

World

Luxury Travel

Magazine

Vol. 3 ■ Issue 1 ■ August, 2014

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The power play of Nature

Australia

An aboriginal adventure

Gay Travel

The top gay-friendly cities in Asia

The Central Plaza Hotel

Zurich, Switzerland

September Festivals

around the Globe



In ancient times, people revered Mother Nature and her manifestations including the things they had no control over. Evolution has changed the ever adventurous human mind whonow wants to conquer it all. Fascination for Volcanoes in particular, has given rise to a new form of tourism leading people to these awe inspiring

locations. This month's cover story brings you five of the magnificent volcanos today that can be visited and admired for real.

A country, a continent, an all-time personal favourite, a destination I cannot have enough of is - Australia. Every visit gives me a fresh new perspective. The landscape, the biodiversity and the delicious food, everything in fact, is just perfect. Our country getaway section of this issue gives you a sneak peek of this year-round destination.

Unlike earlier times, Asia is adopting a liberal approach towards homosexuality. From a tourism perspective, it is a welcome change. There are many destinations where you can be gay and away! Our feature story brings you a few such gay-friendly destinations in Asia.

We had the pleasure of staying in Hotel Central Plaza in Zurich, Switzerland early this year. Read our review of the same on our Luxe Stays section of the e-zine.

This issue of the e-zine marks our entry into the third year of World Luxury Tourism's online presence. We are grateful to our readers for the continued support and encouragement. Looking forward to your suggestions and feedbacks - as always.

Thank you!

Manashree Prakash
Editor-in-Chief

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The Central Plaza Hotel

Zurich,
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Volcanos

*The power play
of Nature*

Five must-see volcanic destinations of the world

Volcanoes have always been subjects of wonder, amazement, curiosity and fear. Exciting, unnerving and unpredictable, not to mention downright dangerous, they have often been the cause of mystery as well as misfortune.

These fierce, intriguing structures hold the secret behind many of the earth's landscape and topography. Though not regular tourist attractions or suitable for

all kinds of visitors, a volcanic exploration is truly one of a kind. If you are done with your share of typical tourist hotspots and breezy vacations, pack your bags to visit some of the most extraordinary sights and phenomenon that take the world by storm.

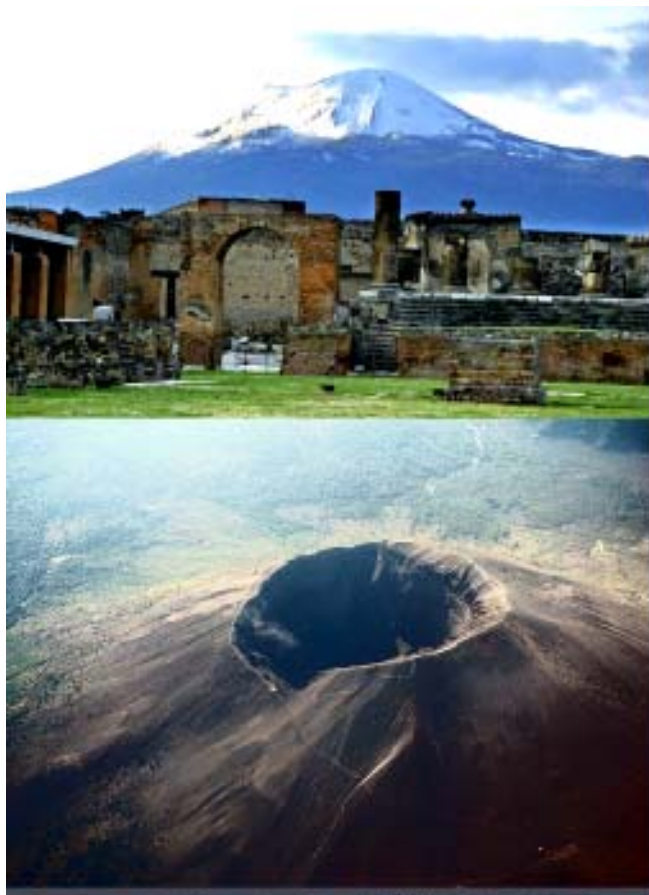
Mount Vesuvius, Naples, Italy

A write up on volcanoes will be incomplete without any reference of the famous Mount Vesuvius located just east of Naples in Italy. Who can possibly forget its legendary explosion in 79 AD, which buried the entire cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum? However the ash that cloaked the city of Pompeii

helped to preserve everything it covered. The historic dig site attracts a lot of visitors. Vesuvius is still considered active today since it has erupted within the last 100 years, the last major one being in 1944.

