

**World**

# Luxury Travel

**Magazine**

Vol. 1 ■ Issue 7 ■ February, 2013

*Valentine's Day Special*  
**Food for Romance**

**Croatia**

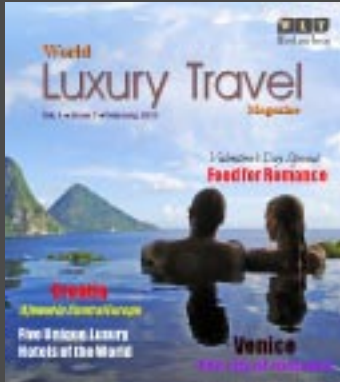
*A jewel in Central Europe*

**Five Unique Luxury  
Hotels of the World**

**Venice**

*The city of romance*

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**W L T**  
World Luxury Tourism

**Editor-in-Chief** : Manashree

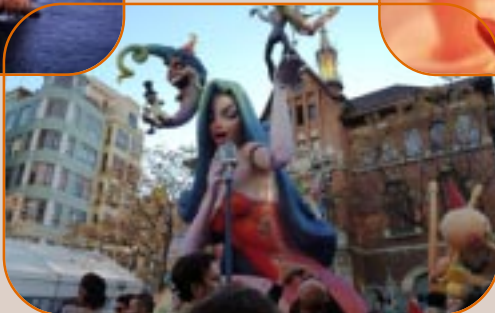
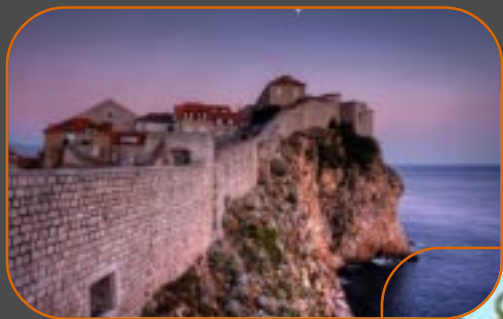
**Travel Writers** : Prabha, Saurav

**Contributing Photographers** : Prakash, Marc Sprengers

**Website Counsellor**: Pramathesh

**Designer** : Pranab

World  
Luxury Travel  
Magazine



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**FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK**

**T**ravel is like time, it never stops. Not just for the obvious reasons like vacation, leisure and business, people travel even during economic slowdown, natural calamities and other set-backs. The reasons of people travelling differ depending on the time. I spent two weeks in New Zealand recently and experienced another kind of tourism, especially in Christchurch (More about it in our blog). The city is still recovering from the earthquake of 2011 and is in the process of renovating the damages. Devastation creates another kind of curiosity and people travel to get their curiosity answered. Hence the wheel of travelling keeps moving - non-stop.

On this month of love, we are travelling for love. First, enjoy reading our cover story on the five unique luxury hotels of the world to experience something different. Our Valentine's Day special includes Venice, the city known to be one of the most romantic destinations of the world. Indulge in some delectable Food for Romance. Check out our recently introduced food section for more on this. Not to forget our Event Watch section for the biggest travel event of the year.

Your love and support has given worldluxurytourism.com its due recognition in the international travel world. Our successful participation in international tourism events is a proof of that. The team of World Luxury Tourism thanks you and looks forward to your continued encouragement. Thank you!

Manashree Prakash  
Editor-in-Chief

# Five Unique Luxury Hotels of the World







To choose from the vast array of celebrated luxury hotels, each with their own dazzling range of facilities, accommodations and special features, is no easy task. However, unique being the key word here, we drew up a list which would justify that adjective. The hotels chosen below have all the usual trappings of course, grand rooms, superlative services, beautiful layout and food fit for kings. However they owe their uniqueness to either some special features which they alone offer or for offering services which are unrivalled by their brethren. Simply put, these names are unique because they would stand out in the remembrance of the most jaded traveller's mind.

So go ahead and discover some fascinating places to add to your bucket list!



## The Point Resort, Saranac Lake, New York

Perched on the edge of the lovely Saranac Lake, amidst the Great North Woods, this majestic log retreat is all of 10 acres. Built by William Avery Rockefeller and set in the private Adirondack estate, it holds out the rare promise of solitude and utter tranquillity,

which comes from the absence of televisions, phones and children.

Gourmet fare by the Michelin starred chef, superlative service by an ever-attentive staff and some of the most beautiful surroundings in the world are yours to enjoy in this rustic getaway. There are 11 guest rooms, each with lake view, massive beds, chrome fitted baths, huge fireplaces and antique furnishings to match.

The Boathouse is the most popular and the loveliest one to stay in. Guests can enjoy dinners at the



Great Hall or private barbeques, luncheons and island picnics. Skiing, skating, ice-fishing (in winter); boating, water-skiing, swimming; tennis, golf, hiking, fishing, trekking, horse-riding are some of the activities you can enjoy. Evenings are for gathering around a roaring fire or setting off on a cocktail cruise. The cuisine is superb and the finest of drinks are at your disposal. The entire property can be booked for special events (this is the place for dream weddings). What is hard to beat is the magic of the woods where you can catch your breath at the sudden flight of a bird over water, a gushing waterfall or the delightful feeling of being in the middle of nowhere!

**USP:** The best all-inclusive rustic, luxury camp in the world. It is so private that not even its exact location is generally known, it is revealed only after you have made reservations to stay.

**Fancy that:** The Great Camp Era of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw several wealthy families, including the Rockefellers, build luxury camps on the lakes in the lovely Adirondack Mountain regions!



### **The Poseidon Undersea Resort, Fiji**

If *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne ever fired your youthful fantasies of living under water, here is your chance to make it a reality. Welcome to the Poseidon Undersea Resort, located under the sea in a 5000 acre lagoon near a private island in Fiji. Accessible via an elevator from the island shore, it is an aquatic world complete with 24 underwater guest rooms, bar, gym and a restaurant.

Seventy per cent of the room are transparent affording breath-taking views of the teeming marine life with up to 200 feet visibility. The Poseidon Mystery Island has 3 types of accommodations - underwater suites, island villas and overwater villas. Facilities include king-size beds, in-room refrigerators, marble bathrooms with Jacuzzi tubs, a library, Wi-Fi/internet and televisions. Built with complete safety in mind, each capsule-like suite of the resort can be detached and pulled up for repairs if the need arises.

There is no dearth of things to do here. You can actually learn to navigate a submarine and explore the underwater world. Or just relax with a drink in hand and view the lovely







reefs from the comfort of a luxury passenger submarine. Go scuba diving or walk the sea floor with a hi-tech diving helmet. There are regular activities like kayaking, wind-surfing and snorkelling, parasailing, ultra-light flight, tennis, golf or island-caves' explorations. Marvel at the star studded sky from the hill top observatory, enjoy a lunch at the private honeymoon island, attend cooking classes or workshops or just relax in the lounge choosing

your drink from the list of 9000 wines. The Amphitrite Spa offers superb body treatments. World class cuisine is guaranteed at the underwater restaurant or the beach side cafes and bars (6 restaurants and 7 bars in all). There is a fitness centre, a library, a lovely room which can be used as a conference room or the world's only underwater wedding chapel. There is also a dive shop as

well as a boutique selling lovely local products and more.

**USP:** The world's first seafloor resort and pressurized undersea structure and the only luxury underwater retreat where you can stay 40 feet under the sea!

**Fancy that:** The Nautilus Suite in the resort, the largest luxury underwater abode is 1000 sq. ft. and decorated to emulate Jules Verne's fictional submarine!





### Four Seasons George V, Paris

Taking luxury and pampering to a whole new level, the palatial Four Seasons George V is an eight-storey building dating back to 1928. Beautifully renovated, it is the last word in French grandiosity, sophistication and impeccable service. It boasts of fantastic location right near Champs Elysees, a superb view of the iconic Eiffel Tower, stunning mural work, signature floral displays and a world class spa and pool. The 244 luxury rooms have exquisite art pieces, lovely 18<sup>th</sup> century tapestries and beautiful chandeliers. Many have private terraces affording lovely views of the city and many of its famous landmarks. Food at the renowned Michelin starred 'Le Cinq' will linger in your memory long after it has vanished from your tongue.







The original secret wine-cellar is still in use and offers a choice of 50,000 wines. For cocktails and snacks, guests can head to La Galerie or Le Bar. The royal opulence and grandeur is seamlessly blended with every modern amenity and comfort. In the comfort of your Louis XVI style furnished room you can enjoy flat screen televisions, internet access, CD players and PlayStations. State-of-the-art equipment is available at the Health Club while the spa offers the top luxury body treatments.

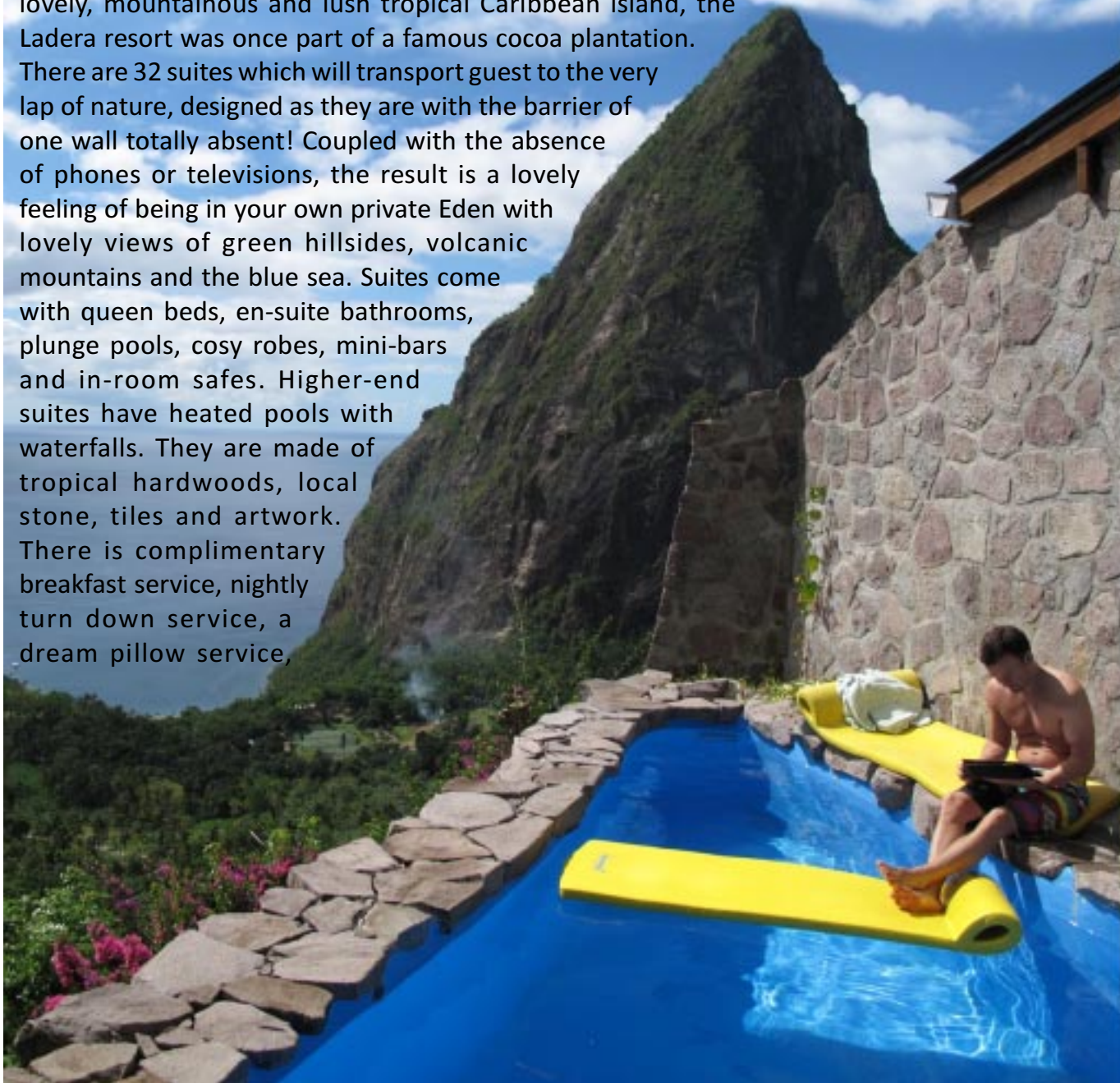
**USP:** A legend among classic luxury hotels

**Fancy that:** The hotel offers its guests the services of the only Hermes-inspired, hand-built and custom made Rolls Royce Phantom in the world!



