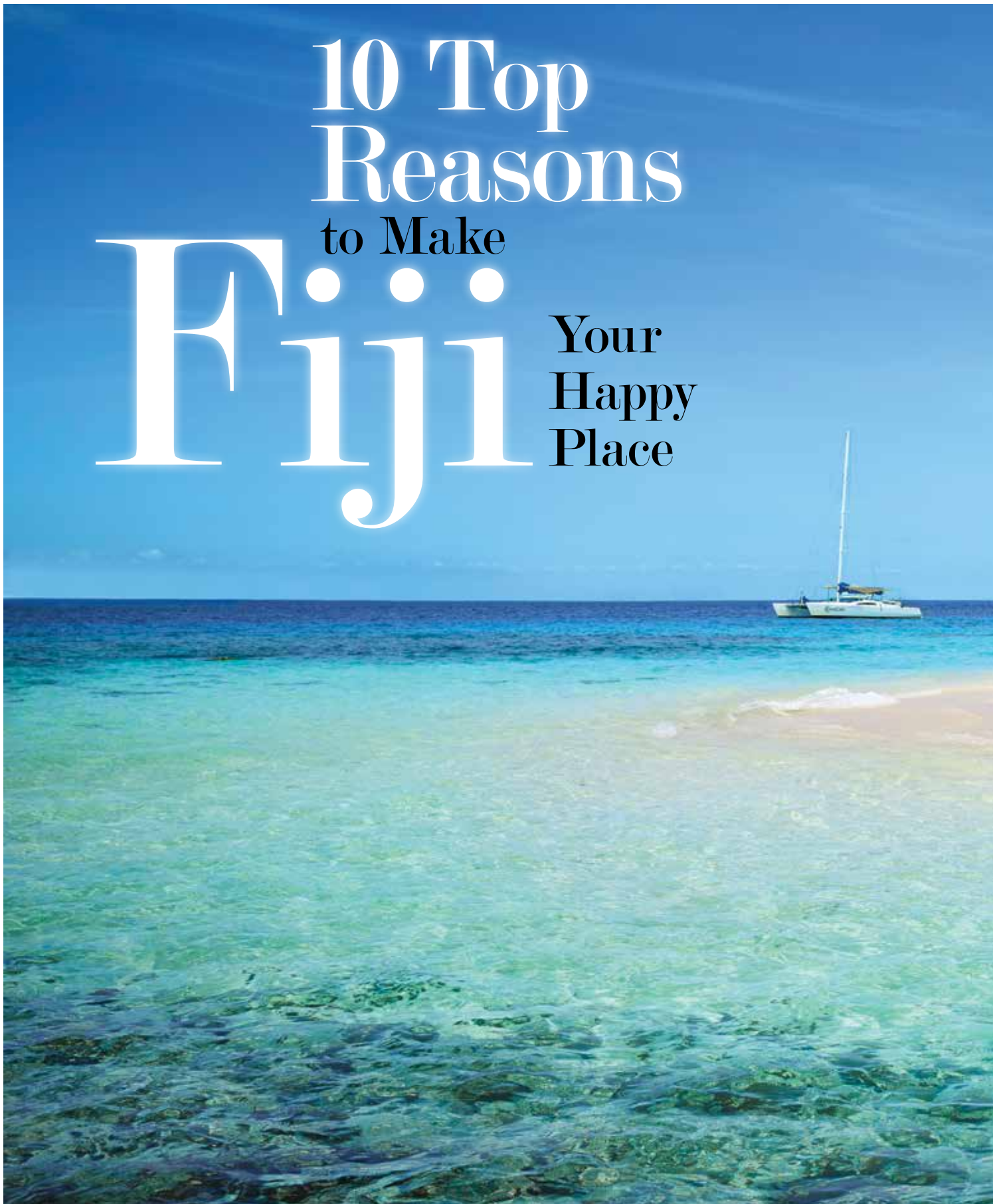
Lights as well as other winter activities such as ice fishing, snowshoeing, and traditional Finnish sauna. During the Summer months, guests can try their hand at fishing, paddleboarding, and kayaking or they can experience a scenic hike or cycle. What better base for travellers desperate to get off the grid and reconnect with their beautiful natural surroundings?




Situated in Asikkala (Lahti Region), *Lake Hotel Lehmonkärki* provides adult-only mirror houses on the peaceful Lake Päijänne, the second largest lake in Finland. With a restaurant, bar, lakeside hot tub spas, and hot spring baths, this 5-star hotel offers guests everything they need to unwind and relax in the beautiful surroundings of Finland's famous Lakelands. The

surrounding areas of the property invite guests to indulge in adventure activities such as skiing (the hotel offers free ski hire) as well as hiking, or they can simply recline on the hotel's private beachfront. Located nearly 20 miles from the nearest major city, Lake Hotel Lehmonkärki offers travellers a blissfully secluded escape from civilization.

10 Top Reasons to Make Fiji Your Happy Place





With a genuinely friendly vibe and limitless options for relaxation and adventure, Fiji makes it easy to live your best island life.

THE “BULA” SPIRIT MAKES EVERYTHING SEEM BETTER

Ahh... Fiji. A gorgeous island, full of pristine white beaches and sparkling azure waters, with greetings of ‘Bula!’ (the Fijian welcome greeting) from the friendly natives everywhere you go, and is it almost too cliché to say: coconut trees swaying in the balmy wind? Have all that and *so, so much more*, what’s with its abundance of culture and spirit, when you enter the tropical and exotic haven of Fiji, an archipelago of 333 islands located in the South Pacific. And if you’re wondering what exactly you can do there, other than lounging at the gorgeous beaches..., Here are some great options to make your great escape even sweeter.



1. THERE'S ANOTHER WORLDLY UNDERSIDE

Called the “Soft Coral Capital of the World” by legendary undersea explorer and conservationist Jacques Cousteau, Fiji is brimming with dazzling sites. Go underwater to explore shallow lagoons teeming with marine life, mysterious caves and canyons, and cool coral-covered walls. Among the archipelago’s most famous world-class dive destinations are the Great Astrolabe Reef, Somosomo Strait, and many more. Idyllic weather, clear waters, and a wealth of expert instructors also make Fiji an ideal place to learn how to dive, particularly as a family. With an unmatched spectrum of colourful reefs, more than 1,500 species of fish, and several hundred types of coral and sponges, Fiji offers plenty of unique diving and snorkelling experiences. There is even the opportunity to swim with Manta Rays and Hawksbill Turtles if done during the right time of year.

