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EDITOR'S LETTER

“MY GOAL IS TO RUN OUT OF PAGES IN MY PASSPORT”

Ok, so maybe the above goal hasn't been attainable this past year, but eventually, it will be. Though the current pandemic has drastically shifted how some of our time here in Europe has been spent, adventures are still yet to come. Let our Stripes Europe spring and summer edition help you do just that—get excited for the adventures to come.

In this magazine, you'll get a chance to explore Europe by renting a camper van. Some of us may have experienced this journey from last summer, but it's still a great opportunity to see this beautiful continent. Once we're able to fly, I suggest taking off to Barcelona where you can spend the day getting lost admiring Gaudi's architecture and meandering the Barri Gòtic. We have a 24-hour itinerary for you to follow.

For those who love to travel solo, we've featured several destinations that are safe and solo-traveler approved. Don't know where the travel bug will take you? Hop on a cruise and fall in love with several countries in a short amount of time. And, if you're like me and have lived in Europe for several years and have been to the “must-visits,” head to the countries beloved by many Europeans.

Since we've saved our hard-earned leave and money throughout this pandemic, why not splurge and live your best, luxurious life by treating yourself to these glamorous destinations? After all, you've earned it!

In this edition, you'll also be in the know of what our nine teen-approved European destinations are and where to treat the family this summer. If, like me, you're craving the sand in between your toes, check out these welcoming beaches.

For the foodies, you'd be remiss if you didn't eat at the many Michelin-starred restaurants in this food capital. Find out where in our food and shopping section. Love to shop? We feature a popular item to grab before you leave Europe.

I know your passport pages are screaming for a few travel stamps—but when the time comes—you and your passport will be ready, and our spring and summer edition will help you to achieve this goal.

Mary Del Rosario
Lead-Writer Editor
Stars and Stripes Europe



LOOK OUT FOR **THIS STAMP** THROUGHOUT THIS EDITION TO SEE **MARY'S FAVORITES!**

EDITOR'S PICK

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WHERE TO GO



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Explore Europe with a **CAMPER VAN**

By Karen Bradbury and Elizabeth Jones

Longing to see the wonders of Europe but still leery about boarding a plane or train? That's understandable. While you could just pile into the car and head to a rental property or camping area, there is a way you can a) tick off the miles in spacious comfort and b) have a safe place to bunk down at the end of a long day.

Yes, we're talking about the great European camper-van vacation! RVs, camper vans and motor homes are very popular throughout Europe. These vehicles facilitate trips-of-a-lifetime while helping to minimize the time usually spent in shared spaces.

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WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE



European Road Signs

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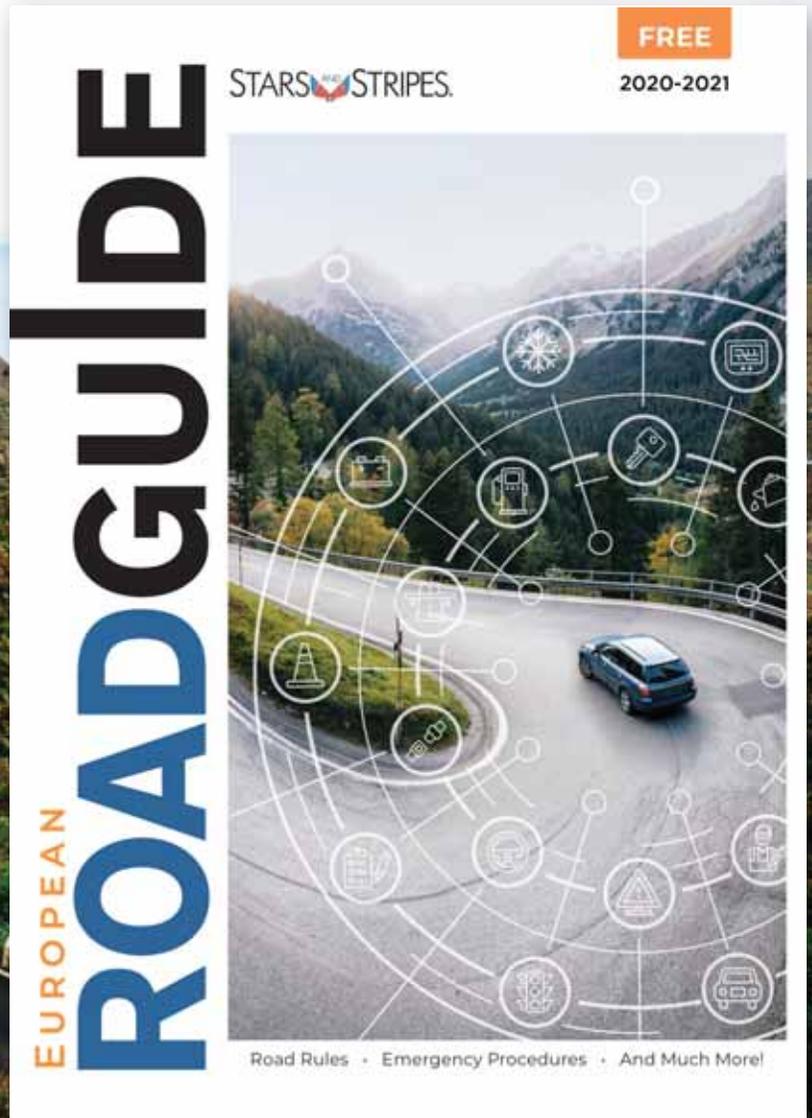


Emergency Phrases

European Road Rules



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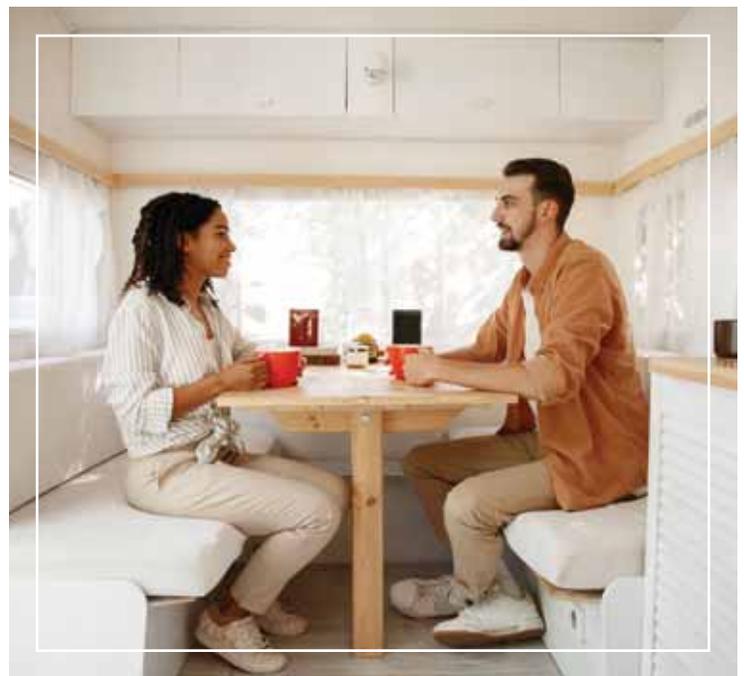


Lovers of the RV'ing lifestyle are quick to tout its countless benefits. With judicious planning, enough gear can be stashed away to be on the road for months. A fridge and cooking facilities on board help to minimize pricey restaurant visits. Best of all, you have the freedom to go almost anywhere, and should your destination change at the last minute, your odds of finding somewhere decent nearby to set up camp are always good.

Parks that welcome these homes on wheels are found in a vast array of environments. There are RV parks by the sea, next to lakes, deep in the mountains and just outside the city limits of many a great metropolis. There are bare-bones facilities exclusive of electricity hookups and sanitary facilities, where an overnight stay comes in at less than a 10-euro note. At the other end of the spectrum are full-service areas with five-star facilities. To seek out a destination and see how it rates, the website campercontact.com allows you to choose from 34,000 possible places to park for the night across Europe.

If you're looking to invest in your own RV, you will find many different options. But for those whose budgets are not ready for that type of investment, there is another option: renting.

The largest of companies to rent out mobile homes in Europe is called McRent, with branches in most European countries. Models vary in size and comfort category, from a standard "urban" model that sleeps two to a premium luxury model. Prices will fluctuate with the seasons. The company also has last-minute offers promising considerable savings.



FAVORITE ROAD TRIPS WITHIN COUNTRIES



GERMANY

- Romantic Road
- Wine Road
- Fairytale Road
- Alpine Road
- Castle Road



ITALY

- Amalfi Coast
- Tuscany region
- The Dolomites
- Veneto region

EDITOR'S PICK

TIPS FOR YOUR ROAD TRIPS

No matter where you're stationed, you can plan an epic road trip whether it's within one country or across multiple. Follow these helpful tips to ensure your road trip, via car or RV, is a success.

In advance:

- Ensure everyone has tourist passports.
- Bringing pets? Get their passports and shots up to date. Check if they're allowed in countries and if any shots are needed for them to enter or come back to your host nation.
- Make sure you have your international driver's license.
- Research and understand the different rules of the road of all countries you're driving to and through.

What to pack:

- Tourist passports.
- Pet passports, seatbelts and other necessities.
- Entertainment for kids.
- Emergency vehicle equipment, spare tire, extra oil and other necessary fluids.
- Meals, snacks and drinks.
- Bottled water since tap water in some countries isn't drinkable.
- Trash bags for any messes or wet clothing/linens in the car.
- Necessary electrical adaptors.
- Pack light for clothing, if possible.
- Toilet paper for the rest stops that may be out of it.

Planning and budgeting:

- Contact your bank about all travel plans, including countries you're driving through in case you make an unexpected stop.
- Download maps from Google Maps to use offline in case you hit dead spots.
- Budget accordingly for gas, tolls and vignettes along your route.
 - Carry cash for tolls.
 - Plan your fuel route and gas up in cheaper countries.

Vignettes

Purchase a vignette for each country you plan to travel to. Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland all require a vignette sticker. They can be purchased at border crossings and nearby gas stations for a set number of days, one or two months or even a year. ■



U.K.

- **Ireland** - Ring of Kerry, Burren Loop, Wild Atlantic Way, Causeway Coastal Route and Dingle Peninsula
- **Scotland** - North Coast 500, Argyll Coastal Route, Highland Route and Isle of Skye
- **England** - The Great Stones Way, St Hilda's Way, The Peak Pilgrimage, The Cornish Celtic Way and The Old Way



9 BEST EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS

FOR THE Solo Traveler

By Nicole Standish

Tired of spending countless hours planning a trip everyone can agree on? Looking to embark on a new solo adventure? Europe has many locations that are great for solo travelers. Each of the nine destinations listed below offer a wide variety of activities for solo travelers with almost any interests and are relatively safe.



1

1. Paris, France

Paris is first on the list because it is one of the most traveler-friendly locations in Europe. The mass transit system is easy to navigate and very efficient. It is pretty easy to find a hotel or vacation rental at a reasonable price (even during peak season, although the prices are considerably higher). Snag a Paris Pass and see the city via Seine River cruises or a hop-on-hop-off bus. Add on a Paris Visité Pass and enjoy unlimited trips (for the number of days you choose) on both the metro and bus system. Enjoy the Louvre, Centre Pompidou and the Musée d'Orsay at your own pace.

2. Rome, Italy

For art and architecture enthusiasts, Rome is for you. Take a stroll through the world famous Colosseum, explore renowned artwork and take in the foundation of the Roman Catholic Church in Vatican City. Rome's taxis are generally safe, and many Italians speak English; making it much easier for a non-Italian speaker to get around the city. The Via Guilia is often regarded as Rome's most gorgeous street and has many accommodation types available. The Roman Guy, a touring company, offers numerous excursions to often overlooked areas such as the ancient catacombs.

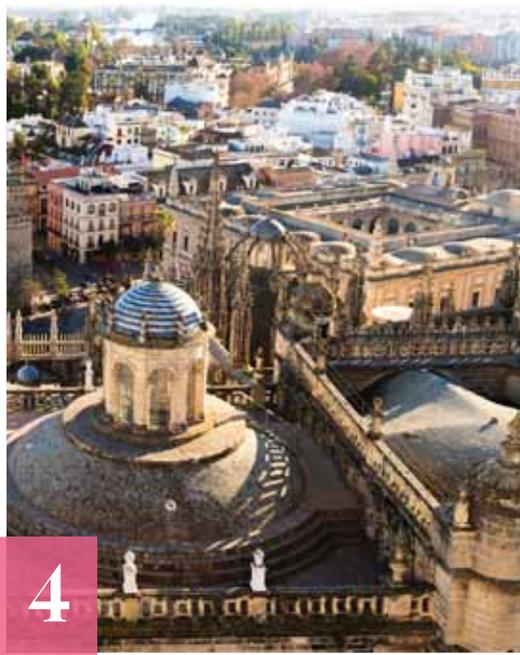
EDITOR'S PICK



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3. Tuscany, Italy

Another Italian gem, Tuscany also has a large population of English-speaking citizens. Tuscany offers many different types of excursions, food and wine festivals and historical tours. You can also follow the Via Francigena, a route that runs through much of the Tuscan region that served as an ancient pilgrimage path. The food and wine scene here is as rich as its history with any one of Tuscany's trattorias just waiting to fill you up with delicious pasta and local wine.