## Ladera, St Lucia, West Indies

This resort is a tribute to Nature's loveliness. Located in St Lucia, a lovely, mountainous and lush tropical Caribbean island, the Ladera resort was once part of a famous cocoa plantation. There are 32 suites which will transport guest to the very lap of nature, designed as they are with the barrier of one wall totally absent! Coupled with the absence of phones or televisions, the result is a lovely feeling of being in your own private Eden with lovely views of green hillsides, volcanic mountains and the blue sea. Suites come with queen beds, en-suite bathrooms, plunge pools, cosy robes, mini-bars and in-room safes. Higher-end suites have heated pools with waterfalls. They are made of tropical hardwoods, local stone, tiles and artwork. There is complimentary breakfast service, nightly turn down service, a dream pillow service,





pool service and beach shuttle service to the nearby Jalouise Beach. The highlight of the resort is undoubtedly the lush, colourful tropical setting. There are a whole lot of sight-seeing activities for absorbing the local Caribbean culture. Apart from the tours, you can also play golf, go hiking, horse-riding, snorkelling, whale and dolphin watching or just unwind at the pool. Food at the Dasheene is not to be missed, especially the local dishes made from freshly harvested produce. Finally indulge in luxurious pampering at The Spa.

**USP:** Built into a hillside, perched 1100 feet

above sea level, with the fourth wall missing from rooms to allow sweepingly, stunning views of the Piton Mountains, the Caribbean Sea and tropical forests.

**Fancy that:** The Piton Mountains near the Soufriere town consist of two volcanic mountains - the Gros and Petit Piton and are part of a World Heritage Site.







### **Cappadocia Cave Resort and Spa, Turkey**

The Cappadocia Cave Resort is a luxury retreat tucked away into the rock carved dwellings of Uchisar. Spectacular views of the jagged, rocky stone formations called 'fairy chimneys' meet your eye at every turn. The suites have a rustic theme in keeping with the cave like surroundings but they contain every modern amenity including flat screen TVs, digital jukebox, massage showers and Wi-Fi! The first cave spa in the world, Leea offers the delights of

the famous Turkish hammam, as well as a host of other body treatments. The best of European, Turkish and Japanese cuisine coupled with the finest vintage wines will delight your taste buds at the award-winning Padishah Restaurant. Cocktails and spectacular scenery are offered at the Erciyes Pool Bar. Two heated pools (indoor and outdoor) are available for refreshing dips. A fitness centre, 2 saunas, a snow room, steam room, adventure shower and conference rooms are also available. There are a host of sightseeing activities to choose from as the



resort is located within convenient reach of famous tourist spots like Uchisar Castle, Gerome Open Air Museum, Pigeon Valley and the underground city of Kaymakli. Guests can also go horse-riding, hot air ballooning, enjoy dinner with folklore shows or experience the mesmerising Whirling Dervish Show.

**USP:** The luxury cave-resort and spa is located in Cappadocia, in a region famous for its lunar-like landscape and cave structures and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Fancy that:** 'Fairy Chimneys' can be as high

as forty metres and consist of caps of harder rocks resting on columns of softer rock below; the stunning geological formations of Cappadocia are one of the wonders of the world!

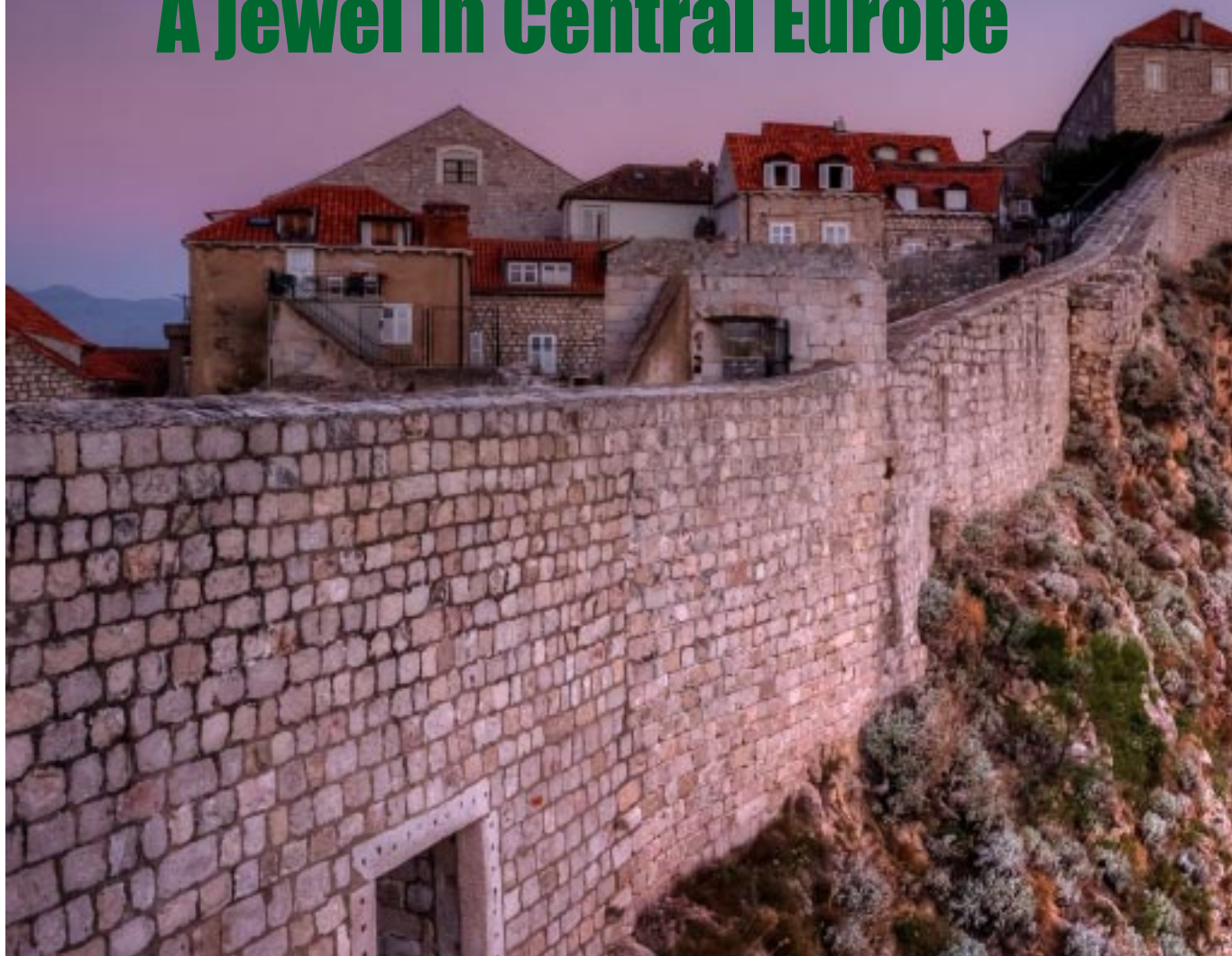
The above resorts are not just epitomes of gracious hospitality, they add to their repertoire an intriguing dash of the unusual, which tantalises the imagination and evokes wishful sighs. Not for nothing are they being continually added to travellers' wish lists all over the planet. Come and discover what their magic is all about!



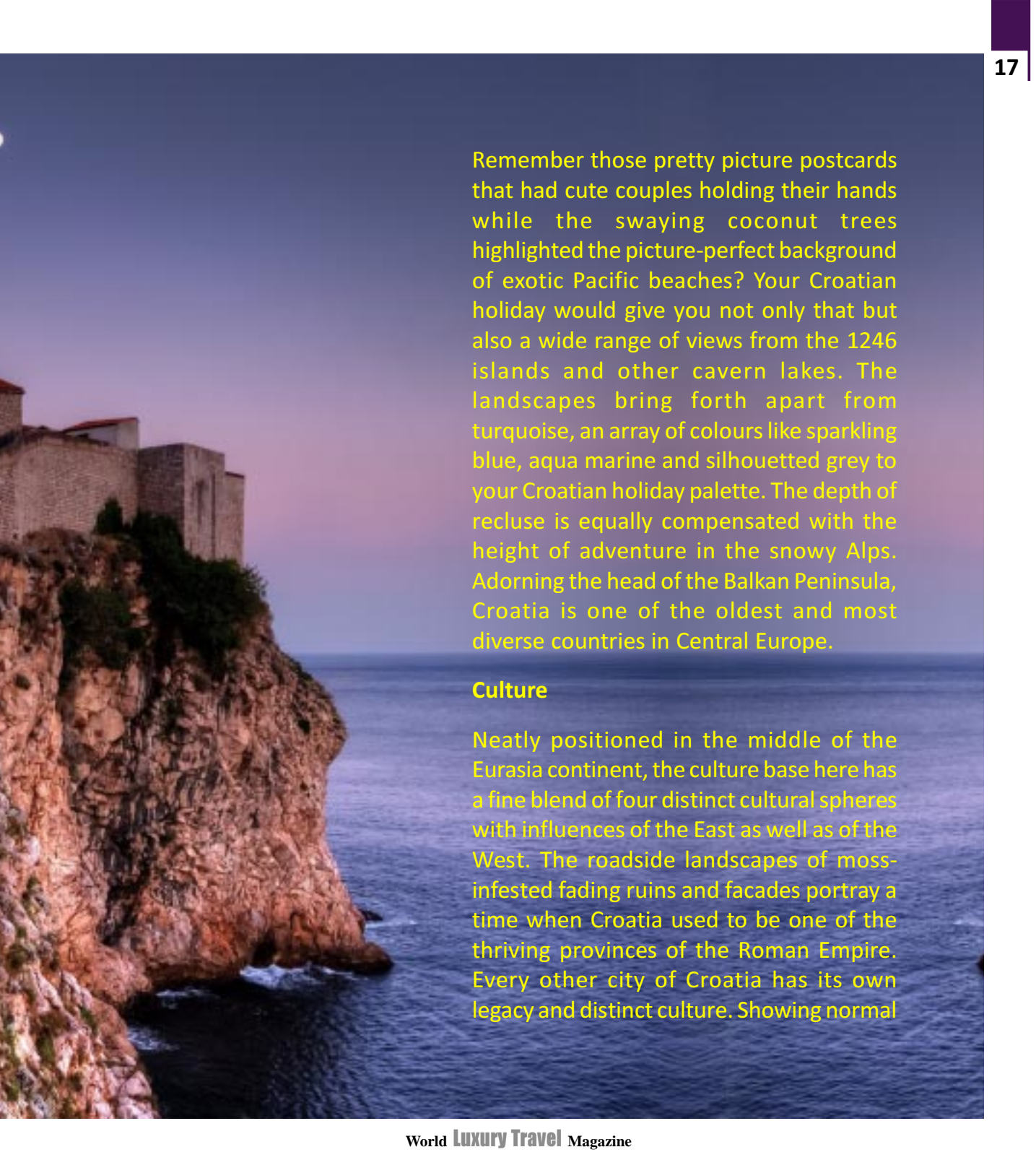
**Country  
Getaway**

# Croatia

**A jewel in Central Europe**





A scenic view of a coastal town built on a rocky cliff overlooking the sea at dusk. The town's stone buildings are silhouetted against a soft, purple and blue sky. The sea is a deep blue, and the rocky cliff in the foreground is rugged and textured. The overall mood is serene and picturesque.