A tour of this landmark may not include fireworks or lava flows but the upper part of the mountain is spectacular to





say the least. Once you reach within 200 vertical metres of the summit, you have to either travel by bike or on foot to get any closer. The vast crater at the top resembles an immense Roman amphitheatre or an architectural masterpiece that will leave you in complete awe. A national park encircles the mountain. The ruins of Pompeii illustrate the massive impact of the volcanic destruction and are nothing like any place you have ever visited.

Claim to fame: Massive eruption in 79 AD resulting in the buried ruins of Pompeii, a must see for all.



Mount Fuji, Tokyo, Japan

The highest mountain (12,000 feet) and the icon of Japan, Mount Fuji falls in the category of a dormant volcano. The last eruption took place in 1708 and the ash from the unfortunate event completely

covered the city. Its beautiful symmetric cone and snow-capped summit demands a rather steep climb. Bordered by five picturesque lakes, it is truly a sight to behold.

The tourist spots are open in July and August when exploring the mountain is



comparatively safer. Hiking is popular during the summers when the region looks like a lunar landscape and offers breath-taking views from the peak. There are various routes to the summit but the Kawaguchiko with its huts and the scenic Yoshida route with old shrines, huts and teahouses are the two preferred ones.

Claim to fame: Symbol of Japan and site of the massive explosion in 1708 that covered the entire region.

