



**World**

# Luxury Travel

**Magazine**

Vol. 2 ■ Issue 8 ■ March, 2014

## **A Woman's World**

**Best travel destinations  
for women**

## **Travel for fashion**

*The most fashionable  
cities of the world*

## **SPECTACULAR SPRING FESTIVALS**

*in the Northern  
Hemisphere*

## **April Festivals**

*around the World*



**H**ave you ever travelled solo? I did. The feeling is extremely liberating. I suggest you do it too, especially if you are a woman. To help you pick a safe destination to start with, and to mark the International Women's Day, we bring you the best destination for women to travel solo. Read this cover story and feel free to write to us about your experiences. The most interesting contribution will get published on our blog too!

Fashion, the word immediately transports our minds to those perfect figures wearing the perfect dresses. How about going to such a place where you get inspired to be fashionable? Yes, our city section brings you the most fashionable cities of the world. A visit to these cities would surely make you determined to be and remain fashionable.



Spring is just a few days away! It is one of my personal favourites. It holds so much hope! To add to the 'feel good', spring is celebrated through different festivals all over the world. Head to our feature story on spring festivals and find out if there is one just next to you.

World Luxury Tourism wishes you a happy spring!

Thank you!

Manashree Prakash  
Editor-in-Chief

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**World**  
**Luxury Travel**  
**Magazine**

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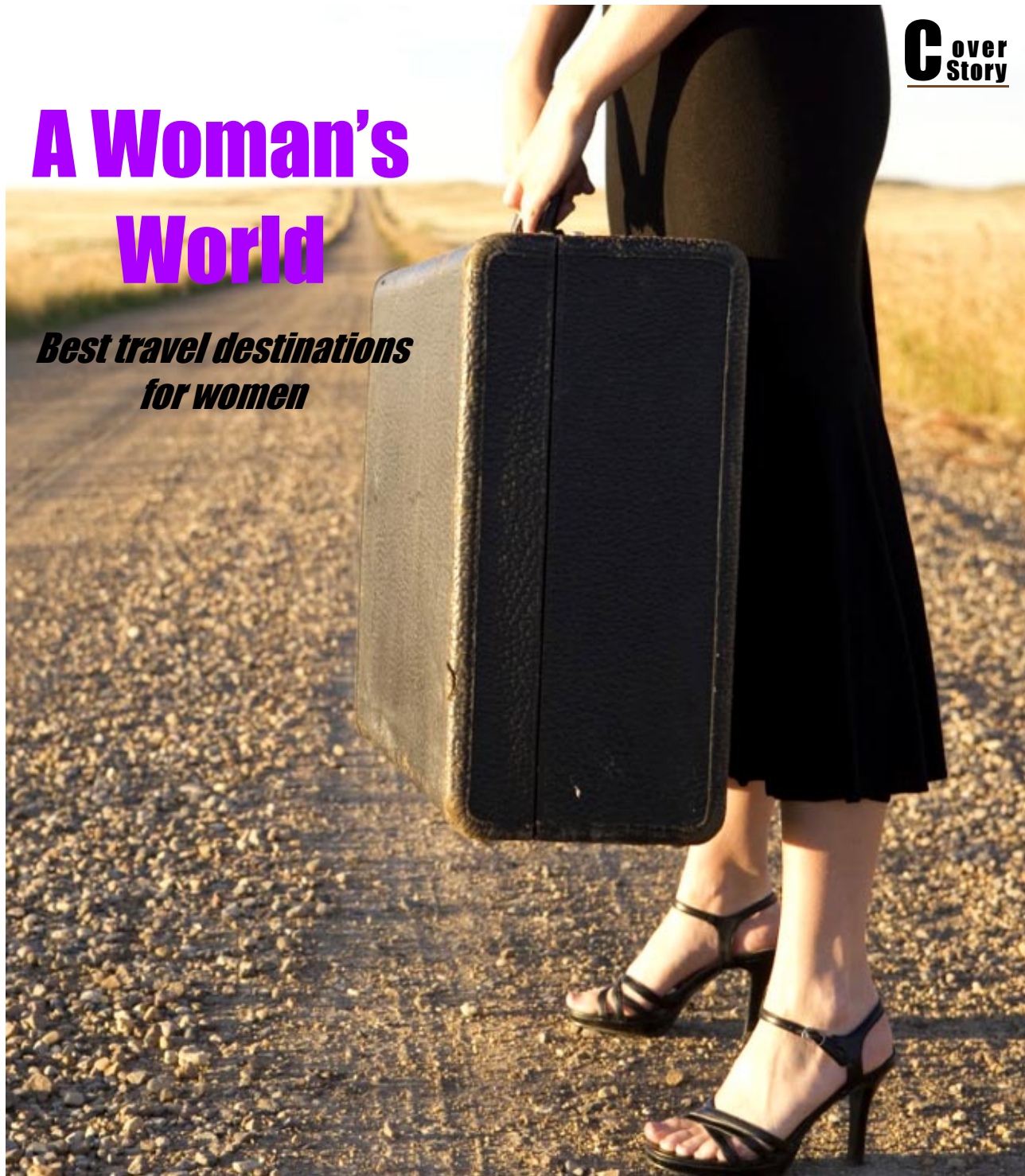



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# A Woman's World

*Best travel destinations  
for women*



A woman with dark hair, smiling, is shown from the side, wearing a large red and black backpack. She is outdoors, with a clear blue sky and some greenery in the background. The backpack has a red top section and black bottom section, with black straps and buckles. A blue water bottle is visible in a mesh pocket on the side of the backpack.