Remember those pretty picture postcards that had cute couples holding their hands while the swaying coconut trees highlighted the picture-perfect background of exotic Pacific beaches? Your Croatian holiday would give you not only that but also a wide range of views from the 1246 islands and other cavern lakes. The landscapes bring forth apart from turquoise, an array of colours like sparkling blue, aqua marine and silhouetted grey to your Croatian holiday palette. The depth of recluse is equally compensated with the height of adventure in the snowy Alps. Adorning the head of the Balkan Peninsula, Croatia is one of the oldest and most diverse countries in Central Europe.

### Culture

Neatly positioned in the middle of the Eurasia continent, the culture base here has a fine blend of four distinct cultural spheres with influences of the East as well as of the West. The roadside landscapes of moss-infested fading ruins and facades portray a time when Croatia used to be one of the thriving provinces of the Roman Empire. Every other city of Croatia has its own legacy and distinct culture. Showing normal



respect is a custom that is still maintained among the more conservative Croats. The topic of Croat-Serbian war is still a sad memory to many in Croatia and should, if at all needed, be mentioned with respect. Wine sessions in the evenings are part of the local culture and events that must not be missed. It is best enjoyed in the city bars mainly if you are in the capital city of Zagreb. A relaxing, laid back weekend at any of the vineyards scattered around the country and your host's sobriety to make you choose your flavour with your food gives your eyes yet another reason to sparkle.

Croatia is one of those European

countries where public nudity is supported. There are distinct areas here where "naturism" or "nudism" is displayed in public. Croatia has few of the oldest "naturist" beaches where customarily



you are not allowed to wear any clothes. Hostility endangering other's modesty though is not tolerated by law.

Strip clubs are to be avoided at all costs. Harassment is a common thing for tourists at these places.

### **Climate**

Varieties of geographical terrains also come with the most obvious consequences of differing climatic conditions. In Croatia, there are three distinct climatic regions. The Eastern Adriatic coastal lines have that breezy and sunny weather around the year which is characteristic to the Mediterranean and has a pleasant spring and autumn. The extreme northern sides have a typical continental climate which allows a hot summer and a very cold winter. Almost same





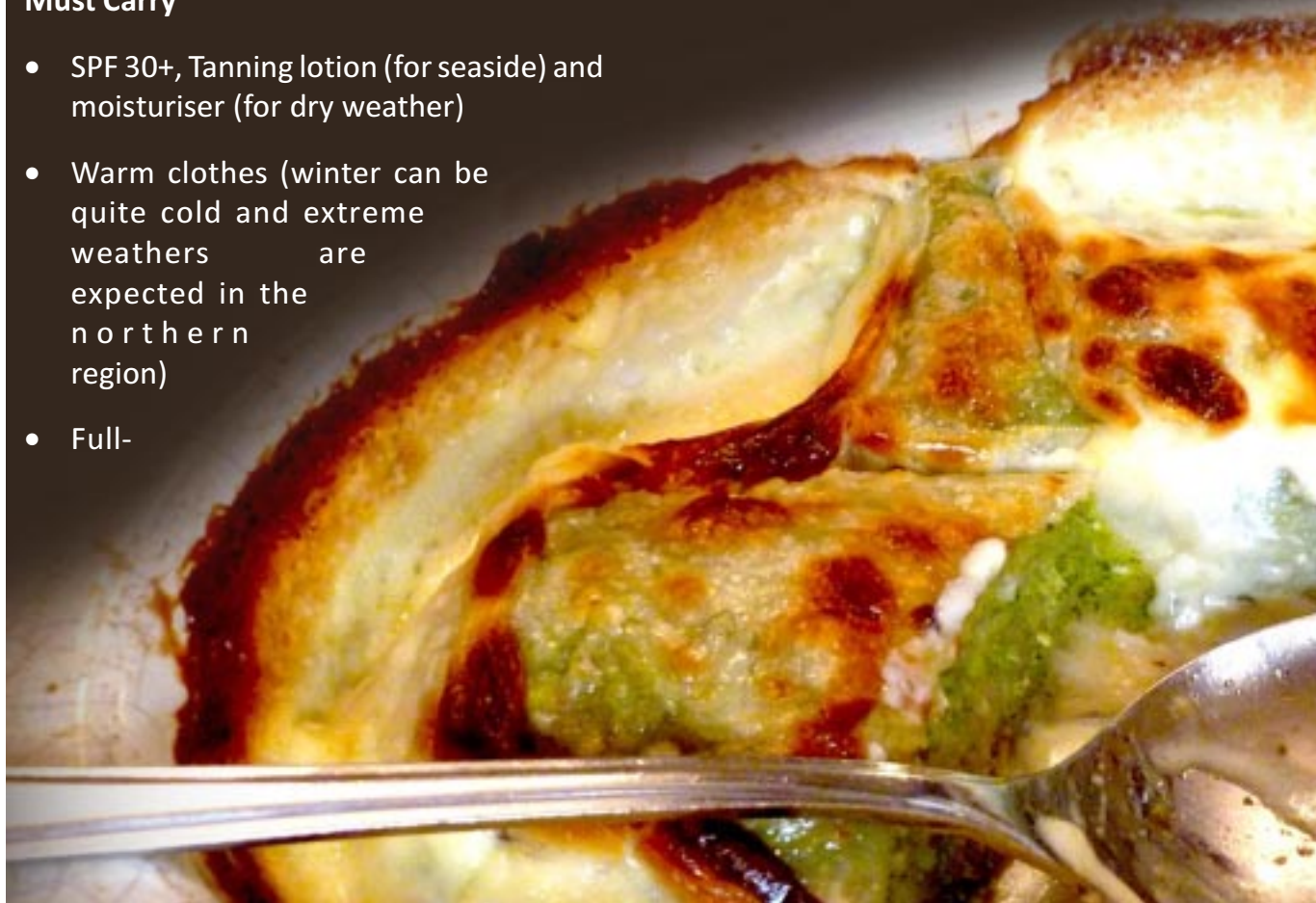
is the case for the central mountain areas, only with the exception that weather stays cold here all year long and the winter comes with temperatures as low as -10 degree Celsius. Hence, it is like choosing that perfect dress for the bride if you are trying to find the ideal time to visit Croatia. Frankly, Croatia is not the cake that can be eaten at one go. Savour it in slices to relish its varied flavours separately. Plan to explore and take in one specific area at a time.

### Must Carry

- SPF 30+, Tanning lotion (for seaside) and moisturiser (for dry weather)
- Warm clothes (winter can be quite cold and extreme weathers are expected in the northern region)
- Full-

sleeved clothes (for your travel to the Eastern Slavonia) and insect repellents

- Medicines/vaccination for diseases like encephalitis
- Cool shades (for summers)
- A multi-purpose knife (a handy companion in the vast geographical terrain)
- Legitimate documents for





vehicles (if you are planning to travel by roads)

## Cuisine

Croatian cuisine is an amalgamation of diverse tastes and choices. Do note that Croatians look down upon fast food. Hence, no major fast food chain is visible outside the main capital



area. Very frankly, who needs a McDonald when you have home-made delicacies available even at 4 am after a wild night! The Eastern continental side offers a very tasty sausage called “kulen”. A special stew with various meat and spicy paprika (“Cobanac” or “Shepherd’s stew”) is very good and enjoyable especially on a cold night. Cheese is a national pastime. Try it in pasta (“strukli”) or in fish (“paski sir” or Pag-island cheese) or with sour cream (“Sir I vrhnje”) or just buy any of the numerous varieties (smoked cheese, “skiripavac”) fresh from capital Zagreb’s main market. The seaside is filled with maritime delicacies like octopus, calamari, crabs and fresh fish. A must try are the desserts of Croatia which have a very ardent influence of the Ottoman period. The most famous is of course the creamy flourish of the “kremsnite” cake. “Burek” and “cevapcici” are most popular like in any other Southern European countries. Croatia

has some of the finest wines in the world. The country is also known for its olive oils. Be sure that you are buying the original Croatian oils. There are also a few cheap imported varieties from Greece being sold under the same name. The general home-grown wine sold in plastic jugs by the local farmers should better be avoided.

### Places to see

**Zagreb** – It's the capital city of Croatia. A field day for art lovers while admiring the work of Raffaello, Lorenzetti, Caravaggio in the famous Mimara Museum. Witness city architectures at the Old Town Gate, the cobblestone streets in King Tomislav Square and visit the Maksimir Park, Zagreb Zoo and the Jarun Lake. The entertainment hubs

including the best restaurants and pubs are located in the upper town and the lower town areas. The Zagreb Card allows tourists to avail the efficient public transport free of cost.

**Dubrovnik** – The bearer of rich early European history, the coastal city of Dubrovnik is a jewel on the coastal lines of the Adriatic. Partly damaged during the Serb-Croat war, the city still holds quite a few relics of the past like the church of St. Ignatius, the city walls, the old town, the Bokar Fortress etc. Declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Dubrovnik has another nickname - 'The Pearl of the Adriatic'.

**Split city** – Located in the central Dalmatia, Split city is centred by the Roman king Diocletian's palace (which is a UNESCO





heritage building). It is a place of immense natural beauty and is host to many seaside beaches including Bacvice. From marketing to snorkelling, climbing to sphinx watching – everything is possible in this sunbathing seaside city.

**Pula** – Having an ecstatic urban history of almost 3000 years, the city of Pula has major archaeological sites all round it. It hosts one of the biggest amphitheatres “Arena” of the Roman Period. Located in the Istrian Peninsula, the city holds key to a few of the major beaches and is a direct sea link to the



Brijuni group of islands. Go on a “fish picnic” if you like. Don’t forget to take part in the Pula Film Festival if your trip is planned during the months of June-July.

**Rijeka** – You have not visited Croatia if you have not had a long drive along the coast of the Adriatic bordering Rijeka. Clear night skies here are ideal for stargazers. You may also lie down on the beach, dive, have a wild bike ride or just trek to enjoy the magnificent landscape. Theatres are also

available in the main city area for the movie buffs.

### Getting there

Getting a visa permit for Croatia is easy. While few countries need visa permits for visits, there are many in the European Union which can arrange stays in Croatia “visa-free” for a maximum 90 days.





**By air:** The international airports in Croatia receive international flights from Tel Aviv and Qatar. Charter flights arrive from Seoul or Tokyo occasionally, but generally one has to jump flights in order to reach here. People coming from Northern America are advised to port first in hubs like London or Frankfurt while Asian and Australian visitors are advised to board flights from Doha or Istanbul.

**By train:** Direct and indirect railway lines connect Croatia to all other European

countries. There are three main EuroCity and InterCity lines. Passengers carrying an international Eurorail pass must validate them from an international window immediately after arrival and not from a local ticket collector.

**By car:** Driver's license, Automobile Registration Card and the documents of vehicle insurance are necessary for getting clearance to enter Croatia. Road assistance no. is 987 or if you want a further detailed report of the road, you can refer to the website of the 'Hrvatski Auto Klub' which provides real time maps, traffic updates etc.



**By bus:** Buses operate from Venice to Istria with tickets being available from the A.T.V.O. bus office in Venice. Dubrovnik, Split, Osijek, Varazdin are important bus hubs operating between a range of countries. Osijek is located strategically beside the railway station.