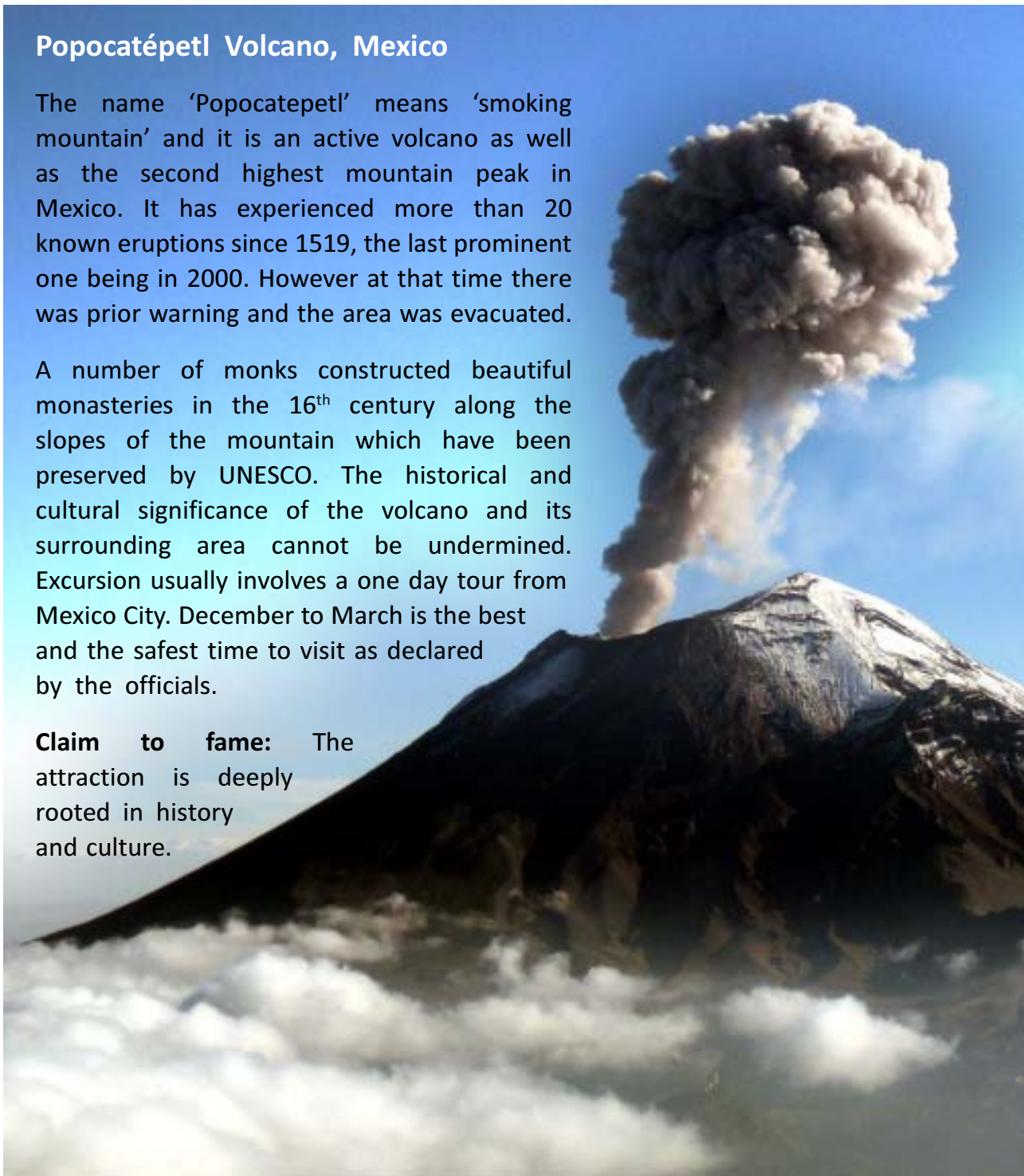


Popocatépetl Volcano, Mexico

The name 'Popocatepetl' means 'smoking mountain' and it is an active volcano as well as the second highest mountain peak in Mexico. It has experienced more than 20 known eruptions since 1519, the last prominent one being in 2000. However at that time there was prior warning and the area was evacuated.

A number of monks constructed beautiful monasteries in the 16th century along the slopes of the mountain which have been preserved by UNESCO. The historical and cultural significance of the volcano and its surrounding area cannot be undermined. Excursion usually involves a one day tour from Mexico City. December to March is the best and the safest time to visit as declared by the officials.

Claim to fame: The attraction is deeply rooted in history and culture.



Mount Bromo, East Java, Indonesia

One of the most popular tourist attractions in East Java, Indonesia, Mt. Bromo is considered to be both striking and sacred. On the fourteenth day of the annual Hindu festival of Yadnya Kasada, locals dedicate offerings like fruit, vegetables and livestock into the crater to worship the mountain gods. According to

legend, Princess Roro Anteng was commanded by the gods to sacrifice her last child in the crater and then host an honorary ceremony each year.

Once considered pretty dangerous Mt. Bromo is now a stable volcano. The last eruption occurred in 2004 though some minor activity was witnessed in 2007. One can walk, ride on a horse or drive across





an ash desert to reach here. A flight of stairs to the rim of the crater can

be accessed only if the circumstances are ideal. A jeep ride to the summit of Mount Penanjakan, located on the volcano's rim will let you enjoy an extraordinary sunrise with the volcanic mountain in the foreground.



Claim to fame: Its exquisite sunrise just cannot be missed and

its annual ritual is also fairly intriguing.

Kilauea, Hawaii, USA

The widest volcano in the world resides in the Big Island of Hawaii. It has been erupting continuously since 1980. Situated within the

to visitors and is open 24 hours a day throughout the year though a lot depends on its volcanic activity at any given time.

Mount Kilauea is not only easily



Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, it produces approximately 250,000 and 650,000 cubic yards of lava per day. However it is fairly accessible

accessible, safe and dramatic, it also offers stunning views of spewing magma and lava flows. To witness red hot lava pouring into the ocean



can be quite an experience. A boat ride will let you admire the amazing sights, which includes flowing lava streams causing the sea to boil and vaporise into white steam. Boat and helicopter tours and the observation point outside Hawaii

: Volcanoes National Park
: ensure fantastic views of the
: volcano.

: **Claim to fame:** It is the most
: active volcano of the world
: where you can witness molten
: rock and lava flowing out into
: the ocean.



Volcanoes provide everything from adventure, great sights, awe-inspiring landscapes to an unmatched travel experience. You cannot quite describe the feeling of standing up close in front of a magnificent volcano, feeling somewhat insignificant and mesmerised by the sheer power of natural forces that govern the world. Whether it is power, beauty or a sense of thrill that draws you to the site of the most striking marvels on the face of earth, you will certainly court an experience to remember.





Country
Getaway

Australia

An aboriginal adventure

Sandwiched between the Indian oceans and Pacific oceans, the island continent of Australia is the world's sixth largest country with a total area of 7,682,300 sq. km. It is also the largest country to be surrounded by water on all sides and has a

coastline of 36,735 km. Its 50,000 years old indigenous history, unique biodiversity and vibrant, multicultural offerings lend it an undeniable appeal that is hard to miss.

A Land of Biodiversity

Australia boasts of roughly 27,700 plant species, 378 mammal species, 828 bird species, 4000 fish species, 300 species of lizards, 140 snake species and 50 types of marine mammals. There are 55 different types of parrots, kangaroos and wallabies. Bird species range from the tiny

honeyeaters to the large, flightless emu. It has 21 of the world's 25 deadliest snakes. Its marine life includes 4000 types of fish, 30 of the world's 58 sea grass species and 1700 different species of coral. Approximately 80 per cent of its marine species, 85 per cent of flowering plants, 84 per cent of mammals, and 45 per cent of birds cannot be found anywhere else. Around 7 to 10 per cent of all species on Earth reside here.



Climate

Australia has a temperate climate for most parts of the year. The climate is quite unpredictable. The northern part of the country usually has a warm weather whereas the southern states report of cool winters. Being one of the driest continents with 20 per cent of its landmass under desert area, its average

rainfall is below 600 millimetres. The best time to visit is summer (December to February).