2. IMMERSE YOURSELF IN NATURAL BEAUTY –

The islands of Fiji are spread over 500,000 square miles of the Southern Pacific Ocean. The dreamy country made even more famous by the movies *Cast Away* with Tom Hanks and *The Blue Lagoon* is home to 333 picturesque islands and some of the most paradise-like scenery on earth. With its postcard-perfect islands, hidden coves, and luxurious views of the turquoise ocean, Fiji boasts of having hidden waterfalls and lush green tropical rain forests rugged coastlines, and dramatic volcanic mountain peaks. Fiji’s third-largest island ‘Taveuni’ is referred to as the ‘Garden Island of Fiji’ for a good reason —80 percent of the island is covered by tropical rainforests, along with natural rockslides and ancient lava flow. Also, the Sigatoka Sand Dunes, on the main island of Viti Levu is famous for whose rolling dunes are something straight out of Arabian

nights though right on the coastal front!

Fiji is a breathtakingly beautiful destination on many a traveller’s bucket list and the scenery includes powdery white sands, swaying palm trees, and sparkling turquoise lagoons. From jaw-dropping beaches to tranquil small islands, snorkelling, and wellness programs, to adrenaline-pumping adventures and parties in the middle of the Pacific, there are nearly as many reasons as there are islands in Fiji to ‘Dream of this Paradise’. With some of the most exotic locations in the world, Fiji is the destination of choice for filmmakers also.

3. FAMILIES FEEL AT HOME IN FIJI

Fiji is an ideal destination for those seeking a tropical family holiday; it is filled with fun land-based activities, epic marine experiences, sumptuous cuisine, and warm and friendly locals.



Finding family-friendly accommodation with meal deals and amazing Kids' Clubs for the little ones in Fiji isn't hard. With incredible wildlife, stunning beaches, and a huge range of adventure activities,

Fiji is just one big playground. Grab some snorkels and discover little critters on the reef or learn to dive at any of the many excellent dive spots. You can jump on a jet ski, kayak through mangroves, or head inland to hidden waterfalls and float down rivers on a bamboo raft. Or simply let them swim and build sandcastles to their heart's content on long sandy beaches.

Fiji's relatively small size means getting around is easy so that you can squeeze more activities into each day. Complimentary perks for families commonly include one-on-one nanny services for infants and toddlers, and supervised kids clubs for children ages four to 12. Teens typically can choose from a daily slate of guided activities,





like kayaking, snorkelling, and hiking. At the end of the day, families can gather for meals, swim time in the family pool, and evening activities, such as Fijian dance performances.

4. RELAXATION IS A FORM OF ART IN FIJI

There's always time and room to chill in Fiji. One can experience the sheer bliss of doing nothing except floating in a serene lagoon or napping in a palm-shaded hammock. Many resorts offer relaxation options with a Fijian twist, such as massages on the beach and private picnics on secluded beaches or sandbars. Adults-only island enclaves like Tokoriki Island Resort (only 15 minutes by air from Nadi

International Airport) and the remote Royal Davui Resort in the Beqa Lagoon offer a relaxation trifecta: peace, quiet, and total privacy.

To add a daily dose of pampering to your relaxation regimen, unwind at one of Fiji's world-famous spas. Typical rejuvenating options include traditional Fijian Bobo massages and skin treatments incorporating sugar cane, honey, banana leaves, and other Fiji-sourced ingredients. Fiji's second-largest island is an ideal destination for tranquillity at exclusive properties, such as the celebrity favourite on Vanua Levu. Much of the island is covered in lush tropical forest and coconut plantations, making it a scene



to connect with nature. A few of the accommodations around Savusavu not only host regular wellness retreats but also have their wellness and health programs.

5. ADVENTURE AWAITS IN FIJI!

Those who want some action on their holiday, you are in for a treat. Skydiving, helicopters, jet boats, white water rafting, shark diving, river tubing, Zipline Through the Rainforest, Parasail Over the Islands, White Water Rafting in Deep River Canyons, and much more can be enjoyed in and around the islands of Fiji! with warm weather, warm waters, and warm Fijian hospitality.

6. DISCOVER FIJI ON CRUISE

Fiji Cruises as a holiday option? Yes! Picture this ... Cocktails on the rear deck, fresh sea breezes, sunsets over a golden ocean, and a fabulous new island to discover every day.

Cruises to Fiji are one of the best ways to see and experience the raw natural beauty and serenity of the South Pacific. Discover beaches that

feel like paradise, with crystal-clear water lapping at soft white sand, and palms rustling in the warm breeze. You can snorkel over coral reefs, sunbathe, visit eco-parks with rare protected species, and trek through tropical jungles on these fantastic Fiji cruise itineraries.

In Nadi, take in a live performance that highlights local culture and tradition through music and dance, or explore the town's Hindu temples. Visit the Sigatoka Sand Dunes National Park, where you can see 500-year-old lava flows. Soak your stress away in the Sabeto Hot Springs and Mud Pool, or see the incredible fire walking ceremony performed by the villagers of Beqa Island. Experience unforgettable adventures, rich culture, and total relaxation.

Captain Cook Cruise - Get a taste of Fijian Beauty on the blissful short Captain Cook Cruises. The day cruises are designed to give you a taste of the real Fiji; it's great food, spectacular scenery, friendly people, and the opportunity to be as active or laid back as you want. From Tivua Island Day Cruise and Fiji Sunset Dinner Cruise to Private Yacht Sailing, and Adventure Cruises, there's something for every travelers.

Blue Lagoon Cruises - Blue Lagoon Cruises takes you on a journey through paradise, cruising the Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands. These idyllic islands lie off the western coast of Viti Levu, and have some of the most beautiful and striking scenery in the South Pacific. **Opt for Sigatoka River Safari** - Explore Viti Levu's longest river on a Sigatoka River Safari! Enjoy the 18-kilometer journey from Sigatoka Town into Sigatoka Valley and discover the lushly green environment known as the 'salad bowl'. The Sigatoka River Safari is an exciting cultural experience, where you will get to experience both the thrill of a Jet Boat and explore a traditional Village. This tour offers both morning and afternoon departures from Sigatoka, your day will start with an exciting Jet Boat ride to the village where you will learn about some Fijian history and life in the village. During your time in the village,





you will sit down to a lovely tropical lunch with singing and entertainment. After a wonderful cultural experience, you will head back to Sigatoka by Jet Boat and have some fun doing 360-degree spins! Tantalize your taste buds with a sumptuous tropical Fijian lunch prepared by the women of the village before jumping aboard for the return journey!