If the recent figures are anything to go by, the number of women travelling for work or leisure has steadily gone up over the years. Traditionally boutiques and jewellery stores have never left any stone unturned to woo them and now travel agencies seem to be the newest addition to the league. Women are venturing out in the world to make it their own, travel like a free bird or attend to businesses.

It is



perhaps the right time for the tourism industry to go for a facelift in order to better cater to this emerging group.

In between running households and managing offices, women often crave for and deserve a relaxing break to rejuvenate. The good news is the travel destinations best suited for female tourists have expanded beyond doubt. We bring you here the top five such places to visit for an immensely satisfying and memorable getaway:



## **New Zealand –**

Whether you love adventure sports or crave a peaceful, secluded holiday in the heart of nature, New Zealand lives up to its reputation of being a dream come true for all kinds of tourists. It is one of the safest destinations you can opt for. This picturesque land has plenty of thrills for visitors who like – camping, hiking, skydiving, fishing, rafting, bungee jumping, horseback riding, paragliding, mountaineering and so on. The fresh air, clear skies and breathtakingly splendid surroundings will surely blow your mind.







**Vietnam** – If you are dying to go someplace exotic and have a cultural adventure, Vietnam will be your best bet. This Southeast Asian country is like no other. Teeming with cheerful natives and a potpourri of sights, you will have plenty to do here. Visit any of its renowned temples, try the delectable cuisine,

stroll around the paddy fields or go shopping in its colourful markets. Alternately, you can also choose to do absolutely nothing and just take in its many flavours or immerse yourself in the spirituality of this ancient land. Women can explore to their heart's content without a worry here.



**Hungary** – For those who want to go off the beaten track without compromising on safety, Hungary is the perfect option. It is not yet fully commercialised, which means you can expect less crowd and cheaper prices during your stay.

Engulfed in history and boasting of a myriad of popular spots, it enchants visitors with its vibrant setting as well as a delightful ambience. The quaint cafes, cobbled streets, magnificent buildings and famous thermal spas will leave you pleasantly surprised and perhaps wanting for more.





**Ireland** – The best part about travelling on your own or with your girlfriends to Ireland is you do not constantly need to be on your guard or feel self-conscious. There are plenty of women exploring alone and it is not considered to be anything out of the ordinary. The locals are incredibly friendly, the bars and food joints are plenty and the sights are heavenly. You are of course at an advantage if you speak fluent English. While most of the travellers head straight to Dublin, which of course has its own appeal, the countryside is another part that you simply cannot afford to miss.







**Iceland** – Though it is sometimes given a miss due to its location, Iceland has far more to offer than any other tourist hub. Its extraordinary landscape and thrilling activities add to its appeal. You can look forward to a rather enthralling vacation here while enjoying your moments of peace and quiet every now and then.




## Tips

- If you are travelling solo for the first time consider a place you are comfortable with or maybe have few friends residing. That way you get to have your own little adventure without too far to reach.
- Choose a country that speaks the language you are well versed with. If you are ever lost or in need of help, you can always communicate without any hassle.
- Tourist friendly places are better







equipped to provide you with the comfort and safety you desire. Choose one such location for your first solo vacation trip.

- Read about the local customs,

etiquettes and tips or any potential warnings from other travellers.

- Keep the emergency numbers of local authorities, women's help lines and the number of your hotel handy at all times.

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If you have been thinking of extending your girls' night outs for a couple of days, what better way to unwind than travel with your friends to visit new places and catch up on old times? On the other hand, if you would like to be a lone explorer on a voyage of self-discovery, travelling to a dream destination may open up more avenues than you could ever imagine. Either way, there is no denying the fact that the travel industry has realised the significance of female travellers and is going out of the way to pamper them. From being under the charm of the

fairer sex to charming them like never before, the world it seems has gone for a complete revolution in the last few years.

If you are curious, read our post on [What Women Want – An insight to the women travellers' needs](#)



# Travel for fashion

The most fashionable cities of the world



What earns a city the epithet of 'fashionable'? Is it the way its people dress or the number of designers outlets in the city? Is it the number of exclusive areas devoted to high shopping or the



cultural character of a city that defines fashion? Guess the answer is a little bit of everything. Culturally, some cities have a strong fashion background. People have a natural sense of style and would not dream of being anything other than stylishly

turned out.

Here are our picks of a few of the most fashionable cities around the world.





## Paris

Paris reigns supreme in the world of fashion. The denim material, the modern bikini, the pencil skirt and even the sewing machine are all French inventions. The very concept of haute couture was born here. The city is home to high priests of fashion like

