

World

Luxury Travel

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Magazine

**Best Surfing Destinations
of the World**

Darwin

A year round destination

Thai Food

Five must-try dishes in Bangkok

Africa

The top ten must see attractions

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■ Issue 10
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W L T
World Luxury Tourism

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Magazine



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

There is no dearth of activities for the thrill seekers in the world. Every season, geographic location and landscape gives them an opportunity to experience something new and exciting. Spring is over and so is the spring break. How about a vacation to recover from the vacation?

Summer is the ideal time to be with the sea, sand and sun. Add a bit of surfing to heighten the fun quotient. Pick from our list of Best Surfing Vacations in the World featuring as our Cover Story. We have covered all level of expertise while making the list for our readers. Don't forget to send us your surfing vacation pictures.

Why not Africa? Yes, one of the most diverse, rich and amazing places to travel is Africa. Read about the Top Ten Must See Attractions of Africa and you would know what we are talking about. World Luxury Tourism recommends a visit to this Dark Continent!

Though the seasons vary in the Southern Hemisphere, it is always a good time to visit Darwin in Northern Territory of Australia. Read more on Darwin in our City Guide section of the e-zine.

The World Luxury Travel Magazine is in a vibrant mood. Watch this space for some exciting topics in our upcoming issues. To keep track, do give us a virtual 'thumbs up' on our facebook page here:


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Thank you!

Manashree Prakash
Editor-in-Chief

Best Surfing Destinations *of* the World



A tropical beach scene with palm trees and surfers. The image shows a sandy beach with several people. Two people on the left are holding red surfboards. In the center, a person is sitting on the sand with a yellow surfboard. To the right, a person is walking with a yellow surfboard, and another person is standing further right. The background features a blue sky and ocean waves. A large palm frond is visible in the foreground on the left side.

Very few water sports can match the thrill of riding the waves on a surfboard. The exhilaration of riding the wave is unbeatable. Millions of surfers across the world will agree fervently with John McCarthy when he says, “Surfing is the most blissful experience you can have on this planet, a taste of heaven”. Such is the lure of this adrenaline pumping sport that Duke Kahanamoku, considered the father of modern surfing, once said, “Out of water, I am nothing”!

No wonder surf lovers across the world are in search of the ‘perfect wave’ and the most fantastic spots to indulge their surfing passion. Let us explore some of the best surfing destinations in the world. Before we do that let us take a brief look at some of the surfing terms which might be helpful.

Surf Parlance

- Beach Break/Point Break: A permanent obstruction such as a reef or a rock,
- Barrel/Tube: The hollow, covered portion of a wave forming a tube,
- Left and Right Waves: Waves breaking to the left or right from the surfer’s perspective,
- Swell: Waves coming from a storm; or waves coming onshore from some other sources in deep waters (formed by the wind).

Now we are set to discover the best the world has to offer by way of top surfing destinations. Let us begin the journey:

Pipeline, Oahu, Hawaii

One of the top class surfing destinations in the world, the North Shore, Oahu is famous for massive waves, which rise as high as nine metres. The North Shore has some fantastic surfing spots - Sunset Beach (2 - mile long surfing haven), Waimea Beach (known for its enormous waves) and Waikiki Beach (best for learners). The most famous of them all is the Banzai Pipeline (Ehukai Beach). The Pipeline is raw water power at its massive best. The huge waves powered by the westerly swells rise close to the shore and rise above sharp volcanic reef. The combination gives rise to

huge classic barrel shaped waves with deadly power and fury. Surfing these waves is a challenge only intrepid and experienced surfers dare to accept. The Billabong Pipe Masters, one of the most prestigious surfing events in the world, is held here every year.

Best time to surf:

May to September – for learners and others;
November to March – for professionals.



Jeffreys Bay, South Africa

Located southwest of Port Elizabeth, this is an incredible surfing destination with its awesome right-hand tubes, lovely beaches, abundant shells and amazing seafood. It is considered the best surfing spot in the world for the consistency and quality of its surfing. The most famous surfing spot here is the Supertubes (Supers), where enormous water barrels, fuelled by the south-west swells break for about 300 m or more, give experienced surfers the thrill of a lifetime. For beginners, there are smaller and easier waves at the Point. Other popular surfing spots include Boneyards, Kitchen Windows, Magna Tubes and Albatross. The famous Billabong Pro WCT is held here annually.