7. RELISH YOUR TASTE BUDS WITH FIJIAN CUISINE

Fijian cuisine is a delectable fusion with recipes that regularly

incorporate locally sourced ingredients like mud crabs, crunchy sea grapes (called nama), cassava (a fibrous root vegetable), and freshly caught fish. Indian curries are restaurant staples infused with homegrown Fiji flavors, such as coconut milk, plantains, and tomatoes. Extend your deep dive into Fijian cuisine by sharing in a Lovo (earth oven) feast, a traditional meal, slow-cooked underground over heated stones and under banana stalks and palm fronds. Many resorts and restaurants offer special Lovo nights,

where guests can dine on steaming meats, fish, and root vegetables freshly dug out of the subterranean oven.

8. POSTCARD-PERFECT BACKDROPS FOR INSTAGRAM

Capture vibrant images with a daily dose of Fiji's land and water locations and with 30 to 40 varieties of Asian orchids and Cattleya hybrids. In addition to the ubiquitous natural beauty, wherever you choose to travel in the islands you'll encounter an only-in-Fiji scene worth sharing. Make the quick hop south of Viti Levu to post mesmerizing images of Fiji's legendary Beqa Island Firewalker. On the eastern side is the wildly green Taveuni Island, aptly named the Garden Island, fill your feed with shots of the three Tavoro Waterfalls. Located in lushly forested Bouma National Heritage Park, the cascades are visual stunners and have natural volcanic pools where you can simultaneously soak and share a to-die-for Instagram story.

9. GO GOLFING IN FIJI

Golf is played widely in Fiji. The island has plenty of expert-designed golf courses for you to explore. There



are over a dozen scattered throughout the islands, with three championship courses on the main island, Viti Levu, and many smaller and fun 9-hole courses elsewhere. For the ultimate, world-class golfing experience, Viti Levu has three spectacular 18-hole, 72-par championship courses. The Natadola Bay Championship Golf Course, arguably Fiji's best, is located on the South-West coast of the island and it offers spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean, along with excellent facilities. The green island does have everything you need for a luxury golfing holiday. There are world-class championship golf courses and stellar private island stays available.

10. HAVE YOUR WEDDING AND HONEYMOON IN FIJI

Turquoise waters lapping onto sandy shores backed by swaying coconut palms... That's the typical backdrop to a romantic getaway, wedding, or honeymoon in Fiji. The island is so renowned for its breathtaking wedding venues and honeymoon resorts that it's almost become a cliché for romantic island getaways. But it also offers something unique, as Fiji has a smorgasbord of landscapes to dress up your big day, proposal, or honeymoon, from volcanic cliffs with cascading waterfalls to verdant jungles. The romance of the tropics... it has long been a favourite destination for honeymooners and couples and it's becoming increasingly popular for weddings or the re-affirming of vows.

One can choose from modern international resorts or smaller more intimate islands because this tropical paradise has a resort just right for everyone. Some resorts will help you arrange your wedding either in the traditional Fijian style or the white wedding of your dreams.

Whatever the plans, discover why Fijians are the world's best hosts and dive into Fiji for a wedding and honeymoon that you'll never forget. The Fiji people are so warm and friendly that no matter what resort you stay at you will feel like family by the time you leave.