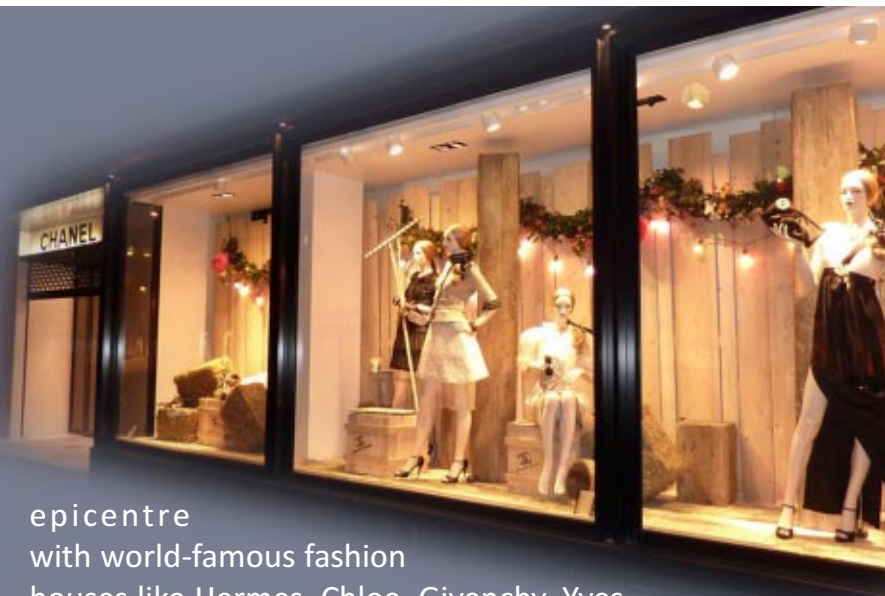
Dior, Louis Vuitton, Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel and Jean-Paul Gaultier. Parisians are famous for their sense of style and fashion. The Carrousel du Louvre hosts the piece de resistance of the Big 4 Fashion Weeks – the Paris Fashion Week (the other three being held in New York, London and Milan). Paris is especially spectacular during fashion weeks, looking like a fashion glossy come alive!



## Fashion Hotspots:

**Golden Triangle** (juncture of Champs-Élysées, Avenue Montaigne and Avenue Marceau) is the hotspot of high fashion and haute couture with top fashion houses like – Dior, Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Ralph Lauren or Louis Vuitton. Don't miss the Six Seven (ultra-glam nightclub) and Laduree (for macaroons, pastries) too. **Faubourg Saint-Honoré** is the fashion

epicentre with world-famous fashion houses like Hermes, Chloe, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent and Dior. Visit for dazzling displays of clothing, jewellery, cosmetics, furnishings and ultra-stylish shopping. Don't miss the Buddha Bar (cocktails) and Colette (Paris'







trendiest boutique). **The Marais** is for eclectic fashion, antiques, art and craft items and unique jewellery. It's open on Sundays too. **St Germain Des Pres** is this famous shopping district. It is famous for names like Bonpoint, Hermès and Cire Trudon. Don't miss the delicious food at Rue de Buci. **Clignancourt Flea Market** is for lovely vintage clothes, bags, jewellery, furniture and home wares.

**Must Visit Stores:** Galeries Lafayette (one of the world's largest and elite department stores), Au Printemps (one of the world's largest perfume

selections), Le Bon Marche (including the La Grande Epicerie gourmet market) and BHV (for fashion and huge home improvement section).

**Paris Tourist Attractions:** Eiffel Tower, Louvre, Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame, Sacre-Coeur, Musee Galliera (fashion museum) and Granville House (Christian Dior's childhood home).





## Milan

Milan is home to renowned names like Giorgio Armani, Versace, Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci, Prada and Roberto Cavalli. The Milan Fashion Week is a beacon in the world of fashion, showcasing top models and haute couture designs. Numerous fashion agencies and institutes are to be found in this style capital including the Beatrice International Models Agency and Style Design College. Milan is especially a men's style destination.





### Fashion Hotspots:

**Quadrilatero d'Oro:** One of the top shopping districts in the world, it includes Via Montenapoleone (6<sup>th</sup> most expensive shopping street in the world), Via della Spiga, Corso Venezia and Via Manzoni. All the top fashion brands of Italy can be found here. **The Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II:** This lovely, glass-roof shopping centre has top luxury designer stores including the famed Prada flagship store. Other top shopping areas include Corso Buenos Aires (Europe's biggest shopping street), Via Dante and the Brera district.







**Must Visit Stores:** Rinascente (Italy's most prestigious store for clothing, jewellery, gadgets); Armani flagship Megastore; Prada flagship store; Excelsior (high end fashion); Corso Como (boutique store).

**Hot Tip:** Visit Milan early January to early February or late June and July during the saldi (sales) time in the city and pick up great deals!

**Milan tourist attractions:** Duomo di Milano, Da Vinci's Last Supper (Santa Maria della Grazie); Sforza Castle.



## New York

New York is a leading city when it comes to fashion. The fashion scene here is vibrant and creative. The epicentre of fashion is the Manhattan Garment District (or Fashion District) with its huge concentration of fashion businesses, designers, warehouses and textile suppliers. The famed Fifth Avenue and Ninth Avenue



are located here too. Top brands like Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, Carolina Herrera and Oscar de la Renta have their showrooms here. The New York Fashion Week, a hotspot for global designers, models and buyers, is an important dictator of fashion trends throughout the world. People have a unique sense of style and street fashion is both creative and trendy.





## Fashion Hotspots

**Fifth Avenue** is a legendary shopping area famous for its luxury boutiques and stores. Banana Republic, Gucci, Prada, Victoria's Secret, Tiffany & Co. are some of the impressive names of the fashion world you will find here. **Madison Avenue** is another area choc-a-bloc with top notch apparel and jewellery stores. Prestigious names abound here include Ralph Lauren, Cartier, Lanvin, Gucci, Tod's and many more. Top departmental stores include Bloomingdale's, Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys. **Nolita** is a fascinating shopping area which beckons with wide ranging displays of luxury designer boutiques, sidewalk cafes, art galleries and night



clubs. Popular stores include Erica Weiner (boutique jewellery), Creatures of Comfort, Frock, Me & Ro (jewellery). Once the haunts of artists, **SoHo** now is a leading shopping destination stocking renowned brands like Acne, Levi's, Zara, Topshop, Burberry (Don't forget to drop into Café Habana).