Must Carry

Sunscreen – The Australian sun is very strong particularly in the afternoon and can burn your skin within 15 minutes during summer. Do not forget to keep yourself hydrated as well.



GPS and Spare Tyres – A number of travellers prefer to go on road trips, camping, hiking and exploring the outback and the wildlife of the country. Such trips can be unpredictable and downright unnerving if you are not well prepared.

Insect Repellents – This one is particularly recommended for those who intend to spend most of their

time outdoors whether swimming, fishing, hiking or taking a tour of the forests.

Language and Culture

The ancient aboriginal culture of Australia dates back to the beginning of time. It was home to 500 different clan groups earlier with their own distinct cultures, beliefs and languages. Today 20 per cent of



Australians are migrants and over 40 per cent have multicultural roots. English is widely spoken and Christianity is the dominant religion. That apart, 226 different languages are also spoken here.



Trivia

- Australia is the world's largest island
- Australia's ocean territory is the third-largest
- Its population density is the lowest with two people per sq. km.
- 91 per cent of Australia is covered by native vegetation
- 70 per cent of the world's wool is produced here
- 80 per cent of Australians live along the coastline



Places to See

The Great Barrier Reef, Queensland – You simply cannot miss the 1,240 miles of coral gardens and vibrant aquatic life of the Great Barrier Reef. This World Heritage Site is a haven for divers and marine lovers.

Wilson's Promontory National Park, Victoria – This national park boasts

of mountainous forests, fern gullies, heaths, salt marshes, grey granite ranges, pristine beaches etc. It houses 50 per cent of Victoria's bird species, kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, emus etc.

Glasshouse Mountains National Park, Queensland – It offers amazing forest hiking trails, panoramic views, mountain peaks and is a paradise for nature lovers. You can also visit the Sunshine Coast nearby for an early evening swim.





Sydney Harbour, New South Wales – No trip to Australia can be complete without paying a visit to the famous Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Do not miss shopping at nearby Darling Harbour.

Uluru (Ayers Rock), Northern Territory – Uluru or Ayers Rock is a sacred site of the Aboriginal custodians and definitely worth a visit. The breath-taking red mountain in the middle of acres of flat land and desert shrubs is magnificent to look at. Several hotels and resorts offer conditional out door dinner by the side of this massive rocky mountain.

Litchfield National Park, Northern Territory – Opt for Ranger guided tours, swim in the lovely small lakes or