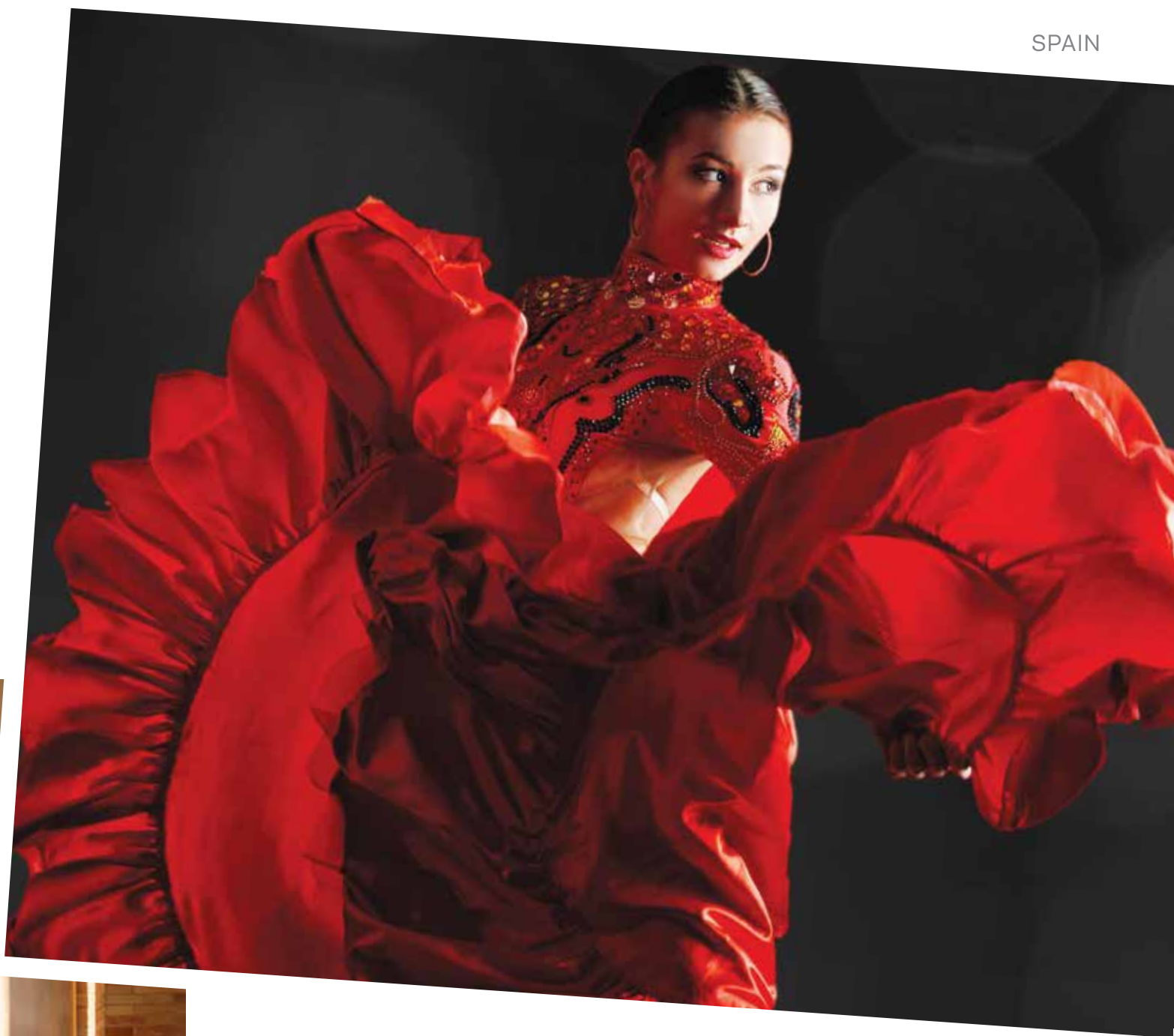
Flamenco

the music genre that will
captivate you when you visit

Spain

Flamenco is a form of popular artistic expression representing a long-standing tradition that appears on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.





This art form combines vocal music, dance, and musical accompaniment (called *cante*, *baile*, and *toque*) rooted fundamentally in Andalusia and other regions like Murcia and Extremadura. This cultural expressive vehicle with two centuries of history (some experts have traced its origins to the 18th century when its popularity began to grow) is the most emblematic of Andalusian folklore and the most renowned form of artistic expression in Spain. Flamenco has become a true identity for numerous communities, such as the gypsy ethnic group, where it is transmitted from generation to generation through dynasties of artists, families, flamenco clubs, numerous important festivals, schools, and flamenco

tablaos, whose numbers are growing each year.

There are a myriad of figures in the world of flamenco whose endeavours in the art have brought them great success, namely, Antonio Gades, Enrique Morente, Eva La Yerbabuena, La Niña de la Puebla, Joaquín Cortés, Antonio Canales, Rafael Amargo, Antonio “El Bailarín”, Camarón de la Isla, Cristina Hoyos or Carmen Amaya, just to name a few. They are able to express a multitude of different feelings through the medium of vocal music (*cante*) and dancing (*baile*). *Cante* can not only be accompanied by the flamenco guitar, but also by castanets, a percussion box known as “*el cajón*”, hand-clapping and heel-clicking, whose rhythms are broken down into diverse “*palos*” or varieties

(toná, soleá, seguiriya, fandango, sevillanas, etc.) based on factors, such as the song's character or origin. Baile, in turn, has a complex technique and its interpretation varies according to the individual performer.

Flamenco is the most well-known music genre in Spain. Today, one of the best places to enjoy flamenco in Spain is at a tablao, a traditional live music café from "the golden age of flamenco" that you can find throughout the country. These cafés have launched a number of careers over the years: great singers such as Camarón de la Isla and Enrique Morente, dancers such as Carmen Amaya and Farruco, and guitarists such as Paco de Lucía. Madrid is sometimes considered

another province of Andalusia due to its great flamenco and is the home to some of the best tablaos in the country, where you're guaranteed a great show and fantastic food. You will feel yourself clapping along to the rhythm of the music in no time. It'll make you want to get up and dance as you shout: olé! And during your trip, you can also learn to dance Sevillanas and tap your heels in time to the music in the traditional style.

The generation that followed Camarón de la Isla has been introducing new sounds and fusing other genres into flamenco, to create a new vision of the genre that is merged with tradition. Did you know that Rosalía is one of the new up-and-coming artists in

the genre? When you visit Spain, you can also enjoy various routes that you will find in the heartland of flamenco: Andalusia. You can't leave without discovering the home of the music that is loved by the entire world. Begin your discovery by creating a playlist of the best flamenco for your trip to Spain.

Do you love flamenco music? The best areas to enjoy it

Originating in the mix of cultures and traditions that is Andalusia, flamenco is one of the most quintessentially Spanish artistic disciplines. Recognized by UNESCO in 2010 as part of the world's Intangible Cultural Heritage, it is an art form bursting with emotion and passion,





SPAIN

expressed in music, song, and dance. Discover the thrill of this raw and authentic art in the best areas of Spain for enjoying flamenco.

Andalusia, the birthplace of flamenco

Flamenco first emerged in Andalusia, and some of the most famous flamenco artists were born in the region. Today its spirit is still very much alive, and this is one of the best places in Spain to experience flamenco performance. Different areas of Andalusia have their *aires* or regional styles, and while you can find flamenco anywhere in the region, the best-known centers are Seville, Jerez de la Frontera, Granada, and Cordoba.

Seville

Seville is home to *tonás* and *sevillanas*, Spain's most famous flamenco *palos* (styles). As well as enjoying the sound of flamenco in streets, bars, and *tablaos*, not to mention the *saetas* sung during the Easter processions, in Seville, you can soak up flamenco culture in the *Flamenco Dance Museum*, founded by Cristina Hoyos. If you get a chance to attend, the *Flamenco Biennial*, held every two years since 1980, is a major event celebrating the art of flamenco with competitions, shows, discussions, and much more.

Jerez de la Frontera

Lola Flores and José Mercé are just two of the many illustrious flamenco artists from Jerez de la Frontera. This is a town where flamenco pervades everything, with innumerable *tablaos*, recitals, and events, including the traditional Fiesta de la Bulería and the famous Jerez International Flamenco Festival. An essential visit for a deeper understanding of this culture is the *Andalusian Centre of Flamenco*, with exhibitions and historical archives.

Granada

Granada is the living history of flamenco. The famous Sacromonte caves, home to great artists for centuries, offer exceptional flamenco shows where you can enjoy the traditional dance forms of the region,



beautiful guitar playing, and emotive laments or *quejíos*. To experience this culture to the full, we recommend the flamenco tour “Tras los pasos de Antonio Chacón”, visiting several districts of Granada where the people live and breathe flamenco, accompanied by the music of Chacón, one of the greatest exponents of the *fandango*.

Cordoba

A visit to Córdoba is an authentic flamenco experience. One of the most festive evenings in a city famous for its fiestas is the *Noche Blanca del Flamenco*, with top flamenco artists



performing all night in the open air. Another important event in the world of flamenco is the famous *International Guitar Festival*, with workshops, concerts, and shows. The *Fosforito Flamenco Centre* is another must-see venue for discovering the high-quality flamenco of Cordoba.