4. Seville, Spain

This capital city of Spain's Andalusian region has an easily navigable and extensive mass transit system. With beautiful and historically significant landmarks right in the heart of the city, it is easier to see more of what the region has to offer in less time. Some of the most visited areas include the Cathedral of Seville, the Torre del Oro, the Giralda and the Alameda de Hercules. This bustling area offers live flamenco dance shows, lively soccer games and great nightlife (check out the Alameda and Triana neighborhoods).

5. Ljubljana, Slovenia

This home city of the First Lady usually has many tourists but offers extraordinary scenery. Here, you can take a boat cruise down the Ljubljanic River and see the famous Dragon and Triple Bridges. You can also enjoy a two-hour city tour of the Ljubljana Castle and the city center. Take a funicular ride or explore the ancient ruins of Tivoli Park. Make sure to get a Ljubljana card as it offers access to 21 attractions, unlimited city bus rides and complimentary internet access around the city. If you finish exploring around the city earlier than expected, hop on over to Bled, just 32 miles northwest, where there is an exquisite 11th century castle and a gorgeous lake vista.

6. Reykjavik, Iceland

Iceland is a wholly unique experience. Called the Land of Fire and Ice, Iceland is home to some of the world's most beautiful natural wonders. Here you can find glaciers, waterfalls, volcanos and hot springs. In the summer months, enjoy nearly 24 hours of sunlight and send stunning pictures home to friends and family right on the spot as Wi-Fi access and cell phone reception are excellent in the entire country. Plan to use Reykjavik, the capital city, as your home base. Here you'll find art galleries, shops, cafes, museums, the best accommodations and the international airport. Those interested in outdoor adventures include ice climbing, caving, cycling and hiking. For easy navigating, most locals speak English and welcome visitors to enjoy what Iceland has to offer.

continued on page 12

7. Amsterdam, Netherlands

Amsterdam is easy to get to as there are trains, buses, flights and tours from all over Europe that land on this riveting city scene. Once there, rent a bike from one of the city's many bike stations and travel the city like a local. Before you leave, it is essential to tour the stunning canals by boat, as there is no better way to take in the city. Definitely visit the floating gardens and the Anne Frank house. The many museums are stunning and offer opportunities to experience art in unique ways. Amsterdam also boasts an ever-changing restaurant scene with foods from all over the world. Don't forget to visit the world famous ice bar or the many cafes that make Amsterdam the gem that it is.

8. Berlin, Germany

Although Germany has many amazing cities and picturesque landscapes, Berlin, the capital city is a cultural center with its own jazzy personality. A mix of both historic and modern sites, Berlin is a great fit for people of all ages and with a large array of interests. Visit the remains of the Berlin Wall (there is a free museum there as well), enjoy pastries in one of the city's eccentric cafes, explore the many art museums and see the murals that drape the buildings in the vibrant art community. The mass transit—consisting of the bus system, tram and metro—is super convenient and easy to navigate. There is a fair number of English-speaking locals here. Let your inner kid come out and explore amazing displays in the Legoland Discovery Center and afterwards spend time in the Sony Center where there are great restaurants and the aquarium nearby.

9. Oslo, Norway

Get all your positive vibes on in Norway, which scores high on the World Happiness Report. This eco-friendly city on the fjord is replete with super friendly people and has superb public transportation. Visit the Viking Ship Museum or, in the summer months, the Royal Palace. Take amazing, Instagram-worthy pictures in Vigeland Park or at Akeshus Fortress. Bring your swimsuit and jump right into the fjord at the city center before visiting one of the city's rooftop terraces. Take a stroll through the beautiful botanical gardens or go kayaking on the fjord. In the summer months, Oslo is home to several music festivals and outdoor concerts, including a very unique outside opera festival.

Whether you are looking for an epic solo vacation, tired of waiting for everyone's calendars to sync or just looking for a little alone time, solo traveling means you get to enjoy what matters to you most! ■



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SEE OUR AD ON PAGE #21

spending the day in

BARCELONA

By Mary Del Rosario

Barcelona is a beautiful Spanish city with many architectural highlights boasting creativity. Whether you've found a cheap flight with a budget airline, are docked on a cruise or are making a pit-stop on your Spain road trip, enjoying Barcelona can be done in 24 hours. Check the itinerary below to make the most of your day and create the best memories.

Morning

Start your morning off right with breakfast at Citizen Café, a cozy cafe that is home to delicious eggs and fluffy pancakes. After you've fed your stomach, take a five minutes walk to Placa de Catalunya, a large square considered to be the city center where many important street venues are held. From there, walk to Passeig de Gràcia where you can shop till you drop and marvel at all the celebrated pieces of architecture. Next, check out the Sagrada Familia, Spain's most famous church, in the morning to avoid crowds. Remember to dress appropriately to enter. To save time, book tickets online in advance.



Placa de Catalunya



Las Ramblas



CaixaForum



Mercat la Boqueria

Afternoon

If all that sightseeing and walking has you feeling parched and hungry, visit Mercat la Boqueria, a famous market that houses the freshest homegrown fruits and vegetables. Once your body is replenished again, head to Park Güell, a must-see, enchanting park blanketed in a colorful mosaic garden. Buy tickets through their website to save time. Be sure to visit the Picasso Museum which houses over 4,000 of the artist's work. After, head to the Barri Gòtic, or Gothic Quarter. This web of medieval streets is the center of Barcelona's old city. If you haven't gotten tangled in the medieval streets of Barri Gòtic, head to Placa Reial, a square packed with lamp posts and lush palm trees. Las Ramblas, a walkway stretching 1-kilometer adorned with historic buildings, will also be a great way to take in the culture of Barcelona.

Evening

If you're up for a different kind of museum, check out the CaixaForum. This former brick factory features a forever-changing collection of art. Had your fill of museums? Head to Barceloneta Beach instead. This popular beach provides heavenly seafood eateries along the shore. Top off the day with tapas at El Vaso De Oro, just two minutes from the beach, because is a trip to Spain really complete without tapas?

Just because you have a short time to explore Barcelona doesn't mean you can't enjoy it. If you've liked what you've seen and want to explore this city some more, you can always go back. ■



Barri Gòtic

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Utrecht:

The Netherland's Well-Kept Secret

By Anna Bagiackas

Can you keep a secret?

Have you heard of Utrecht, in the Netherlands? Although this city is often overlooked—or even unheard of—compared to Amsterdam, Utrecht continues to be a very well-kept secret because the people who live there love it. With a charming, car-free city center, canals to rival any Dutch locale and rich cultural offerings, there is lots to enjoy here. Some even argue that Utrecht is a truly Dutch city, compared to Amsterdam, which has become more international.

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A Little History

Let's start with some background. Utrecht is located in the middle of the country, about 45 kilometers from Amsterdam. Currently, it is the fourth-largest city in the Netherlands and because of its location, is a central hub for railway and transport, giving Utrecht the busiest rail station in the country. It is home to the largest university in the Netherlands, providing it a university-town atmosphere, and it is also known as a great cycling city.

Utrecht was the most important city in the Netherlands up until the Dutch Golden Age in the 17th century, when it was overtaken by Amsterdam. Since the 8th century, Utrecht was the country's religious center and that role persists today, represented by the Dom Tower that still presides over the skyline. Some of the buildings in the ancient city center go as far back as the High Middle Ages.

It's also important to mention the history of the waterways, which have shaped the growth and landscape of the city for centuries and have made it such a unique place to visit! Utrecht was fortified by the Romans around 50 A.D.; the moats still exist today around the old town. In the 1100s, the flow of the Rhine was directed into canals and the wharf system was created, establishing the two-level street along the canals you see today.

What to Do & See

As with many cities, to get a flavor of Utrecht, you should visit the old town. You can walk around the Oudegracht, the curved canal that runs through the ancient city. A 465-step climb up to the Dom Tower, the tallest belfry in the Netherlands, is a quintessential experience in Utrecht. You can also visit the Kasteel de Haar, a moated castle from early 1500s. Spending time wandering along the wharfs and sitting on outdoor terraces is also time well spent if you're wanting to live like the locals.

Utrecht has become well-known for the cultural life in and around the city. Art, theater, film and music have flourished there, being home to an Early Music Festival and the Netherlands Film Festival, among other cultural events. You will also find music venues, such as the TivoliVredenburg music complex and rock and jazz music halls. Branching out of the fine arts and into architecture, it is also worth a visit to the Rietveld Schröder Huis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

If you enjoy shopping and being immersed in the buzz of activity, check out Hoog Catharijne, a large shopping mall next to the train station, Utrecht Centraal. (Hint: you can actually get a great view of the city and Dom Tower at one of the cafes in the mall!) Or maybe you are simply interested in railways and trains, and if that's the case, be sure to visit the national railroad museum, Spoorweg. If it is peace and quiet in nature you're looking for, head to Oude Hortus, Wilhelminapark, Griffpark or the Botanic Gardens.

And what does Utrecht offer in terms of eats? While you will find lots of Dutch fare, this city is filled with menus from all over the world. Indonesian cuisine in particular shines as a result of the Netherlands' history of colonization in Indonesia. For the beer lovers out there, Belgian Beer Café Olivier and Kafe Belgie are two great options for large selections of brews to taste. ■





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By Ruth Cuevas & Amanda Palumbo

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- **Lower Cost:** Students on average pay less when achieving an online degree. While they're paying for tuition costs and books, they're avoiding fees like housing and transportation. Most universities will offer a military non-resident tuition waiver to avoid out-of-state tuition costs.
- **Comfortable Learning Environment:** Online students can also set up an environment that works best for their brain like comfy couches, music in the background and snacks readily on hand. You also get to avoid that one person in class that has an outrageous, argumentative opinion about every topic.

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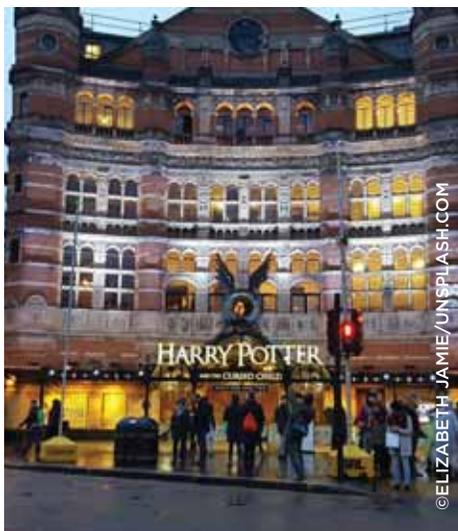
europaean bucket list FRIENDS EDITION

By Mary Del Rosario

As nice as it is to be able to travel around Europe with your significant other or family, sometimes, we all need to take a little getaway with someone other than them. Whether it's your best friend from your hometown coming to visit or someone you just met, going on a trip with friends can make for unforgettable memories. Below are some bucket-list ideas for the perfect getaway.

FOR THE LADIES

1. Shop the streets of Paris for haute couture.



EDITOR'S PICK

2. See a Broadway show in London.



4. Pamper yourselves with a spa day or weekend. Switzerland is known for having great spas.



3. Sunbathe the day away on the beaches in Santorini. The backdrop also makes perfect selfies for you and your girlfriends.



5. Get your hands on Polish pottery in Bolesławiec.

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VFW's Mission Statement

is "to foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts and to serve our veterans, the military, and our communities and advocate on behalf of all veterans." This mission statement reflects what the association does to protect the rights of the veterans and their families who gave invaluable service to America's history by their love for country and dedication to the service by protecting her from all her enemies.

VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) of the United States is a non-profit veteran service organization composed of eligible veterans and military service members of the active, guard and service forces. VFW mission statement and vision statement push for justice for the nation's veterans, service members and military families on an array of issues and continue to be the voice of veterans everywhere.

They advocate for justice for the veterans, service members and military families on an array of issues and continue to be the voice of veterans where ever they may be. They testify in Congress, meet with elected officials and rally the national network of VFW members and patriotic supporters to ensure that lawmakers put veterans first. When those who served the country and those that support them stand together, these veterans cannot be ignored.

VFW's core values are to "Always put the interests of our members first: Treat donors as partners in our cause, promote patriotism, honor military service, ensure the care of veterans and their families, serve our communities, promote a positive image of the VFW, respect the diversity of veteran opinions."

SEE OUR AD ON PAGE #17

How You Can Shop More Safely and Securely Around the World

As a military member or military family member, life can be unpredictable. Luckily, the security of your finances doesn't have to be.

If you're looking for the safest way to make purchases in Europe, it is always a good idea to use a credit card. If your card gets lost or stolen, a member services representative will be able to help you right away so that you can avoid fraudulent charges. Many financial institutions also make it easy to keep tabs on your card usage so you'll know right away whether someone else is using your card; whether it's via an SMS alert making you aware of potential suspicious activity, or through app options that allow you to set spending, category and location limits.

Plus, you'll usually get better rates for foreign exchange fees with credit cards than by exchanging currency. In fact, some

credit cards offer no foreign transaction fees at all.

If you are just starting out, a credit card such as Service CU's Visa® Everyday Card can help you begin establishing your credit history, which you'll need if you ever apply for an auto loan, mortgage or even a home rental. If you're eligible for a card with higher limits, such as their Visa® Signature Everyday Elite card, you'll earn points on every purchase, which you can use to redeem for merchandise or cash back.

Last but not least, many new credit cards are contactless, which means they are virtually impossible to tamper with or clone. All you have to do is tap and pay!