**Must Visit Stores:** Saks Fifth Avenue (high end fashion, top global brands); Barneys (hip trends); Bergdorf Goodman (ultra-luxury store); Bloomingdale's (casual wear);







Macy's (the world's largest store); Scoop NYC (ultimate fashion store); Roundabout Resale (consignment store for designer wear).

**Hot Tip:** Thanksgiving is the best time to catch amazing bargains! Check [newyork.citysearch.com](http://newyork.citysearch.com) for daily listings before you shop.

**NYC Tourist Attractions:** Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, Times Square, Central Park, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Empire State Building.

## London

London is in the forefront of the fashion scene today with the Global Language Monitor declaring London as the most fashionable city in the world (2011, 2012). The London fashion scene is eclectic and diverse, reflecting the multi-cultural influence of its population. The fashion scene is also buzzing with the creativity infused by hosts of young designers coming out from the various London fashion schools. A walk down the Bond Street is an education in fashion; but fashion has also permeated to daily life and London street style is in a class of its own.





### Fashion Hotspot:

- Bond Street and Mayfair for iconic destinations, top luxury lines and stores
- Oxford Street for high fashion, designer outlets and landmark stores such as Selfridges
- Regent Street for mid-priced fashion
- Jermyn Street for men's clothing; stores like Benson & Clegg (bespoke shirts), John Lobb (shoes)





- Portobello Road, Notting Hill for its vintage fashions and antiques
- Covent Garden for fashion boutiques, vintage stores, urban wear, stores like All Saints, Banana Republic, Accessorize
- Brick Lane, East End - a flea market overflowing with second-hand clothes, furniture, jewellery Indian eateries and every miscellaneous item imaginable; a bargain-hunter's dream.







**Must Visit Stores:** Westfield London (150,000 m<sup>2</sup> of shopping, dining, entertainment; top international brands; top luxury area-The Village); Harvey Nichols (international luxury) Selfridges (High end. Check out the cupcakes at Lola's), Topshop (affordable range), Brown's (international brands), Primark (budget), Urban Outfitters, Brick Lane (street wear), H&M (affordable clothes, accessories), Beyond Retro (huge warehouse with collection of vintage clothes, accessories).

**London Tourist Attractions:** London Bridge, British Museum, London Eye, Buckingham Palace.





# SPECTACULAR SPRING FESTIVALS

*in the Northern  
Hemisphere*



Nature seems to reward us for enduring the dark, cold days of winter with a burst of life and colour in spring. While the earth celebrates by coming alive with newly unfurling leaves, singing of birds and appearance of spring flowers, man applauds with enthusiasm. All over the Northern Hemisphere, during the spring season, hundreds of celebratory events and festivals are organised. Let us take a look at some of the most eye-catching ones!

## Hanami Festivals

March to May

Japan

Hanami or cherry blossom viewing is Japan's traditional tribute to the lovely spring-time blooming of cherry blossoms. The entire country literally bursts into snowy clouds of lovely, delicate pink cherry blooms. Depending on the location and weather conditions, the cherry season can start as early as February and extend till May. People flock to parks and gardens bringing picnic baskets (with rice cakes, fried chicken and the traditional drink 'sake')





and enjoy the beauty around them with friends and family. Hotspots for cherry blossom viewing include Yoshino-yama, Hirosaki, Ueno Park and the Japan Mint tunnel.

**Trivia:** Hanami bentos are specially made boxes filled with dishes made from fresh spring produce. They are colourful, typically representing spring hues.





## St Patrick's Day

March 14 – 17, 2014

Dublin, Ireland

Ireland honours its patron St Patrick with great religious fervour and gaiety. Week long celebrations culminate in the grand parade on St Patrick's Day on March 17. This grand street carnival is a medley of colours, lively band music composed of drums, pipes and gorgeously decorated







floats. There are also a host of cultural, religious and fun events taking place all over Ireland during this time. Most are free and everyone has a great time singing, dancing and drinking huge quantities of Guinness! Green is traditionally worn and so is shamrock (the three-leaved clover that is the national emblem).

**Trivia:** Traditional food to dine on includes potatoes, corned beef, pink bacon, cabbage and Shepherd's Pie.





## Holi

March 16-17, 2014

India

Aptly named the 'Festival of Colours', Holi is a celebration of the arrival of spring. Holi is

marked by the use of colours as vibrant as spring itself. People throw coloured water with water guns, water balloons and sprays. Coloured pigments are mixed with oil or water and coated over friends, relatives or passers-by.







Children love this festival. It is a great time to have some good-natured fun. Friends and family catch up in the evening over sweets and the special Holi drink – thandai, a cold drink made of dry fruits and spices (known as bhang when it is mixed with marijuana).

**Trivia:** On the eve of Holi huge bonfires are lit. They symbolise the destruction of the demoness Holika and the victory of good over evil.





## National Cherry Blossom Festival

March 20 – April 13, 2014

Washington D.C.

When 3750 cherry trees burst into blooms, the result is a scene of breath-taking loveliness. A million visitors are captivated by this sight during the National Cherry Blossom Festival every year. The trees, gifted as a mark of friendship by the city of Tokyo in 1912 are around the Tidal Basin area of Washington D.C. During the festival, the







city vibrates with over 200 cultural programmes and scores of special events. The main attractions of the festival include the Blossom Kite Festival, the National Cherry Blossom Parade and the Japanese Street Festival.

**Trivia:** The Cherry Blossom Queen's crown was gifted by Mikimoto Kokichi (a pearl company President) in 1957. It is made up of 1585 pearls over five pounds of gold and ermine at the base.

