

World

Luxury Travel

Vol. 2 ■ Issue 9 ■ April, 2014

Magazine

Green Paradise

The five must-visit urban parks in the world

Cape Town

A kaleidoscope of colours and diversity

Extraordinary Vacations

Mysterious hotels of the world

May Festivals
around the World
Traveling
for Pizzas

Popular pizza destinations of the world



Travel is one of the most enriching experiences of life. I sincerely believe that one must grab every opportunity to travel, to see a new place, experience a new activity in the place and to savour the local delicacy while in a foreign land. All these add colour to the journey of life.

In our website and magazine, we have been talking about the many destinations that are worth a visit. Our endeavour is to bring you

some of the 'not-so-talked-about' destinations too, which we believe add a new perspective to life itself. This issue of the e-zine tells you about the five must-visit urban parks around the world. Read on to know how a patch of greenery always refreshes your mind and makes you believe in the goodness of nature.

Speaking of nature, in our city guide section of the e-zine, we are talking about the capital city of one of the most naturally diverse countries in the world. Yes, we visited Cape Town – a city worthy of visiting at least once in your lifetime.

In our February 2013 issue of the e-zine, we talked about five unique luxury hotels in the world. This issue of the e-zine brings you a few more that we couldn't resist writing about. You have to read it to believe it.

Travel and food is like the two sides of the same coin. Do you like pizza? How about traveling for pizzas? I savoured pizza in different places of the world including Italy. Believe me, the difference in taste,

toppings and tradition of making pizzas differ vastly from place to place. In our Luxe Food section we are talking about few of the most popular destinations for pizzas.

Pick the one you like.

In the routine of life, there comes a time when accidents like the MH370 happen and shake us to the core. These incidences make us question everything. We cannot even begin to feel how the families of the passengers aboard the Malaysian Airline flight MH370 feel. Everyone from

World Luxury Tourism conveys our heartfelt condolences to

them.

Thank you!



Manashree Prakash
Editor-in-Chief

World
Luxury Travel
Magazine

■ Vol. 2 ■ Issue 9 ■ April, 2014

Editor-in-Chief :
Manashree

Travel Writers :
Prabha, Saurav

Contributing Photographers :
Prakash, Marc Sprengers

Website Counsellor :
Pramathesh

Designer :
Pranab

Contents

Green Paradise

The five must-visit urban parks in the world



5 || Cover Story

City Guide || 22



Cape Town
A kaleidoscope of colours and diversity



Luxe Stays

|| 34

Extraordinary Vacations

Mysterious hotels of the world

Luxe Foods || 48



Traveling for Pizzas

Popular pizza destinations of the world

|| 66

Happenings



May Festivals
around the World

Introducing the MICE Directory by www.worldluxurytourism.com (WLT)



To get listed, please send us the details of your MICE
Services to info@worldluxurytourism.com

Green Paradise

The five must-visit urban
parks in the world



Who does not pause to glance at a blooming flower or sniff the glorious smell of wet earth after a brief shower of rain? There is nothing more refreshing than to relax in an open space and gulp in lungful of fresh air after working in tiny cubicles or rushing through the traffic. The full-in-the-weekends neighbourhood parks bears testimony to this fact.

Every city on

this planet has some park or garden where its residents can picnic, relax, admire the flowers and connect with Nature. Some of the most famous parks in the world are in some of the busiest cities. They provide the much-needed getaway for their residents. Today, let us dig a little deeper into some of the most famous urban parks of the world and see what makes them such huge draws!





Central Park, New York

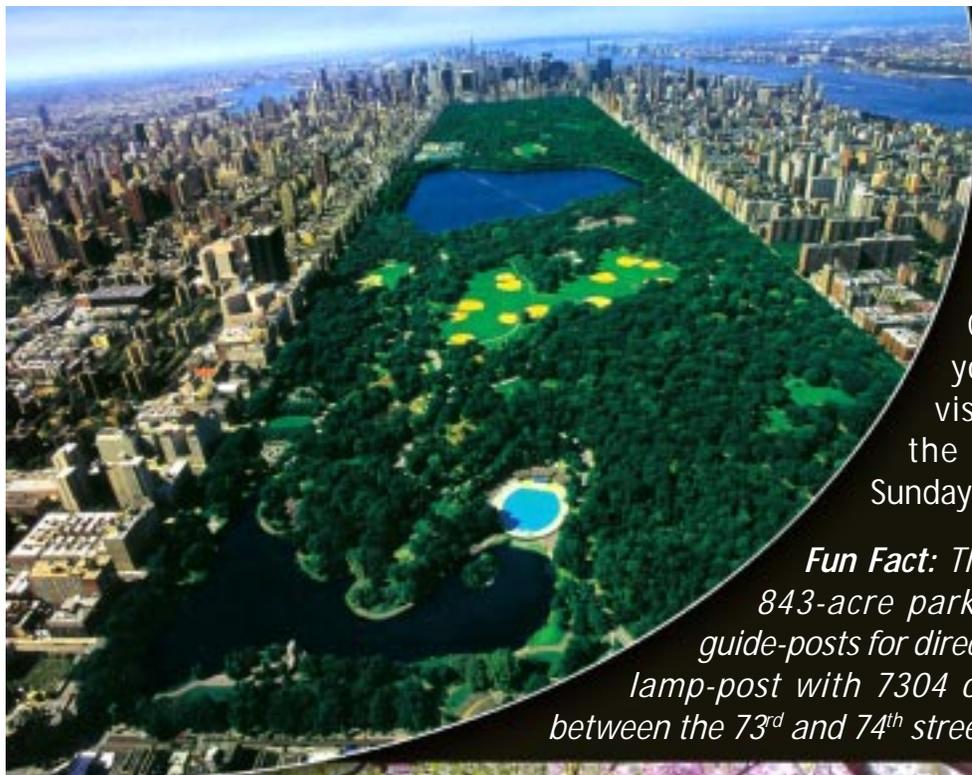
Perhaps no other green space in the world can be so justly called an 'oasis in a concrete desert' as the Central Park in New York. You only need to take a look at an aerial shot of the park to agree. The 843-acre park is set like a jewel in colours of blue and green

amidst a jungle of steel and concrete. Needless to say, it is the favourite place of New Yorkers whenever they want to 'breathe' and relax in the environs of nature. The Central Park is the most famous park in the world and attracts not just New Yorkers



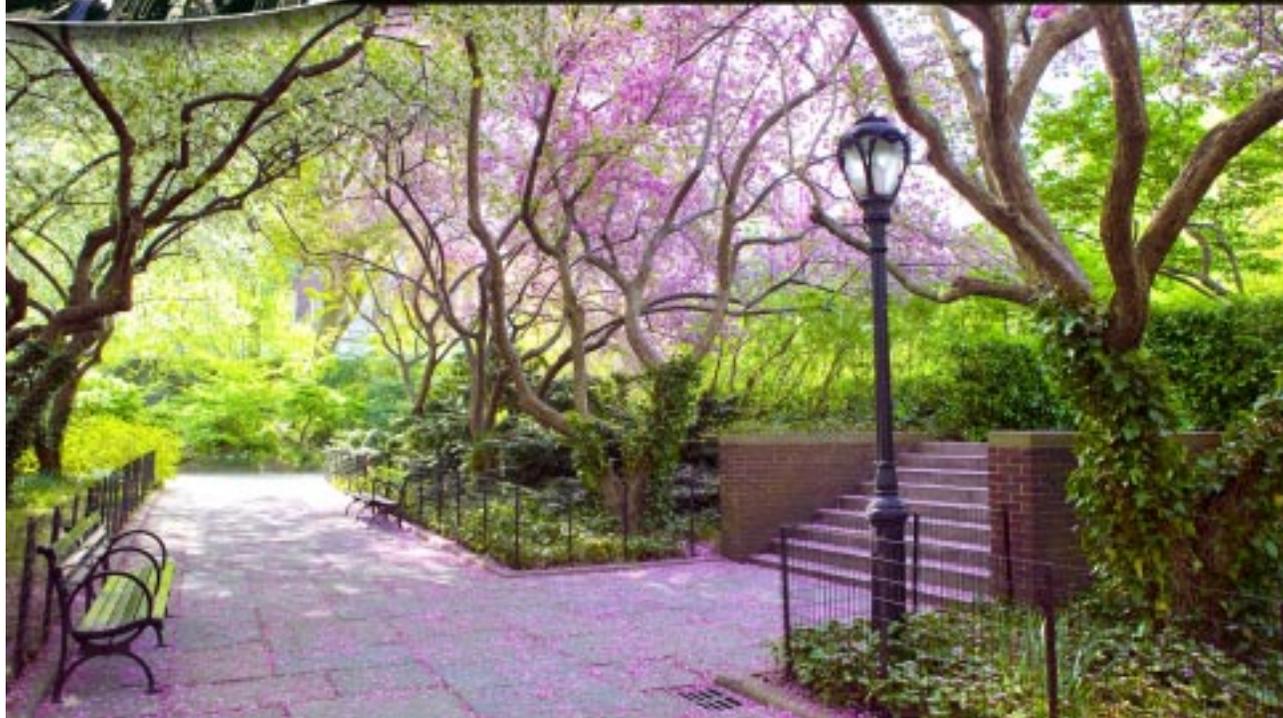
but tourists from all over the globe, 35 million of whom turn out annually to visit this famous attraction.