Madrid, the showbiz capital

The capital of Spain is also the place to enjoy the very best flamenco. *Madrid*

offers flamenco shows at all times of night and day, in theatres and *tablaos*, including the iconic Corral de la Morería. Essential events include the *Suma Flamenca Festival*, celebrating some of the greatest singers, dancers, and musicians while also introducing new talents, and the *Flamenco Madrid contest*, with a full, wide-ranging programme.

Barcelona, the art of flamenco in all its glory

After Madrid and Andalusia,

Barcelona is one of the best places in Spain to enjoy flamenco. This is mainly due to the many shows to be seen in its theatres, including the Palau de la Música Catalana, and flamenco *tablaos*, especially the city's largest, the *Palacio del Flamenco*. Throughout the year, the beautiful melodies of Spanish and flamenco guitar can be heard in Barcelona's *Maestros de la Guitarra* concert cycle.

Murcia, the legacy of Andalusian flamenco

Murcia took the flamenco of Andalusia and fused it with the *cantes* and *fandangos* emerging from the Murcian mining towns, thanks to emigration and the long-term mingling of Murcian and Andalusian traditions. This is how the prestigious *Flamenco Festival of Las Minas* began in 1962, bringing some of the world's greatest flamenco artists to the town of La Unión. Throughout the region, there are flamenco clubs that liven up the local fiestas with their performances, and they are all worth taking the time to enjoy.

Spain, A country full of artistic wonders

Discovering Spain means travelling back and forth in time and being surprised by a whole host of monuments ranging from an ancient Roman aqueduct to medieval castles and the most avant-garde, futuristic architecture. Centuries and mixed cultures have left their fascinating mark on Spain with some of the most amazing artistic heritage in the world. When you visit us you will be enchanted with the stories behind every work of art and remember them forever. Some of the most beautiful masterpieces created by Velázquez, Picasso, Dalí, and Gaudí are here. It is well worth discovering them with the original guided tours on offer, retracing the footsteps of great masters through museums such as the Prado, or visiting palaces like the Alhambra in Granada on a moonlit tour. Experiences that offer so much more than an average visit to a monument.

Hokkaido

Top 10 Things to Do

**Explore Japan's Northernmost Island
Hokkaido is the northernmost of
Japan's four main islands**



Filled with natural beauty, the prefecture's mountains, lakes, and parks provide nature enthusiasts with a plethora of excursions throughout the year. During the warmer seasons, Hokkaido's hiking trails and lakes offer remarkable views, and its parks are in full bloom. In winter, the island shines with relaxing *hot springs* and renowned winter sport spots. For the urban adventurers, Hokkaido's cities of Sapporo, Otaru, and Hakodate are filled with museums, restaurants, and much more.



1. Blue Pond

Blue Pond, or Aoiike, is located in the small town of Biei. People flock to this scenic pond year-round to witness the seemingly unreal color. The magnificent blue is most vibrant in late spring through early summer and is the result of aluminium that flows in from the Shirahige Falls. The man-made pond is the by-product of a dam built to protect Biei from the volcanic mud of Mt. Tokachi's eruption. Within the Blue Pond are submerged larch and silver birch trees, remnants of the forest before it was partially flooded. On windless days, the pond resembles a mirror, and visitors are treated to a perfect reflection of the sky. You can travel to Blue Pond during any season and whether the trees are

sparkling with snow, or the glass-like pond is mirroring the summer sky its uniqueness is guaranteed to fully mesmerize you.

2. Farm Tomita

Envision standing in a field encircled by a kaleidoscope of color and floral scents floating on the passing breeze. Farm Tomita is a popular attraction in Furano, a town centered in Hokkaido. On a bright day, Farm Tomita is an explosion of colour, with its rainbow flowers seamlessly flowing into the blue sky. The best time to visit the farm is from late June to early August when the flowers are in full bloom. Although the farm offers an array of blossoms, it is most famous for its lavender fields. If you desire to see the lavender, we recommend that you visit the fields

in July when the hills are blanketed in purple.

3. Hakodate

The city of Hakodate is located on the southern tip of the island and is cradled by the Sea of Japan and the Pacific Ocean. With its history as a port city, Hakodate is known for its abundance of fresh *seafood*, lending to its exquisite sushi and rice bowls. Foodies can treat themselves to a stroll through the city's morning market, where they can peruse the catches of the day.

Hakodate lies at the foot of Mt. *Hakodate*. The viewing platform at the mountain's peak is a popular spot for visitors and natives alike. The night-time view of the city is one of the best in Japan, as visitors are treated

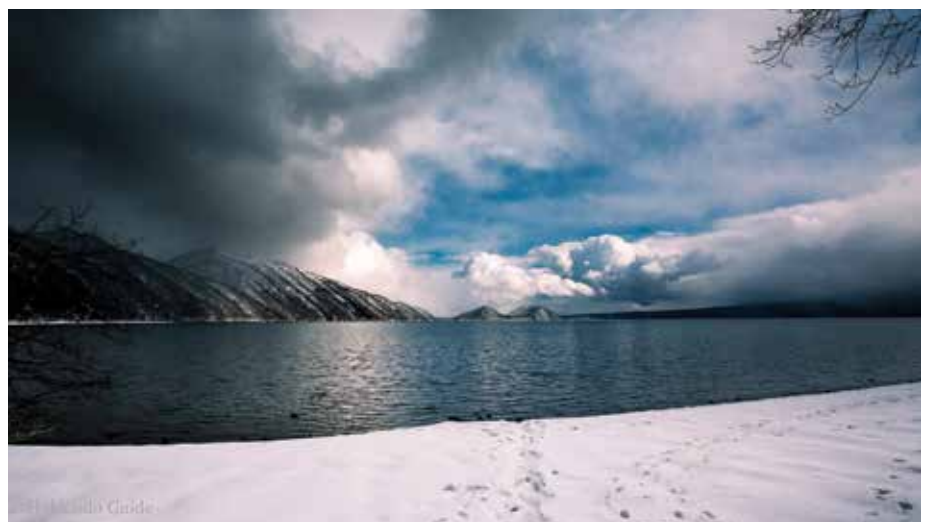




to an expansive sight of the city's dazzling lights. While the bird's-eye view of Hakodate is remarkable, you can only truly experience the city by walking its streets. The city is home to unique spots such as the star-shaped park of *Fort Goryokaku*, the historic neighbourhood of Motomachi, and Onuma Park. With its diverse offerings, Hakodate has something for everyone.