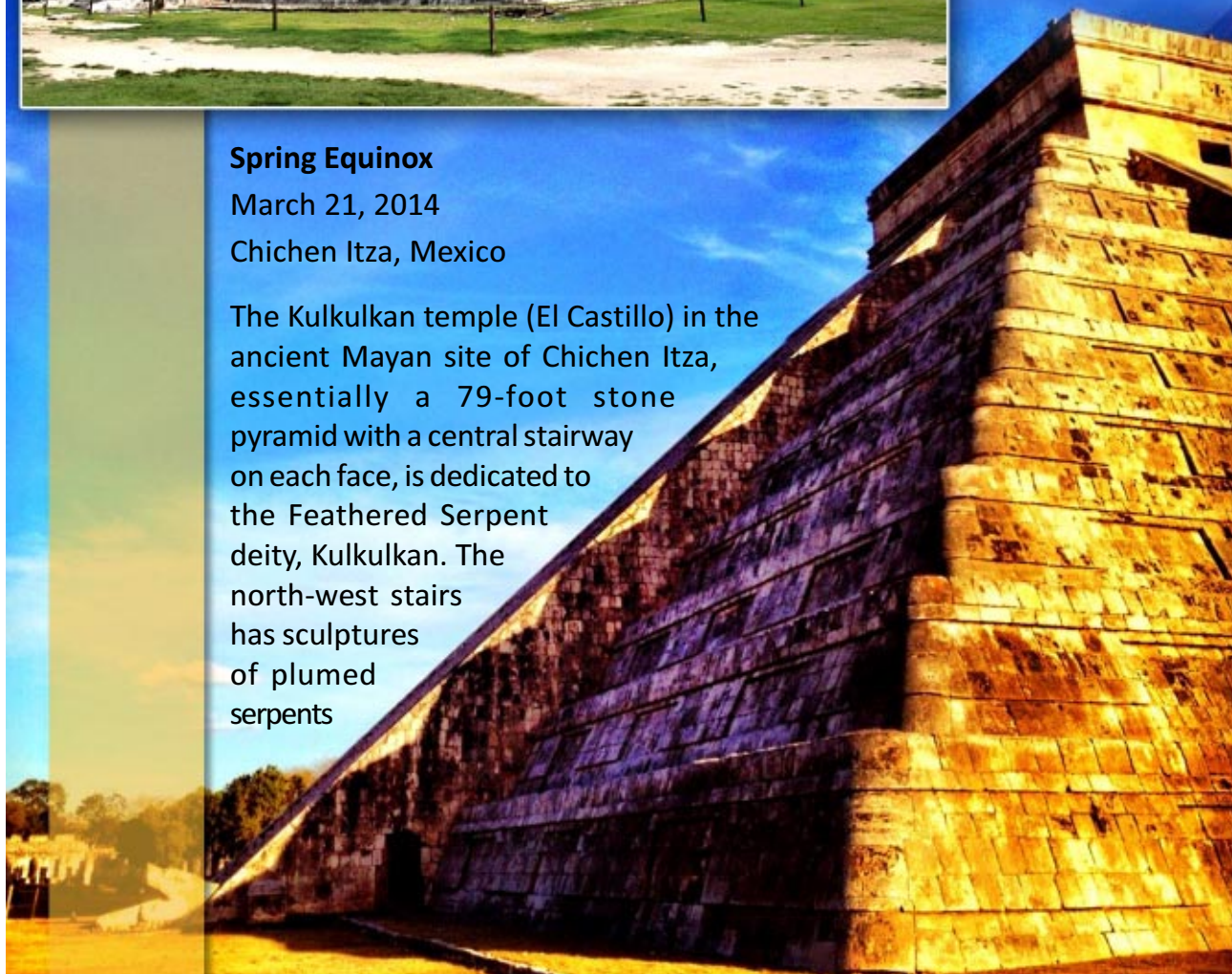


### **Spring Equinox**

March 21, 2014

Chichen Itza, Mexico

The Kulkulkan temple (El Castillo) in the ancient Mayan site of Chichen Itza, essentially a 79-foot stone pyramid with a central stairway on each face, is dedicated to the Feathered Serpent deity, Kulkulkan. The north-west stairs has sculptures of plumed serpents





running down the sides. During the equinoxes, the setting sun strikes the sides of the northern balustrade creating the illusion of a snake-like shadow slithering down the steps. Thousands of visitors from all over the globe come here to witness this unique phenomenon that takes place twice a year during the equinoxes. This structure is believed to have served as an astronomical calendar.

**Trivia:** There are 91 steps on each of the four sides and including the platform on top they add up to exactly 365- the number of days in the Mayan calendar.







## Semana Santa

April 13 – 20, 2014  
Seville, Spain

The Holy Week or Semana Santa is a religious celebration commemorating the

crucifixion of Christ. It is celebrated with great religious fervour particularly by the Catholic religious brotherhoods. Seville is the epicentre of celebrations with a huge parade being taken out; it consists of 115







massive floats weighing over 3 tonnes. Over a million people congregate here to watch the gorgeous floats, the costaleros or float bearers (covered in hooded costumes) and the nazarenos (penitents) with their wooden crosses. Bands with drums and trumpets playing hymns accompany the parade.