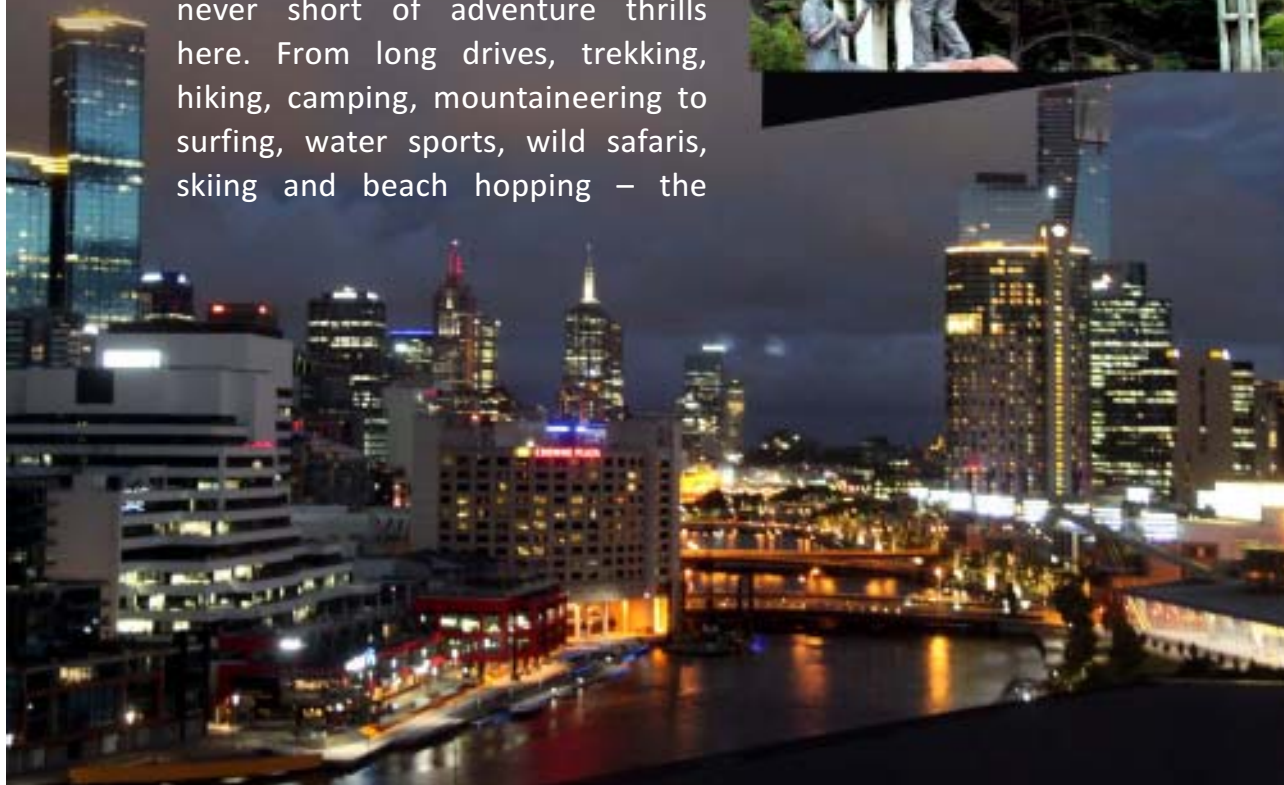


camp under the stars while visiting the Litchfield National Park. Its cascading waterfalls, wonderful gorges and fascinating views will leave you wanting more.

Apart from the above, we strongly recommend visits to **Kangaroo Island, Adelaide, Melbourne City, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Cairns** and the **Port Campbell National Park** by the **Great Ocean Road**.

Things to do

The vast, rugged outback, the rich wildlife, arid desert region, verdant rainforests and glorious mountains ensure you are never short of adventure thrills here. From long drives, trekking, hiking, camping, mountaineering to surfing, water sports, wild safaris, skiing and beach hopping – the





possibilities are endless.

Choose from an array of options like diving, kayaking, snorkelling, canoeing, sailing and surfing during your stay. Explore the treasure trove of the Great Barrier Reef, sail through the idyllic Whitsundays Island, swim with the dolphins, discover the underwater caves, bathe under the waterfalls, surf in the pristine beaches or go for kayaking in the tranquil backwaters.

If you love seafood, this is the place for you. The country is famous for its splendid open air dining venues as well as its fusion food. Beef, chick





peas and tropical fruits are immensely popular. The fine wineries and wine trails are wine connoisseurs dream spots.

Australia hosts world famous festivals and colourful events throughout the year. The popular ones are Melbourne Food & Wine Festival, Country Harvest Festival, Good Food Month, Orange FOOD Week, Canberra's Fireside Festival,

Darwin Beer Can Regatta, Camel Cup, Garma Festival, Australian Rules Football, National Rugby League, Australian Open, Melbourne Cup, Formula One Grand Prix etc.

Australia has 19 listed World Heritage sites and plenty of museums, art galleries etc. Lovers of arts, culture and heritage will find plenty to explore here.





Getting there

Air – Australia is nick named as ‘Down Under’ for a reason and getting there can be though exhausting, but worth the trouble. Summertime is quite crowded for inbound tourists. Since the country is quite cut off from the rest of the world, air travel is the best way to reach here.

Getting around

Air – Flying is the best way to save

time. The country is serviced by a number of airlines that connect all the major cities of the country.

Road – A vast network of well-maintained roads and beautiful scenery make driving a pleasurable experience. Car rental companies are plenty. You can also get cabs and motorbikes for hire. Cycling is another great option, just make sure you wear a helmet and pay heed to road signs. Coaches (buses) are comfortable, easy