4. Akan National Park and Lake Mashu

With breathtaking lakeside views, lush forests, and volcanoes, *Akan National Park* is a must-see spot in Hokkaido. Located on the eastern side of the island, the area is one of Japan's first national parks. The abundance of natural beauty makes the park an ideal place for sightseeing and hiking. The park is home to three lakes: Lake Akan, Lake Kussharo, and Lake Mashu. A trip to Akan National Park would



be incomplete without a visit to Lake Mashu. This lake is one of Japan's most stunning natural attractions with extremely clear water and surrounding mountains. The park's observation

decks provide visitors with panoramic views of the stunning landscape. Lake Mashu is equally famous for the fog that often blankets its blue water, creating a hauntingly beautiful atmosphere.



5. Lake Shikotsu and Lake Toya

Lake Shikotsu and *Lake Toya* are popular lakes located in Shikotsu-Toya National Park. The park is on the western side of Hokkaido, well

removed from busy urban life, with the small town of Shikotsu Kohan being the closest developed area. Both lakes were formed due to volcanic activity, which caused areas

of the earth to collapse. On Lake Shikotsu's coast, hikers can explore trails and trek up Mt. Tarumae. By Lake Toya, visitors have the opportunity to observe huge craters recently formed by Mt. Usu's eruption. After hiking, both lakes have onsen, or hot springs, nearby where weary travelers can rest their bodies.

6. Asahiyama Zoo

Asahiyama Zoo rests on the outskirts of *Asahikawa* city, which is in the center of Hokkaido. The zoo is known for its uniquely designed enclosures. Visitors can "swim" with penguins by walking through a glass tunnel, watch lesser pandas run above them on suspension bridges, and much more. The lively atmosphere immerses visitors in an exciting and educational experience. The zoo hosts a diverse population of animals with



native Japanese species as well as international ones.

7. Otaru

Otaru is a small port city located on Hokkaido's western coast. The city attracts Japanese natives and tourists alike with its charming environment. Visitors can walk along the *Otaru Canal*, which is the city's most popular attraction, or take boat tours through the area. At night, the canal is illuminated by dozens of traditional oil lamps. The light's reflections on the water coupled with the historic buildings lining the canal create a truly magical scene. After spending time on the water, visitors can explore Otaru's streets. The city is filled with *museums*, including the Otaru Museum and glass-blown souvenirs, products of its presence in the glass-blowing industry. Of course, with its history as a fishing city, Otaru has some of the freshest

seafood in the area as well. The small city is swimming with memories waiting to be caught. Just cast your line. You are certain to get a bite!

8. Sapporo

Sapporo, Hokkaido's capital, is Japan's fifth-largest city and one of the most popular destinations in Hokkaido. The city shines during winter with *resorts* offering therapeutic *baths*, renowned skiing and snowboarding slopes as well as its annual snow festival. The Sapporo Snow Festival takes place one week in February every year. The festival is filled with exquisite snow sculptures, warm food and beverages, and snow activities such as slides and ice rinks. The festival's jubilant atmosphere transforms the longest nights into a winter wonderland.

Sapporo is also home to *Odori Park*, which is a public park in the heart of

the city. The large area is filled with trees, flowers, and fountains, creating a relaxing environment in the bustling city. Another exciting feature of Odori Park is the *Sapporo TV Tower*. The tall structure's design is based on the Eiffel Tower and offers beautiful views of the city from the top. For beer lovers, the Sapporo Beer Museum is a short drive away from the park and has beer production tours as well as tasting. Visitors cannot forget to try the local cuisine, with hairy crab and ramen being the area's staples.

The large city is bursting with activities, destinations, and culture, making it a required stop for visitors traveling to Hokkaido.

9. Shiretoko National Park

Shiretoko is one of Japan's most pristine national parks. Its wild expanses are home to 36 land and 22 marine mammal species as well as 285







bird species, including brown bears, Blakiston's fish owls and orcas. The peninsula's volcanic landscapes cover ocean, river and forest ecosystems that vary dramatically between seasons. You will have chances to hike through meadows dotted with alpine flowers, walk on drift ice, snowshoe through frozen forests, and cycle along winding mountain roads. The Shiretoko Peninsula is Hokkaido's farthest northeastern promontory, defined by the harsh spine of the Shiretoko mountains running down its center. Shiretoko National Park covers almost 390 square kilometers of this vast headland and about 220 square kilometers of sea surrounding it. Sheer

cliffs on its western edge, some 100 meters high, drop dramatically into the Sea of Okhotsk, providing safe nesting sites for seabirds such as spectacled guillemots. On the peninsula's eastern side the coastline slopes gently down to the sea. Brown bears ramble along the shores, and whales roam the deep waters. This wild and largely unspoiled land and sea earned UNESCO World Natural Heritage site status in 2005 for its singular blend of terrain and wildlife.

10. Niseko

Niseko is a town situated on the southwestern side of Hokkaido and is world-renowned for its ski resorts. People from all around the world travel

to Niseko to take advantage of its fluffy powder snow, which provides unique skiing and snowboarding experiences. Niseko's resorts offer countless slopes with varying degrees of difficulty as well as off-trail skiing. The area is comprised of multiple ski resorts with Grand Hirafu, Niseko Village, and Annupuri being the most visited ones. Grand Hirafu and Niseko Village are filled with restaurants, bars, and shops, while Annupuri is more secluded. Regardless of which resorts travelers choose to stay at, the diversity of Niseko's lodgings and surrounding activities ensure that visitors' times off the slopes are as equally thrilling as their times racing down the mountainsides.

10 Day Southern California Road Trip



There's nothing like packing your bags, hopping in the car and turning the radio dial-up as miles of pavement pass beneath your wheels. In Southern California, where warm, sunny days make for perfect drives with the window down, the best road trip includes three amazing and unique regions all within a few hours of each other: Santa Monica, Greater Palm Springs and San Diego. Whether you're a beach bum or a culture connoisseur,

you'll appreciate the variety of experiences that await in each place—and can be enjoyed in just 10 days.

Ready to hit the road? Let this ultimate Southern California road trip itinerary be your guide.

DAYS 1-3: SANTA MONICA

DAY 1: Santa Monica, your starting point, is Los Angeles' beach city—a charming seaside town with all of the culture, *events* and urban amenities of

a bustling metropolis. Kick off your trip with a bike ride along the 35-kilometre beach bicycle trail or a guided tour with *Santa Monica Bike Center*. Then spend a few hours at the Pacific Park amusement park, located on the world-famous *Santa Monica Pier*, and catch the sunset from the Ferris wheel. Finish your first day with dinner on the patio at one of *Main Street's* neighbourhood restaurants.