To learn more about Service CU's Everyday credit cards, visit servicecu.org/myeverydaycard.

SEE OUR AD ON PAGE #39

FOR THE GENTLEMEN

1. Drink a pint—or more—of Guinness at the pubs in Ireland.



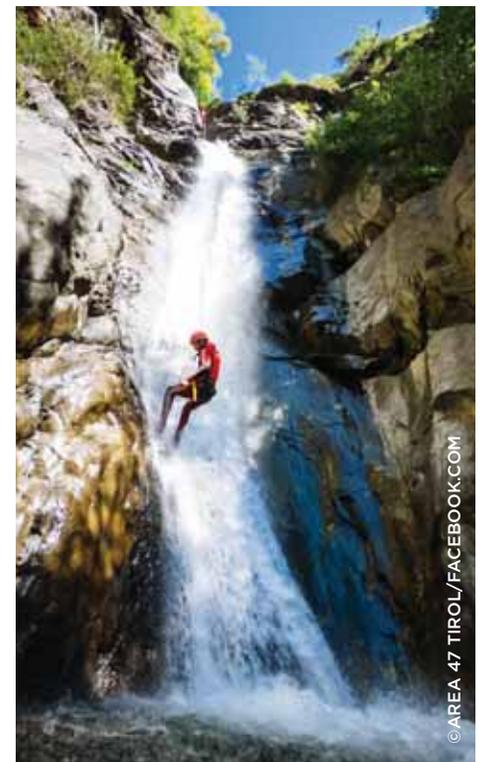
2. See what the buzz is all about in Amsterdam.



3. Hike up the GR 20 in Corsica but be sure to bring a rucksack.



4. Bring your GoPro and film your adventures at Area 47 in Tyrol.



5. Hit a hole-in-one in the Algarve, which is rated as one of the top golfing destinations.

FOR BOTH

1. Party from sunrise to sundown in Ibiza.



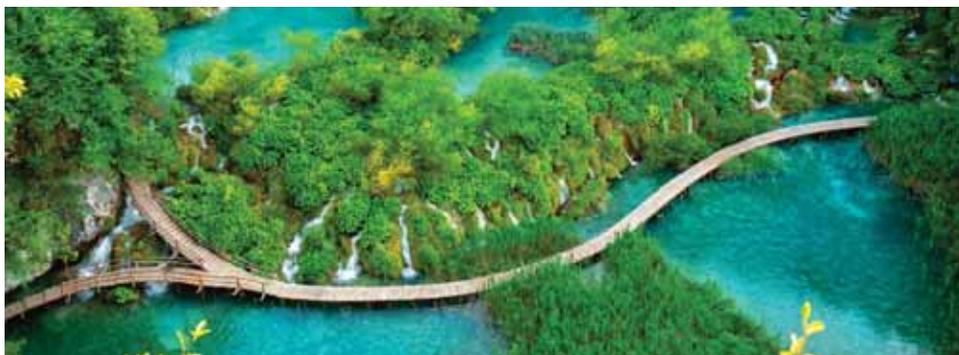
2. Become humbled at American monuments in France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom.



3. Witness the amazing Aurora Borealis, also known as the Northern Lights, in the Nordic countries.



4. Unleash your wild side during Yacht Week—a weeklong yacht trip that has locations in Croatia, Greece, Italy and Montenegro.



5. Be adventurous and head out to the Balkan region, which consists of countries such as Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro to name a few. ■

Come Sail Awe

CRUISING
THROUGH
EUROPE

By Stacy Roman

Waking up in a glamorous European city, gliding along the crystalline waters of the Mediterranean or on the scenic and equally beautiful Douro River in Portugal, having an itinerary and meals already planned and house-keeping service including turndown service? It sounds downright heavenly. Cruising in Europe is a fantastic, all-inclusive way to discover spectacular cities in a short amount of time.

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However, planning a cruise can feel overwhelming and the choices seemingly endless. Whether you're an old pro or planning your first one, here's help to get you on your way.





Ocean Cruises

When it comes to booking a cruise, there is no shortage of cruise lines. Some of the more well-known companies include Costa, MSC, Holland America, Princess, Celebrity, Crystal, Cunard, Norwegian and even Disney. Often, it will come down to what amenities you want, size and, of course, price. If you're looking for something that won't break the bank, Costa and MSC are budget-friendly and offer a lot of sailings all around Europe. Their ships are quite large and would be comparable to Carnival cruises in the U.S. (Costa is a subsidiary of Carnival). Holland America and Princess are slightly smaller in size and are geared toward an older demographic. With its trademark magic, Disney is known for being family friendly. However, they're also on the pricier side and book very quickly.

There is a plethora of sailing routes throughout Europe including the Western Mediterranean, Eastern Mediterranean, Adriatic, Baltic, Scandinavian, Greek Isles and transatlantic. Popular port destinations include:

- Barcelona
- Marseille and Monaco
- Dubrovnik and Kotor
- Venice and Civitavecchia (Rome)
- The Balearic Islands (Mallorca, Menorca and Ibiza)
- Santorini and Mykonos

River Cruises

If the thought of rollicking on the open sea makes your stomach churn, consider taking a river cruise instead. Riverboats accommodate a much smaller number of passengers—usually 200 or less. State-rooms tend to be smaller compared to their ocean-faring brethren, but you're also on the ship less. The majority of sailing is done at night, with port calls usually every day. "At sea" days are rare, and you may visit two ports in one day. It's a great way to see sights you may not have otherwise visited.

Some larger cruise companies such as Norwegian are beginning to break into the river cruise market, but you'll find reputable operators such as Viking, Tauck and Uniworld have an established foothold with river destinations. Many river cruises are directed toward couples or more mature passengers, but there are also many offering itineraries for families. The cost of sailing on the river can be pricier than ocean cruises; however, most shore excursions are included in the price. River cruises are a great way to see interior parts of Europe. Some fantastic routes include:

- Douro River Valley in Portugal
- Danube River, with ports in Austria, Hungary and Romania
- Rhine River, with excursions in Cologne region and Heidelberg
- The Dutch Waterways, stopping in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, as well as Arnhem and Ghent in Belgium
- The Seine, which flows far beyond Paris through the French countryside to the English Channel.

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Know before you go

Do your research. Sit down and figure out what you want, and more importantly, what your budget is. Each cruise line offers different experiences and prices. [Cruisecritic.com](https://www.cruisecritic.com) is a great website to search for itineraries, cost and reviews of cruises. Also be aware of the itinerary. Some may include stops in Russia (St. Petersburg) or Turkey, which are currently restricted for active-duty members.

Book in advance. The earlier you book, the better the discount. Some companies, such as Disney, offer limited sailings in Europe each year and sell out very quickly. However, sometimes you can catch a break with last-minute reservations at the end of the season.

Go early. If you're traveling to your port of departure, why not go a few days early and wander through the city? It also gives you another chance to pick up items you may have forgotten at home.

Choose your stateroom wisely. Take a look at your ship's deck plan ahead of time. If you're prone to motion sickness, you'll want a room located toward the middle of the ship and on a lower deck. Likewise, you may want to avoid rooms close to the casino or entertainment areas.

Be sure to check your documents. Some destinations may require visas or special inoculations depending on the location. Ensure the validity of your passport is good for six months past your travel dates, as many countries require this upon entry.

Invest in travel insurance. With the unpredictability of the military and unforeseen circumstances, consider purchasing travel insurance should you need to cancel for any reason. Check with your credit card company, as many will offer certain financial protections should the need arise. ■

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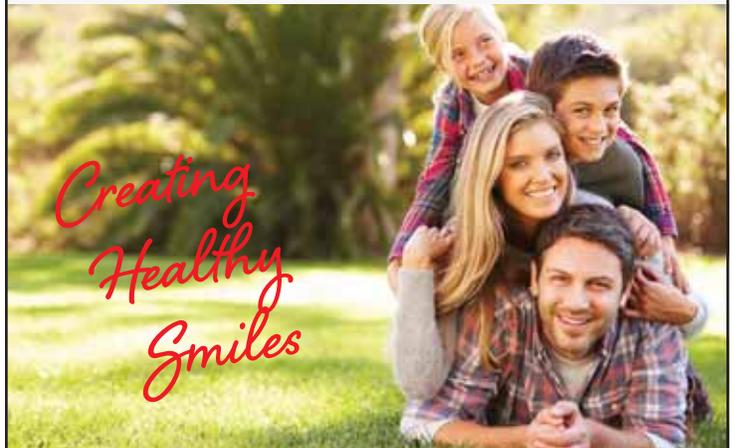
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Hiking the **HIGH LANDS**

By Addison Takats

When in Scotland, you can't escape the land's wild beauty. It's untamed, unruly and absolutely breathtaking. I highly recommend taking a few days away from the history of the cities to hike and wander about the Highlands. But, as with all things Mother Nature, you need to be smart about it. Here are some tips.

1. KNOW YOUR LIMITS.

We hiked with family, and the majority of us...okay, all of us...were not avid hikers, just visitors who wanted to get out and explore. Because of this, we stuck to simple but still beautiful trails and mountains. Choose your trails and mountains wisely. Ben Nevis was an all-around favorite!

continued on page 34



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2. BE PREPARED.

Bring plenty of trail snacks and water! Many of these hikes are pretty decent drives, and you might not be able to stop by a gas station and pick up supplies easily. This goes for some hiking safety basics too. It never hurts to carry around some Band-Aids (or plasters if you want to sound like a local), wipes and Neosporin! And not to sound like a mom, but dress for the hike! You can always take extra clothes off, but you can't put them on if you don't have them. The weather in Scotland can change in a millisecond, and it's usually not very visitor-friendly. Do you like experiencing rain, snow and extreme sun all on the same day? Then you'd love the weather.

3. GO WITH A GUIDE.

This isn't a necessary step but, it helps. Even if you just have family or friends in the area who know where you are. I'm lucky to have family-galore in Scotland, and taking them with us made the trip a million times less stressful. There are also plenty of guides for hire if it's something you would like to add to your trip. There's no shame in the guide game.

4. STICK TO THE RULES AND THE PATH.

Scotland is wild. That is no joke. There are moors, beasties (bugs), midges, wild animals, oh my! And while Scotland does abide by a right-to-roam policy (a policy that allows you to pretty much hike anywhere without fear of being persecuted for being on private land), there's just a lot of uncontrollable variables. If you're new to hiking, do yourself a favor and stick to the path. Also, if you're interested in taking advantage of the right-to-roam policy, make sure to do all the necessary research first and be as respectful as possible.

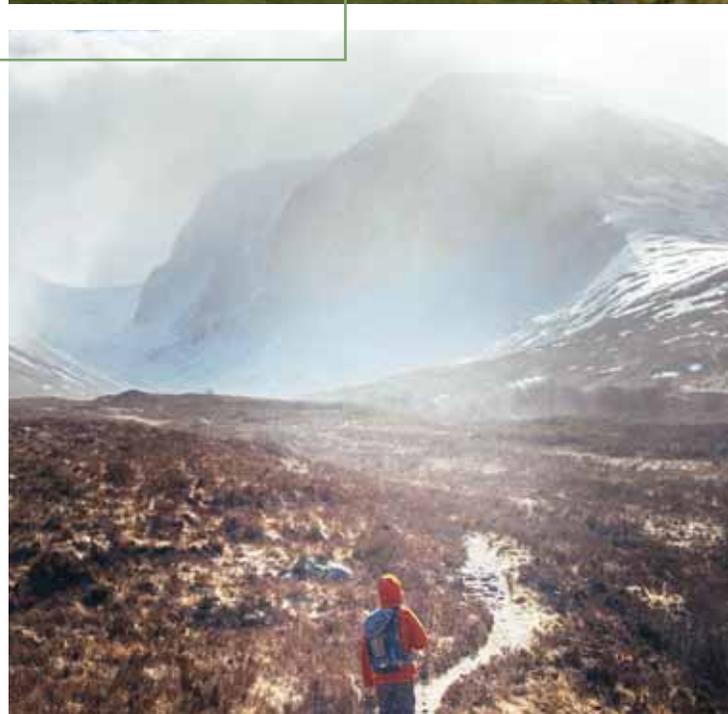
5. ENJOY EVERY SECOND.

Hiking the Highlands is truly one of the most enjoyable memories I have. I loved every second. Being surrounded by family in one of the most beautiful places on earth is something I'll never forget. We took pictures, breathed in the incredibly fresh air and turned our faces to the sun whenever we got a chance. If it's not already on your bucket list, add it. You won't regret it. Now that my husband and I have started our family, we're itching for our little one to be old enough to lace up some hiking boots and take to the Highlands!



ABOVE: Aerial view of the Scottish Highlands.

BELOW: Ben Nevis, the tallest mountain in the British Isles.



FACTS ABOUT THE HIGHLANDS:

- **Ben Nevis** is the tallest mountain in the British Isles.
- **Kilts** were born and bred, starting in the Highlands.
- **The Highlands** cover almost 10,000 sq miles!
- **The Isle of Skye** is home to the magic "Fairy Pools." ■



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SEE OUR AD ON PAGE #19

Europe's Favorite HOLIDAY SPOTS

By Karen Bradbury

When it comes to vacations, it's okay to be slightly envious of citizens of the European Union. Guaranteed a minimum of four weeks of paid leave, they're not forced to shoehorn their travel and adventures into the space of days. So where do these lucky Europeans choose to spend their holidays? While they flit about their continent with ease, they are also perfectly content to stay within the borders of their own nations. Below are their favorite destinations.