Located in the heart of Manhattan, the park was opened in 1857. The park contains a zoo, a wildlife sanctuary, over 25,000 trees and beautifully landscaped gardens, lakes and walkways. Popular attractions include the Belvedere Castle, the Central Park Reservoir and the Bethesda Fountain, Alice in Wonderland sculpture, Conservatory Garden (popular wedding venue) and the Ancient Playground for children. Hiking, biking, skating, baseball, fishing are all popular here and so are the cultural performances and concerts regularly held



here. The park also houses war memorials, and a 3500 year old Egyptian obelisk nicknamed Cleopatra's Needle. If you are planning to visit, remember that the park is closed on Sundays.

Fun Fact: The lamp-posts in the 843-acre park actually serve as guide-posts for directions; so if you see a lamp-post with 7304 on it, your location is between the 73^d and 74th streets.





Hyde Park, London

Relaxing in the Hyde Park with a cup of coffee, watching people boating and children playing, it is hard to imagine that years back nobles raced across these very

grounds in wild pursuit of deer. The land was first procured by King Henry VIII in 1536. Originally the hunting grounds of royalty and later the aristocracy, it was laid open to the general public only in 1637 by Charles I. Hyde Park is one of London's eight Royal Parks.





The 350 acres of greenery has over 4,000 trees, a large lake and pretty flower gardens. The Speaker's Corner is a renowned spot, noted for debates and discussions, and orators venting their opinions. Karl Marx, Lenin and George Orwell are some of the famous people who have spoken here. Other famous landmarks include the Serpentine Lake (popular for boating, swimming), the Rotten Row (once the King's private road), the Diana Memorial Fountain, the Joy of Life Fountain

and a lovely rose garden. The park is a great place for recreation with facilities for horse-riding, skateboarding, roller-blading, tennis, personal fitness and football being available here.

Fun fact: The Marble Arch in Hyde Park was originally designed as the entrance to the Buckingham Palace.

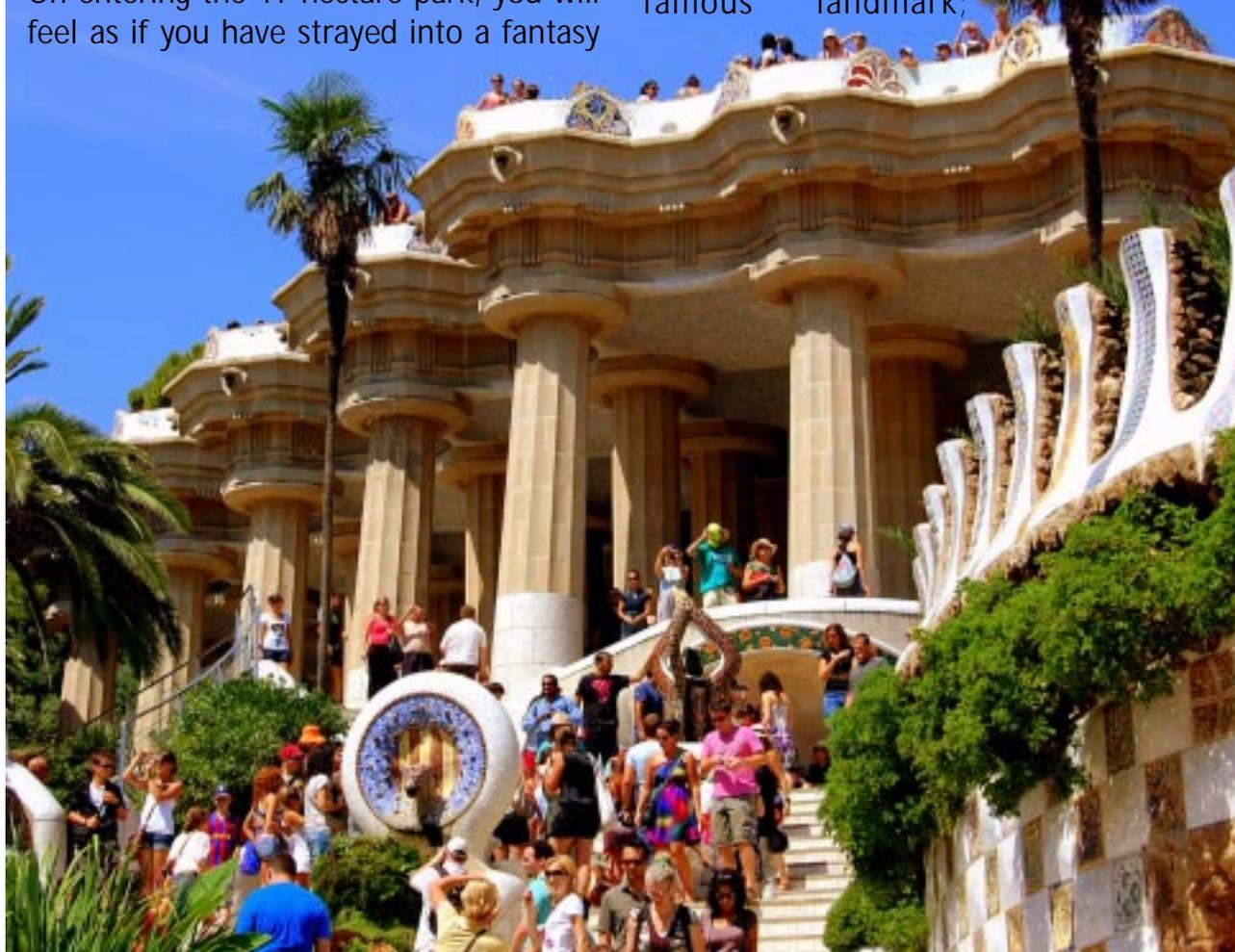


Park Guell, Barcelona

Park Guell is an unusual park; it was not designed to be a park at all. Noted architect Antonio Gaudi developed it as a housing colony for the Guell family but the project was unsuccessful and remained incomplete. It finally became the city's property in 1923 and was converted into a garden.

On entering the 17-hectare park, you will feel as if you have strayed into a fantasy

land. The colourful park is full of eye-catching pieces of architecture like the gingerbread gatehouses, giant lizards, palm-tree like columns, ornamental spires and colourful patchworks of ceramic tiles. The Gran Placa Circular, originally meant to be the marketplace, is a famous landmark;



especially notable is the ceramic serpentine bench bordering this terrace area. It is considered the longest bench in the world. Eighty six huge columns support the massive plaza and the view from the top is breath-taking. The park also houses the Gaudi Museum (the house where Gaudi lived).

Fun Fact: Park Guell Is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Stanley Park, Vancouver

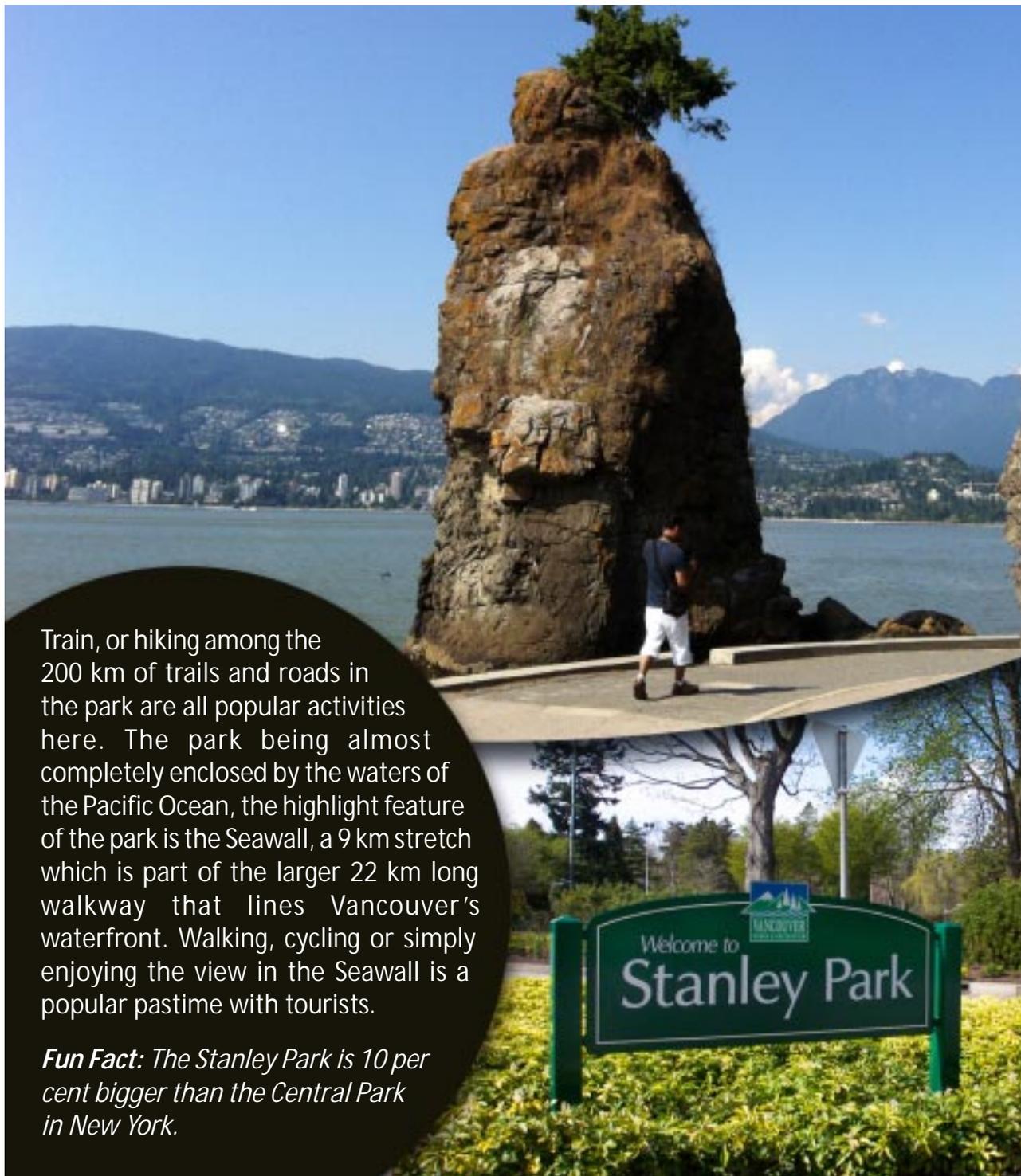
This 1001-acre park does not owe its beauty to the hands of any landscape artist. Over the years it evolved naturally from a forest and urban space. The park-land, originally home to the indigenous peoples like the Burrard, Musqueam and Squamish First Nations, was first spotted by explorers in 1792. When the City of Vancouver was created in 1886, proposals for a park were put forward. Named after the Governor-General of Canada, Stanley Park came into being and was officially opened in 1888. Today it