DAY 2: Begin your day by grabbing



some fresh fruit from the *Santa Monica Farmers Market*, then getting a coffee-to-go and strolling toward the 26-acre *Palisades Park*, known for its beautiful ocean views. Want to get your feet wet? Catch a wave during a surf session with the pros at *Aqua Surf School* before exploring the *Annenberg Community Beach House*, a unique community destination with spectacular views, a splash pad, a playground, a gallery, beach courts,

cultural events and more. Afterwards, hit up *Santa Monica Place* for outdoor luxury shopping and dining.

DAY 3: Greet the dawn with a sunrise hike in historic Will Rogers State Park through *Malibu Discovery Tours*, then grab your sunscreen and shades and find a sunny spot in the sand. *Perry's Café and Beach Rentals* is a must, offering "Beach Butler" service with a private beach area, as well as chairs, an umbrella, towels, and food

and beverages delivered right to you. Once you've worked on your tan, find your artsy side at *Bergamot Station*, Southern California's largest art gallery complex and cultural centre with over 20 contemporary galleries, or head to Pico Blvd for a *self-guide street art mural tour*.

Looking to stay somewhere truly unique while in Santa Monica? Check out these hotels which feature *amazing architecture and design elements*.



DAYS 4-7: GREATER PALM SPRINGS

DAY 4: It's time to head to *Greater Palm Springs* for a little relaxation and rejuvenation. This storied resort oasis, home to nine distinct cities,

serves as the gateway to Joshua Tree National Park and boasts hundreds of miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails, as well as an incomparable collection of seductive luxury hotels, resorts and spas.

After the 2.5-hour drive, climb aboard the *Palm Springs Aerial Tramway*, the world's largest rotating tramcar, and ascend over 9,000 feet to the top of Mount San Jacinto. Need to stretch your legs? Set out on a desert hike or go rock climbing among colossal boulders at *Joshua Tree National Park*. Afterwards, be sure to visit Pioneertown, an Old West movie set, or stop by the world-renowned saloon and restaurant *Pappy & Harriet's* for a barbecue dinner and live music.

DAY 5: Rise and shine with an outdoor adventure that's sure to get your adrenaline pumping. With *Big Wheel Tours*, you'll get a guided bike tour as you join the signature "Earthquake Canyon Express" through the San Andreas Fault Zone. At America's first carbon-neutral resort, *Two Bunch Palms*, treat yourself to a full range of spa-induced wellness treatments, including mud baths, chakra massages and reiki. And as



the sun dips behind the mountains, embark on a San Andreas Fault Sunset and Stargazing Jeep Tour with *Desert Adventures Red Jeep Tours & Events*.

DAY 6: Begin the day with another shot of adrenaline at the *BMW Performance Center*. Strap into a high-performance BMW and learn to negotiate one of three private road tracks under your instructor's watchful eye. Before the 2.5-hour drive to San Diego, allow La Quinta Resort & Club to nourish the body with authentic Mexican cuisine at the resort's signature restaurant, *Adobe Grill*.

DAYS 7-10: SAN DIEGO

DAY 7: After spending a couple of days immersed in the desert's awe-inspiring scenery and healing energy, pack up the car to explore the world-famous attractions and neighbourhoods of *San Diego*. The region's unique Cali-Baja culinary scene and craft brew industry have foodies

flocking for fresh experiences, while a dynamic downtown is a home to nightlife that's as vibrant as the city itself.

Plus, it's only 2.5 hours away! Spend the late morning exploring the Embarcadero, an epicentre of maritime history, where you can tour the *USS Midway Museum*, take a 1- or 2-hour harbour cruise or visit the floating Maritime Museum. Later, watch the sunset while sipping cocktails at one of Harbor Island's trendy bay-side restaurants, then indulge in incredible cuisine prepared by top chefs in *Little Italy*, San Diego's current restaurant "hot spot."

DAY 8: Wake up and walk on the wild side at the world-famous *San Diego Zoo*, home to more than 4,000 animals. Stroll through the country's largest urban park—*Balboa Park*—featuring 15 museums, an artist colony and fascinating architecture. Then top it all off with dinner and dancing in the *Gaslamp Quarter*, a historic downtown

neighbourhood where you'll find 200+ restaurants, bars and nightclubs within a 14-block radius.

DAY 9: Make your last morning memorable by enjoying breakfast at a cosy *La Jolla* cliffside restaurant (be sure to check out the sea lion colony!) followed by some much-needed beach time. Kick back and catch some rays along San Diego's 70 miles of coastline. Round out the day in *Old Town*, the "Birthplace of California," where museums, restaurants and Mexican traditions combine to provide an unforgettable cultural experience.

DAY 10: START DREAMING ABOUT YOUR RETURN VISIT

Enjoy a light bite at one of San Diego's hidden gem neighbourhoods of *North Park*, *South Park* or *Hillcrest*, then head to the airport (located just 10 minutes from downtown San Diego) for your trip back home—and start dreaming about your next SoCal getaway!

ITALY

Consider these things when
planning your

wedding in Italy



Do you wish to get married in Italy? If yes, the choice of place stands as a testimony of your great taste. Italy is famously called “Bel Paese”, the Italian phrase for a beautiful country. The land is known for its natural treasures. And thanks to the amazing sense of aesthetics of the locals, the manmade structures of the place are equally breathtaking.

However, before you move forward, you must know a few things

*The land is known for its natural treasures.
And thanks to the amazing sense of aesthetics
of the locals, the manmade structures of the
place are equally breathtaking.*



about destination weddings in Italy.

Pick the right wedding location and venue

The best thing about Italy is that you will not need to be a wise person to pick the right wedding location and venue. Every single place in this European nation is beautiful and has fascinating features to boast of.

If you want to choose one of the known and conventional places for your destination wedding, you can pick Venice, Rome, or Florence. However, these are not the only places that can make the celebration look grand. Moving towards the Italian countryside will introduce you to some enchanting locations. Some of the options you can choose from include Amalfi's stunning coastline, Umbria's hilly terrains, Tuscany's epic hills, and so on.

Know the legal procedure well

If you want to get married legally in Italy, you must complete a complex legal procedure. As every country has different rules when it comes to legal marriage, speaking to an expert is a must for you.