THE BRITISH ISLES

The English adore their southern coastline, and cities such as Brighton and Bournemouth, appeal to those after both nightlife and beaches. Cornwall beckons with stunning coastal walks and historical landmarks. Irish vacationers exhibit a fondness for the southwestern corner of their country, where cities such as Killarney and Cork offer quaintness and a welcoming atmosphere. Inchydoney Beach and Glanleam Beach call out to sun-seekers and the charming town of Kinsale—with its picturesque harbor and award-winning seafood—always brims with visitors.

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NORTHERN EUROPE

Scandinavia

Scandinavians, too, appreciate the beauty of their homelands. Swedish vacationers have a term for domestic vacations; a typical “hemester” might see them spending family time in a wooden cabin by the shores of a pristine lake. They are particularly attracted to Lapland, Land of the Midnight Sun, and its 275-mile Kungsleden hiking trail draws those seeking active holidays. The Finns enjoy communing with nature by picking berries or bracing swims in icy waters followed by a warming sauna. A favorite destination for residents of Helsinki are the islands in its surrounding bay, including the fortress island of Suomenlinna, home to museums, art galleries and a sheltered bay for swimming.

Belgium

Residents of the Benelux also delight in attractions close to home. Belgians eschew the cities of Bruges and Ghent—so loved by international tourists—in favor of back-to-nature vacations. Along its coastline, Blankenberge calls out to seekers of active nightlife, while sophisticates make way to Knokke-Heist. Dutch families are huge fans of camping vacations, with Scheveningen and Zaandvort among their favorite coastal resorts. Texel, one of the Wadden islands, attracts with unspoiled beauty, seals and birdlife.

Germany

As much as Germans love to roam, time spent within their borders is treasured too. Favorite destinations include the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, lapped by the Baltic Sea and offering gems such as the island of Rügen and the vast Schwerin Castle. Bavaria, with lakes and mountains promising active holidays, is popular with families. Schleswig-Holstein’s 240-mile long North Sea coastline attracts with its untamed, wind-whipped islands, while the cities of Lübeck and Kiel offer maritime flair.



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SOUTHERN EUROPE

France

Residents of southern Europe take full advantage of the beauty and reliably good weather of their homelands. French holiday-makers in search of summer sun have “beaucoup d’amour” for their Mediterranean coastline, with their area of choice Provence-Alpes-Côte-D’Azur. Home to the French Riviera and its glittering cities of Saint Tropez, Nice and Cannes, those with kids might opt for the more family-friendly Antibes or Fréjus St-Raphaël. The Camargue river delta attracts intrepid travelers with otherworldly landscapes populated by wild white horses and pink flamingos.

Italy

Italians are fans of seaside holidays, and the islands of Sardinia and Sicily, the Amalfi coast, Liguria and Tuscany bristle with domestic tourists. Rimini is for many the ultimate fun in the sun destination, while Apulia, the heel of the boot, is viewed as an up-and-coming destination. Well-heeled Italians in search of luxury gravitate toward the Amalfi Coast, Portofino, Bellagio, Positano, Capri and Sardinia’s Costa Smeralda.

Spain EDITOR’S PICK

When the Spanish make way to the beach, the coastlines of Valencia and Catalonia are popular choices. They also time their travels to coincide with festivals and religious holidays, with Easter and Christmas big drivers of domestic tourism. The state of Andalucía, with its profound and touching ceremonies surrounding Holy Week, is a beloved destination just before Easter.

CROSSING BORDERS

Some Europeans want the sun and beach coupled with the comforts of home. Germans adore the Spanish island of Mallorca, and have all but colonized the Playa de Palma, where beer is just as likely to flow as sangria, and bratwurst figures into the menu as prominently as Spanish tapas. For fun in the sun, British tourists flock to Benidorm, a city on Spain’s Costa Blanca. Hearty English breakfasts, fish and chips and an afternoon watching two English soccer teams kicking around the ball while downing Spanish lager is for many Brits the ultimate holiday. And when it comes to seeking out the winter sun, all Europeans agree on one thing: Spain’s Canary Islands are the place to be. ■





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On Your Radar:

Poznań, Poland

By Jessica Zen

If you've been searching for the perfect city to visit that won't break the bank, look no further. Poznań, Poland is full of colorful buildings, 16th-century houses and incredibly inexpensive food. The towering churches, stunning palace and modern zoo are sure to hold your attention. Take the whole family and explore everything this beautiful city has to offer, all while staying on a budget.

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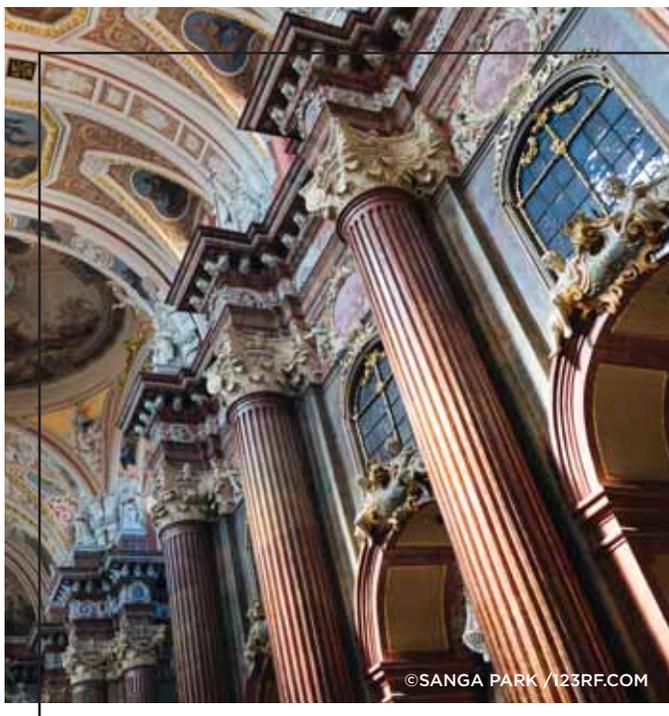
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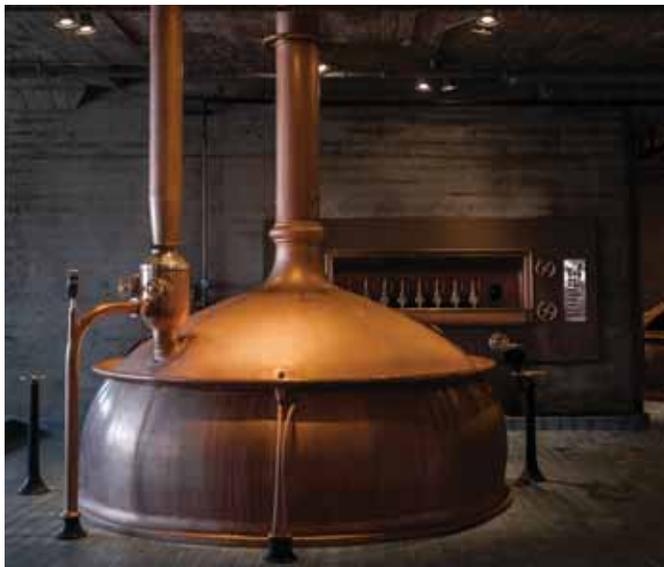
Start your adventure in Old Market Square. The plaza itself was planned in 1253 and features a row of colorful merchant's houses. You'll find purple, green and blue buildings, all melded together to create picturesque surroundings. The town hall is a stunning Renaissance building. Inside you'll find a museum, featuring a Grand Vestibule with a coffered ceiling. Entry into the museum is less than two euros.

On the corner of Market Square is the Church of St. Stanislaus, featuring a lovely Baroque facade. This structure was a former Jesuit college and features 18th-century frescoes and 13 altars. Work on the church started in 1649, but it wasn't finished for over 50 years. Entry is a contribution to the Poznań Fara, but guided tours start at less than one euro. Other beautiful religious structures can be found on Ostrów Tumski (Cathedral Island). The Poznań cathedral sits here and is Poland's oldest Gothic designed cathedral featuring medieval plans. Admission with crypt access is less than one euro.

For a look at Europe's youngest castle, head to the Imperial Castle. This Neo-Romanesque palace was built from 1905 - 1910 and has a colorful history. The castle once held Nazi soldiers and reflected the style of the Third Reich. Inside features a Byzantine-style throne room with statues of Holy Roman Emperors gracing the space. Admission is free without a tour.



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Children will love the New Zoo. Spread out over almost 300 acres, here you will find owls, golden eagles, elephants, giraffes and more. There is a mini railway running around the perimeter, so you can hop on and off as you like. Admission is 5.33 euros on weekdays and 6.95 euros on weekends.

If you think the attractions in Poznań are inexpensive, wait until you see the food prices! For breakfast head to Bo Poznań. This fusion restaurant slings traditional family recipes with a twist. The menu is constantly changing, but expect to eat for under 5 euros.

For lunch or dinner, consider Schaboszczak od Dziadka. You can get a plate-sized pork chop with potatoes and cabbage salad for under 4 euros. If you want a sweet treat, Lodziarnia Kolorowa ice cream shop is perhaps the best in the city. Expect to wait in line, but it's worth it. You can get two scoops for under 2 euros.

Last, but not least, is the Lech Beer Brewery. Established in 1629, this is the oldest brewery in Poland. Schedule a two-hour tour of the brewery itself, which is from the 1980s. Beginning at 10 a.m. tours start every two hours and are 3.94 euros.

From the amazing sights to the delicious food, Poznań is certainly a place that will steal your heart. Spend a few days visiting the sites and eating too much food, all while staying within a reasonable budget. The Polish zloty is equivalent to approximately .23 euros, making your money go even further. Here's to reasonably priced vacations! ■



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9 Teen-Approved EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS

By Stacy Roman

Traveling with teenagers poses its own set of challenges. After living in Europe for four years, there are only so many old towns, cathedrals and squares my teens can visit before they all begin to run together. I recently sat down and asked them (and a bunch of their friends) where some of their favorite places are and why. Here are nine teen-approved places to check out.



Barcelona

This vibrant and wonderfully eclectic city tops the list for my European football-loving 16-year-old.

- ▶ Stroll through the colorful quirkiness of Parc Güell.
- ▶ Take in sweeping panoramas from thrilling rides at Tibidabo Amusement Park—the oldest in Spain.
- ▶ Follow the footsteps of the legendary FC Barcelona football club at Camp Nou.
- ▶ Sagrada Família. This cathedral (which has been under construction for 137 years) will leave even the moodiest teen in awe.

Berlin

EDITOR'S PICK

The city is full of reminders of its storied history but has also blazed a path forward, becoming a fantastic spot to visit with teens.

- ▶ Check out the vibrant graffiti-tagged remnants of the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery.
- ▶ See firsthand what life was like in a divided Berlin at the Berlin Wall Memorial and the DDR Museum. There are plenty of hands-on activities (such as digitally tagging the Berlin Wall) to keep your kids engaged.
- ▶ See how many pop rocks, marshmallows and other tasty bits you can squeeze into a chocolate bar while making your own at Ritter Sport Bunte Schokowelt.
- ▶ Stop by the only museum dedicated to punk-rock legends The Ramones.

Ireland

My daughter's friend chose Ireland as one of her favorite spots because it offers a plethora of rural and urban activities.

- ▶ Take a Viking Splash tour of Dublin. See city sights from both land and water. Don your Viking helmet and yell with the rest of the crew.
- ▶ Literature lovers won't want to miss the library at Trinity College.
- ▶ Venture out of town to Tayto Park—Ireland's only theme park—for a day of adrenaline-induced fun.
- ▶ Stay at a working farm and witness the miracle of life during lambing season.



Prague

According to one of my son's friends, the City of a Hundred Spires has an inexplicably "cool vibe" to it and lands high at the top of her list.

- ▶ Crisscross the city using the 18 different bridges that span the Vltava River, including the famous Charles Bridge.
- ▶ Slowly eat a sinfully delicious "Trdelník" while strolling through Old Town Square.
- ▶ Check out one of the many emerging Black Light Theater shows, but be sure to check reviews ahead of time, as some may not be quite teen-friendly.
- ▶ Take a leisurely cruise along the river, or rent a paddleboat and work up an appetite for more Trdelník.

Switzerland

Postcard-perfect scenery, plenty of opportunities for adventure and tasty food gave Switzerland plenty of high marks from several teens.

- ▶ Take a hike! With jagged crags, tumbling waterfalls and rolling hills, there are plenty of hiking trails to choose from.
- ▶ Go on an outdoor adventure. Zip-line above the spectacular landscape or get a little wet while white water rafting.
- ▶ Take a relaxing and delicious ride on a cheese and chocolate train.

Rome

Full of incredible history, fashion and unforgettable food, Rome is a great place for teens to combine hands-on learning and fun.

- ▶ If exploring the Colosseum isn't enough, learn the ways of Roman warriors with a session of gladiator training.
- ▶ Go underground in the catacombs. There are more than 60 catacombs spanning hundreds of kilometers below the city.
- ▶ Toss dough in the air at an authentic pizza making class, enjoy a cappuccino and cornetto in a cafe or sample tasty gelato while gazing at intricate fountains and statues.

Tenerife

For a more laid-back, beach bum spot, head to Tenerife in the Canary Islands.