Best time to surf: June - August (winter).

Mentawai Islands, Indonesia

These lovely islands, close to Western Sumatra and accessible by boats, are a surfer's paradise. The consistent and quality waves are to be found almost all year round though the huger ones are created during April to October. Some of the main surfing destinations here are Siberut, Sipora and North and South Pagi. The popular spots include Lance's Right, Macaroni's, and Thunders. The winds blow from various directions with the result that you can find good waves for surfing close to the shore also. This remote surfing destination can be accessed by boat trips. The Mentawai Pro by Rip Curl will be held at Lance's Right from April 21 – 29 this year.

Best time to surf: June to September.

Gold Coast, Australia

Gold Coast is adored by surfers for its lovely climate and the 70 km stretch of beaches with classic point breaks like Palm Beach, Mermaid Beach, The Spit and Narrowneck (artificial reef). There are other fabulous

spots like the consistent Burleigh, South Stradbroke Island and Broadbeach. Snappers Rocks Superbanks is home to some of the longest waves with a single wave of 1.97 km believed to have been ridden all the way from Snappers Rock to Kirra! Gold Coast has some of the most consistent waves and something



suited for surfers of all levels. Apart from the two feet high swells produced by the easterly swells, there are cyclones which stoke waves to a height of four feet occasionally. The Quiksilver Pro is held here annually.

Best time to surf: January to July.



Fuerteventura, Spain

Located in the Canary Islands, situated off the African coast this island is aptly named. Fuerteventura means 'strong winds' and the winds make for incredible waves attracting hordes of surfers, experts and novices alike. The north and north-west swells whip up waves 4-12 feet high. Wind surfing and kite surfing are very popular here. The Bubble, a legendary right-hand wave, is a power packed barrel, guaranteed to make you gasp. Other prominent waves include Shooting Gallery, Generosa, Rocky Point, Harbour Wall, El Hierro and Cotillo. The International Windsurfing and Kiteboarding Championships are held here.

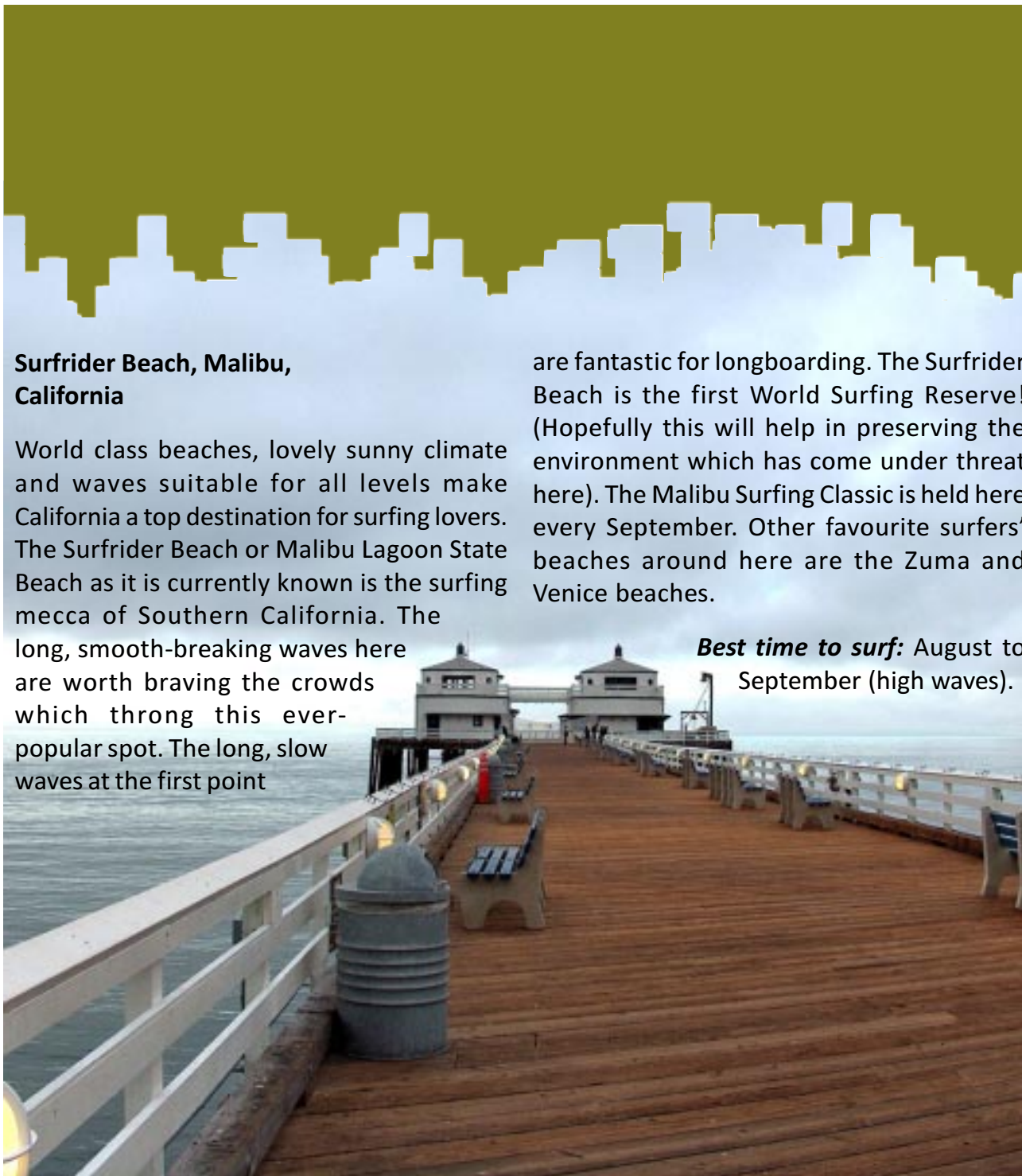
Best time to surf: September to April (for experts).

