

HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS 2019

ARTICLE

From the moment warm weather appears and makes our life more enjoyable and brings us to sweat, most of us start to thinking about where to go to holiday. I know a lot of people who already chose their destination in December for the next year, because they can already await it in the cold days. The biggest group of people wait until the last moment waiting for the best possible price and a lot of people actually do not choose the destination, just pick something from the offer list. It makes it also a little adventurous and surprising to not know where you'll travel this year. With the minimalistic wave now more and more people think about not traveling at all, using the local possibilities of sunbathing, relaxing, wellness or hiking. It makes the travelling more responsible and waste-free. Whatever you decided for, the important thing is, that everyone needs a change, a break and a family time which makes us restart and reload our batteries. Here are some destinations chosen for those, who are searching for something new.

THE TURKISH RIVIERA - A CHIC-BUT-AFFORDABLE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE BEACH-PARTY CROWD

A couple of years ago the Turkish Riviera was all but off-limits for British travellers – so what welcome news that this glorious coast is back with a bang. British Airways has resumed its direct flights from London to Dalaman, making secret beach spots such as Datça and Bozburun super accessible. Meanwhile, the Bodrum Peninsula is all of a flutter with smart new developments that are taking the scene up a notch. Around the corner from the superyacht-filled Yalikavak Marina is Ian Schrager's all-white Bodrum Edition, which launched in summer 2018 with a restaurant by El Bulli's Diego Muñoz, a full-on disco (including a giant pink glitter ball), and a non-stop deep-house soundtrack that resonates from the pool to beach club. More ambitious still is Kaplankaya, an entire new coastal town north-west of Bodrum. Already launched is a Six Senses hotel and destination spa, five beaches and various restaurants, and there are several more hotels in the offing plus a Foster & Partners-designed marina. Old favourites reopened this spring, too: Nicolas Sarkozy was among those holing up at peaceful Amanruya in summer; Mandarin Oriental Bodrum made a splash with new nightclub Kai; while round the headland Macakizi has a new waterfront restaurant and club and is working on an exciting place to stay nearby called Macakizi Lofts.

EGYPT - THE NEW ART PILGRIMAGE

The opening of the game-changing Grand Egyptian Museum has been delayed again – until when, we're no longer exactly sure (though the latest word is 2020). And yet, the news from the ground is for the first time in 8 years, there's a waitlist for city hotels and boat trips along the Nile. After a tumultuous few years, Egypt, it seems, is back on the map. It had been hoped that the \$1 billion, sleek, marble temple to the country's antiquities would have swung open its doors by now, revealing, among a wealth of other national treasures, most crucially King Tutankhamun's entire burial collection – more than 5,000 pieces – displayed to the public in an exact replica of the tomb itself. And in March 2019 the much-talked about St Regis will open right on the river, injecting Cairo's dusty hotel scene with a much-needed dosage of glamour; it's floor-to-ceiling glass doors opening onto terraces that offer the sharpest views of Cairo's pedestrian-friendly Corniche promenade anywhere around.

THE PELOPONNESE, GREECE - A GO-SLOW CORNER OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

While the starriest Greek islands – such as Santorini and Mykonos – grapple with over-tourism, forward-thinking visitors are heading to the mainland and discovering the wide-open spaces of Greece off-season. The Peloponnese has been bubbling just below the radar since Costa Navarino opened in 2010. Soon afterwards, the local airport at Kalamata opened up to international flights, shaving off several hours' driving time from Athens and boosting arrivals to the region by 15 per cent last year. In 2019, the rail service linking the port of Patras with the town of Pyrgos, in the south-western Peloponnese, will resume after a seven-year halt. A train ride is the perfect way to explore this laidback region which has been a destination for wellness and fitness since Hippocrates prescribed therapeutic olive oil massages and naked athletes limbered up in Olympia. Athletes (dressed in more than just a slick of olive oil) will be hitting Costa Navarino in April 2019 for Greece's first Iron Man race. After a 1.9km swim in the Ionian Sea, competitors will cycle through olive groves before embarking on a half marathon that runs alongside Voidokilia beach, a perfect semi-circle of burnished sand.

MATERA, ITALY - A ROMANTIC RAVINE IN ITALY ATTRACTING TRAVELLERS LOOKING FOR AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

Down in the arch of Italy's foot, Matera is built into the rock of a ravine. This strange, prehistoric-looking city is miles from anywhere, and so out of time that it has been used as a set for films needing an authentic Jerusalem: Ben-Hur, and The Passion of the Christ, for which a crucifix was made that remains on the hillside. But Matera's sassi are what people come to see, the troglodyte cave dwellings where, even in the mid-20th century, its impoverished citizens lived in dank darkness until it was eventually abandoned. In 1993, UNESCO declared Matera a World Heritage Site. Slowly its fortunes changed, and now, as in Santorini, they've become hot property among travellers keen for an immersive stay. Many sassi are being rented out on Airbnb or turned into galleries, restaurants and charming cave hotels, upscale hideaways in limestone grottoes, such as the Palazzo Gattini, Corte San Pietro, Relais La Casa di Lucio (which has a new royal apartment) and Sextantio Le Grotte della Civita, one of the most romantic digs in all Italy. A short drive away, in Bernalda, is Francis Ford Coppola's splendid Palazzo Margherita.

PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA - THE WILD WEST COAST'S RIVERSIDE CAPITAL

The Margaret River region is well established as a foodie destination, with its Gourmet Escape pulling in international chefs (Rick Stein, Nigella Lawson) every November. There's culture in the form of Sculpture by the Sea, an annual exhibition held in March (in 2018 Damien Hirst's giant inflatable head in snorkel and mask emerged from the bone-white sands of Cottesloe Beach); while on Rottnest Island, so close you can swim over from Cottesloe, Pinky's new tented eco-retreat will welcome guests from February 2019. North of the city there's been £100-million investment in Scarborough Beach – where the fine sands and sunny disposition can never be confused with Britain's own Scarborough beach – with a smart new pool and restaurants such as The Peach Pit. Stop off en route for a night at Katanning's new Premier Mill Hotel, which brings hipster cool to the outback-of-beyond; then while you're down there, there's a new-for-2019 trip to see killer whales at the feeding grounds of Bremer Canyon.

QUESTIONS

1. Are you planning on going anywhere for your next vacation? If so, where? Who with? How long will you stay?
2. Describe the most interesting person you met on one of your travels.
3. What was your best trip.
4. What was your worst trip.
5. Do you like to travel with children? Why or why not?
6. Do you prefer to travel by train, bus, plane or ship? Why?
7. How do you spend your time when you are on holiday and the weather is bad?
8. What are some countries that you would never visit? Why would you not visit them?
9. What are some things that you always take with you on a trip?
10. What place do you want to visit someday?
11. Do you prefer active or relaxing holidays? Why?