- ▶ Head to one of the warm, golden sandy beaches surrounding the island.
- ▶ Explore the imposing fortress of Castillo San Miguel and then cool off in the nearby Garachico rock and tide pools.
- ▶ Get a beautiful vantage point of the island by hiking the Anaga Mountains.

Scotland

With rugged coastlines and bustling metropolitan cities, Scotland is another spot offering the best of urban life and quieter countryside.

- ▶ Hop on the original Hogwart's Express Jacobite steam train and traverse through the Scottish Highlands in style.
- ▶ Explore the quirky (and free) Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow.
- ▶ Dare each other to sample Scottish staples such as the Scotch egg and haggis.
- ▶ Discover the secrets of Edinburgh underground as you make your way through Real Mary King's Close.

Venice

This Italian city earns a spot on the list for its canals, shops, architecture and, of course, food.

- ▶ Grab a gelato and explore the narrow alleyways of the city. Wear good shoes, as most walkways are cobblestone.
- ▶ Go island hopping. Head to one of the nearby islands to escape crowds and discover the uniqueness of each island.
- ▶ Not sure which Venetian mask to pick up? Sign up for a mask-making class and create your own masterpiece.
- ▶ Get lost. Venice is its own city island. Ditch the maps and get lost amidst the waterways, shops and cafes. ■



Live the Lavish Life at These Luxurious European Destinations

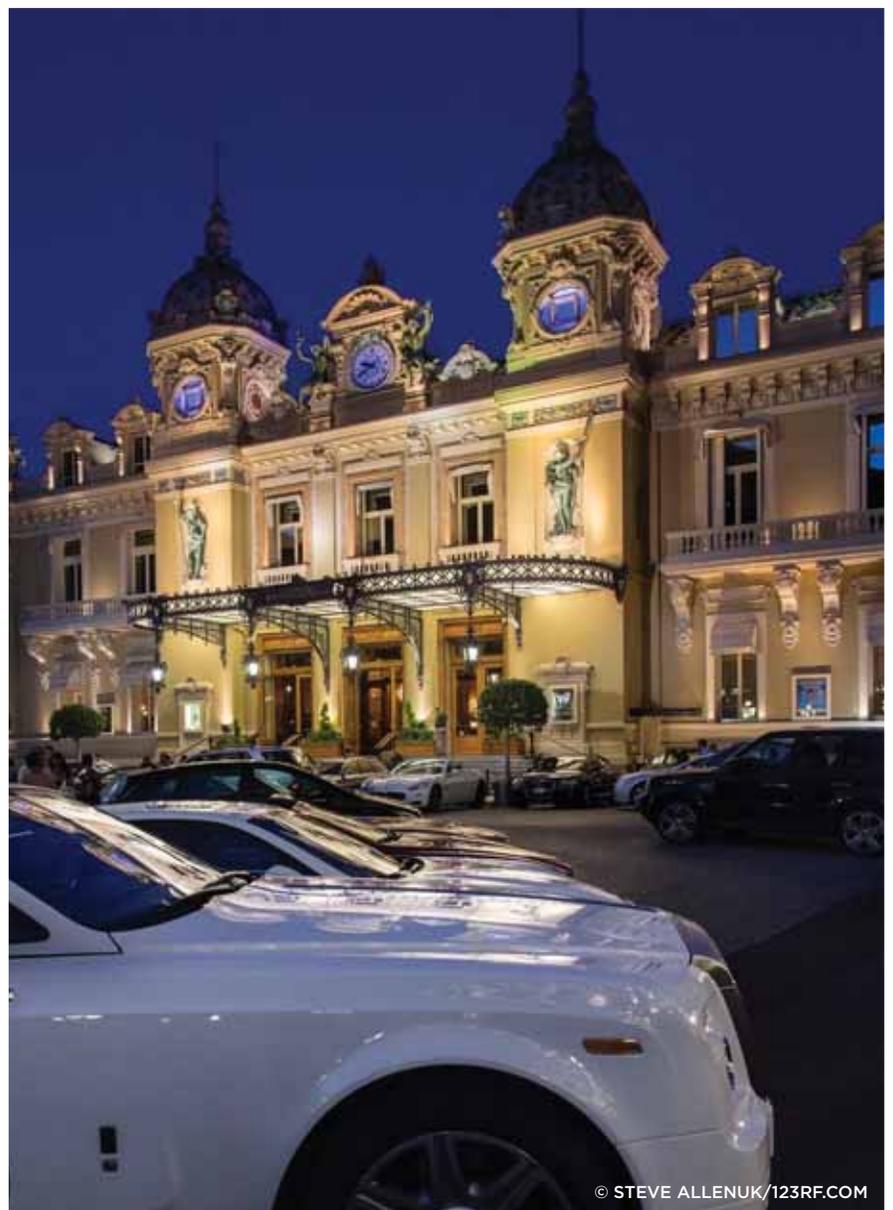
By Jessica Zen

After staying inside for what seems like forever—whether it be in quarantine, lockdown or just generally not going anywhere—it’s high time to get back to traveling once restrictions are lifted. During down time you may have acquired some extra time off and saved some funds. Why not splurge and live the lavish life for a few days? You certainly deserve it! Check out these incredible destinations that are sure to leave you feeling relaxed, refreshed and ready to take on the world again.

Monaco

Syracuse Monte Carlo is home to incomparable luxury. Relaxing hotels, high-stakes casinos, elegant restaurants and magical shows are sure to lull you into a complete sense of euphoria. Book a stay at Monte-Carlo Beach, which is dripping with 1930s charm. Think glittering sea views, calming spa treatments and some seriously fresh seafood. Be sure to stop at Larvotto Beach, one of the glitziest beaches in the world. Wear your best designer shades to blend in while sunbathing here.

No trip to the city is complete without visiting the iconic Casino de Monte-Carlo. This world-renowned destination features Belle Epoque



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architecture, an exceptional selection of games and some serious sophistication. For some posh shopping, stroll down the Boulevard des Moulins. Here you'll find upscale boutiques full of famous fashions.

Switzerland

Nestled in the Engadin valley, the glamorous village of St. Moritz has earned international fame for hosting the Winter Olympics not once, but twice. Lake St. Moritz adds even more village appeal in the winter months with its White Turf horse races, snow polo and ice cricket tournaments. Throw in some devilish ski runs, après ski clubs and a bobsled run for the perfect combination of winter activities. This swanky village resort area has something for everyone.

To get a taste of the latest and greatest the area has to offer, be sure to book a room at Auberge Resorts Collection St. Moritz, which is set to open in 2022. Enjoy stunning lake views, two restaurants, a cafe, bar, cigar lounge, kids club, ski shop and a fabulous spa. If you just can't wait that long to visit, try Badrutt's Palace Hotel, a five-star resort that dates back to 1896.

Iceland

Due to the naturally high cost of living raising the prices, most places here are called "luxury" by default. Don't let that deter you from visiting the Land of Fire and Ice. In Iceland, the dramatic landscape and natural splendor are bar none. A trip here will keep you active and hopping from steaming geysers, hot lava fields, thundering waterfalls and glacier lakes to blue lagoons and late-night northern light locations.

Consider taking a luxury adventure with a private guide to enhance your experience. Get a personal driver to take you to Iceland's most majestic sights so you don't have to worry about finding them yourself. Look for offers that start in Reykjavik and include stays at luxury hotels with customizable itineraries.



EDITOR'S PICK





Italy

For a high-end escape with opulence galore, Lake Como has it all. This is where the upper echelons of the Romans once vacationed. If you like old money and glamor, stay at the five-star Grand Hotel Tremezzo. It has not one, but three floating pools, a spa and an incredible breakfast spread. Their private beach has been revamped to channel the essence of the Italian Riviera during the 1950s and 60s. Talk about la dolce vita! Lounge chairs, parasols and aperitivos draw you in while you look out over the lake and mountains.

Be sure to hire a boat to take you out onto the lake to relax and see the beautiful surrounding villas. Splurge on wine, pasta and fresh fish, as well as way too many cappuccinos at all the beautiful cafes. Be sure to stop in Bellagio, the prettiest town on the lake, to stroll through the streets looking at fancy shops, colorful gardens and the stunning architecture.



Greece

For some seriously stunning photographs, nothing shocks and awes quite like the island of Santorini. Those white-washed walls paired with the blue roofs interact perfectly with the azure Aegean Sea. Sunbathe on Kamari Beach or explore ancient ruins for the perfect day. If you're a wine aficionado, you're in the right place. The wine here is particularly special due to the make-up of the volcanic terrain. Take a small group wine tour and be sure to stop at Santo Winery or Venetsanos for some seriously stunning views. Sip on your wine and relax in one of the world's most beautiful locations. If you want a little more activity, hike from Fira to Oia and admire the picturesque towns and ocean views. The reward for conquering this steep and challenging path is a stunning view over the Boka Bay.



Pack your best outfits and plenty of the appropriate currency for the vacation of a lifetime at any one of these luxury locations. You deserve a reward for surviving the latest pandemic! Make it a trip you won't soon forget. ■

SOMMERRODELBAHN

Summer Alpine Family Fun

By Melissa Shock

Spins, curves, jumps and bumps—all while speeding down a mountain! Ever wonder what they do with ski slopes once the snow melts? They turn them into “Sommerrodelbahns,” translation: summer toboggan runs. There are many destinations for the spine-tingling ride of a toboggan run or alpine coaster across Austria, Switzerland and Germany.

Sommerrodel-what?

Toboggan Run: You control a wheeled sled in a stainless steel or concrete luge (typically only open during the summer).

Alpine Coaster: You control a wheeled car on a rail system (typically open year-round).

Most toboggan runs and alpine coasters are open from May to October, but check individual websites for details on additional leisure activities, exact opening days and times, and prices.

You can ride solo, or double up on a two-seater (not recommended for children under 3).

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Austria

Austria features the longest and steepest Sommerrodelbahns in the world!

Serlesbahnen - Mieders: This is the steepest alpine coaster in the world! With an altitude change of 640 meters, it's a thrilling ride at 42 kilometers per hour with 40 sharp turns. The resort also offers a hidden paradise in the surrounding Stubai Alps with their extensive hiking and mountain biking trails.

Alpine Coaster - Imst: Imst has the world's longest alpine coaster at 3,535 meters (that's more than 2 miles long). After a ride on the coaster, continue the adventure with mountain climbing courses or cool off in the natural bathing lake. A variety of birthday packages are available for the coaster.

Golmerbahn - Vandans: At 2,600 meters long, this coaster offers 44 jumps and a unique 360-degree loop! If that isn't enough adrenaline, check out the Flying Fox, a zip line over the lake that reaches speeds of 70 kilometers per hour.



Switzerland

High above small Swiss towns, these toboggan runs and coasters offer not only exhilarating rides but also beautiful panoramic views.

Pilatus - Lucerne: This toboggan features dragon dens, which speed you through tunnels along the track. Pilatus is also home to central Switzerland's largest rope park, including a 20-meter freefall adventure.

Pfingstegg - Grindelwald: This toboggan run is popular for parties. You can rent the course for birthdays, weddings and company events. The resort also includes other adrenaline-pumping activities like paragliding and bungee jumping.

Feeblitz - Saas-Fee: One of the highest coasters in the Alps, the Feeblitz provides excellent mountain views as you go in circles down the 900-meter-long track. Still need more fun? There's an adventure forest that offers tree-men-dous fun along with river rafting and scooter bikes.

Pradaschier - Lenzerheide: At 3,100 meters, this is Switzerland's longest alpine coaster and includes 31 extraordinary curves throughout the track. This peaceful resort is a breath of fresh air, literally, offering tranquil nature hikes with the occasional deer and fox spotting.

Glacier 3000 - Gstadd: Set in the absolutely beautiful town of Gstadd, this resort offers both a toboggan run and alpine coaster. To relax after the double adrenaline of the rides, check out the petting zoo or campfire areas.



Germany

Head to the mountains or stay near town; Germany offers a number of different toboggan runs and coaster locations.

Alpsee Bergwelt - Immenstadt: At 2,780 meters, this is the longest toboggan run in Germany with a whopping 58 curves, seven jumps and four bridges. Plus, you can ride at night for a unique experience.

Blomberg - Bad Tölz: Offering both a toboggan run and coaster, this is the perfect spot for a Bavarian mountain getaway. Idyllic mountain scenery and lush green pastures make for postcard-worthy pictures.

Kurpfalz-Coaster - Wachenheim: Only a short drive from Kaiserslautern, this coaster is shorter than most but spins you 360 degrees with dense nature views of the Pfalz and hillside vineyards in the Kurpfalz Park.

Kolbensattel - Oberammergau: EDITOR'S PICK This coaster is 2,600 meters of breathtaking views and adventurous curves. The resort is also well-known as a hiker's paradise with trails for beginners to those seeking more advanced routes.

**Get ready for the slide
of your life as you
explore the curving,
jumping, spinning
Sommerrodelbahns
of Europe.**

These toboggan runs and alpine coasters combine adventure and nature that guarantee a fun, action-packed summer! ■



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SEE OUR AD ON PAGE #35

The Greatest Beaches in Europe

By Courtney Woodruff

As swimsuits and tank tops replace scarves and sweaters on store shelves, I find myself lost in daydreams that include tan lines, frosty beverages and sand-sprinkled toes more and more often. Summer is so close I can almost smell the sunscreen and taste the sea salt in the air. If, like me, your idea of the perfect mid-year vacation includes a trip to the water's edge, check out this list of Europe's best beaches.