### Getting around

The national Croatian Airlines connects the main cities of Croatia. Trains are the cheapest. The new “tilting train” which

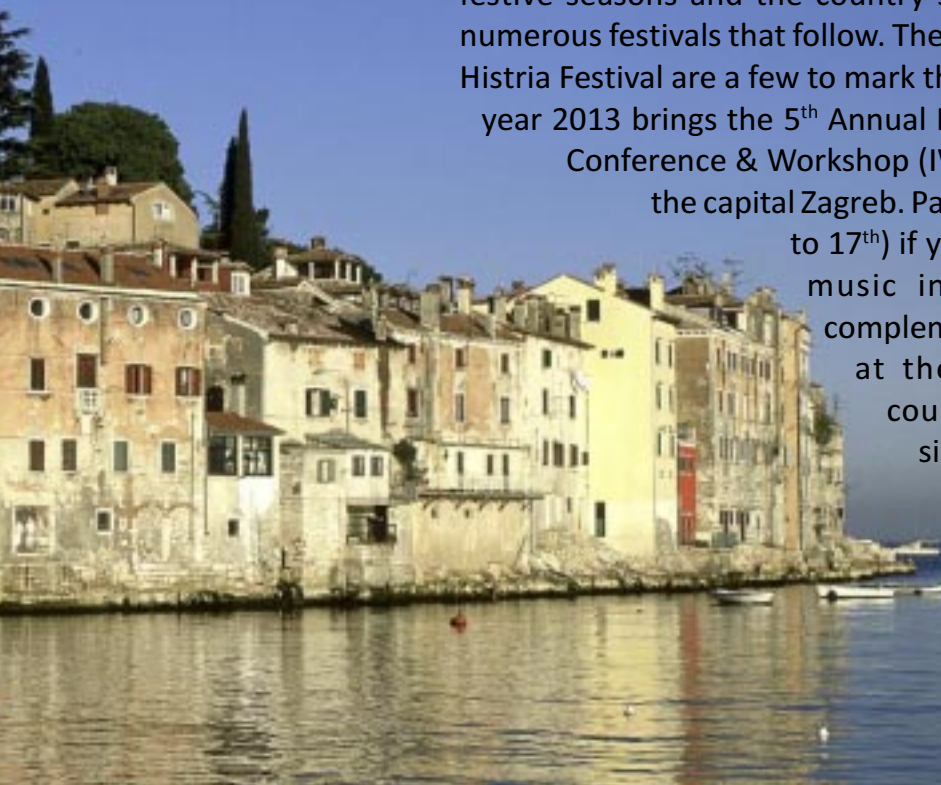






travels at 160 km/h has been inaugurated. Dubrovnik is the only city that is out of railway bounds. It has to be reached through buses taken from Split. Besides trains, buses have a very good network all over the country with Zagreb bus terminal at its centre. Taxis can be helpful when you are riding with many family members. You can hail a taxi by calling 970 or pre-book the taxi for your designated time, especially during the busy summer months. Hitchhiking can be an option if you can reach the toll booths in the highway. The ferry is a relaxing ride with a view of the Adriatic Coast. Sometimes it is also the only way through the edgy archipelagos.

Summer bears the colours of spring when it spreads its wings across Croatia. The month of April denotes the arrival of the festive seasons and the country starts to get ready for the numerous festivals that follow. The Motuvon Film Festival, the Histria Festival are a few to mark the endless ceremonies. The year 2013 brings the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual International Wine Tourism Conference & Workshop (IWINETC) to the contours of the capital Zagreb. Pack your bags for March (15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>) if you love your wine. The folk music in the evening is just a complement to your exclusive stay at the best vineyards of the country. The magical country side and the lucid sea seem to dissolve into the finest blends and create the perfect lip-smacking cocktail of a jolly vacation, relaxation and enjoyment.



**Feature**

*Valentine's Day Special*

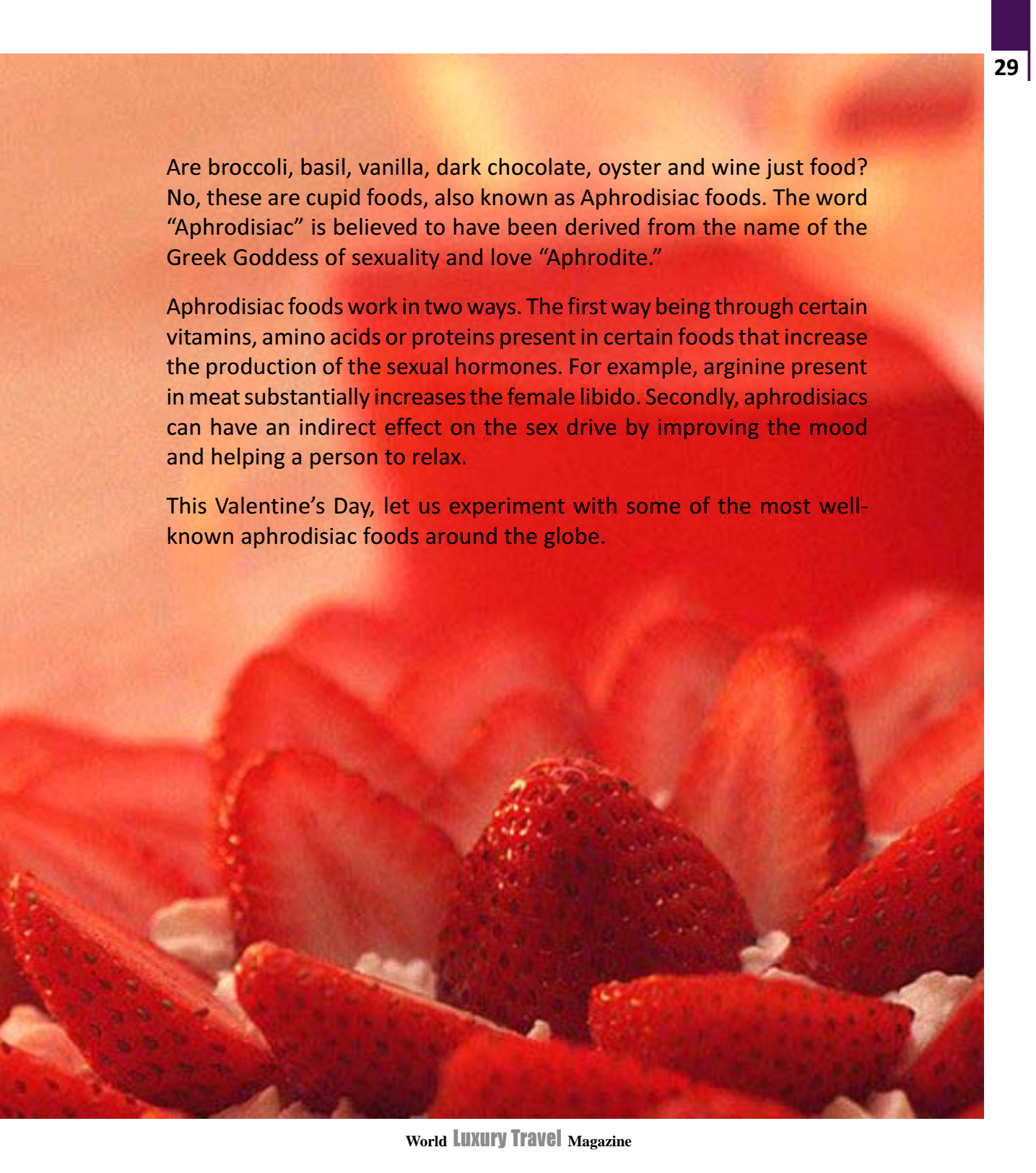
# Food for Romance



Are broccoli, basil, vanilla, dark chocolate, oyster and wine just food? No, these are cupid foods, also known as Aphrodisiac foods. The word “Aphrodisiac” is believed to have been derived from the name of the Greek Goddess of sexuality and love “Aphrodite.”

Aphrodisiac foods work in two ways. The first way being through certain vitamins, amino acids or proteins present in certain foods that increase the production of the sexual hormones. For example, arginine present in meat substantially increases the female libido. Secondly, aphrodisiacs can have an indirect effect on the sex drive by improving the mood and helping a person to relax.

This Valentine’s Day, let us experiment with some of the most well-known aphrodisiac foods around the globe.



## Strawberry

Strawberry is considered to be one of the most sensuous fruits on the planet! It was believed to be an aphrodisiac due to the many tiny seeds which symbolize fertility. Mythological beliefs say that these luscious, fragrant berries were originally the heart-shaped tears shed by Aphrodite upon the death of her lover Adonis. In the French countryside it was at one time a tradition to serve cold strawberry soup to newlyweds to help add extra zing to their honeymoon romance.

Due to their high Vitamin C content and also a good amount of potassium, folic acid, iron and fibre, strawberries help to boost the “feel good” factor of the human body.

## Oyster

The Romans in the second century A.D. documented Oyster to be an aphrodisiac food. Giacomo Casanova, the most



famous lover of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is believed to have credited his immense success with women to the 50 oysters he consumed every day for breakfast and the many more oysters he consumed with his other meals through the day.

In spite of being cold and slime in appearance and slightly pungent in taste, the oysters are extremely popular as an aphrodisiac food. However, it is believed that it is the presence of zinc, protein and monosaturated oils that help improve the “mood”. Also, raw oysters contain high amounts of Aspartic acid and N-methyl-D-aspartate that may promote the release of hormones like testosterone and oestrogen.

### **Chocolate**

The sinfully irresistible Chocolate is rightfully associated with love, romance and seduction. Chocolate became famous more than 1500 years ago, as both the Mayan and