**Trivia:** Semana Santa is a week off for everyone, so almost all the places will be closed.







## **Madeira Flower Festival**

**May 1 – 7, 2014**

**Madeira, Portugal**

A celebration of spring, this beautiful flower festival is held in the capital city of Funchal. The whole city overflows with flowers. People exhibit their creativity by making lovely floral carpets, bouquets and a variety of floral arrangements. Celebrations begin on the preceding





day with thousands of children bringing flowers to build a 'Wall of Hope' near the City Hall Square. The next day is the Flower Parade, an incredibly lovely sight of flowers in all their profusion and colour. Gorgeous floral floats and costumes, music and dance make this a fun-filled and enchanting event.

**Trivia:** Birds of paradise, roses, lilies, pride of Madeira, orchids and camellias are some of the flowers that can be seen here.



## Canadian Tulip Festival

May 9 – 19, 2014

Ottawa, Canada

Often considered to be the largest tulip festival in the world, the Canadian Tulip festival celebrates the country's heritage and its role in freeing the Dutch during WWII. The festival's

roots goes back to 1945 when the Dutch gifted 10,000 tulip bulbs as a token of thanks for Canada's help in liberation of Netherlands and providing refuge to the exiled Dutch royalty during that time. The festival was first held in 1953. During the three weeks of the







festival, Ottawa is virtually a tulip haven, attracting around 500,000 visitors. A host of events are held including concerts and lectures. The top places to catch seas of tulips include the Commissioners Park and Major's Hill Park.

**Trivia:** Netherlands continues to send 20,000 bulbs every year to Canada!



### Spring Fever

Flower festivals, religious festivals, cultural events, there is a whole lot of activity happening during the spring season. This year, why not catch the spring fever and travel to any of these fantastic destinations? As Robbin Williams declared, "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party'!" So let the party begin!

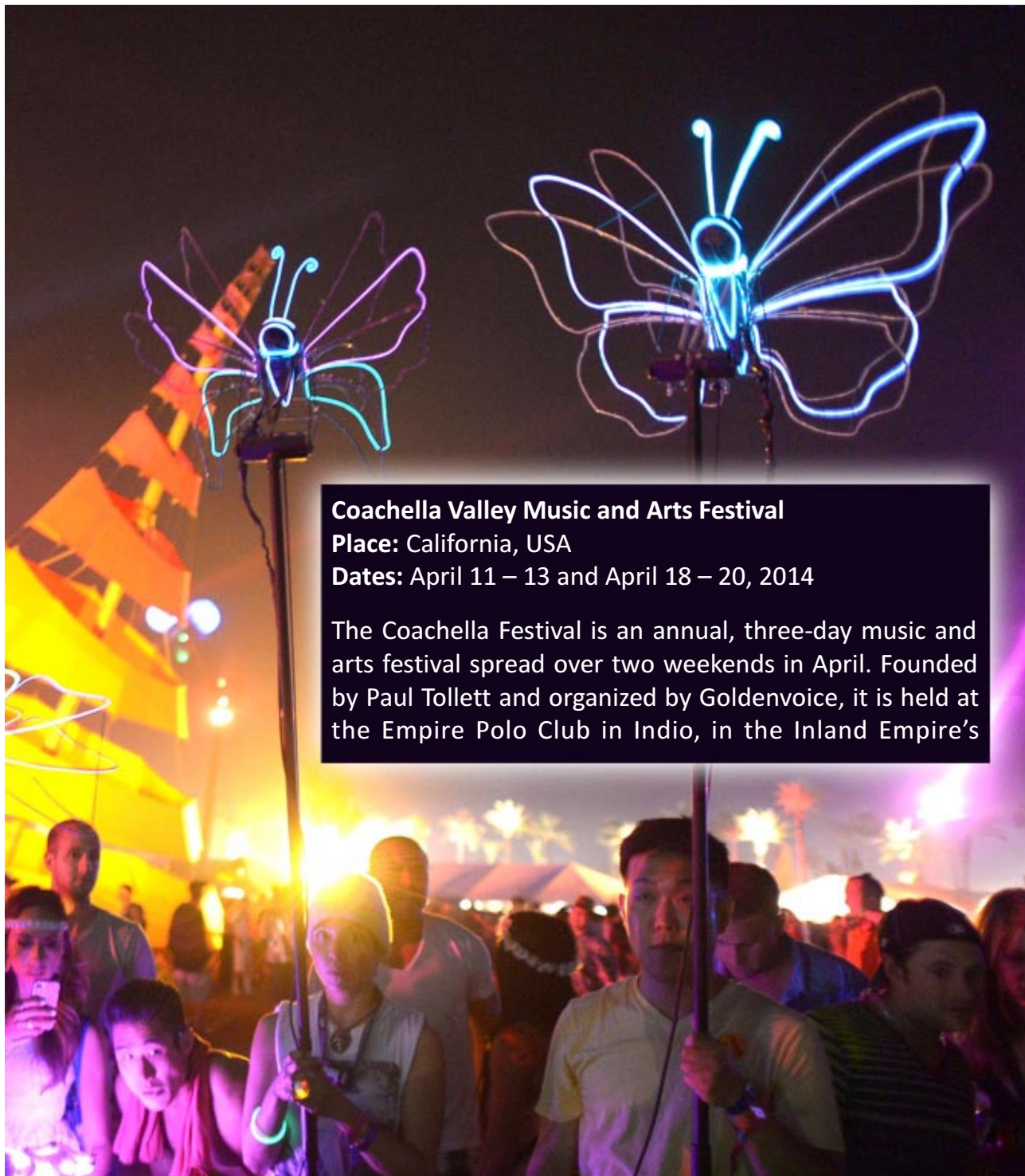
## Happenings

# April Festivals

*around the World*







### **Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival**

**Place:** California, USA

**Dates:** April 11 – 13 and April 18 – 20, 2014

The Coachella Festival is an annual, three-day music and arts festival spread over two weekends in April. Founded by Paul Tollett and organized by Goldenvoice, it is held at the Empire Polo Club in Indio, in the Inland Empire's





Coachella Valley. There are various stages across the venue where live music performances take place. Music lovers can enjoy every genre – hip hop, rock, indie, electronic music. Some of the most famous names in music enthrall visitors with their performances here. A popular way of enjoying the festival is camping on the polo grounds. The 2014 line-up includes names like Outkast, Muse, Arcade Fire, Lorde and Calvin Harris.