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For Sunbathing in Germany

Rügen

Germany may not be the first country that comes to mind when researching hot European beach destinations where you can banish your winter glow this summer—but don't count it out, either.

Rügen, a Baltic island off the Pomeranian coast, allures travelers with 60 kilometers of sandy beaches, enticing lagoons, "Bodden" and gorgeous seaside resorts. Rays beat down on the island an average of 1,800 hours each year, making it Deutschland's sunniest and warmest location.



Sandy beach and traditional wooden beach chairs on Rügen island.

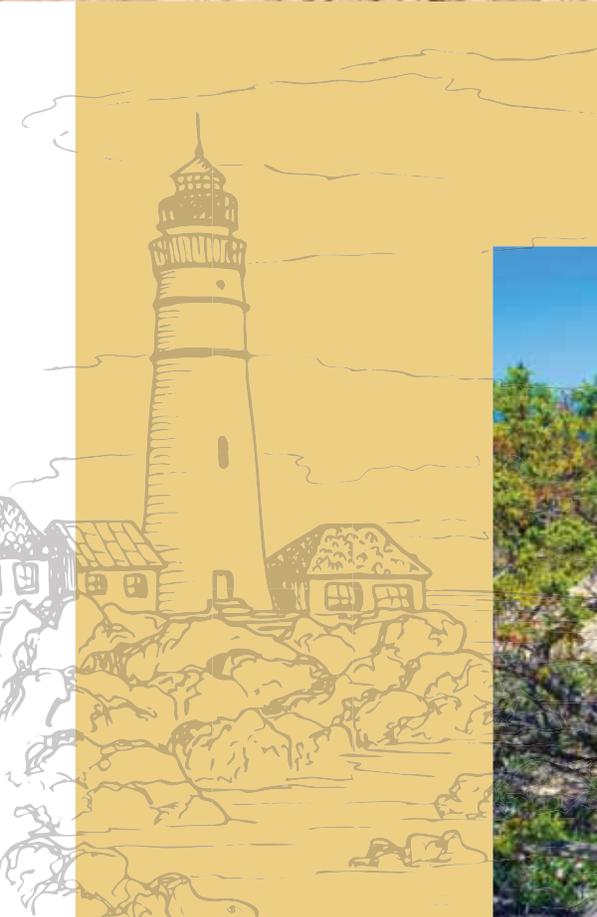
For Snorkeling in Italy

Isola Rossa

Isola Rossa, a beautiful Sardinian beach known for its sugary white sand, crimson granite rock and sapphire water, has earned a reputation for being one of the best places to snorkel in Europe. Its rocky underwater canyons and red coral reefs are said to attract higher numbers of colorful fish than anywhere else in the Mediterranean. For that reason, you are almost guaranteed breathtaking photographs every time you head under.

Be sure to take a buddy with you—you're likely to come face to face with one of the many moray eels that have made their home in the warm, shallow pools.

Path towards the sea near Isola Rossa.



For Toddlers in Spain

Es Grau

High tides and mischievous waves can be enough to keep families traveling with toddlers away from seaside hotspots, but Menorca beach has something special to offer little ones.

At Es Grau, the azure Mediterranean water remains a shallow 40 meters out to sea, creating a large, spa-like pool for parents to enjoy with their children. In the meantime, thrill-seeking big kids will have a blast kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkeling and exploring nearby secret coves, like Cala de sa Torreta and Cala des Tamarells.



Shallow and crystal clear water at Es Grau, Menorca.

For Relaxing in Your Birthday Suit in Portugal

Ilha Deserta

If you fantasize about escaping to a secluded beach where you can leave it all behind—including your swimsuit—head to Portugal's uninhabited Ilha Deserta. Getting there requires a 30-minute ride by water taxi.

As its name suggests, you won't find much on "Desert Island" when you arrive, except for a single restaurant, unblemished beaches, crystal clear water and a whole lot of tranquility. It's the perfect place to turn off your cellphone, wash your worries away and relax ... wearing nothing but a smile.



Coastline view from the Marimurtra botanical garden.

For Adventurers in Spain

Cala de sa Forcanera

Looking for a European beach where you can do something a little more exciting than spending the day flipping from back to front on your beach towel to regulate tan lines? Cala de Sa Forcanera is calling your name. Tucked into a hidden cove, this secluded beach can only be reached by kayak or boat, which is why it is usually unoccupied. Getting there is only half the adventure. Hike up to the lush Marimurtra botanical garden for a breathtaking view of the surrounding cliffs and turquoise water below—it's worth the trip.



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For Families in Greece

St. George Beach, Naxos

St. George Beach in Naxos, Greece is a paradise for families with children of all ages. Parents can lie back and relax in lounge chairs while little ones play in warm, shallow water so blue and clear you won't be able to tell where the sea ends and the sky begins. There's plenty for energetic big kids, as well; they can start up a game of tennis or volleyball with new friends on the beach, rent a mountain bike to go exploring or sign up for thrilling activities, like windsurfing, waterskiing and wakeboarding at the local sports club.

For a Budget-friendly Holiday in Greece

Corfu

If you dream of spending your summer holiday soaking up picture-perfect Santorini but are afraid it might break the bank, consider heading to Corfu instead. This beautiful Greek island is a fantastic option for penny-pinching beach-bound travelers. Budget airlines, like Ryanair, offer great deals on short hops to Corfu from European countries, and a stay at a clean, comfortable and inexpensive (but not luxurious) all-inclusive resort will help save you money on the cost of entertainment and dining out.



For Exploring Caves in France

Morgat

Explorers will love beachcombing the quiet, secluded bays of Morgat, France. Marvel at the sea life wonders that reveal themselves in the rock pools at low tide and collect colorful shells and pebbles that have washed ashore. When the water level rises, the beach is transformed into a completely different destination for nature enthusiasts to enjoy. Rent a kayak or purchase a ticket for a local boat tour to get a glimpse inside the fascinating sea caves.

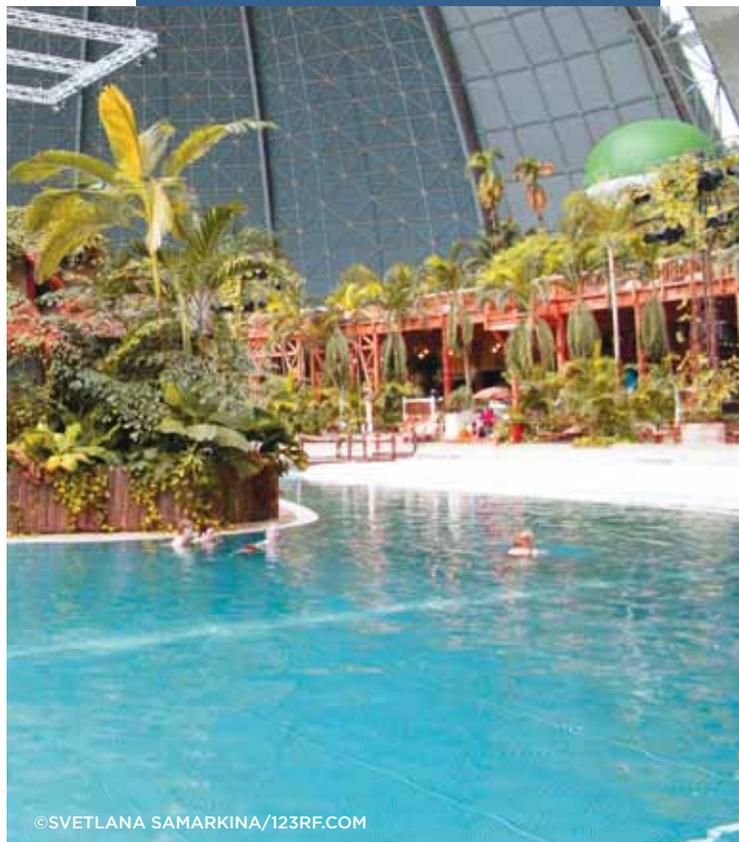


For a Year-round Paradise in Germany

Tropical Islands, Berlin

Weather can be unpredictable in Germany—even in the summer. To take the elements out of the equation while planning the perfect beach vacation any time of the year, escape to Europe’s largest holiday resort: Tropical Islands. Whether you’re looking to entertain the whole family with exciting water activities, lounge around on your beach towel in-between spa treatments with your partner or camp out on the beach with your friends, this heavenly indoor retreat has something special to offer for everyone.

Tropical Islands Resort, Berlin.



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For a Romantic, All-inclusive Splurge in Croatia

SENSIMAR Adriatic Beach Resort

Treat your partner to an unforgettable romantic getaway at this luxurious all-inclusive beach resort in wild and wonderful Croatia.

For “lovers only,” SENSIMAR Adriatic beach resort promises elegance, extravagant amenities and a serene atmosphere. Splurge on couples spa treatments, enjoy intimate dinners for two and relax on the beach as the attentive staff caters to your every whim. Rooms are newly remodeled and offer breathtaking views of the cerulean sea. ■

Aerial view of sandy beach in Croatia, Adriatic sea.

EDITOR'S PICK



Porto, Portugal

COME FOR THE PORT, STAY FOR THE OLD-WORLD CHARM

» Sunset on the Duro river overlooking Porto's famous iron bridge.



By Rachel Cotter

Like a Guinness in Ireland or champagne in France, there is something magical about drinking a beverage in its home country. The same is true for Port wine. This unique drink is from, you guessed it, Portugal and was created to help preserve the wine as it traveled from the vineyards down the river on its long, hot journey to the town of Porto. The wine was stored until it was ready to be shipped and enjoyed around the world. For those looking to maximize their European travel experience, I recommend making your way over to this unique city—not only to drink its namesake—but to get a taste of an often-overlooked part of European history and culture.

A Little History

Porto, which was named by the Romans when they took over the city from the Celts in the 4th century, is the second-largest city in Portugal, right behind Lisbon. As time progressed and the country changed leadership—from the Romans to the Moors—the city name of Porto grew to cover the country as Portugal. Like many European cities, Porto is full of old-world charm with medieval buildings, colorful, wobbly houses and red tile roofs, all which helped it to become a World Cultural Heritage location in 2001 by UNESCO.

For those who are looking to walk through history, follow the famous streets lined with buildings decorated with blue “azulejo” tiles to the stunning riverfront. Once on the Ribeira, you can weave your way through colorful houses, shops, restaurants and bars. If you are on the hunt for a piece of Porto to take home with you, check out the embroidery, filigree and ceramic shops. Be sure to snag some hand-made “azulejos” before you leave, as a souvenir! If you have extra time, you can enjoy filigree-making demonstrations where you can see how the delicate designs of gold and silver wires are created. When walking around, be on the lookout for bridges. One of the most notable is the Dom Luís I Bridge, which is a double-decker metal arch bridge that—at its construction in 1881—

was the longest bridge of its type in the world. When you are finished with all your walking, slow down to enjoy the sun setting over the water as you sit outside a cafe, sipping a glass of your favorite beverage and trying the flavors of Porto.

Food and Drink

When the locals have been known as “tripeiros” (tripe eaters) since 1415, you know you are going to find some unique offerings on the menu. This tradition started when the local sailors would go off to explore, and the town would send with them the best parts of the meat, leaving behind the “guts” for the remaining people in the city. Don’t be scared to expand your tastebuds as the locals have had centuries to perfect their recipes. If you are looking to try something new, you can find the mild taste of tripe in soup, like “caldo verde” with cabbage and potatoes. Another option is a “francesinha.” This tasty sandwich is stuffed with different types of meat and covered with cheese and a spicy sauce.

Whether you are a port enthusiast or a newbie, you can take your knowledge to the next level with some enjoyable “research” on a port tasting tour. There, you can learn what is the difference between tawny and ruby (spoiler: age) and what gives it that powerful flavor. A great place to try is the Sandeman Company, the oldest established brand in Porto, where they have four different tour options.

“
When the
locals have
been known
as “tripeiros”
(tripe eaters)
since 1415, you
know you are
going to find
some unique
offerings on
the menu.