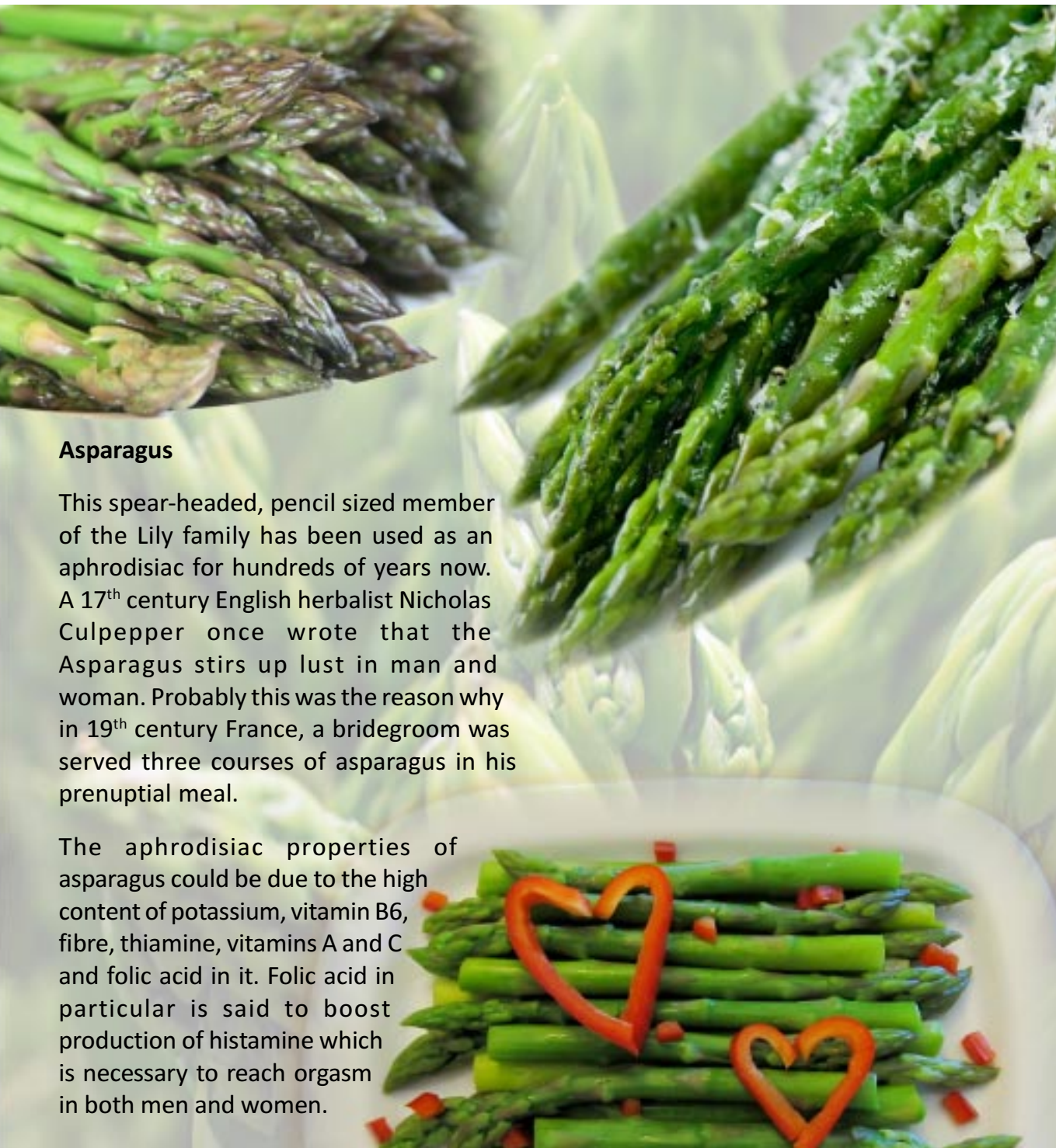


Aztec cultures of South America believed it to be an aphrodisiac with mystical qualities. Emperor Monteczuma of Aztec is said to have drunk 50 golden goblets of chocolate every day to keep his 600 wives happy.

Apart from being thick, creamy, smooth and delicious, it contains mood lifting substances Phenylethylamine and Serotonin, which incidentally also occur naturally in the human brain and are released into the

nervous system when we feel happiness, love, passion and the likes. Eating chocolate releases these same substances into our system resulting in rapid mood change increase in blood pressure and heart rate and thereby inducing the feeling of well-being, almost bordering on euphoria usually associated with desire or being in love. As Sandra Boynton said, "The greatest tragedies were written by the Greeks and Shakespeare... neither knew Chocolate!" Eating chocolate gives an instant and solid energy boost thus increasing stamina.





## Asparagus

This spear-headed, pencil sized member of the Lily family has been used as an aphrodisiac for hundreds of years now. A 17<sup>th</sup> century English herbalist Nicholas Culpepper once wrote that the Asparagus stirs up lust in man and woman. Probably this was the reason why in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, a bridegroom was served three courses of asparagus in his prenuptial meal.

The aphrodisiac properties of asparagus could be due to the high content of potassium, vitamin B6, fibre, thiamine, vitamins A and C and folic acid in it. Folic acid in particular is said to boost production of histamine which is necessary to reach orgasm in both men and women.



### Chili Pepper

“Setting the heart on fire”....that is what chili peppers do...and quite literally too! The essential heat producing compound Capsaicin, which is found in all types of chili peppers, is responsible for an influx of endorphins resulting in higher blood circulation, increased heart rate and stimulated nerves. The way we get sweaty because of the rise in body heat and the way our cheeks look flushed at just a mere bite of it, imitates the classic state of arousal.

The chili pepper was used by multiple cultures historically as an aphrodisiac. It is believed that the great ruler Montezuma consumed a special fortified chocolate drink containing chili as the key



## Avocado

This pear shaped, not sweet, buttery and kind of nutty and oily fruit has been considered an aphrodisiac since ages. Avocados are rich in Vitamins B6, Vitamin C and E, Beta-sitosterol and glutathione, which are believed to increase the feeling of romance and love. Avocados were used mixed with other aphrodisiac plants like cocoa and vanilla as sodium free, cholesterol-free, sexual stimulant by the Aztecs.

The avocado was also associated with fertility owing to its resemblance to the female ovary. Due to the evocative way the fruits hang in pairs, the Aztecs named the avocado tree “Ahuacuatl” or “Testicle Tree” and the maidens of the village were forbidden to go outside during the harvest of these fruits.

ingredient, to prepare himself for his daily visit to his beautiful mistress. Even today, macho contests are held in many social gatherings to test the chili endurance level of men while the women tend to watch quietly and gather their own conclusions.

## Honey

This sticky, yet delicious, sweet, liquid gold is also known as Aphrodite's nectar. It is believed to be one of the most seductive foods in the world. Like cuvees of wine, honey comes in many varieties from bold and thick to soft and creamy. Each variety is believed to suit a specific mood.

It is believed that in olden times, people





drank a fermented drink called Mead made from honey to promote sexual desire. Newly married couples in ancient Persia drank Mead every day for a month after marriage to get the right mood for successful lovemaking and marriage. Hence the term “Honey Month” or as we better know it “Honeymoon” came to be used.

Honey is rich in Vitamin B which promotes testosterone production. “The sticky stuff contains mineral called boron, which enhances testosterone levels and puts you in the mood, and intensifies your orgasm.”

There is a long list of fruits, vegetables, drinks and herbs that are considered aphrodisiacs. Added to that there are some really weird aphrodisiacs like Ambergris, which is produced in the intestines of sperm whales, Royal jelly found in the bee hives and is the only food a queen bee feeds on, Ant Tonic made of black ants, Rhino Horn, Spanish Fly, Mamushi Pit Viper, Monkey Brains...the list gets weirder! The question is how willing are you to experiment to add that extra spark to your romance. This Valentine’s Day, how about trying something new?



## City Guide



# Venice

## The city of romance



## La Serenissima

Ten to one odds are that a mention of Venice will bring a picture of a gondola gently floating into your mind and of course, good reason too! For, the gondola is the quintessential symbol of this city where roads are canals and pavements are tiny docks. This lovely city, voted one of the most romantic cities in the world, attracts hordes of tourists every year. They flock to see the canals and the colourful palazzos lining them, the marvellous

Byzantine and Gothic architecture, to discover the fascinating history of ancient buildings and to admire the works of masters in every field of art.

So the golden question which comes to mind is - when should you visit Venice? A look at the following will be helpful.





### **General Climate of Venice**

**Spring:** (March - May) – Sunny, long days, comfortable weather with temperature ranging from 11 to 21 degree Celsius (53-70°F average)

**Summer** (June - August) – Sunny, hot and humid, 26 to 32 degree Celsius (80-90°F) or more

**Autumn** (September - November) – Lovely

weather, fairly dry in early autumn, 15 degree Celsius (59°F average)

**Winter** (December - February) – Cold, long winters, sunny, sometimes wet, 8 degree Celsius (47°F average)

**Acqua Alta or high water** – During October to January flooding occurs in Venice with low lying areas and streets getting covered; this can affect sightseeing plans.



## Best Time to Visit: Spring

Days are warm and hours of sunlight are more. However peak time also means heavy tourist influx, longer queues and difficulty in getting accommodation (Labour Day, May 1<sup>st</sup> is best avoided). You could plan a trip in summer but it will be hot and humid; however evenings are cooler with breeze blowing. For a less crowded vacation you can go in winter if you can brave the near freezing temperatures; also book in advance for many hotels remain closed in winter.

## Top Tourist Attractions

**Grand Canal** – ‘The most beautiful street in the city’ is the main waterway of Venice and attracts visitors worldwide. A vaporetti tour on the canal is the best way to view the major landmarks of the city. Shaped like a large ‘S’ it is 3800 m long and 30-90 m wide. It is lined with beautiful buildings and





palazzos with architecture worth admiring.

*Tip: The historical Regatta, a boat race, on the Grand Canal is a major tourist attraction.*

**St Mark's Square** – Considered one of the world's most beautiful squares, it has lovely historical monuments and numerous cafes. A very popular meeting place, it has a cheerful air with orchestras, pigeons, visitors and waiters adding their bit to the colour and noise here.

*Tip: Watch the square fill up during acqua alta on a full moon night!*

**Basilica San Marco** – This beautiful example of Byzantine architecture is dedicated to the city's patron saint. It houses famous Venetian paintings and Byzantine mosaics. The Pala d' Oro, behind the main altar, is a real beauty studded with 2000 emeralds,







rubies, amethysts, sapphires, pearls and other precious stones. The dazzling gold covered framework contains enamelled figures of saints and a central figure of Jesus.

*Tip: Dress modestly, knees and shoulders must be covered.*

**Doge's Palace (Palazzo Ducale)** – This beautiful museum in Venetian Gothic architectural style was the seat of the ruling authority, the Doge of Venice. In this awe-inspiring palace, one can see the huge state rooms, lovely Renaissance paintings, superb gold covered ceilings and frescoed walls. The whole atmosphere speaks of opulence and the enormous power of the rulers.

*Tip: Book the Secret Itineraries Tour to see the prisons, torture chamber and the famous Bridge of Sighs.*



**Rialto Bridge** – This charming stone bridge, across the Grand Canal, is one of the most famous landmarks of Venice. It is arcaded on both sides and lined with shops. Wide stairs rising from either side meet at the pinnacle archway. Nearby is the famous Rialto Market. In olden times, it was the meeting place for traders of silk, spices, metal and textiles and the area was abuzz with activity. Even today this is a popular spot for shopping, meeting and watching the gondolas on the canal below.

*Tip: The best time to see the bridge is early morning or late night when shops are closed and crowd is less; the market is closed on Sundays.*

**Galleria dell'Accademia** – This museum is a veritable treasure house of 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century paintings by great masters like Paolo, Titian and Veneziano. This is the largest collection of Venetian paintings in the world and offers fascinating glimpses into Venice's history and culture. It houses the famous 'Tempest' by Giorgione, 'Feast in the house of Levi' by Veronese and works of Tintoretto, Titian and Longhi.

*Tip: Admissions are limited and queues are long, but the*







*museum is worth a visit.*

**Collezione Peggy Guggenheim** – Named after Peggy Guggenheim, an eccentric American lover of modern art, this palazzo-museum houses her eclectic collection and is ranked among the best collections of its kind. If you want to see unusual and interesting exhibits, this is the place to head to. It contains works by Picasso, Magritte, Jackson Pollack and Max Ernst to name a few.

The list of places to see in Venice is long. Some of the other attractions include the St Mary of the Friars - a beautiful church with Venetian masterpieces, San Roco, Teatro La Fenice, Campanile di San Marco and Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Jewish Ghetto.



Some of the following tours are a popular way of exploring Venice:

- Venice in One Day is a combined walking and boat tour of Venice,
- Murano, Burano and Torcello is a half day sightseeing tour covering the famous islands by the same name,
- Best of Venice Walking Tour and Grand Canal Taxi Ride is a small group tour covering major tourist spots,
- Venice By Night Tour and Gondola

Ride (2 hours) is a lovely way to see the grand canal and attractions like the Campo San Polo, Rialto Bridge and Campo San Margherita.

### Things to do

Venice has a lot more to offer than its famous landmarks and attractions. So here's a list of other things to do in Venice:

**Shopping:** Shopaholics rejoice! There are options galore for shopping. Lovely knick-knacks made from the hand blown Murano glass (specialty of nearby Murano Island),



Burano lace, beautifully painted masks and painted fabrics are all Venetian specialties. For designer stores head to the stretch between Santa Lucia Station and St Mark's Square. Not to be missed is the famous fish, fruit and vegetable market of Rialto.