attracts 8 million visitors from all over the world.

Famous landmarks of the park include the Lost Lagoon, Siwash Rock (a 32-million year old rock outcropping), the 700 year old Hollow Tree, Brockton Point Lighthouse and the Vancouver Aquarium. The First Nations

totem poles are also notable tourist attractions. The park also houses several memorials and sculptures. Another huge draw is the beautiful flower gardens including the Rose Garden, Rhododendron Garden and the Rock Garden. There are facilities for recreational activities too. Swimming, tennis, riding the Miniature





Train, or hiking among the 200 km of trails and roads in the park are all popular activities here. The park being almost completely enclosed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean, the highlight feature of the park is the Seawall, a 9 km stretch which is part of the larger 22 km long walkway that lines Vancouver's waterfront. Walking, cycling or simply enjoying the view in the Seawall is a popular pastime with tourists.

Fun Fact: *The Stanley Park is 10 per cent bigger than the Central Park in New York.*



Luxembourg Gardens, Paris

If Stanley Park evolved naturally, the opposite is true of Luxembourg Gardens. It was laid out as per the wishes of Queen Marie de Medici in 1612 to emulate the

Boboli garden of her native Florence. The garden, originally just 8 hectares in size, was later expanded and developed into the 22.45-hectare park that it is today.

The Luxembourg Gardens is the garden of

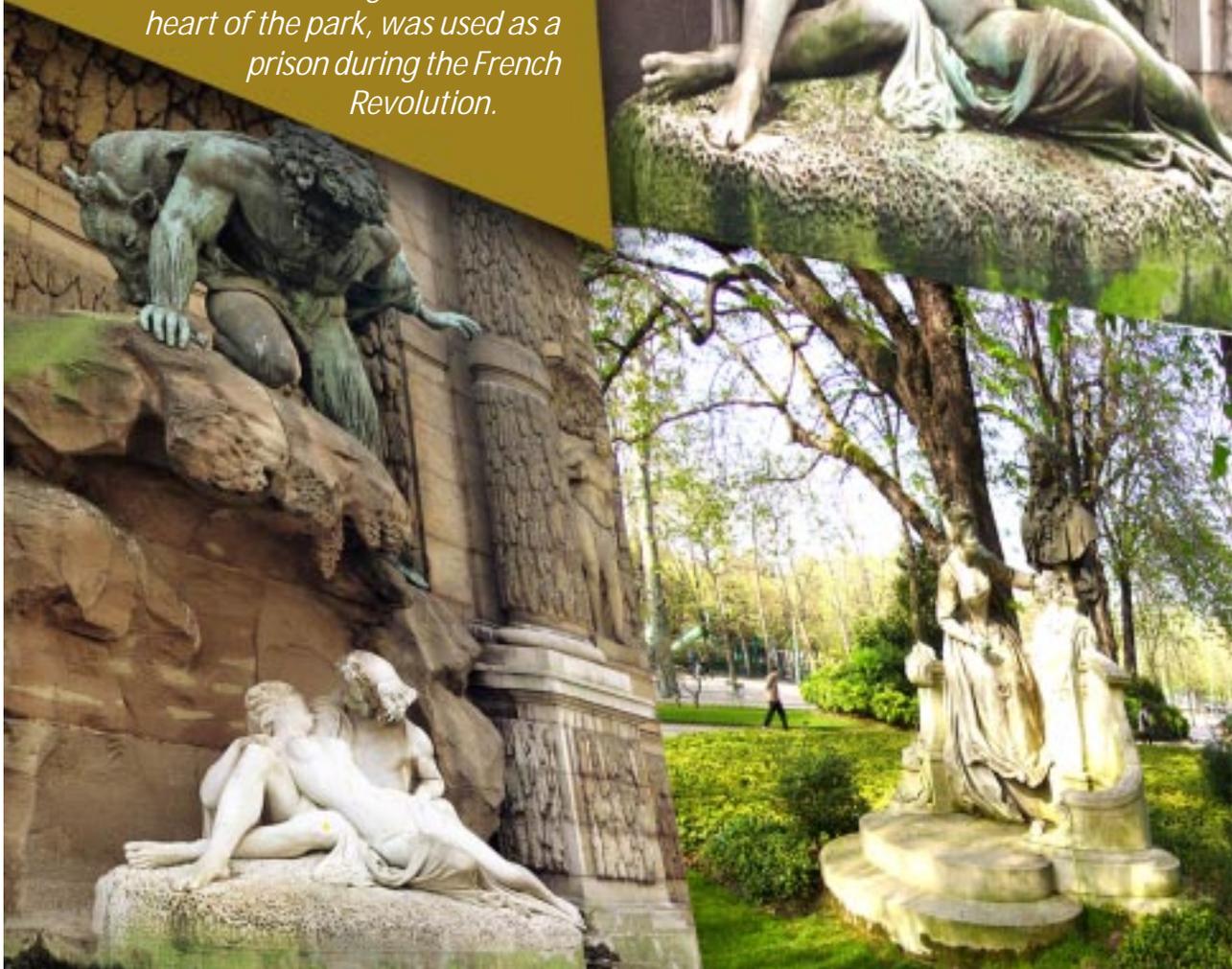
the French Senate which is housed in the Luxembourg Palace. The park is famous for its neatly manicured lawns, formal gardens, fruit orchards, beautiful statues and fountains. The layout of the garden is a unique blend of traditional French and

English-style gardens. Out of the 106 odd statues in the park, the most famous one is the Medici fountain. Not to be missed is the orangery, dating back to 1830 with over two hundred tubs of oleanders, oranges, pomegranate and palm trees. There is



something here for everyone. Adults can relax, picnic and enjoy the lovely blooming flowers. Kids delight in the puppet theatre and the playground with a carousel. Sports lovers can play tennis, chess, bridge or operate remote control boats. Visitors can also enjoy dining at the small cafes and enjoy music performed at the gazebo.

***Fun Fact:** The Luxembourg Palace, in the heart of the park, was used as a prison during the French Revolution.*



Preserve the greenery

Not just these iconic parks; every park, however small, is an asset to a city or town. In the times in which we live, trees are being sacrificed at a heart-breaking rate to make way for some new mall, office or house. No wonder that even a small patch of greenery soothes the eyes and mind. Do your bit to save the greenery on this planet. Why not build a park in your neighbourhood if you don't have one; or join hands and improve one which is already there. You will have your own 'bit of heaven' to enjoy.

City
Guide

Cape Town

A kaleidoscope of colours and diversity





Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa is a picturesque, lively city at the foot of the famous Table Mountain and on the shore of Table Bay. It is a well-known commercial and industrial centre for oil refining, chemical and fertiliser processing, ship repairing, automobile manufacturing, leather goods etc.



Cape Town has been named the World Design Capital 2014 and the prestigious title adds another feather to its illustrious cap. This quintessential melting pot of culture and creativity extends warm hospitality that strikes a chord with all its visitors.

Climate and best time to visit

Cape Town has hot, dry summer months from late October to March or April. Winters last from May to September, and are generally cool and wet.

Late January to April is the best time to visit when the sky is clear and there is plenty of sunshine.



Places to see

Table Mountain – The sheer size and beauty of the Table Mountain o v e r s h a d o w s everything else in the city. The majestic structure with a flat surface, often cloaked in white clouds that look like a 'tablecloth', is a spectacular destination. Tourists can board a cable car all the way to the top of the Table Mountain to enjoy a 360 degree view of the land.

Cape Point Reserve – This southernmost tip of the continent is b r e a t h t a k i n g l y beautiful to say the least. A cable car will let you witness the tremendous force of the ocean at the edge. The reserve has a variety of wildlife. The lovely hiking trails and vibrant flora of the region makes it a wonderful picnic spot.