**Trivia:** Tickets for the 2014 show were sold out in three hours!





## Songkran

**Place:** Thailand

**Dates:** April 13 – 15, 2014

Songkran, the Thai New Year, is a harvest festival and also marks the beginning of the solar calendar. The main ingredient in the joyous revelry is water, tonnes of it. Trucks are lined up on street sides carrying icy cold water. Children arm themselves with plastic water guns or balloons and adults grab anything that comes handy from bowls to





buckets. Policemen are favourite targets and so are passers-by. Action is particularly heated in Phuket, especially Bangla Road where water battles rage until night. However, the whole thing is done in a spirit of fun.

**Trivia:** Songkran is symbolic of spiritual cleansing and purification in readiness for the New Year.

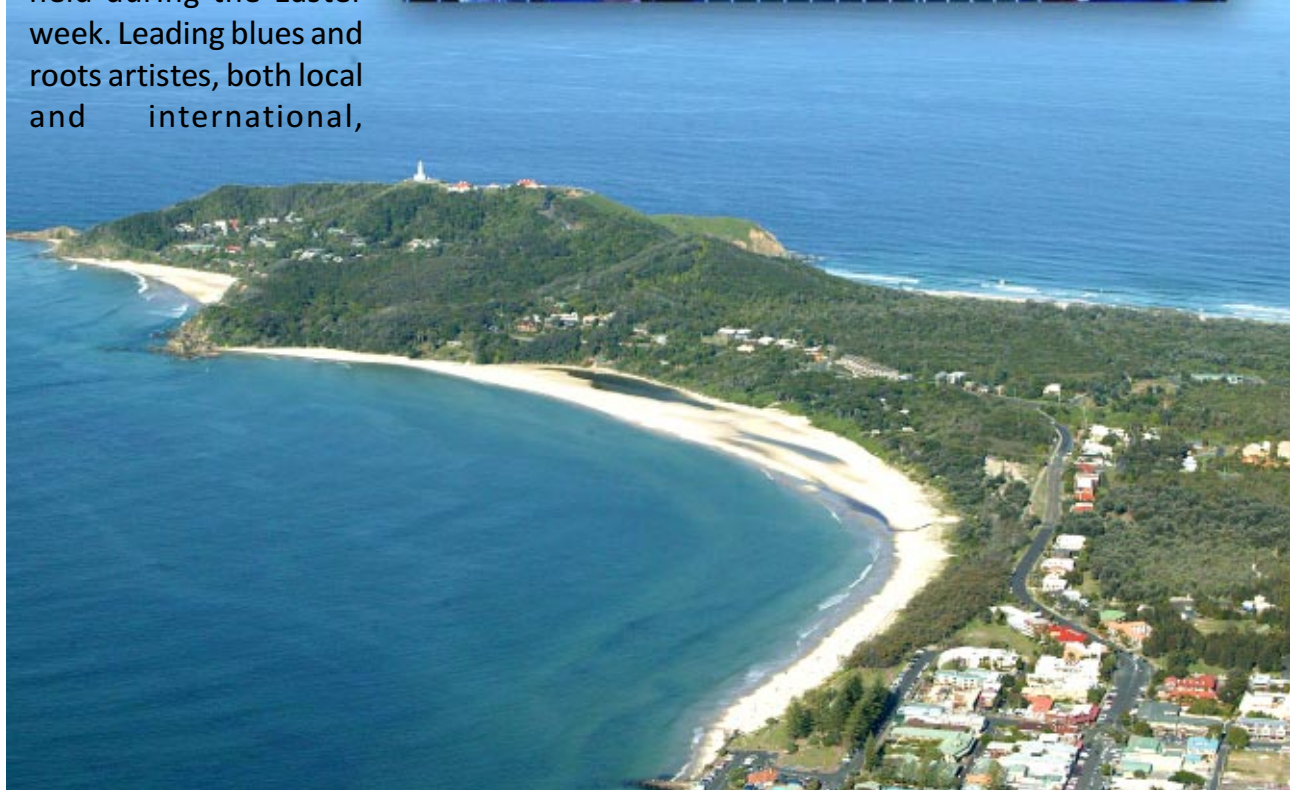


## Byron Bay Bluesfest or the East Coast International Blues and Roots Music Festival

**Place:** New South Wales,  
Australia

**Dates:** 17 – 21 April,  
2014

The Byron Bay Bluesfest or the East Coast International Blues & Roots Music Festival is an annual music festival held during the Easter week. Leading blues and roots artistes, both local and international,



perform here. Over 200 performances featuring the world's finest blues, roots, jazz, Latin, reggae, hip hop, folk and soul artists are held on the five stages at the Tyagarah Tree Farm venue. The venue, 11 km away from Byron Bay, has car parking, camping facilities, food court,

bars and a coffee shop. This year's line-up includes renowned artistes like Jack Johnson, Elvis Costello, John Mayer and Dave Matthews Band among others.