Governments of some countries have entered pacts with the government of Italy regarding the marriage of citizens. Find out whether your country has any such agreement with Italy. The rules regarding marriage will also depend on whether your country is part of the Monaco Convention, Hague Convention, or any other international convention.

If you work with an experienced wedding planner, your job will become a lot simpler. The expert will take care of all the legal aspects of your marriage. This will ensure that you don't fall prey to any legal complications.

You have to book everything in advance

Italy has become one of the most popular wedding destinations in the past few years. So, if you want to enjoy a perfect wedding in the country, you must book well in advance.

Ideally, you should fix the wedding date and complete the bookings at least a year before that date. If you miss doing so, you will never get the venue of your choice and there are also chances that you will need to change your plans. Once the venue is booked, you should also not delay booking your tickets to Italy. This means you will also need to prepare the guest list of your destination wedding in advance.

Plan the trip meticulously

You must know that many of your guests will be visiting Italy for the first time in their lives. What's more, some of them will be doing so for the last time. So, it would be a good idea to appreciate their presence by organizing a trip for them. If you hire a top wedding planner for your destination wedding, they will be able to arrange the trip for you.

The trip is not required to be an elaborate one. Visits to a few archaeological sites located near the wedding venue should be enough for your guests to be happy. Italy is home to thousands of such places. You can obviously opt for more extravagant trips if you have a bigger budget.

Final words

The best time to be in Italy for your destination wedding is in summer. However, the weather in the country remains good during most times of the year. Individuals who are not worried about the budget can pick summer to get married in Italy. For others, fall is the best season.





Architectural landmarks in **Copenhagen**

Take a look at the following ten iconic Copenhagen buildings and discover how playful, light-filled, healthy and people-focused architecture can be in Copenhagen.



The Royal Danish Library - The Black Diamond

Designed by Copenhagen firm Schmidt Hammer Lassen, the extension to the 1906 **Royal Library** was finished in 1999 and is nicknamed 'The Black Diamond' for its dark, shiny, faceted shape that reflects the sea and sky from the waterfront. The

idea of juxtaposing this ultra-modern block with the older red-brick building is deliberately radical: it marks the transition from a traditional library to a future-focused cultural centre.

The National Gallery of Denmark - SMK

Denmark's largest art museum **SMK**

is another marriage of old and new, and an attraction in itself, located in central Copenhagen. The modernist extension by C.F. Møller in 1998 added much more than extra exhibition space to the gallery, as it opened up the building to the surrounding parkland, playing with the grandeur of the original 1896 building and the idea of making the





former royal collection accessible to the wider public. It also draws in light to the whole building.

Ordrupgaard Museum

Ordrupgaard Museum houses French Impressionist art and Danish art from the Golden Age in the lush area north of central Copenhagen. It takes an elegant 19th-century mansion by Danish architect Gotfred Tvede and furniture architect Finn Juhl's home next door as its starting point and has added two modernist wings, one by Zaha Hadid in 2005 and another by Norwegian architects Snøhetta in 2021. Hadid's wing is nicknamed 'the beached whale' for its organic concrete shape and was the architect's first

building in Northern Europe; Snøhetta's wing houses French Impressionist paintings and absorbs and reflects the changing light outside, echoing the world of the paintings it displays.

Grundtvig's Church

Grundtvig's Church is a gothic cathedral in Bispebjerg, north Copenhagen, was created in commemoration of the great Danish priest, poet, and reformer N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1882). Architect and designer Kaare Klint (1888-1954) completed the building in 1940 after his father, the original architect, died. He also designed the chairs, which have become a Danish design classic. The impressive building exudes a

special sense of calm and is made from handmade yellow bricks from Zealand, using restraint, natural light and clean lines throughout.

Mærsk Tower

The University of Copenhagen's **award-winning tower houses** parts of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences and is future-focused, using sustainable solutions all the way to the top of its 75-metre tower in Nørrebro. Designed by C.F. **Møller has** won several prizes for its innovative and sustainable design, which include rainwater recycling and energy-efficient laboratories.

The Royal Danish Opera House

Danish architect Henning Larsen



designed the **Opera House**, a bold and dramatic building on Copenhagen's harbourfront and one of the city's largest buildings. A number of Danish artists have contributed to the decor, among them Per Kirkeby who has created four bronze reliefs, and Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson who has contributed the three light sculptures for the foyer. In 2023, Cobe's Opera Park will open, a prominent public park designed with inspiration from the European capital's historical gardens with winding paths and pavilions.

CopenHill

CopenHill, an artificial ski slope and recreational hiking area built on top of the new waste management centre



in Refshaleøen, opened in 2019. It's a great example of architect Bjarke Ingels Group's definition of 'hedonistic sustainability' – its philosophy that sustainability should also be fun. Combined, the playful design and the ski slope on top represents a new way to think about urban resource handling and build waste-to-energy plants that are welcomed by city inhabitants.

The Silo

This former grain **silo** in the post-industrial harbour area of Nordhavn was transformed into a dramatic steel tower by COBE in 2017 with an angular faceted exterior of galvanised steel lending a raw and edgy appeal. The avant-garde building houses residential apartments and a stunning restaurant serving up fine dining and views as

far as Sweden from the 17th floor. Inside, it retains a post-industrial feel with exposed concrete walls, further celebrating the idea of transforming industrial trash into modern-day treasure.

M/S Maritime Museum of Denmark

The challenge was to create a **maritime museum** in Helsingør, north of Copenhagen, that did not disturb the view of the town's UNESCO-listed castle. Bjarke Ingels Group's solution was this: an underground museum in the shape of a ship built in the town's former dry dock. It's a staggering tour de force telling stories about shipping and seafaring in Denmark using an innovative form that celebrates the history and scale of shipbuilding itself.

Amalienborg Palace

Home to Denmark's royal family, as well as a museum about the monarchy, **Amalienborg** comprises four Rococo palaces set on a square in the heart of the city. Known as one of the best examples of Rococo architecture in Europe, it was designed by state architect Nicolai Eigtved in the 1750s and is a major classical work in Danish architecture built during the reign of King Frederik V. Eigtved also designed the adjacent Marble Church, a grand copper-domed church a street away as well as the **Frederikstaden** district Frederiks Hospital, nowadays home to the just-renovated Designmuseum Denmark. The architect played an important role in the establishment of the Royal Danish Academy.



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