Beaches – Cape Town beaches are touted to be some of the bests in the world. The popular ones include – Camps Bay, Clifton, Llandudno, Noordhoek and the Boulders Beach. Most of them are easily accessible and are brimming with bars, restaurants, boutiques. The soft white sand stretches for miles and is accompanied by stunning scenery. Boulders Beach has a penguin colony that makes it all the more special.





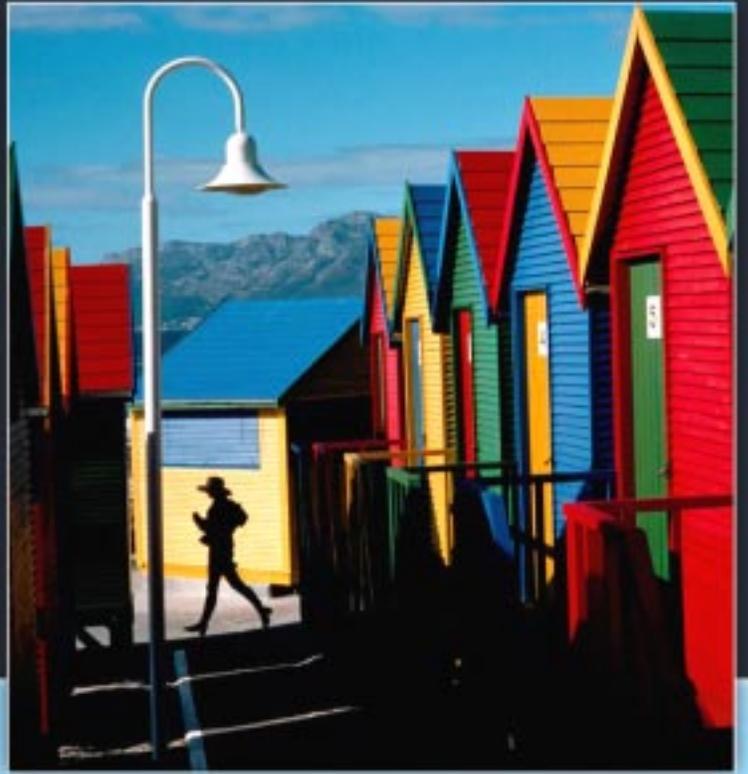
Wine Tours – The four renowned wine routes include Paarl, Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Constantia. These are main areas of wine production and all of them have their own appeal. Constantia is the closest one while

the Paarl valley has plenty of vineyards that can take a few days to explore. Stellenbosch is famous for its art galleries and wine farms. Franschhoek, originally a French area, is the gastronomic haven of Cape Town.



Nightlife:

Nightlife in Cape Town can be a pleasure to explore. There is a wide variety of bars, clubs, pubs, restaurants and discotheques to keep you on your toes. Victoria Road in Camps Bay or the 'sunset strip' offers a boulevard of tables on the pavement or on raised platforms to raise a toast to the setting sun. Long Street has a young, pan-African crowd and a number of them are backpackers from different regions. The Cape Quarter in Green Point is a favourite among gay revellers.



Important Tourist Information:

Languages: English, Afrikaans, Xhosa are widely spoken in Cape Town.

Population: The population is close to 3.5-million in the second most-populated city.

Time Zone: GMT +2

Currency: Rand (ZAR)

City code: 021

Cape Town Emergency Services: (021) 480 7700

Top Ten Things To Do:

- Go shark diving at the Two Oceans Aquarium
- Visit the museums to know more about the historical events
- Discover a hidden beach



- Go jewellery shopping
- Play with the penguins
- Sample the sea food delicacies
- Party all night long at the Long Street
- Pamper yourself at a popular spa
- Explore the flora, fauna and wilderness around
 - Attend a jazz festival

Getting there:

By air - Direct international flights are available from various international destinations like Amsterdam, Dubai, Frankfurt, London, Mauritius, Paris, Zurich etc. In fact, Cape Town is one of the most well connected places you will ever come across.



Getting around:

Bus – Travelling by the City Sightseeing Bus is the best option for visitors. Available throughout the day from various spots, it is highly recommended for a city tour, mini-peninsula tour and a wine tour.

Train - The railway system in Cape Town is mainly focused on commuter transport. The Southern Line Rail Route from Cape Town to Simon's

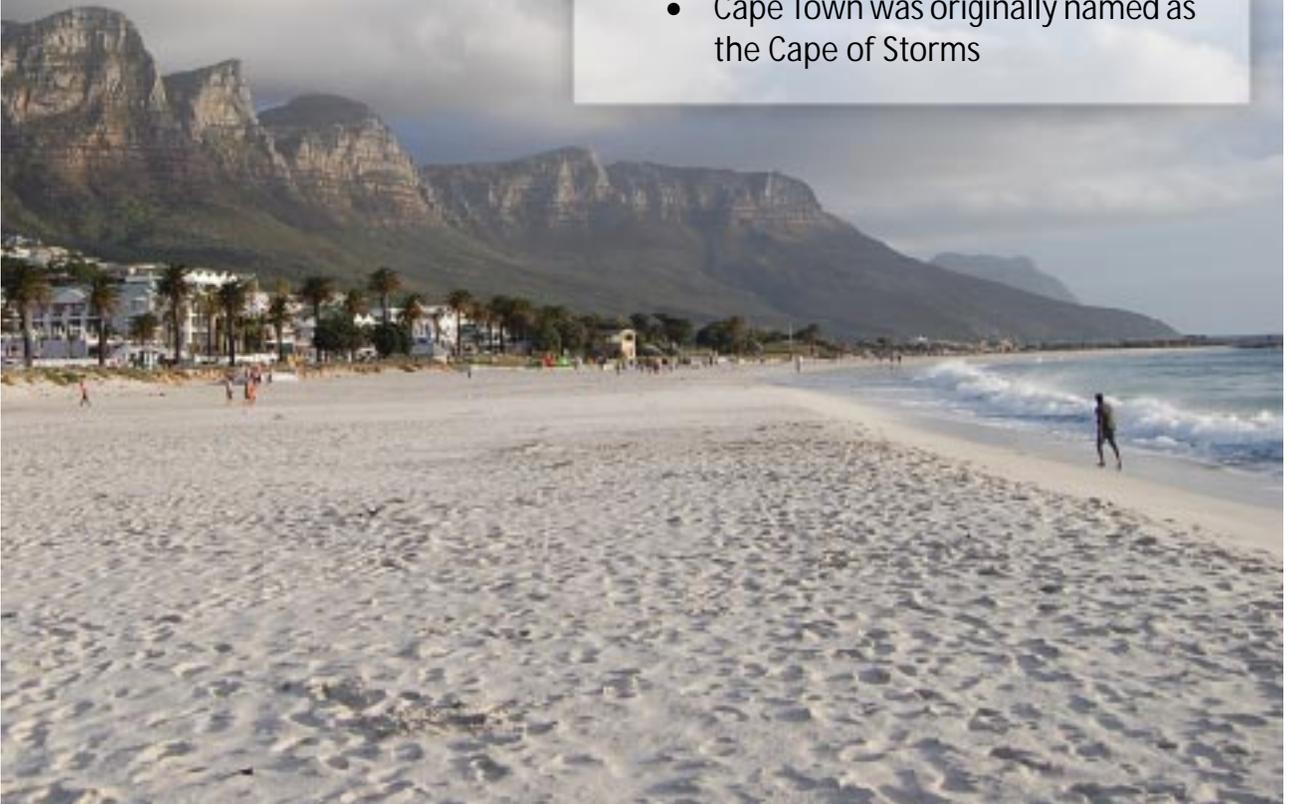


Town has various beautiful stops in the suburbs and coastal towns. Travelling by train is quite affordable but the schedules need to be confirmed beforehand.

Car – Driving is a dream in Cape Town. The roads are well maintained and offer a great view. The major routes include The N1 from Johannesburg, N2 from the Garden Route and N7 from the West Coast and Namibia.

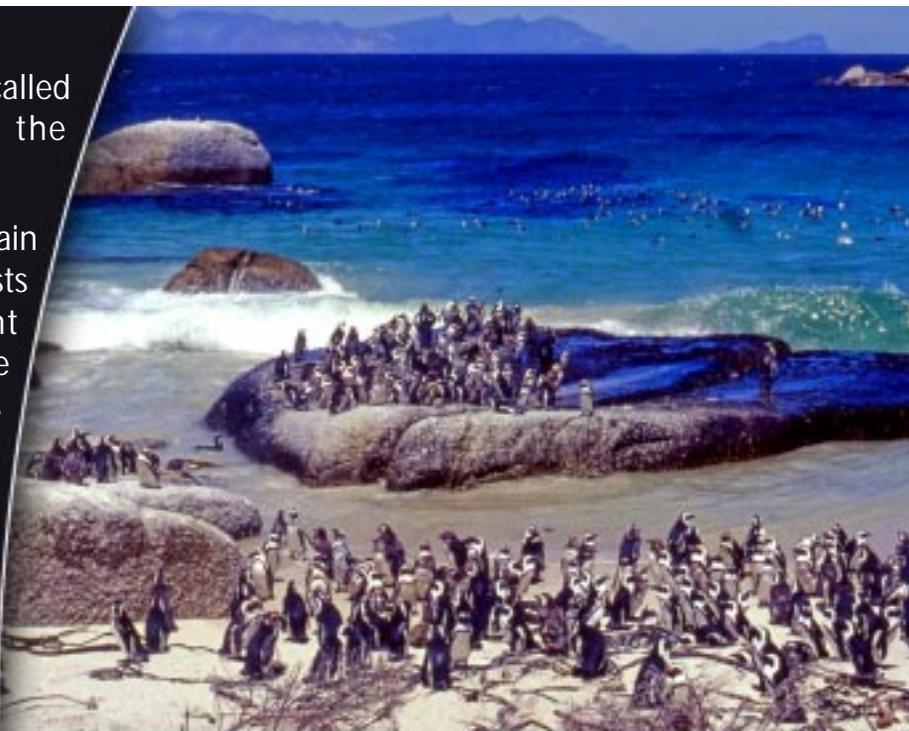
Interesting facts/trivia:

- Cape Town was originally named as the Cape of Storms



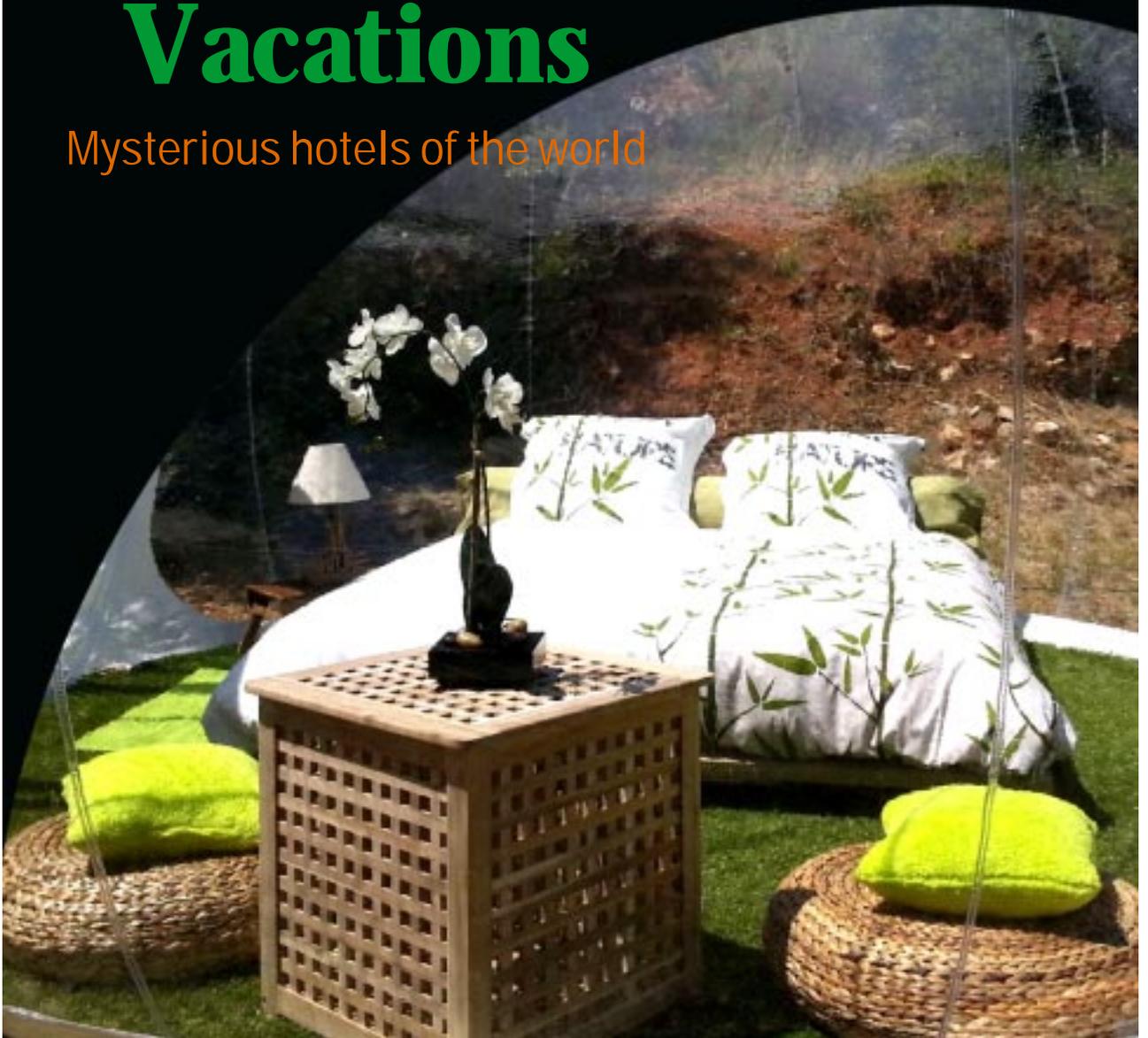
- It is sometimes called the "Tavern of the seas"
- The Table Mountain National Park boasts of more plant species than the whole British Isles or New Zealand
- The city's motto is "Spes Bona" which means "good hope"
- Cape Town hosts the world's largest individually timed cycle race, the Cape Argus Cycle Tour

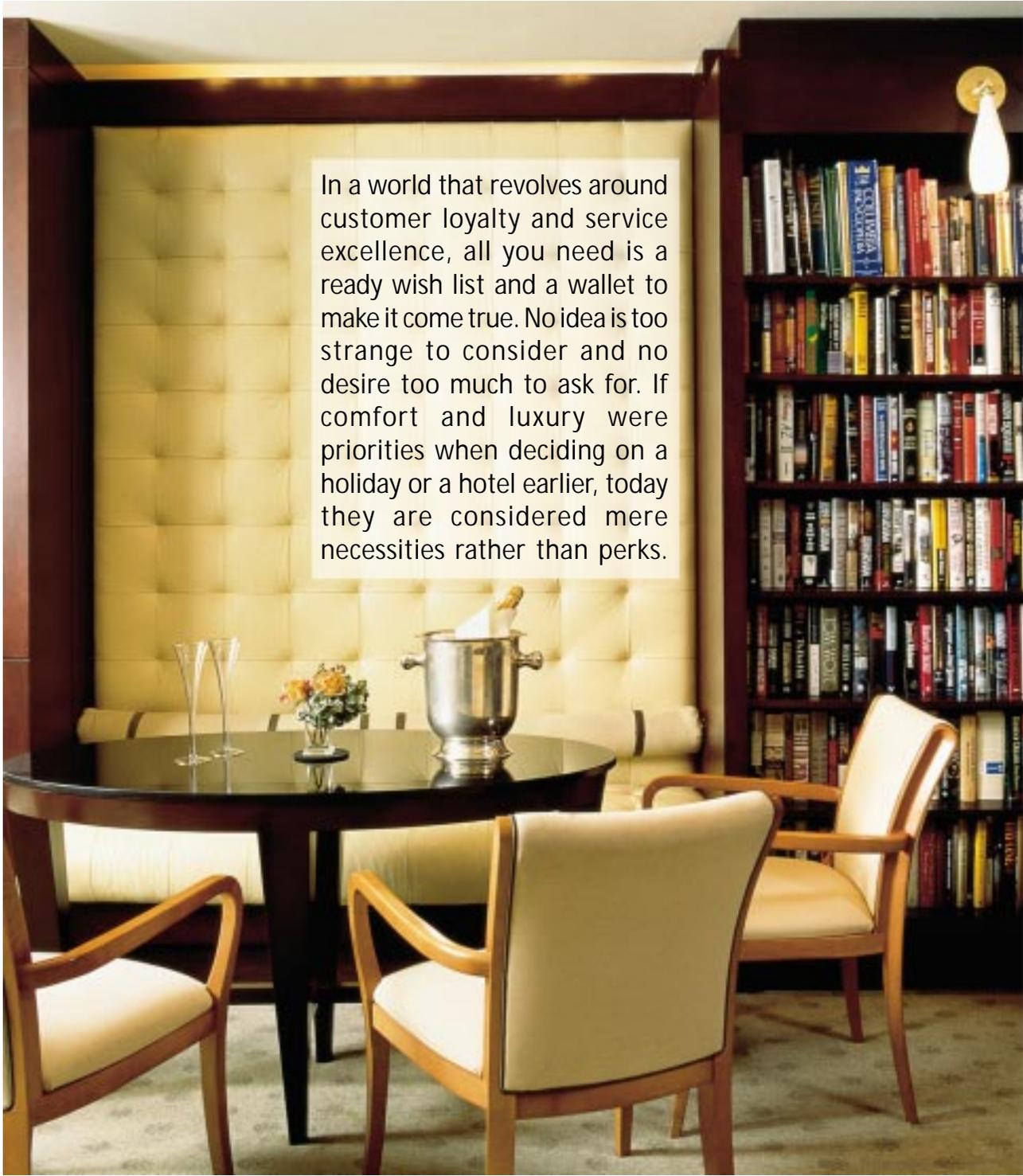
Rich in diversity and affluent with its array of attractions, Cape Town is a wonder to behold. A world class travel destination and an idyllic place to enjoy nature's finest rewards, it lures tourists from every part of the globe year after year.



Extraordinary Vacations

Mysterious hotels of the world



A photograph of a luxury hotel lounge. In the center is a round, dark wood table with a black top. On the table are two champagne flutes, a small vase of yellow flowers, and a silver ice bucket containing a bottle of champagne. Three wooden armchairs with cream-colored upholstery are arranged around the table. The background features a large, tufted, cream-colored wall panel. To the right is a tall, dark wood bookshelf filled with books, with a single light fixture hanging from it. The overall atmosphere is elegant and sophisticated.