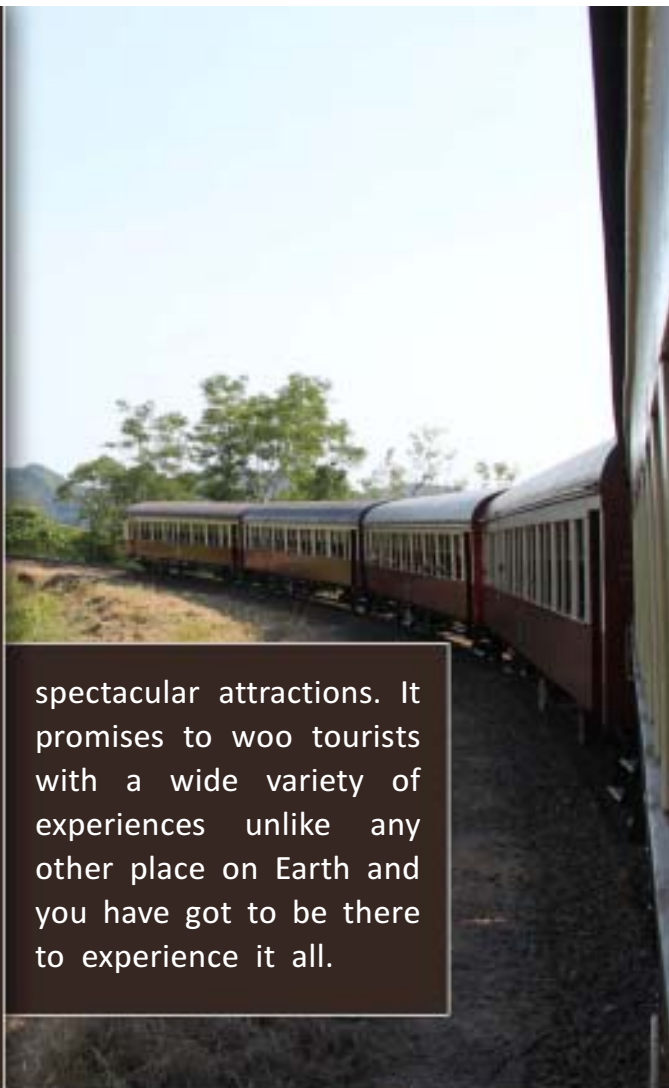
and economical. Coaches usually offer air conditioning, reading lights, adjustable seats and videos. Services are frequent and easily available.

Rail – Rail transfers offer wonderful sightseeing opportunities. Interstate and intra-state rail services connect the cities and regional centres. You can choose from budget travel to luxurious ones.

Ferries – Ferries are popular. The summer season witnesses a large number of tourists using ferries.

Renowned for its rich wildlife, underwater gems, extreme adventure sports, gastronomic delights and year round pulsating events, Australia is a heady mix of

spectacular attractions. It promises to woo tourists with a wide variety of experiences unlike any other place on Earth and you have got to be there to experience it all.



City Guide

Gay Travel

*The top gay-friendly
cities in Asia*

Asia is the upcoming destination for gay tourism today. The times are changing and so are the attitudes and mind-sets of people. Long lived prejudices are being shed vehemently like second skin and what better way to embrace change if not challenging rust ridden ideals that no longer hold true?

As the support network grows and homosexuality becomes legalised in plenty of countries in Asia, we take a look at some of the most gay-friendly cities where free will reigns supreme:



Bangkok

Bangkok is bang on when it comes to being a pioneer in the domain of gay and LGBT tourism. No other city is as tolerant and liberal about sexual orientation as Bangkok. Flamboyantly flashing its preference for gays, it is the epicentre of homosexuality in Asia. There is no movement against homosexuals. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is unheard of. Thronged by same sex bars, a thriving nightlife and an assortment of entertainment options, it is the undisputed gay capital of Asia. The nearby Pattaya is also not too far behind with its yearly gay parade and beauty pageants for transsexuals. Gender reassignment surgeries are common in both the places and there is no social stigma to expressing one's sexuality. Si Lom's Soi 2 and Soi 4 are claimed to be the highlights of Bangkok's gay nightlife.



Shanghai

Shanghai is a blooming destination for homosexuals in China. From hosting a gay pride week to publishing a gay magazine, Shanghai has come a long way and is steadily on the rise. Same sex clubs and bars are mushrooming in every part of the city. There is still opposition from certain sectors but the overall trend is on a boom. The gay central at the French Concession boasts of the “Gay Triangle” comprising of popular nightspots like Eddy’s, Shanghai Studio and the Transit Lounge. LGBT nightlife and lifestyle is gaining popular consent and becoming hotter by the day in Shanghai.



Manila

Welcoming gay bars and pristine beaches will make your idyllic vacation in Manila a memorable one. Revellers flock to the intersection of Maria Orosa Street and Julio Street in Malate regularly. The aforementioned places are also lined with happening nightspots for gays. The country itself gained a reputation for being tolerant to homosexuals over the years. Social stigma has drastically reduced and sexual preference is openly



expressed. Manila has earned a reputation for its amazing saunas and spas, some of which cater specifically to gays. Club Bath Philippines, Fahrenheit Cafe and Fitness Center, The We're House, Hilom Spa Center etc. are among the notable ones. If you are looking for

gay friendly bars and pubs check out Chélu, Red Banana, Zinc Music Bar, Azzul Restrobar, The Library Malate, O Bar and so on. The Malate district is the hub of gays and whether you are frequenting with a partner or looking for one, you will surely have a good time here.





Bali

Bali is known to be one of the most peaceful and tolerant cities of Southeast Asia. This land of ancient wisdom and holistic healing, nurtures people from different faiths, ethnic groups and cultures. The same kind of acceptance can be seen when it comes

to expressing one's sexuality. Though no beach is tagged as "gay only" a few are particularly favoured by gay tourists. These include the Ganesha or Petitenget Beach and the Cantina Beach.