**Trivia:** The festival celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.





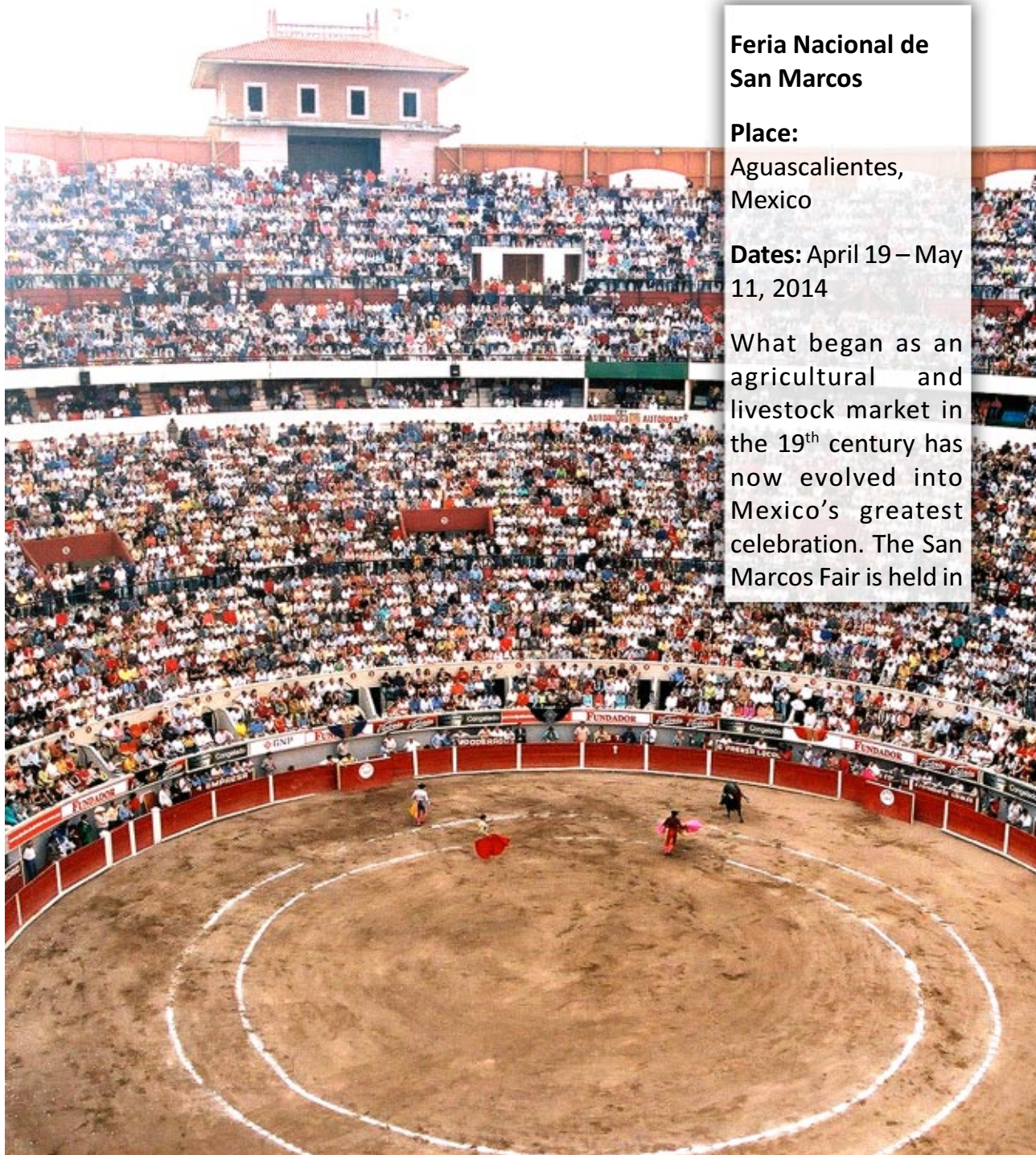
## Feria Nacional de San Marcos

### Place:

Aguascalientes,  
Mexico

**Dates:** April 19 – May  
11, 2014

What began as an agricultural and livestock market in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has now evolved into Mexico's greatest celebration. The San Marcos Fair is held in







honour of the patron saint, Saint Mark. Though the festival is spread over a few weeks the main date is April 25, the Feast Day of San Marcos (St Mark). There is a huge parade and a variety of events like cock-fights, bull-fighting, rodeos, Flamenco dance and music shows. There is also a casino where it

is legal to gamble only during this time. The fair attracts over seven million people and the city and hotels overflow during this festival.

**Trivia:** Aguascalientes is a beautiful city, famous for its natural springs and historical buildings.





## King's Day (Koningsdag)

**Place:** Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Dates:** April 26, 2014

For the first time, King's Day will be celebrated in Amsterdam to celebrate the birthday of the country's first male monarch, King Willem-Alexander. Traditionally the day has always been known as Queen's Day and celebrated in honour of the reigning Queen's birthday (fixed in April after Queen Juliana's birthday). The city is awash with orange, the colour of the royal family with everyone wearing orange colours from head to toe. This is also the day for the 'vrijmarkt', when

everyone sells their second hand goods all over the city. Boating on the canals, partying on the streets, fun, dance and music are all integral part of the festivities.

**Trivia :** Though the king's birthday falls on the April 27 (Sunday), it will be celebrated a day before as traditionally the event is not celebrated on a Sunday.



**W L T**

**World Luxury Tourism**