In a world that revolves around customer loyalty and service excellence, all you need is a ready wish list and a wallet to make it come true. No idea is too strange to consider and no desire too much to ask for. If comfort and luxury were priorities when deciding on a holiday or a hotel earlier, today they are considered mere necessities rather than perks.

The good news is plenty of these hotels are going out of their way to ensure not just a pleasant stay for visitors but one that leaves an impression of a lifetime. If you have always fantasised about staying in a tree house, under the ocean, in a car,

an igloo or even in a haunted coffin or a prison, you are only a step away from taking the trip of your dreams. Here is an interesting list of mysterious and downright bizarre abodes from around the world that will help you make up your mind:





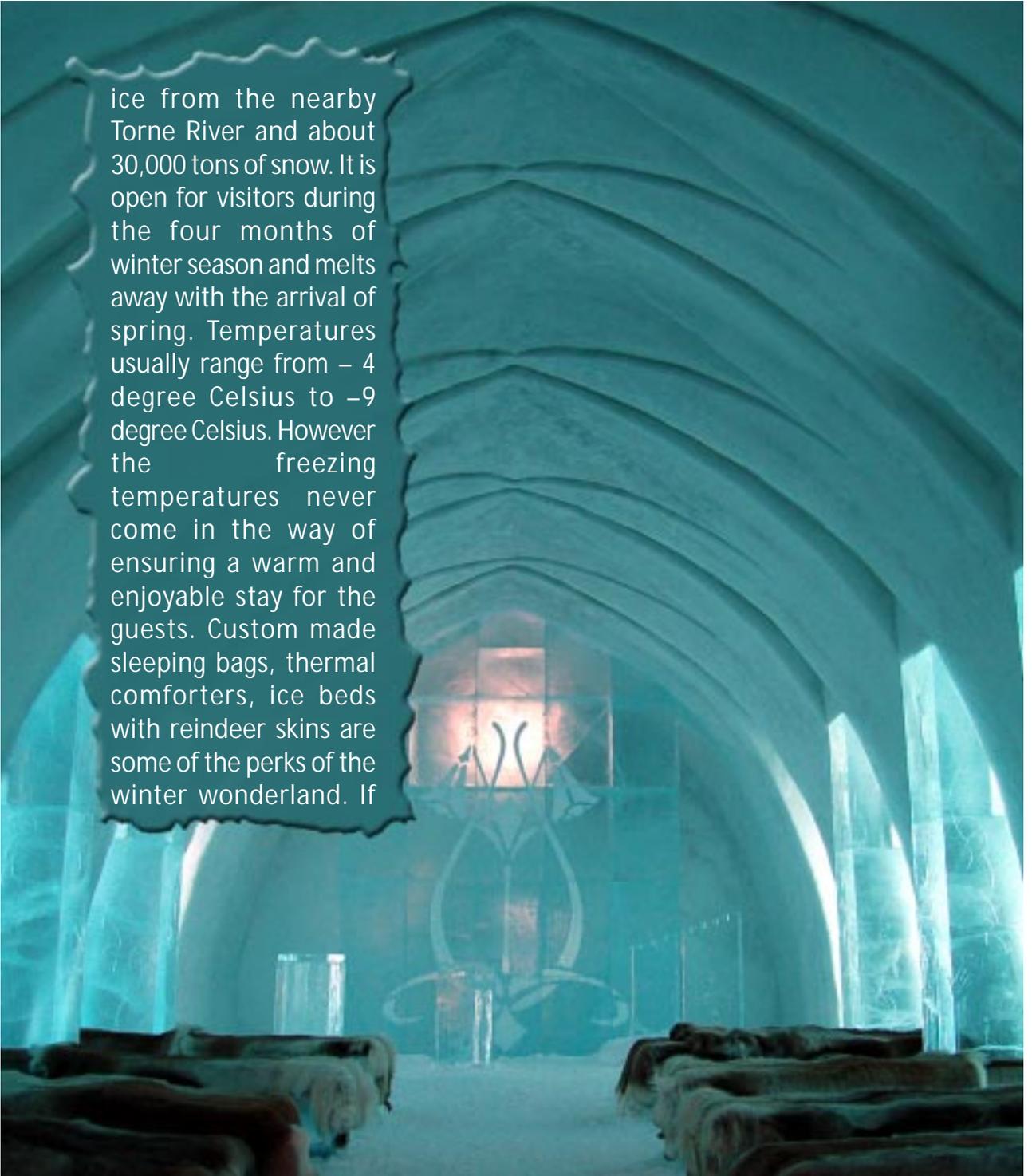
Ice Hotel, Sweden

If you have always dreamt of staying in an igloo as a kid, it is time to make the childhood whims come true. Located in the village of Jukkasjarvi in Sweden, about 120 miles north of the Arctic Circle and easily accessible from Stockholm is the world's first ice hotel that



offers an enthralling holiday experience. Every year several artists from different parts of the world assemble to build the magnificent hotel, which is a work of art in itself. The process requires 10,000 tons of crystal-clear

ice from the nearby Torne River and about 30,000 tons of snow. It is open for visitors during the four months of winter season and melts away with the arrival of spring. Temperatures usually range from – 4 degree Celsius to –9 degree Celsius. However the freezing temperatures never come in the way of ensuring a warm and enjoyable stay for the guests. Custom made sleeping bags, thermal comforters, ice beds with reindeer skins are some of the perks of the winter wonderland. If





that is not enough to catch your fancy, how about snow bars and restaurants, chapels made of ice? Opt for a relaxing sauna before breakfast or a snowmobile tour and moose safaris during the day to make your adventure all the more memorable. Those with an interest in arts can catch lovely performances or concerts in the open-air venue that resembles Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London.

There is also a provision of wooden Aurora chalets for the ones not quite willing to brave the extreme temperatures.

USP: It boasts of furniture and facilities made of ice but the entire hotel melts away in spring every year.



**Karostas Cietums
Hotel, Latvia**

This former Russian military prison built in 1905 has been converted into a hotel but retains its original ambience. Needless to say it is one of the most unusual accommodation options you will

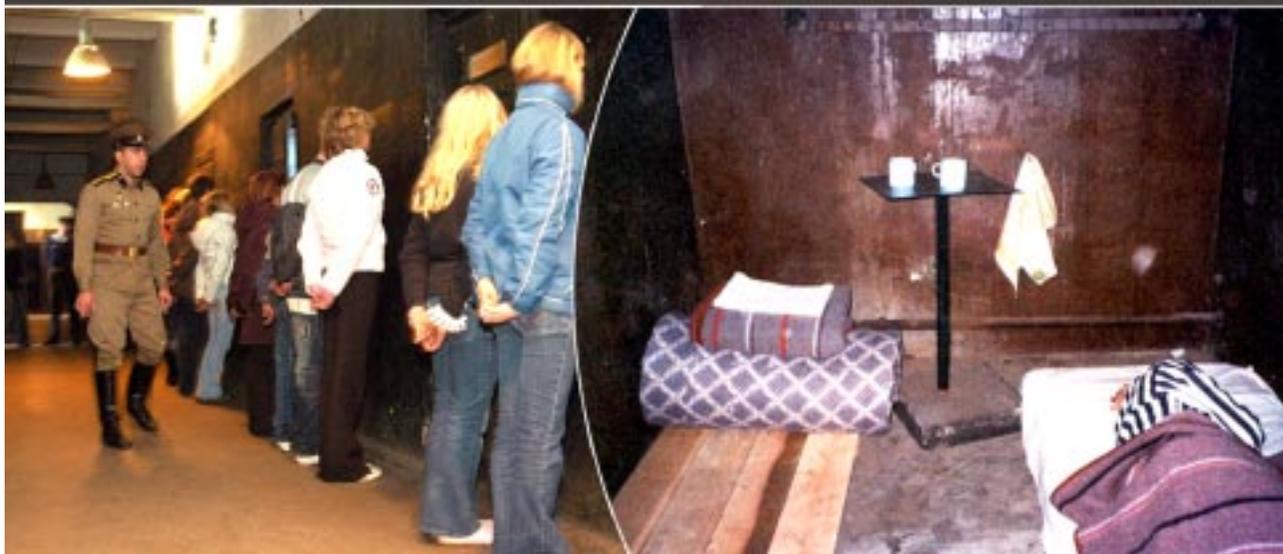
ever come across. Visitors are given jail cells to stay and are handcuffed on arrival. Forget luxurious comfortable beds, spotless linens, polite staff and warm welcome – the establishment challenges the very pillars of hospitality. You will



be separated from your belongings, fed bread and water and given prison bunks with shabby blankets to sleep. What is more, you might even have to endure harsh words from the strict guards on duty. Though it's not meant for the

faint-hearted, Karostas Cietums offers a thrilling, roller coaster experience for those who love living on the edge.

USP: A military prison with jail cells for rooms, talk of weird places to stay!





Attrap Reves, France

If star gazing is one of your favourite hobbies but the limitations of camping outdoors for the night keeps you away, Attrap Reves will solve all your problems. This amazing abode in the heart of nature has bubble shaped rooms made of glass that makes star gazing a truly captivating experience. You can bid adieu to the hassles of being outdoors like humidity, lack of safety, bad weather, insect bites and the like and enjoy a splendid view of the jewelled night sky





with your loved one. Each bubble has its own identity and Zen like decor, Nature, Glamour etc. There are only 6 bubbles in an alluring setting, designed with the help of recycled materials that promise an experience you will cherish. It is an ideal retreat for couples and families who want to have a blissful, star struck vacation without compromising on comfort or privacy.