These are no just popular meeting points but are also ideal for sun bathing, watching sunsets and relaxing during the day. Some local boys might offer to accompany you the entire day at a price if you are travelling alone. Wrap up the day with sunset drinks, bar hopping and trying out local cuisine. The two must-visit strips of Seminyak are the Jalan Dhyana Pura, known as the gay bar strip and the Jalan Laksmana a.k.a. the restaurant strip. Gallery Spa, Antique Spa, Banana Spa Bali, Amoaras Spa are some of the spas you can visit. Ku De Ta, Cocoon, Potato Head or La Lucciola are the popular beachfront bars while Sarong, Mamasan, Warisan, Sip, Metis and Rumours are preferred for a meal.



Ho Chi Minh City

The bars, pubs and nightclubs have upped the gay scene in Ho Chi Minh City. Global, sophisticated and cosmopolitan, the largest city of Vietnam has a growing population of gays and

lesbians. Vui Song Moi Ngay, the first mainstream TV program on transgender in Vietnam brought about a revolution in the social domain. In fact Vietnam is the only region where the LGBT movement is apolitical. There are plenty of gay friendly





restaurants, spas, cafes and hotels. Homophobia is fast vanishing and tolerance has taken its place. More than half of the population in Vietnam is below 30 years and having a young population means less rigidity and an inclination to change. Needless to say 'change' is the winning mantra for acceptance of homosexuality, be it in Vietnam or anywhere in the world.



It must be mentioned that the journey towards widespread acceptance and recognition is a hard one and there is still a long way to go before gays can freely come out of the closet. The good news is that the tide is favourable now and the stepping stones have been laid. Asia continues to grow as a popular tourist destination irrespective of preferences and it is heart-warming to see the region welcoming homosexuals from every part of the globe.





The Central Plaza Hotel

Zurich, Switzerland

Promising to shower you with comfort, the Central Plaza Hotel in Zurich, Switzerland is a popular choice amongst business travellers, families and regular travellers to Zurich for its outstanding location.



Central Plaza Hotel is a few minutes' stroll from Zurich's main railway hub. Tourists who choose to make Zurich the base during their travel in Switzerland this hotel provides ample opportunities to do that. Central Plaza Hotel lies at the centre of Switzerland's entertainment boulevard the Zurich

Central Square. Hop on to a train to reach the nearby famous shopping street Bahnhofstrasse, art museums, galleries and shores of mesmerising Lake Zurich. The old town, allies filled with restaurants and beautiful boutiques are located at a walkable distance.



Rooms

The Hotel comprises of not very large and yet spacious rooms and suites. All are furnished under specific designer themes. Temperature controlled showers, hair-dryers, fresh toiletries, bath robes and slippers are a few of the small features that deserve mentions here. Free Wi-Fi, satellite TV, mini-bar and Nespresso Coffee Machine are the few other amenities. No smoking rooms and accommodations for the disabled are arranged on request.

Hospitality

Sophisticated, professional and quick are the few adjectives that came to our minds when thinking of the hospitality and service in the hotel. The 1883 establishment still boasts of enthusing traditional guest treatment to its visitors. A record number of return guests speaks for the Hotel's popularity as an excellent service provider in Zurich.

Food

A bit limited in choices the all-star buffet breakfast is a welcome relief especially for the early starters. The flagship King's Cave Restaurant in the basement serves delectable dishes including its signature Lamb's Lettuce Salad. The royal ambience designed with an open fireplace, painting

galleries and ethnic decor gets the temperament soaring. Come summer (May – September), it is the correct time to dine under the open skies in the outdoor garden terrace. The Café Bar is open from early morning till midnight. The house pianist's melodious numbers make eating here a memorable experience.



Maintenance

House staffs keep a regular tab on the overall cleanliness of the Hotel and rooms. Towels, pillows and linens are changed every day, and rooms get restored to pre-check in condition. Apart from the silent services, hotel staff also answer to your specific requests and work

upon your feedback. In room service is available on request.

Value

The room price seemed reasonable looking at the extremely convenient location. The food is costly. However, guests have plenty of other options nearby where they can eat cheap.





Fast Facts:

- Central Plaza hotel includes 101 partly air-conditioned suites and rooms.
- All rooms in the hotel are sound-proofed.
- Facilities in the room:
 - Free Nespresso Coffee Machine
 - Mini-Bar
- Direct 2-lines dialler telephones
- Wireless LAN (free of cost)
- Bathroom is equipped with hair-dryer, bathrobes, slippers and regular toiletries
- In-room safety vault
- Laptop safe

- 24 hour Radio
- Satellite (247 programmes) and pay television
- Umbrella
- Ground floor accompanies a

modern gymnasium with advanced equipment.