**Restaurants:** Eating out in Venice can be very expensive. The famous Venetian Spritz al Bitter and local pastries are a cheaper way of filling up for those in-between times. Make lunch your main meal of the day, prices are

lower then. Food gets sold out swiftly, so be there at midday. Check for the prices of everything before ordering. Standing at the counter and eating is cheaper than sitting down at the tables. Some of the popular eating joints include Al Muro at the Rialto Market, Alfredo's Fresh Pasta To Go (for the best take-away pasta), Tearoom Caffè Orientale (best tea and cake), Gelateria Paoline (best ice cream) and Bacareto De Lele (for great local fare).



**Festivals and events:** Popular events add colour to the Venetian life and are a great way for tourists to absorb the local flavour. The most important, held annually in February, is the Carnevale, the world's most famous masked ball. Also popular is the associated Gala Dinner and Ball in February.

The Cavalcina Grand Dance is an exclusive event held at Teatro La Fenice. Also popular are the Witches Regatta, a boat race (January); Capodanno Love in St Mark's Square (December) and the Venice International Film Festival (August/September).





## Getting To Venice

**Air:** Venice can be accessed through one of the three main airports - Venice-Marco Polo (Tessera), Verona-Villafranca or Treviso. Fly via Rome or Milan from North America and or through major European cities. Ryanair (direct from London) and easyJet are cheap carriers.

**Train:** Two main railway stations - Venezia Mestre (on mainland) and Venezia Santa Lucia (on the Grand Canal) are well-connected by trains. Trains from all over Europe come to the latter. It is easy to get a vaporetto outside.

**Bus:** Long distance buses from Italy and major European cities come to Piazzale Roma from where you can get vaporettos (no 82 or 1 will take you to most major stops in the city).

**Car:** This method of transport is not recommended in a city where the streets are canals. It is expensive and troublesome too. If, however, you are arriving by car you have to stop at Piazzale Roma and park at the garages there.

**By Sea:** There are three harbours through



which one can enter Venice. They are inlet of Chioggia, inlet of Malamocco and the inlet of Lido.

### **Getting around:**


Venice is a small city and is easy to explore on foot. The maps can be tricky though, and it is easy to get lost. So make sure you get detailed directions before setting off. Vaporettos (water buses) are the main way to get around. Do not travel without a ticket or you will be fined 50 Euros. If you plan to do a lot of travelling by vaporettos then check out the passes and tickets (swipe them each time you board or you will be fined). Water taxis are very expensive and so are gondolas; though smaller gondolas called 'traghetto' are cheaper.

### **Important info:**

- ATMs are available in Ponte di Rialto and San Marco. Money exchange bureaus are there all across Venice and at train stations.
- A map is a must-carry. Be very careful about directions, maps can be confusing and it is easy to get lost.





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- Cars are not allowed in Venice.
  - Carry mosquito repellents.
  - Remember that cafes charge extra for sitting on chairs and listening to orchestra. So check about the cover charges beforehand. Try to catch the dish of the day at restaurants for a cheaper deal.

### Fun Facts

- Casanova, Marco Polo and Vivaldi were all born in Venice.
- Gondoliers have to get trained and pass a stiff qualifying exam before they can operate.
- Remember never to touch any fish, fruit or vegetable at the market; simply point it out.

### Queen of Adriatic

This lovely city is surrounded by a haze of romance. Watching the lovely reflections on the water from the Rialto or gliding along in a romantic gondola under the moonlight, you are palpably aware how well earned its reputation for romance is. Romance, architecture, art, history, this city has it all. It is indeed well named the Queen of the Adriatic. Venice should definitely be on your list of must-visit places.

Happenings

# March Festivals





### Night of the Witches (Noche de Brujas)

**Where:** Cerro Mono Blanco, Catemaco, Mexico

**When:** March 1, 2013

The first Friday of March annually sees a convention of witches, healers, magicians, soothsayers and of 'other-world' practitioners in the 'Capital of Witchcraft' Catemaco in Mexico. Here they take part in a purgatory ceremony to rid themselves of negative energies of the year before and to celebrate their art. There are various events, rituals and ceremonies and attendance by thousands of curious tourists too. There is magic in the very air with stalls selling amulets, offering shamanic consultations, tarot reading or herbal remedies. Other places of interest in this region are the Lake Catemaco, Monkey Island, mountains and thick forests and sites

of the intriguing, ancient Olmec civilization. If you are looking for the unusual, head to Catemaco.

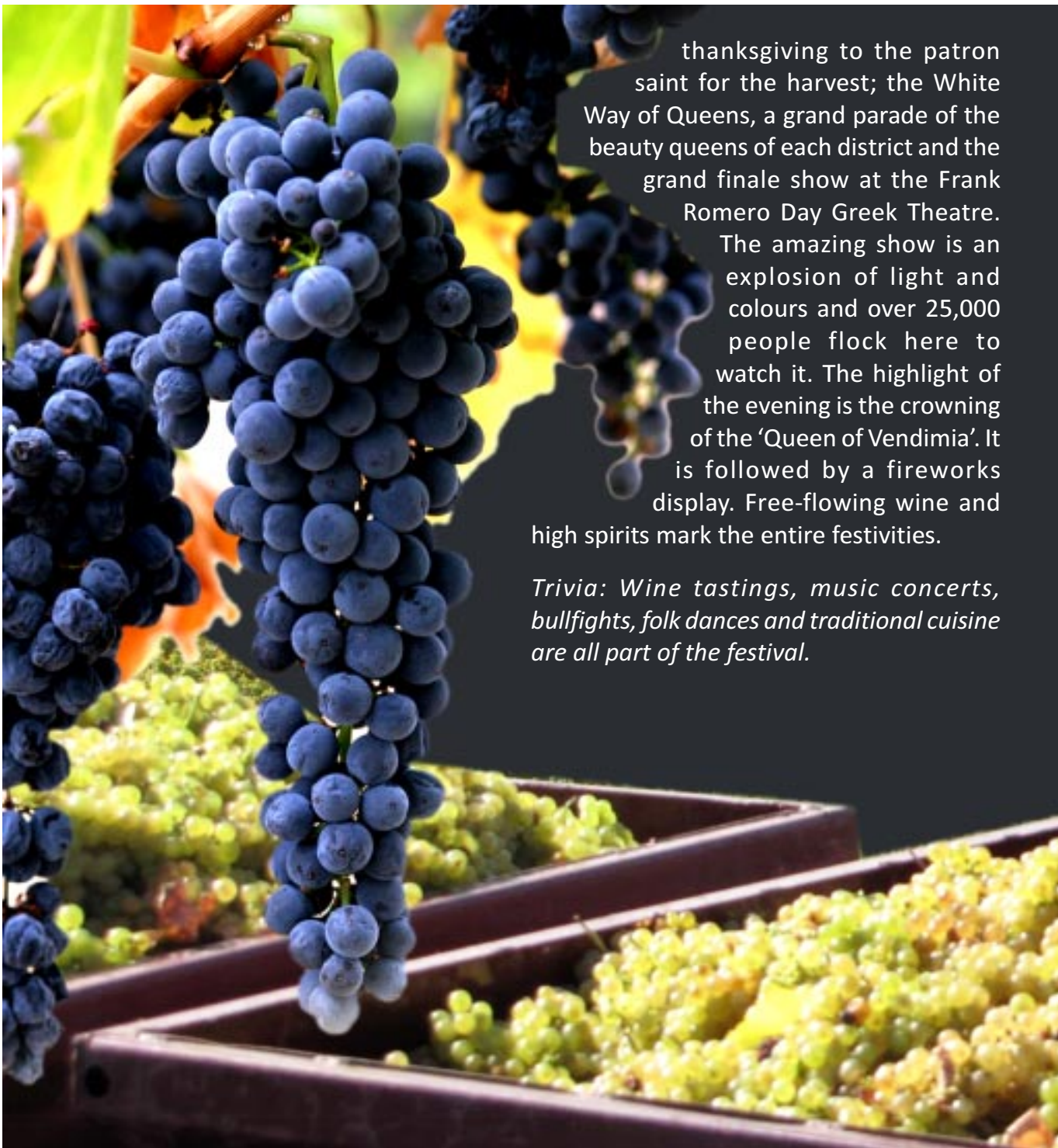
*Trivia: The movies Medicine Man and Apocalypto were both filmed in the lush, tropical rainforest here.*

### National Grape Harvest Festival (Fiesta Nacional de la Vendimia)

**Where:** Mendoza, Argentina

**When:** First weekend of March every year

Mendoza, the famous wine-producing province of Argentina, celebrates grape harvest with a grand celebration. The festival started officially in 1936 and it is marked by parades, dance, musical performances and beauty pageants organized by the eighteen districts in the province. Highlights of the festivities include 'The Blessing of Fruits',



thanksgiving to the patron saint for the harvest; the White Way of Queens, a grand parade of the beauty queens of each district and the grand finale show at the Frank Romero Day Greek Theatre.

The amazing show is an explosion of light and colours and over 25,000 people flock here to watch it. The highlight of the evening is the crowning of the 'Queen of Vendimia'. It is followed by a fireworks display. Free-flowing wine and high spirits mark the entire festivities.

*Trivia: Wine tastings, music concerts, bullfights, folk dances and traditional cuisine are all part of the festival.*



## South by Southwest (SXSW) Conferences and Festivals

**Where:** Austin (Texas), USA

**When:** March 8 – 17, 2013

The South by Southwest, also known as the SXSW festival, began in 1987 as a music festival. However, it later expanded to include films and interactive conferences. Though held in venues all over the city, much of the actions take place in the Austin Convention Centre. The festival includes movie screenings, exhibitions, trades shows and conferences. Around 2000 artistes and over 90 venues make SXSW Music festival one of the largest music festivals in the US. Hundreds of band performances, planned as well as impromptu music performances take place during the festival. SXSW Film festival celebrates cinema of all kinds, national and international, documentaries and drama etc. SXSW Interactive is the hotspot of new innovations and ideas with its focus on new technology and social media; it comprises of presentations, discussions and workshops.

*Trivia: Get a platinum badge to get access to all three segments of the festival.*





## Calle Ocho Festival

**Where:** Miami, USA

**When:** March 10, 2013

Miami bursts into action every year in March, celebrating Hispanic culture with jazz bands, dance, live shows, food and drink in the largest street party in the world. The scene of action is the Calle Ocho locality (SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street), which sees over a million visitors who come to enjoy the revelry. It is the final act of the Miami Carnival and takes place along 23 blocks. The air resounds with salsa, hip hop, merengue, as street dancers and musicians enthrall spectators with their vivacious performances. Food stalls offering the best of local fare, barbecued meat, seafood and the popular drink Cuba Libre add to the gaiety. There is also a 'kidz zone' with clowns, magicians and food to keep the little ones happy.

*Trivia: In 1988, around 119,986 people made up the longest conga (dance) line creating a Guinness World Record.*





## Nyepi (Balinese New Year)

**Where:** Bali

**When:** March 12, 2013

Can you imagine ushering in the New Year in silence, without the usual raucous partying, feasting or drinking? The Balinese believe that for truly making a fresh start, one must start the New Year with meditation and introspection, silence and fasting. A predominantly Hindu country, Bali starts the festivities two days before Nyepi with a cleansing ritual of their houses, household deities and themselves. They take a purgatory dip in the ocean praying for cleansing of body and soul. On the second day (Tawur Agung) effigies of demons are burnt. The third day of Nyepi is a time of silent contemplation for purifying the mind and body. Eating, travelling, working, lighting fires are all prohibited. The airport is also closed down with even tourists observing silence. On the fourth day (Ngembak Geni) there are prayers; it is also a time for family and friends to gather and celebrate.