USP: A night under the stars in a cosy bubble, a perfect place to pop the question!

© Copyright : www.attrap-reves.com



Travellers' Checklist: Other unusual hotels worth a visit

- **The Mirrorcube, Sweden** – Made of light-weight aluminium, the high up forest hotel offers 360 degree views and prevents



birds from entering by an infrared protection. You can also order a similar structure and have it delivered in any part of the world!
(Type – Tree House)

- **Das Park Hotel, Austria** – This sewer tube hotel is one of the most unusual places to stay and lets you



pay what you think the stay was worth. (Type – Sewage Pipe)

- **V8 Hotel, Germany** – This car theme hotel includes a Mercedes Benz car wash, Morris Minor Garage and a Route 66 theme along with car theme rooms, lobby and reception. (Type – Car)
- **The Library Hotel, New York** – Book lovers can choose



rooms and floors on the basis of Dewey decimal classification system. The categories include religion, arts, math, philosophy etc. (Type – Library)

- **Propeller Island City Lodge, Germany** – This strange hotel has a different theme for each room, right from an upside down bedroom to vampire theme coffin rooms! (Type – Arty)
- **Hotel Monteleone, New Orleans** – Located in the land

of voodoo, witchcraft and legends, this 19th century hotel is a place of paranormal activity as confirmed by International Society of Paranormal Research. (Type – Haunted)

It is true that there are a number of retreats for travellers who like to holiday the traditional way. However, the adventure seekers and the ones on the

prowl for the unusual and the absurd are not left unsatisfied as well. The thrills are plenty and not all of them come with a hefty price tag. If you have the will to explore and the desire to discover the unknown, you will never run out of options. Fasten your seatbelts, make a reservation of your choice and get ready to make your long time fantasy come true.





Luxe
Foods

Traveling for Pizzas

Popular pizza destinations of the world

We all love it, and have our personal favourite toppings, joints and our favourite pizzas. Such is the popularity of this universally beloved takeaway food. Pizzerias dot the entire globe with every country having its own variations of the classic pizza, tweaked to suit the local taste buds. This time, we are going beyond our friendly neighbourhood joints to find out which are the most popular pizza destinations in the world.





Naples, Italy

Naples the birthplace of pizzas produces some of the most glorious pizzas on the planet. So famous is the Neapolitan pizza, they even have an organization safeguarding its authenticity. Purists believe that there are only two authentic varieties of pizzas, the Marinara and the Margherita and they are the main ones served in Naples. The distinct feature of the Neapolitan pizza is





the soft, mushy centre and sparse toppings. So what goes into the making of this world-renowned pizza? Wheat flour dough (not more than 11 inches across), inundated with fresh buffalo mozzarella, San Marzano tomatoes and basil; cooked in a wood-fire oven at around 900° F for no more than 60-90

seconds.

Pizza Hotspots: Pizzeria da Michele (featured in *Eat, Pray, Love*; Margherita and Marinara), Pizzeria Brandi (Margherita), Il Pizzaiolo del Presidente (Marinara), Di Matteo (Margherita, fried treats), Pizzeria Starita (Montanara Starita).





Rome, Italy

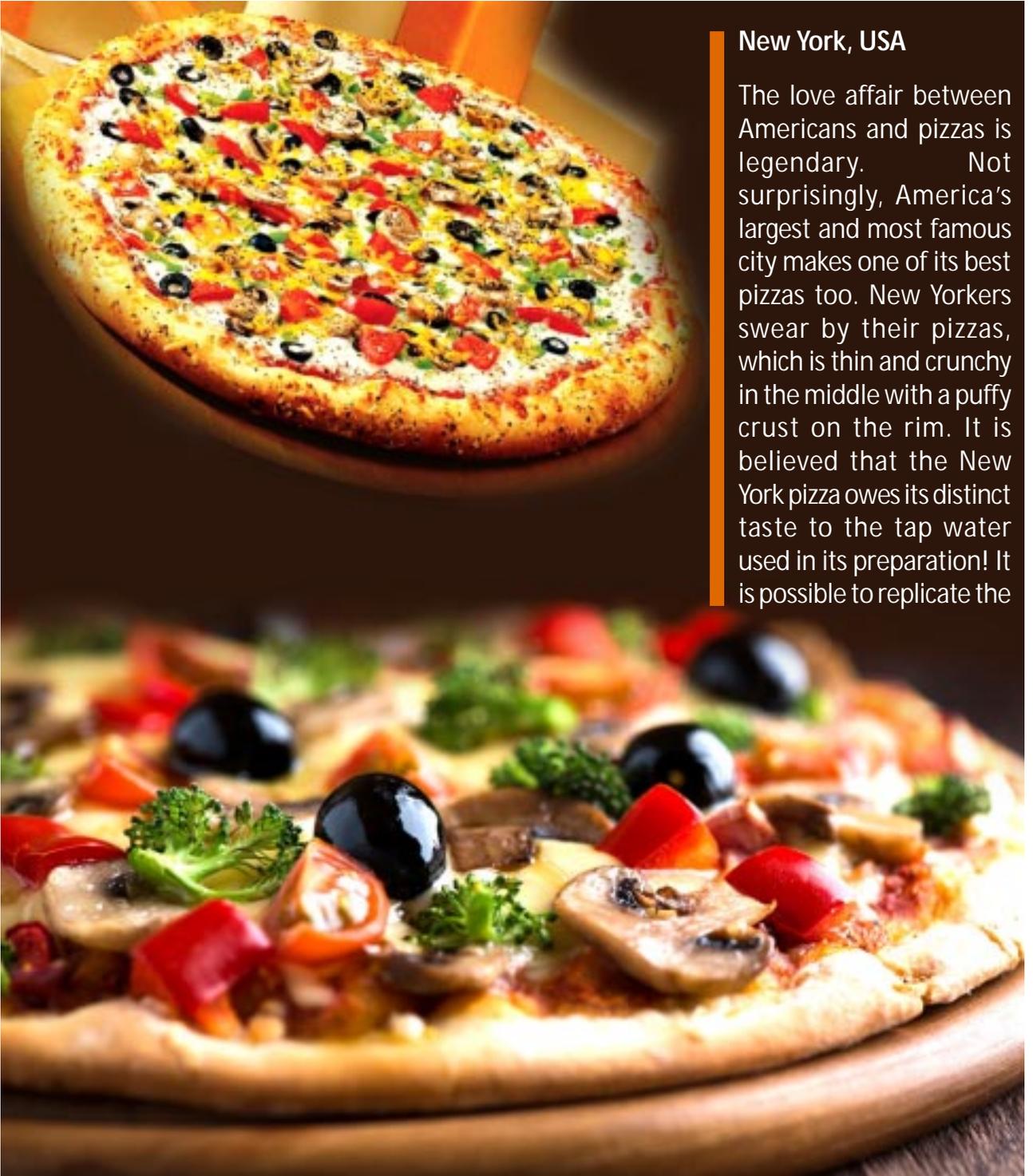
Pizza in the capital city of Italy is different experience altogether. Pizzas are literally street food in Rome. You can grab a slice from any vendor on the street. Pizzas here come with thin, crunchy crusts, fresh ingredients and a wide range of toppings including eggplant, asparagus, courgette or zucchini flowers and

anchovies. Do not, however, assume that the pizzas will be loaded with toppings. The toppings are few and chosen for creating the perfect balance of flavours. Pizzas are sold by the slice ('al



is common to find pizzas baked square and extra-large. Remember that pizzerias are open only in the evenings in Rome.

Pizza Hotspots: La Gatta Mangiona (suppli, pizza dello zio), Pizzarium (pizza rossa, suppli), Sforno (cacio e pepe, fritti), La Fucina (famous for its multiple varieties, pre-sliced pizzas for a group), Da Remo (basic thin crusts), 00100 (trapizzini, foccaccia pugliese), Campo de' Fiori (pizza bianca).



New York, USA

The love affair between Americans and pizzas is legendary. Not surprisingly, America's largest and most famous city makes one of its best pizzas too. New Yorkers swear by their pizzas, which is thin and crunchy in the middle with a puffy crust on the rim. It is believed that the New York pizza owes its distinct taste to the tap water used in its preparation! It is possible to replicate the

dough, the recipe or the toppings; but getting New York tap water is going to be pretty difficult-outside of New York. So if you want to eat the real New York pizza, that's where you have to go.

Pizza Hotspots: Di Fara's (regular cheese pie), Roberta's (The Family Jewels), Motorino (Prosciutto di Parma), Joe's (plain slice), Lombardi's (clam pizza), Grimaldi's (Margarita pizza).



Chicago, USA

Chicago is the land of the deep dish pizza. Pizzeria Uno is credited with the creation of this variety which has a crust up to three inches tall at the edge. Thick, crunchy pizza that has been baked in a deep, steel pan with the dough pressed to the side results in a pie shaped pizza. It is layered with cheese at the bottom, then meat and vegetable fillings and topped with a thick layer of toppings like mozzarella, pepperoni,



sausage, onions, mushrooms or bell peppers. A final layer of soupy tomato sauce completes the unique deep dish. Chicago also has thin crust pizzas (cut typically into squares) and the stuffed pizza (deeper than deep dish and stuffed with more toppings and cheese).