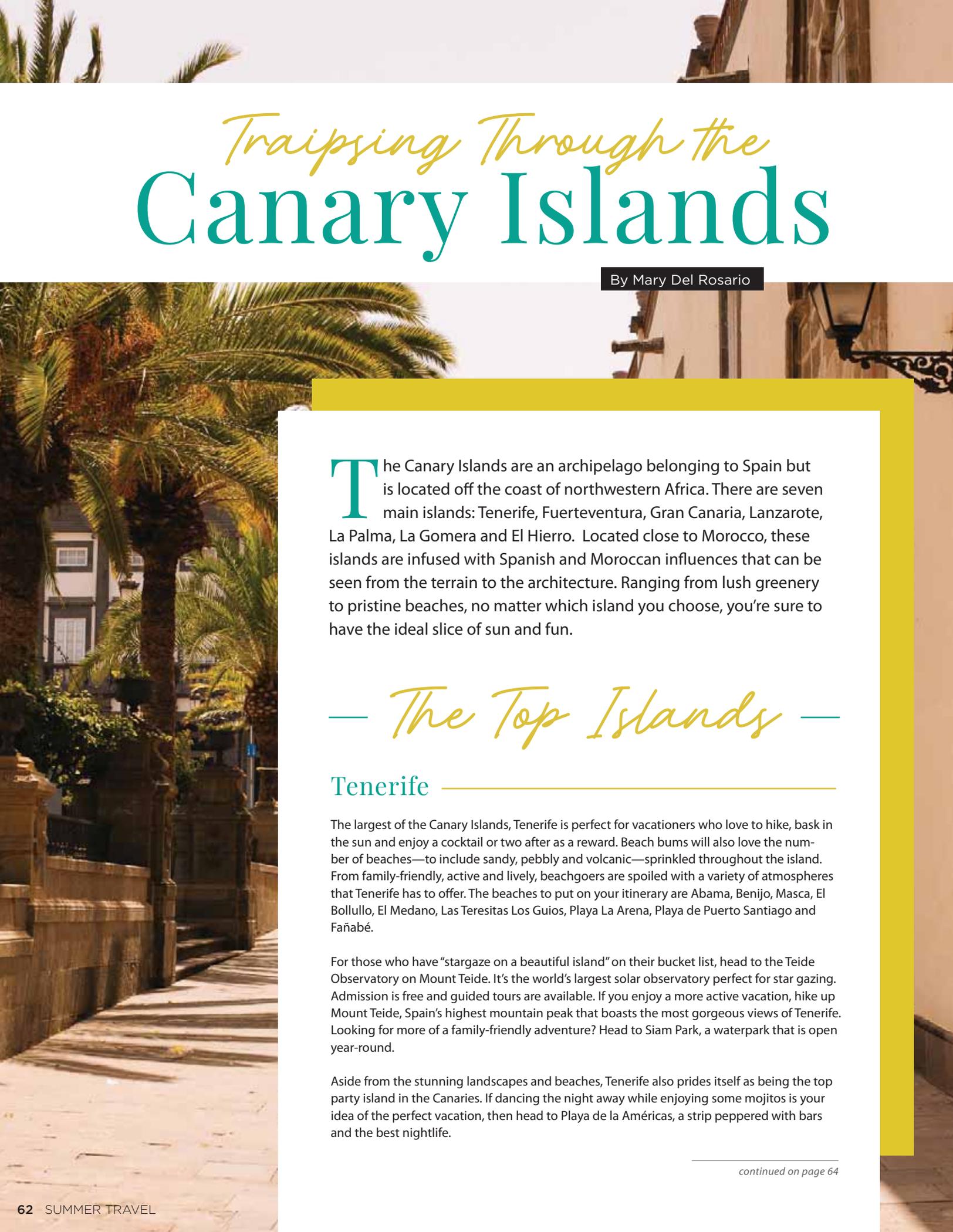
» Traditional Portuguese cuisine: caldo verde - soup with tripe, cabbage, kale and potatoes.

Getting Around

With an airport located 11 miles north of Porto’s city center, this city is both wallet-friendly and accessible. Once you are traveling around Porto, you have the option of using its extensive public transportation system to include buses, trams, metros, taxis, cable cars and funiculars. If you are asking what a funicular is, it’s a little cable car connected to a railroad that goes up a mountain and is a fun way to get to the top, especially when traveling with children. Looking for that special photo op? Try the cable car as it soars above the Vila Nova de Gaia where you can look back across the river and get a stunning view of Porto. ■

» Panorama of Porto’s Old Town and Duoro river.





Traipsing Through the Canary Islands

By Mary Del Rosario

The Canary Islands are an archipelago belonging to Spain but is located off the coast of northwestern Africa. There are seven main islands: Tenerife, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, La Palma, La Gomera and El Hierro. Located close to Morocco, these islands are infused with Spanish and Moroccan influences that can be seen from the terrain to the architecture. Ranging from lush greenery to pristine beaches, no matter which island you choose, you're sure to have the ideal slice of sun and fun.

— The Top Islands —

Tenerife

The largest of the Canary Islands, Tenerife is perfect for vacationers who love to hike, bask in the sun and enjoy a cocktail or two after as a reward. Beach bums will also love the number of beaches—to include sandy, pebbly and volcanic—sprinkled throughout the island. From family-friendly, active and lively, beachgoers are spoiled with a variety of atmospheres that Tenerife has to offer. The beaches to put on your itinerary are Abama, Benijo, Masca, El Bollullo, El Medano, Las Teresitas Los Guios, Playa La Arena, Playa de Puerto Santiago and Fañabé.

For those who have “stargaze on a beautiful island” on their bucket list, head to the Teide Observatory on Mount Teide. It's the world's largest solar observatory perfect for star gazing. Admission is free and guided tours are available. If you enjoy a more active vacation, hike up Mount Teide, Spain's highest mountain peak that boasts the most gorgeous views of Tenerife. Looking for more of a family-friendly adventure? Head to Siam Park, a waterpark that is open year-round.

Aside from the stunning landscapes and beaches, Tenerife also prides itself as being the top party island in the Canaries. If dancing the night away while enjoying some mojitos is your idea of the perfect vacation, then head to Playa de la Américas, a strip peppered with bars and the best nightlife.

continued on page 64

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Fuerteventura

EDITOR'S PICK

Fuerteventura is the second-largest island filled with long stretches of sand dunes ideal for dune buggies and beaches water sports enthusiasts and families can't get enough of. Corralejo Natural Park is a sight to behold with beautiful turquoise waters and white sand. While walking on the beach, you'll catch glimpses of Los Lobos, an islet north of Fuerteventura. Corralejo is a bustling, small town on the north of the island and provides a mix of modern and traditional city vibes.

The north part of the island provides desert landscapes while the south is lush with greenery. However, the island is small enough to drive from north to south enjoying the change in scenery in one day. Since Fuerteventura is known for being the hotspot in the Canaries for kite and wind surfers, be sure to check which beach is compatible with your wishes. Sotavento, located in the south, is a beach only the professional kite surfers would dare to go due to aggressive sandstorms that may occur. Otherwise, the notable beaches are Corralejo, Pájara, Cofete, Gran Tarajal, La Concha and Caleta de Fuste.

Gran Canaria

Known for the contrasts in terrain, Gran Canaria is a diverse island many tourists flock to and for good reason. The black lava and white sand beaches allow you to enjoy nature in its finest form. If you've ever wanted to sand surf or even take a long walk along the beach, explore the island's finest sand at the Maspalomas Dunes located in the south of the island. However, if you would rather lay out on the beach and enjoy the sun's rays, head to Playa de las Canteras and Amadores beach, Gran Canaria's popular beaches. Other popular activities include dolphin watching, Palmitos park (a zoo perfect for kids) and getting lost in the capital, Las Palmas.

If you came to this island with a group of friends, Playa del Ingles is the place to be seen as it is known for merriment and memories in the making. Dotted with bars and entertainment, this lively spot is the perfect way to enjoy a night out. However, if you prefer the opposite, Pico de las Nieves, the highest peak in Gran Canaria, is the ideal location for natural sights to see away from crowds.

Lanzarote

Whitewashed villages, turquoise waters and volcanic landscapes make Lanzarote a beautiful destination to experience. Lanzarote is also known for being the best in wellness throughout the Canaries due to the many surf camps offering yoga, meditation and an overall spa experience.

Lanzarote also has an abundance of highlights to include the Museo Atlántico—an underwater sculpture museum, Jardín de Cactus—a cacti garden, Haría—an enclave filled with whitewashed villas and Timanfaya National Park. For the thrill seekers, try surfing at Famara Beach. Its mountainous landscape will be a perfect backdrop as you surf the waves.

Canarian Cuisine

Whenever traveling to a different country, it's always best to eat like the locals. With so many fresh seafood options and good eats, sink your teeth and delight your taste buds with these Canarian dishes.

"Papas arrugadas" — small, boiled potatoes rolled through salt and topped with "mojo picón," a spicy, garlicky sauce.

"Sancocho canario" — salted and spiced fish.

"Baifo" — young goat meat marinated in herbs and garlic.

"Queso de cabra" — goat cheese. The fried kind is a popular choice! ■

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ONTBIJTKOEK: DUTCH HONEY BREAKFAST CAKE

By Anna Bagiackas

One of my favorite parts of traveling around Europe is breakfast. I get a kick out of comparing and contrasting how different countries and cultures handle the “most important meal of the day.” While eating my way through the city of Utrecht, I learned about this Dutch breakfast staple—spicy, fragrant, dense and slathered in butter—I knew this cake would put Dutch breakfasts on the top of my list.

Ontbijtkoek, also sometimes referred to as peperkoek (pepper cake), is most likely an ancestor of French gingerbread. First appearing in the Middle Ages as a way to use leftover crumbs and ingredients, the additional spices were added when Dutch traders entered the spice trade in the 17th century. While there are a few different variations depending on where you are in the Netherlands, this breakfast cake is all about the sweet and spicy. Unlike American-style quick breads, ontbijtkoek is thinly sliced and because there is no other source of fat in the recipe, creamy butter on top is a must.



ONTBIJTKOEK

(Dutch Honey Breakfast Cake)



Serves 4-6



1.5 hours

INGREDIENTS

rye flour.....	2 cups	ground cardamom.....	1 teaspoon	ground anise.....	1/8 teaspoon
all-purpose flour.....	1 cup	ground ginger.....	1/2 teaspoon	ground black pepper.....	1/8 teaspoon
dark brown sugar.....	2/3 cup	ground nutmeg.....	1/4 teaspoon	salt.....	1/4 teaspoon
baking soda.....	2 teaspoons	ground allspice.....	1/4 teaspoon	honey.....	1/2 cup
baking powder.....	1 teaspoon	ground coriander.....	1/4 teaspoon	molasses (not blackstrap).....	1/3 cup
ground cinnamon.....	2 teaspoons	ground cloves.....	1/4 teaspoon	milk, plus more for brushing.....	3/4 cup

PROCESS

STEP 1

Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C). Grease a 9-inch by 5-inch loaf pan and then line with parchment paper.

STEP 2

Whisk the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Combine the honey, molasses and milk in a small saucepan and gently warm over medium heat, gently whisking and making sure it does not boil.

STEP 3

Gradually add the warmed wet ingredients to the dry ingredients, folding with a rubber spatula until a sticky batter forms.

STEP 4

Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan and smooth the top, then lightly brush the top with milk. Bake for 60 minutes, rotating pan halfway through. If top is getting too dark, cover with aluminum foil. Remove from oven when a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

STEP 5

Cool in the pan and then remove from pan, serving slightly warm or cold. Thinly slice for serving.



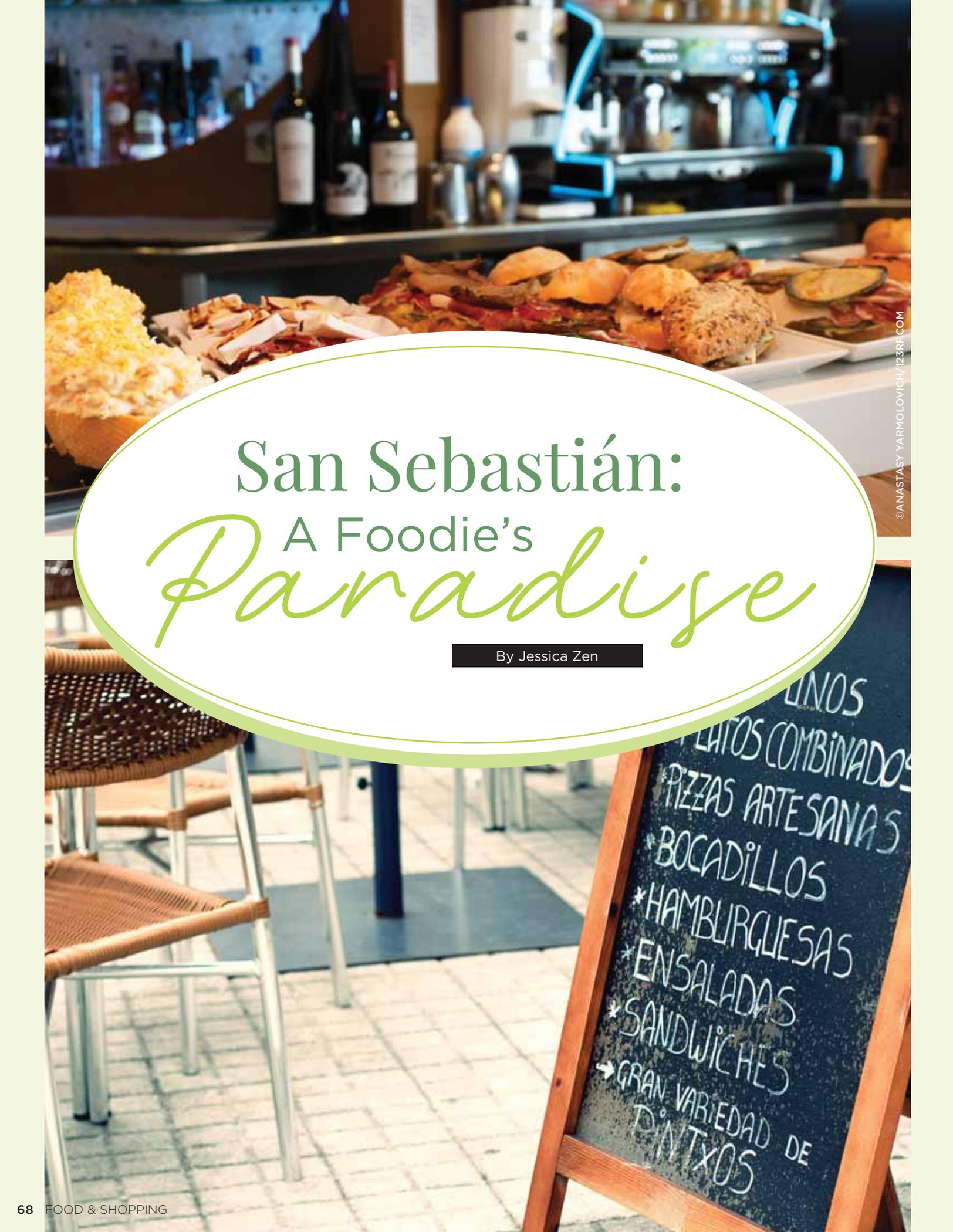
Unlike American-style quick breads, ontbijtkoek is thinly sliced and because there is no other source of fat in the recipe, creamy butter on top is a must.