*Trivia: Resolving our inner issues and starting afresh from within does seem a meaningful way of ushering in the New Year.*

## Cape Town Carnival

**Where:** Cape Town, South Africa

**When:** March 16, 2013

The Cape Town Carnival is a celebration of South Africa's rich culture and heritage. It is a celebration of diversity, with people of different races, cultures and languages uniting as one in this grand celebration of music, dance and arts. The focal point is the spectacular parade consisting of 12 dance schools comprising of 2000 dancers and 9 huge floats. Huge puppets, a procession of Harley Davidson motorbikes, musicians,

fantastic shimmering costumes and colourful floats make a splendid sight. Thousands of cheering spectators, live bands, food and drink stalls charge an atmosphere which is already sparkling.

*Trivia: The 2013 Carnival will take place in Fan Walk, Somerset Road, Green Point.*

## St. Patrick's Day

**Where:** Dublin, Ireland

**When:** March 17, 2013

Ireland earmarks a special day on its calendar for its patron saint, St. Patrick. Week-long





events set the tone for the climactic St. Patrick's Day Parade, the largest street carnival of the country. Foot-tapping live bands, Irish pipes, drums, gorgeous costumes, dance and music and over a dozen floats characterise the parade which draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world. Traditionally, people attend mass in the morning and celebrate the day in the evening. Wearing something green, tucking in a bit of shamrock on the clothes, eating a traditional dinner of bacon, potatoes and cabbages and 'drowning the shamrock' are all symbolic activities related to the festival.

*Trivia: Shamrock - a three-leaved native clover and Ireland's national emblem was used by St. Patrick to symbolise the idea of the Holy Trinity-Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*





## Nowruz

**Where:** Iran

**When:** March 20, 2013

Nowruz literally means 'New Day'. It is the Iranian New Year, which coincides with the start of spring and is the biggest celebration of the country. 'Renewal' being the keyword here, houses are thoroughly cleaned and new clothes are bought. People visit family elders, relatives and friends, eat together and exchange gifts. 'Haft Seen' or setting the table with seven items beginning with 'S' (symbolic of seven aspects of creation) and 'Sabzeh' (germinating various seeds to indicate rebirth) are interesting rituals related to the festival. Sabzi Polo Mahi, Reshteh Polo and Aajil are traditional dishes eaten during Nowruz.

*Trivia: 'Sizdah Bedar' or the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the New Year is traditionally spent outside the house picnicking in fields or parks.*





## Holi

**Where:** India

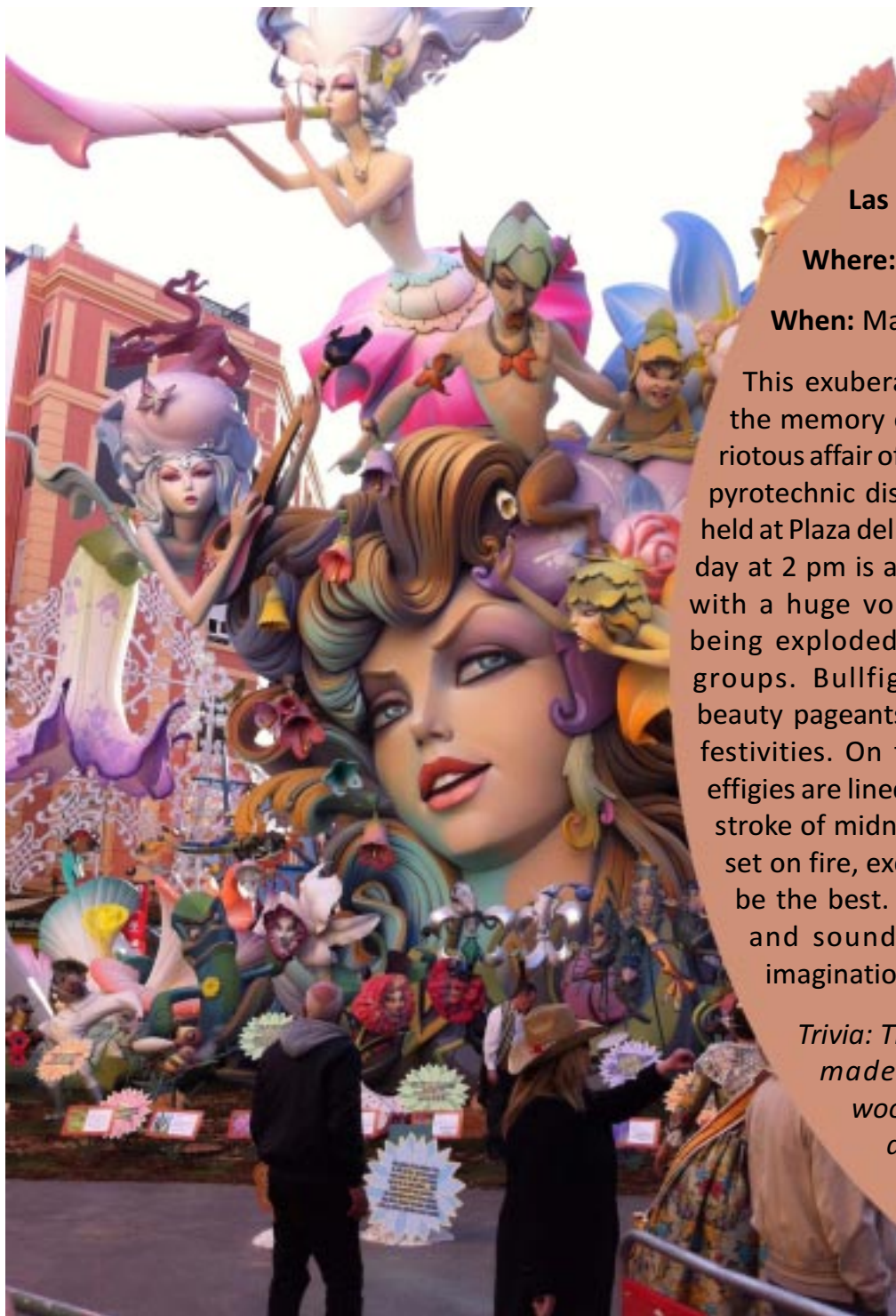
**When:** March 27, 2013

The “Festival of Colours” welcomes spring by replicating the season’s colours! People splash colours at one another, smearing one another’s faces with coloured powders or throwing coloured water through water guns, water balloons, syringes or by simply pouring a bucket of coloured water over their heads. The celebrations begin with people dressed in pristine white. Needless to say, a couple of hours later, only a sea of grinning, multi-coloured, indistinguishable faces can be seen all around. On the eve of Holi, huge bonfires are lit, symbolic of the vanquishing of the demoness Holika. The festival is also

associated with the immortal divine couple Radha and Krishna, popular Hindu deities. Celebrations are long and joyous in the places associated with their birth and life. The evening is concluded with meeting friends and family and partying together.

*Trivia: ‘Thandai’ is the traditional milk based drink consumed during Holi; it is often laced with the intoxicating ‘Bhang’. Gambling is also regarded as a “must-do” activity to bring in financial luck.*





## Las Fallas Festival

**Where:** Valencia, Spain

**When:** March 15 – 19, 2013

This exuberant festival, held in the memory of St. Joseph, is one riotous affair of fires, huge dolls and pyrotechnic displays. 'La Mascleta' held at Plaza del Ayuntamiento every day at 2 pm is an ear-piercing affair with a huge volley of firecrackers being exploded by different local groups. Bullfights, parades and beauty pageants are all part of the festivities. On the final day, huge effigies are lined up together. At the stroke of midnight, all of them are set on fire, except one - judged to be the best. The resulting sights and sounds are left to your imagination.

*Trivia: The fallas or dolls are made of paper-mache, wood or cardboard and are often over 20 feet high.*



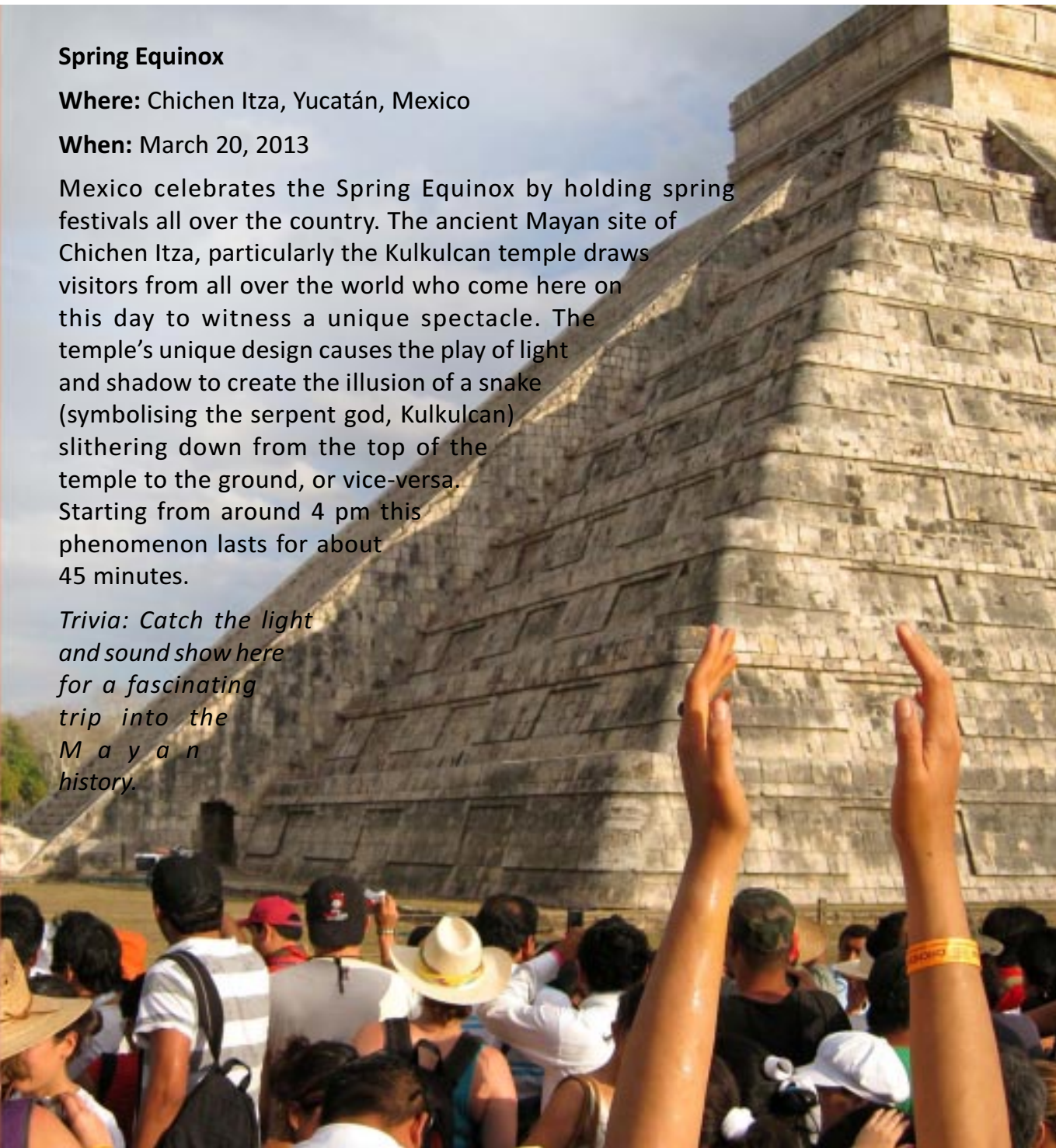
## Spring Equinox

**Where:** Chichen Itza, Yucatán, Mexico

**When:** March 20, 2013

Mexico celebrates the Spring Equinox by holding spring festivals all over the country. The ancient Mayan site of Chichen Itza, particularly the Kulkulcan temple draws visitors from all over the world who come here on this day to witness a unique spectacle. The temple's unique design causes the play of light and shadow to create the illusion of a snake (symbolising the serpent god, Kulkulcan) slithering down from the top of the temple to the ground, or vice-versa. Starting from around 4 pm this phenomenon lasts for about 45 minutes.