- Car Rentals and other information on reservations, bookings, and confirmations can be availed from the reservation desk directly.





The Central Plaza Hotel in Zurich, Switzerland makes for an ideal stay whether you are in Zurich for a long stop over, on a business trip or for tourism. Just check-in, drop your bags and get set to explore all the wonderful places around. The best part about this hotel is that everything is available within a very short distance.

Happenings

September Festivals

around the Globe

Regatta Storica

Place: Venice, Italy

Dates: September 7, 2014

This is the most famous boat racing event of Venice. It is celebrated in memory of Caterina Cornaro, the queen of Cyprus who renounced her throne and took residence in Venice in 1489. The





colourful races feature 16th century style gondolas and gondoliers in splendid period costumes. The regatta (race) takes place in the Grand Canal. The race starts in the Castello area, go around the Paleto (a stake in the water) and finishes at the Ca Foscari. The Champions' Race on the two-oared gondolini is the highlight of this event. Intense excitement and fun make this as an enjoyable event.

Trivia: The colourful parade of Bissone (traditional parade boat) kick starts the race.


Mooncake Festival or Mid-autumn Festival

Place: China

Dates: September 8, 2014

This popular festival is a thanksgiving of sorts. It is dedicated to the Moon-Goddess Chang'e and traditional farmers thank her for an abundant harvest. The mid-autumn festival also marks the transition of seasons and is held on the full moon day during the autumn equinox. The festival earns its other name (Mooncake) from the





sweet that is traditionally associated with the festival. This is the time to feast on the mooncakes, a thin dough-shelled cake filled with red bean paste, dates, nuts or jelly. Climbing on rooftops, lighting lanterns, burning incense and eating mooncakes while admiring the moon, are some of the highlights of the festival.

Trivia: Some popular destinations for enjoying this event include Yellow Mountain, West Lake and Elephant Trunk Hill in China.



Grape Throwing Festival

Place: Mallorca, Spain

Dates: September 15 – 26, 2014

Held in the town of Binissalem in Mallorca, this festival is a celebration of grape harvest. The fight begins with the firing of a rocket. The crowd gathers in a field around large heaps of grapes. Once the fight begins, it is pure madness with people flinging grapes at one another in a messy, juicy fun-fight. The festival is held for two weeks during which there are daily grape battles, grape stomping competitions and delicious wine tasting

sessions. The event concludes with a grand party at the town square.

Trivia: Around 90,000 tonnes of grapes are thrown during this festival.

Aloha Festivals

Place: Hawaii

Dates: September 20, 2014

The Aloha Festivals showcase Hawaiian culture at its best. Experiencing this show is the best way of getting acquainted with the Hawaiian way of life, its music, dance and traditions. The festival has many events including street parties, hula shows, concerts and colourful parades. Celebrated on all the islands of Hawaii, the aim of the festival is to promote Hawaii's unique heritage and aloha spirit. Popular events include the Aloha Festivals Parade, the Waikiki Hoolaulea and Poke Festival.

Trivia: This lively festival features 300 events with 30,000 volunteers working behind the scenes and attracts around a million visitors annually.





Galway International Oyster Festival

Place: Galway, Ireland

Dates: September 25 – 28, 2014

For those who relish oysters, Galway is the place to head to in September. The Galway International Oyster and Seafood Festival is Europe's longest running culinary festival. Galway celebrates its salty delicacy, the native oyster with oyster-feasting, shucking contests, parades and huge quantities of Guinness to quench the oyster-induced thirst. Culinary workshops, tastings, talks and a host of special events are also held during this time. Highlights of the event include Oyster Opening Championships, a beauty contest and a masquerade gala.

Trivia: The festival originated as a ploy by a hotel manager to increase visitors in the off-season.



Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival

Place: Clare, Ireland

Dates: Weekends from August 29 – October 5, 2014

Dubbed as “Europe’s Biggest Single’s Event”, this festival is held in Lisdoonvarna, famous for its mineral waters. In fact the large crowds which were drawn to the mineral waters gave birth to the matchmaking tradition. The festival is not just about straightforward match-making. There are a host of interesting events. The first two weekends are dedicated to country music and the next three are traditional matchmaking times. Throughout the festival months, there is daily dancing from noon till the wee hours of the morning. Live bands, racing, speed dating, dancing and



music make this a lively and entertaining event.

Trivia: William Daly, Ireland’s most famous matchmaker, is the third generation professional practitioner of matchmaking.

(Photo credit: <http://www.matchmakerireland.com>)





World Luxury Tourism