TIP:

Wrapping the cake in plastic wrap after cooled will make an extra sticky outside crust.

This recipe was adapted from Savory Nothings.



San Sebastián: A Foodie's *Paradise*

By Jessica Zen

©ANASTASY YARMOLOVICH/123RF.COM



ABOVE: A typical tapas: tuna-stuffed peppers on crusted bread.



RIGHT: Display of takeaway tapas cones, including fried fish, shrimp and ham.



“Pintxos, the local word for tapas, are bite-size dishes that are more than just food; they are works of art created by the avant-garde.”

Surrounded by the perfect combination of golden beaches and lush mountains, the city of San Sebastián is a foodie’s paradise and a nature lover’s dream. It is located in the northwestern Basque region of Spain on the Bay of Biscay and is home to an Old Town that is brimming with “pintxo” bars. Known as Donostia in Basque, this city has more Michelin stars per capita than any other city—18, in fact. The combination of quick eats and top of the line restaurants makes for the perfect food-driven getaway.

Pintxos, the local word for tapas, are bite-size dishes that are more than just food; they are works of art created by the avant-garde. To get a sample of all the best foods, go on a “txikiteo”, the local term for a bar crawl where you eat pintxos and drink wine, beer or Basque cider. The Old Town is best for this type of activity.

Look for one of the many pintxo bars, where you will find artful creations comprised of fresh vegetables, fish and other local delicacies. For a taste of the local Basque cider, head to Sidreria Gurutzeta. This natural cider producer offers lunch on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and provides the history of the cider with a tasting and bar food workshop. Sakona Coffee Roasters is a local coffee roaster, as the name obviously implies, that sits on the river and is fantastic for your morning caffeine pick-me-up. Here the coffee is lovingly roasted, and the quality captures delicious flavors, while avoiding bitter and burnt tones. For a taste of something truly spectacular, head to Restaurante Akelarre, which

boasts three Michelin stars. Enjoy gazing out at the sea while dining on haute cuisine such as seaweed hake, plankton and oyster leaf.

When you aren’t spoiling your taste buds, go on an adventure. The area offers the Monte Igueldo Funicular, which will take you to the top of the mountain for an incredible view of the city. Here you’ll find an old amusement park and a cafe. Other activities in the area include relaxing at the beach, surfing at Zurriola Beach or visiting Miramar Palace for a tour of the gardens. To learn more about the Basque culture, visit the San Telmo Museum.

To get to San Sebastián, fly into the city of Bilbao, which is just over an hour away. From there you can rent a car, take the train or hop on a bus. Once there, if you want to treat the rest of your body like you are treating your taste buds, stay at the luxurious Maria Cristina Hotel or the elegant Hotel Akelarre. However, if you’d rather not blow your entire savings account, there are plenty of other moderately priced accommodations in the city, allowing you to spend more money on all the delicious food!

If you love trying new foods, exploring new cities and enjoying jaw-dropping landscapes, San Sebastián is for you. Try a Michelin-star restaurant for the first time and let your taste buds dance at the bold combinations of flavors. Later you can lounge on the beach and soak up the sun while your belly digests all the goodness from the day. ■

THE CHARM OF THE DEMIJOHN

By Jessica Zen

The beautiful, bulbous demijohn is in demand these days as a highly sought-after decorative piece. The stunning shades of turquoise, amber and emerald beckon shoppers with their delightful shapes and sizes. Whether you want a one-of-a-kind antique or are searching for something brand new, there are plenty of options. Demijohns are popular throughout Europe and make great additions to any home to add a little flair.



Unfamiliar with the demijohn? They are glass vessels that were used for transporting alcohol or anything else that couldn't be moved in a wooden container. They have a large body and a small neck that were originally wrapped in wicker, metal baskets or wooden crates to avoid breakage. The term "demijohn" dates back to the late 1700s and is thought to come from the French term "damejeanne," which literally translates to "Lady Jane." The term may have referred to the shape of a stout woman in traditional 1700's clothing.

Recently, demijohns have been trending in the home design world. There are so many variations of color, size and style that the versatility of this product is quite impressive. If you're on the hunt, there are lots of places to look for the perfect one. Reproductions are less expensive, but also have less character. Originals have more character, as they have imperfections in the glass, but will also cost more. Demijohns can range anywhere from 50 to 200 euros, depending on size and quality. For originals, shop at flea markets and antique shops for the best finds. If shopping in Germany, antique shops like Antikhandel Döllinger in Markt Erlbach, Anno Domini in Nittenau, Neumanns Antiquitäten in Berlin and Kunst Oase in Munich are great places to start looking.

Once you've found the perfect demijohn, or five, the fun begins. You get to start decorating! There is so much inspiration out there for how to style your demijohn. Put one or several on your mantle and add flowers, seashells, starfish or other beach-inspired items for summer decorations. If it's winter, think about adding holly berry garland, evergreen branches and even pine cones to the mantle to spruce it up. If you're going for a French country look, you can't go wrong with a little greenery, lavender

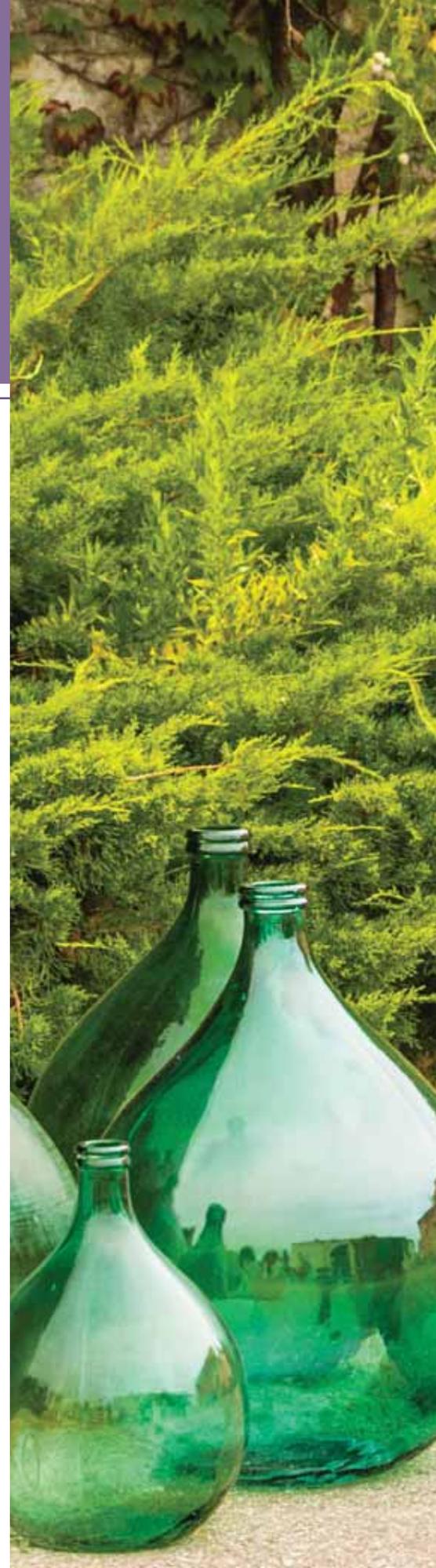
**“FOR ORIGINALS,
SHOP AT FLEA
MARKETS AND
ANTIQUÉ SHOPS FOR
THE BEST FINDS.”**

and herbs. The light blue or even clear color demijohns are splendid for this theme.

If you really want to highlight your beautiful demijohns, display them in a hutch. This will look especially beautiful if you have various sizes and colors. To make the display pop, consider painting the hutch a similar color to one of the demijohns and voila! You've got a serious eye-catcher.

The fun doesn't stop there. You could place demijohns in a tray on the coffee table to add a little color. Go even further and add them to your bathroom on a shelf, perhaps with some sweet smelling flowers. Make these vases the center of attention on your dining table. There's no wrong way to decorate with these delightful pieces. Buy one in each color if it tickles your fancy and your home will only be more lovely for it.

Shop until you find the perfect demijohn, then get ready to get crafty and decorate. On your hunt for the best piece, who knows what other treasures you will uncover. It's all part of the fun! ■



— Best — FLEA MARKETS OF EUROPE

By Carrie Farrell



Some people travel to relax at a beachside resort or climb to the top of the Eiffel Tower. But consider the world as a series of fabulous flea markets, displaying each culture's best artifacts. Who needs an ordinary souvenir when you can remember your vacation every time you use your turn-of-the-century French serving bowl or wear those Art Nouveau bracelets, bought for a song in Portugal?

PARIS, FRANCE

The origin of the term "flea market" is still a mystery, but it is no surprise that the first known references appeared in Paris, France. Paris is huge and there are many flea markets to choose from. If you only have time to visit one, the best of all Parisian flea markets is Marché Aux Puces De Clignancourt. There are 2,500 to 3,000 stalls and shops selling anything from quality antiques to quirky French oddities. This market stretches over four square miles of historical neighborhoods and is divided into different sections. Vernaison, Biron, Cambo, Paul-Bert Serpette and Jules-Valles are the most popular. Each section specializes in merchandise that is not sold by the others. Seeing it all can be exhausting, but the area is dotted with cozy cafés when you need a break. Beware of the aggressive hagglers who are peddling knockoff designer goods. Walk a little farther and you will find dealers who sell their wares from permanent stands, tables and stores. This market is open Saturday to Monday.





PORTO, PORTUGAL

Located along the Douro River, the Vandoma Flea Market is a must-see in Porto. The market is laid out in Fontainhas, one of the city's most picturesque and traditional neighborhoods. Porto itself is one of the oldest cities in Europe dating back to the Roman Empire. The Vandoma market is a secondhand-only market where anything and everything goes. Add to that the historical charm of Porto and you never know what treasures might await. On Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. treasure hunters can find items like clothing and accessories, furniture, vinyl record collections, vintage newspapers, old weapons and jewelry. This flea market is a real paradise for antique lovers and collectors.

AREZZO, ITALY

If you're serious about collecting, consider a pilgrimage to the antiques market in the Tuscan city of Arezzo. Held the first Saturday and Sunday of every month, exhibitors from all over Italy offer high-quality collectibles that meet the needs of antique buffs and the most demanding collectors. Search for rare pieces such as old books, art deco objects, 19th- and 20th-century paintings, watches, scientific instruments, archaeological finds, furniture and more, all from qualified exhibitors. With its Roman ruins, medieval walls and Renaissance buildings, the ambience of Arezzo is an added bonus to this extraordinary flea market.



Small or large, old or new, the best flea markets in Europe have a few things in common: a variety of merchandise, accessibility (most are within an hour's drive of a major city) and a hint of the area's history. Happy hunting! ■



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Staff Picks

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From community news, to travel tips, and PCS tricks, StripesEurope.com has got you covered to conquer your tour in Europe!

In this edition, we asked some of our staff "What's in your luggage?" Check out what they always pack for their travels!



Sean Adams
REVENUE CONSULTANT

INSIDE SEAN'S LUGGAGE:

"I think my list would be a toothbrush, extra phone charger, spare credit card, beef jerky and blue-tooth headphones. Those typical things that I generally forget to pack anyway."



Daniela Gammon
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

INSIDE DANIELA'S LUGGAGE:

"When traveling I always bring headphones (always needed for flights and long drives), a portable charger so my phone/camera doesn't die and my white Chucks to walk for miles in comfortable shoes."



Noel Min
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

INSIDE NOEL'S LUGGAGE:

"In my fanny pack (yup, you know it) are my four essential items: Chapstick, extra hearing aid batteries, Advil and band-aids. Everything you need for on-the-spot fixes"



Anna Bagiackas
WRITER/EDITOR

INSIDE ANNA'S LUGGAGE:

"Anyone who knows me agrees that I am an over-packer. I want to be prepared for anything. I even packed a cookbook once. But it's almost impossible to be prepared for everything, so here is what I always carry with me in my Baggallini backpack: a reusable water bottle, Nuun hydration tablets, tissues, a raincoat, sunglasses, a phone charger and, yes, even a paperback."



Remy Johnson
MARKETING COORDINATOR

INSIDE REMY'S LUGGAGE:

"I always travel with things that will make me feel comfy away from home. I like to pack a soft neck pillow for the plane, warm pajamas and fuzzy socks for the hotel and comfortable shoes for walking around the city that I'm visiting. If I'm taking a long flight, I'll even pack a throw blanket from home. You can't beat bringing a little bit of home with you on your travels!"



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