*Trivia: Catch the light and sound show here for a fascinating trip into the Mayan history.*







## Hanami (Cherry Blossom Viewing)

**Where:** Yoshino, Japan

**When:** Late March to April (varies with climatic conditions for the year)

Japan bursts into beauty with the blooming of the lovely white and pale-pink cherry tree blossoms every spring. The





cloud-like blossoms bloom all over the country at different times in different locations depending on local weather conditions. So much loveliness calls for celebration and the Japanese Hanami or flower viewing does precisely that. People flock towards blooming cherry trees and picnic under them with family and friends. The whole season is marked by day and moonlight picnics and merry-making.

*Trivia: Yoshino is the hotspot for cherry blossom viewing.*





**ITB  
BERLIN****THE WORLD'S  
LEADING TRAVEL  
TRADE SHOW®**

# ITB BERLIN

6-10 March 2013

## ITB Berlin 2013

The world's leading travel trade show

The winds of priorities have charted a new direction for the sails of global tourism. Would you wait to bicker on the indulgence of “bad times” or prefer to climb on top of the situation and navigate yourself towards better opportunities? The lucrative business of tourism

**Even  
Watch**



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can hardly be neglected with the number of global tourists hitting 1 billion in 2012. It's time to pack your bags for Germany for the biggest trade fair of world tourism industry is scheduled to be held early March this year. The International Tourism Bourse (ITB) Berlin flagging off on the March 6, 2013, is going to set the course for a new horizon in global tourism. It has more platforms of discussion

and hoards of new innovative ideas coming on board alongside the leading brands in the international tourism arena. The event starts on March 6, 2013 and continues till March 10, 2013.

### Organisers

Serving the trade fair and conference industry for over 40 years, Messe Berlin (previously known as the AMK Berlin) speaks for its goodwill. The successful organisers are becoming more involved in

the European trade fair circuit from its first trade fair in the year 1822. Backed by a steady growth history, Messe Berlin has the best conference venues under its sleeve. Speaking of venues, the Internationales Congress Centrum or ICC Berlin is the largest conference venue in the entire European continent. Food, logistics, travel and other major aspects of any professional event is dealt with equal professionalism and proficiency while media coverage by over 28,000 journalists from 85 nations is a guarantee. Feature in the list of ten leading trade fair companies, a cause well satisfied, is a general compliment Messe Berlin gets when an event is flooded with exhibitors, two-thirds of whom are from abroad. In number of participation by other nations, Messe Berlin scores top rank in the world. Other than the world's largest trade fair – ITB Berlin, Messe Berlin is also into organising 100 different 'regional, national and international in-house guest events' annually. International Green Week Berlin,







FRUIT LOGISTICA, IFA, ILA Berlin Air Show, Inno Trans are a few of its many prized works.

### **ITB Berlin 2013 – fresh but with the unforgettable old charm**

A few corners to watch out for in the new edition of the ITB Berlin 2013 are:

- **ITB Future Day**

Category: Future, Hospitality, Marketing

Date and Time: March 6, 1100 to 1745 hrs.

A panel discussion on the future of global tourism and the trend forecast of the international tourism industry in the coming years. IPK's World Travel Monitor will present their latest statistics and figures based on the data collected from 500,000 interviews on travel trends in European soil.

Keeping the debt crisis and recession in focus, the main objective of this session is to predict the upcoming trends that are going to create an impact to the international tourism industry and tactical ways to face these issues.

- **ITB Destination Days**

Category: ITB Destination Days

Date and Time: March 6 – 8, 1150 to 1800 hrs.

An entire three day discussion session dedicated to international destination management exploring the newer horizons of accessible tourism, sustainable tourism, lesbian and gay travels along with tourism in fresh locations such as Azerbaijan, Latin America, Asia and more. The official partner country Indonesia will address climate issues as the meet proceeds. On March 8, Africa's Kaza initiative is to be showcased to the world. While ITB Asia's own panel reciprocates repeat of its success story in the Berlin meets, the 'Web-in-Travel' segment points





out the stature of the virtual medium in the future of international tourism.

- **Pivot Point**

Category: PhoCusWright@ITB

Date and Time: March 6, 1030 to 1855 hrs.

“Pivot or not to pivot,” that is the question that the think tank of PhoCusWright, the leading market research group, is allowing the visitor companies in ITB Berlin to reflect upon.

The new age of tourism deserves newer set of ideas to go ahead. So, take a quick look to check if your company is ready to outstand in the changing world. Whether the existing system will need a



# ITB BERLIN

6 - 10 March 2013



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complete overhaul or whether a good oiling would just do to suffice in “bad times”, is the decision companies will have to take to move forward.

## Highlights of ITB Berlin 2012

The 2012 ITB Berlin concluded with more than just the regular smile. The enthusiastic international tourism industry showed more than 20 per cent increase in the attendance from its previous year. Close to 7000 journalists from 94 countries attended the event to cover all the happenings. A few highlights of ITB Berlin 2012 are:

- Everybody from the participating 180 countries got their share to enjoy in the three day global event. Partner country Egypt reflected the exact view as it found strong support to becoming a major tourist destination. Egyptian Minister of Tourism Mounir Fakhry Abdel Nour rightly pointed out, “The





## SOLUTIONS FOR TRAVEL & TOURISM



**ITB**  
ADVISORY



problems in a political context have not affected the general mood (in travelling to Egypt) in the slightest, in fact quite the contrary.”

- Travel Technology has never drawn so much attention! This was proved by the four packed halls where 236 exhibitors showed the newest technological applications available in the tourism market. The App Marathon drew quite an overwhelming response where innovative Travel Apps were demonstrated.

- A congregation of 120 bloggers from 10 countries also formed an important part of the event, as it brought along ideas for improvement from outside. This successful feature has been decided to be held in the future versions of the event as well.

- In the Ecotourism and Expeditions hall, the topic of sustainability in tourism proved to be very relevant and vital.

- Sixty four foreign delegates, 76 ambassadors and 43 government

ministers stood by the on-going events; again proving the value of the travel sector in serving as a joint platform for politicians, industrialists and diplomats.

The assembling of the leaders of tourism industry in one venue means the world is on your plate. From our previous experiences, we can assure you that a visit to this year's ITB Berlin would definitely enrich you with what's on and what's in, in the world of travel. See you there!

For more information visit: <http://www.itb-berlin.de>

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## Even Watch

### Post Event Updates

# ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) Laos, 2013

The ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) concluded in Laos on January 24, 2013. ATF 2013 marked the 32nd anniversary of this event since its inaugural event in Malaysia in 1981. This annual event brought together representatives of the ten ASEAN member nations especially from the tourism industry.

Each year, the hosting of ATF is rotated among the ASEAN member countries. Laos hosted the event for the second time and the capital city of Vientiane welcomed around 2,000 delegates including regional sellers and buyers and media professionals from all over the world.

The three day travel event, held at the Lao ITECC, a brand new convention centre in the heart of the city included exhibits from hotels, wellness and spa facilities, resorts, theme parks, MICE facilities and the likes.

“Road Map for ASEAN: Fostering Sustainable Growth, Promoting Eco Tourism” was the theme of this year’s event. Numerous speakers addressed the latest recycling, energy efficiency and water

conservation projects in ASEAN tourism apart from the regular promotion of the tourism sectors.

The main exhibition hall together with the exhibitors of ATF TRAVEX - an important 3-day travel trade show, featured 490 booths from the ten ASEAN countries. For the sellers it was an excellent platform to meet international buyers and explore business opportunities. The event was complete with wonderful arrangements of hosted lunch and dinner. ‘Malaysia Night’ dinner by Malaysia, late night party by the Philippines, the ‘Laos’ cultural show and dinner and a grand Pattaya late night entertainment show made the ATF Laos 2013 an enriching experience for all the delegates. Pre-show city tours and post-show trips were also organised for those who wanted to explore the place more. The host hotels for the delegates were the new \$50 million Five-star, Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel, Don Chang Palace Hotel, the Mercure Hotel and a few more.

The ATF 2014 flag was handed over to next year’s host country, Malaysia. The event will be held in the state of Sarawak in Malaysia.



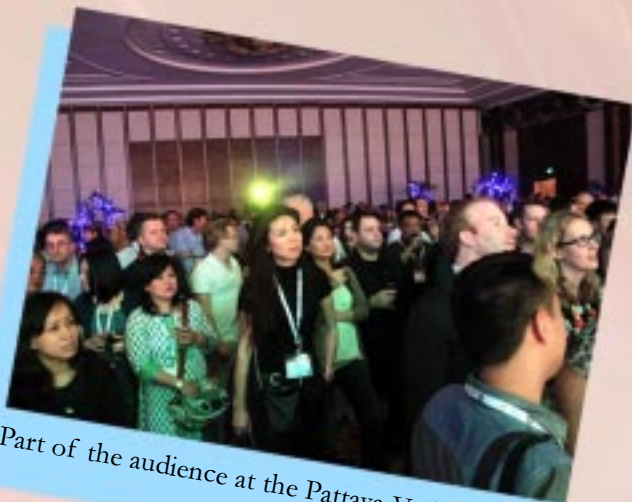
# ATF Laos, 2013 in pictures



Hand shaking of the Tourism Ministers of ASEAN countries and friend countries of ASEAN



Exchanging the signed copy of the MoU.



Part of the audience at the Pattaya Variety Night.



A cultural programme at the Closing Ceremony of ATF Laos 2013

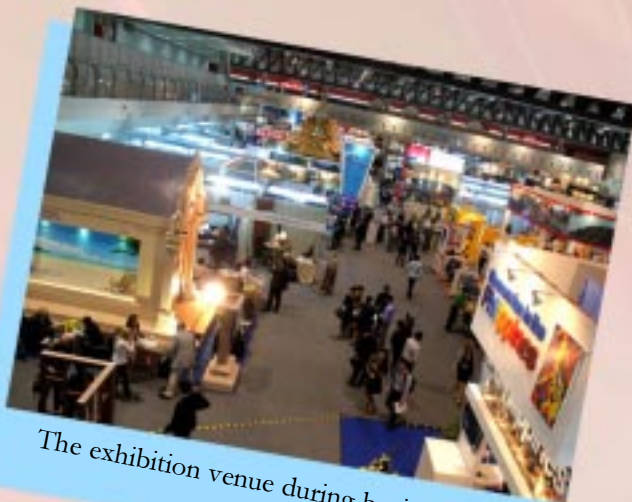
# ATF Laos, 2013 in pictures



Delegates having fun at the Pattaya Variety Night.



A performer on stage at the Pattaya Variety Night.



The exhibition venue during business hours



All Malaysian delegates joining the Malaysian Tourism Minister, Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen in singing the Malaysian Tourism advertisement jingle



# Myanmar

Hospitality & Tourism Conference 2013

26 – 28 February 2013  
Traders Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar  
[www.mhtc.sphereconferences.com](http://www.mhtc.sphereconferences.com)

“Seek partnerships and close business deals at Myanmar's FIRST and ONLY hospitality and tourism conference”

The inaugural Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference 2013 is the country's first and only conference dedicated to showcasing the investment opportunities available within Myanmar. Working closely with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism together with Myanmar Tourism Federation as the co-organizer, this conference will give you insights to Myanmar's visionary plans for the tourism sector.

MHTC 2013 is the gateway for investors, owners, developers and operators of hospitality and tourism products to explore, evaluate and capitalize on the opportunities available in Asia's last frontier. With the inking of the foreign investment laws, the time is now to gain firsthand knowledge about Myanmar tourism masterplan and identify business gaps that need immediate attention.

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