Pizza Hotspots: Pizzeria Uno (deep dish), Giordanos (deep dish), Ginos East (deep dish), Lou Malnati's (The Lou-deep dish), Bacino's (stuffed pizza), Pequod's (pan pizza), Pat's Pizza (thin crust).





New Haven, USA

It's not pizza in New Haven, it's 'apizza'. The apizza was created at Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana. This pizza uses fresh, organic ingredients with toppings used sparingly. The crust is really thin with a crisp outer

rim and chewy interior. The pizza is charred in places from the coal oven and has crunchy spots adding to the overall taste. Pepe is famous for the white clam pie which puts together crust, olive oil, grated



Pecorino Romano cheese, oregano, garlic and fresh littleneck clams. The New Haven pizza uses fresh tomato sauce (not canned) and mozzarella is optional (you get it only if you ask for it).

Pizza Hotspots: Pepe's (white clam pie), Sally's (tomato pie), Modern (Italian bomb), Bar (mashed potato pizza).



San Francisco, USA

The California style pizza is believed to have been developed by Ed LaDou. The specialty of his pizza lay in his amazing creativity and in the variety of ingredients and toppings used. Working under the great chef Wolfgang Puck, he developed over 250 varieties of pizzas using varied ingredients like scallops, roe, baby zucchini



flowers, flavoured dough, olive oil and goat cheese. Thin crusts, exotic toppings, innovative ingredients and plenty of vegetarian options are the main features of pizzas in San Francisco.

Pizza Hotspots: Una Pizza Napoletana (Filetti), Tony's Pizza Napoletana (Honey pie), Little Star (Bone marrow pizza), Delfina (Magic pie), Gialina (Amatriciana).

Osaka, Japan

The Japanese version of pizza has a name to match – Okonomiyaki, meaning ‘cook the way you like’. This is precisely what the Japanese do with their pizza. The ingredients and toppings used vary from cook to cook. However, it is a matter of debate if the pizza here can be called one at all. This is more like a savoury pancake and is a typical street food. However this version



of the pizza is gaining a lot of popularity. It uses a typical Japanese ingredient, nagaimo (a starchy root vegetable), flour, dashi stock and other ingredients like pork belly strips, eggs and shredded cabbage. Toppings include Katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes),



Okonomiyaki sauce and aonori (dried seaweed), Japanese mayonnaise and pickled ginger. In Hiroshima the pizza is layered with different ingredients and uses a large amount of cabbage. Okonomiyaki is sometimes served with a layer of

fried noodles, fried eggs, octopus, cheese etc. This filling pizza will stock you up by around 1000 calories.

Pizza Hotspots:
Tengu, Mangetsu, Mizuno.

Pizza is an amazingly versatile food, allowing chefs to give free reins to their creativity. Ingredients, toppings, sauces and cheeses everything can be added according to individual preference. From the classic pizzas to the downright whacky ones, there is



a perfect pizza for everyone. As the 'pizza prince' Ed Ladou famously said, "The only thing you can't put on top of the pizza is something that doesn't taste good".

It would be gross injustice to claim that the above destinations are the only top ones. There are many that have been left out. Do share with us your favourite pizza destinations and we would love to explore them all.



May Festivals around the World

Happenings



Pooram

Place: Thrissur, India

Dates: May 9, 2014

This 200-year old temple festival is celebrated in the Vadakkumnathan Temple (in Thrissur, Kerala) in honour of the presiding deity, Lord Shiva. A ceremonial flag hoisting starts the seven-day long event leading up to the main festival day. The





highlight of the festival is the procession of richly decorated elephants, bearing mahouts holding ornate and gorgeously decorated umbrellas. The golden caparisons, ornaments, sacred bells and beautiful peacock fans are all part of the eye-catching decorations. The

terrific 'Panchavadyam' (orchestra of five percussion and wind instruments) and spectacular fireworks are other features which make this festival attract tourists from all over the world.



Trivia: Raja Ravi Varma, a renowned Kerala king, started the festival in 1798.

Lightning in a Bottle lightninginabottle.org festival

Lightning in a Bottle

Place: Temecula, California, USA

Dates: May 22 – 26, 2014

Lightning in a bottle, held near Lake Skinner in California, is more than just a music festival. It is a festival which combines music, wellness as well as sustainability. This amazing festival is an eclectic





mix of music, art and culture. Attractions range from live electronic

workshops and guest speakers. Produced by DoLab, the festival highlights their marvellous stage and lighting skills. The Lightning stage, the main stage, comes alive at night with the magic of lighting and decoration and top-notch performances. The Lucent Temple of Consciousness and the Village are interesting features of the festival. On-site camping is the best way of enjoying this festival.



music, three-dimensional interactive art installations, yoga and meditation to

Trivia: This festival has won the 'Outstanding Greener Festival Award' three years in a row for its focus on sustainability.

Galungan

Place: Bali, Indonesia

Dates: May 21 – 23, 2014

The festival of Galungan celebrates many things – the victory of good over evil, the Creator (Ida Sang Hyang Widi) and respect to dead ancestors. During this time the departed spirits are believed to visit earth and they leave on Kuningan (the last day of the festival). Balinese Hindus perform various rituals to welcome and honour their departed ancestors. Sacrifices are offered



and notably 'penjor' are put up everywhere. Penjor are tall bamboo poles from which offerings of food and flowers are suspended. The different days of the festival have different names and are marked by different activities on each.

Trivia: The calculations for festival dates are based on the Balinese calendar which has 210 days.



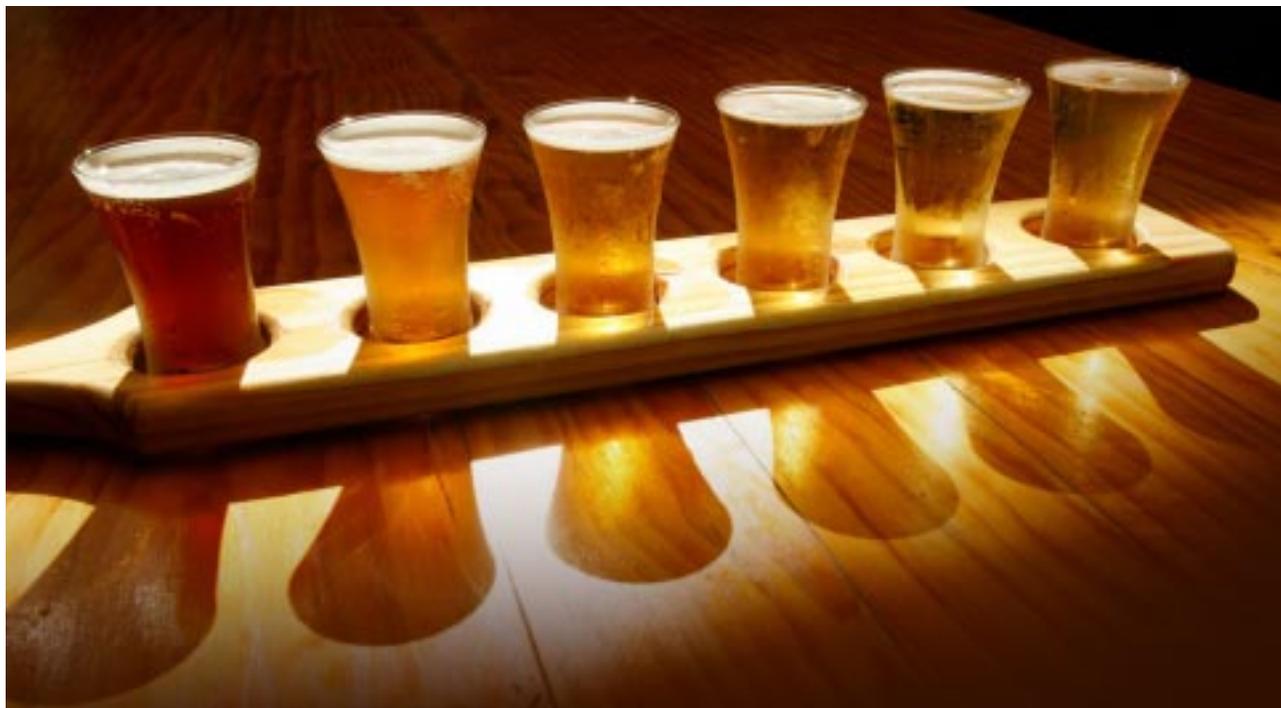
Czech Beer Festival Prague

Place: Prague

Dates: May 15 – 31,
2014

You do not have to wait till Oktoberfest to quench your beer thirst. Head towards Prague in summer and taste the finest of Czech beers. Over 70 different Czech brands are on the offering. This is made more interesting by the people serving them in complete traditional attire. It is party time for 17





days with the best of drinking and dining from top Czech breweries, bakers and chefs. Foreign beers are also available if you want more variety. The atmosphere is further enlivened by live music bands. With gifts and souvenirs available and seating

capacity of 10,000 the festival is also a popular venue for corporate parties.

Trivia: The Beer Card is a new feature this year. It replaces the beer thaler as the mode of payment at the festival.



W L T

World Luxury Tourism