Surfrider Beach, Malibu, California

World class beaches, lovely sunny climate and waves suitable for all levels make California a top destination for surfing lovers. The Surfrider Beach or Malibu Lagoon State Beach as it is currently known is the surfing mecca of Southern California. The long, smooth-breaking waves here are worth braving the crowds which throng this ever-popular spot. The long, slow waves at the first point

are fantastic for longboarding. The Surfrider Beach is the first World Surfing Reserve! (Hopefully this will help in preserving the environment which has come under threat here). The Malibu Surfing Classic is held here every September. Other favourite surfers' beaches around here are the Zuma and Venice beaches.

Best time to surf: August to September (high waves).



Kuta Beach and Uluwatu, Bali,

Bali, Indonesia's most popular tourist destination is also a great place for surfing. Swells from the Southern Ocean keep the waves coming as high as 12 feet. Uluwatu, situated on the southern tip of Bali, sees some spectacular waves ranging anywhere from 3 to 10 feet. The Uluwatu temple nearby is a big tourist attraction. Suited for expert surfers, the wave consistency here is great. Some notable waves include The Peak, Racetracks and Outside Corner. High waves can be found in August and September. Kuta Beach offers some of the world's best waves suitable for beginners as well as experts. Its proximity to the tourist centre of Legian means it is crowded; however this place is great for your first white water surfing lesson.

Best time to surf: May to October.



Hossegor, France

Renowned as the 'surfing capital of Europe', this spot is one of the best beach breaks in the world. Huge water barrels, up to 3 m high, break powerfully close to the shore. The consistent west and north-west swells make sure the water is high during summers and autumns. Watch out for changing weather conditions which makes the surf change its size and condition with surprising suddenness. The famous beach breaks include Gravière and La Nord. The place is suitable for beginners as well as experienced surfers. The Quiksilver Pro France is held here every September. The nearby town of Biarritz is another world famous surfing destination.

Best time to surf: September and October.





Costa Rica

Beautiful beaches, warm waters and consistent surf make Costa Rica a popular place for surfers. The Northern Pacific Coast has great surfing conditions due to the strong off-shore winds that blow during this season and the ideal swell. The Tamarindo Beach is a great favourite. It offers a half-kilometre long beach, warm waters and waves up to a height of 3 m. Popular breaks include Witches Rock and Ollie's Point. Pavones in the South Pacific coast is famous for the world's longest lefts, around 75 miles and a two to three minute ride. The 'Corner' at Playa Hermosa is another favourite, reaching up to 200 m and creating fantastic tubes under favourable conditions. Other popular surfing spots in Costa Rica include Santa Teresa, Avellanas and Nosara. The Costa Rica National Surfing Championships are a popular annual event here.

Best time to surf: December to April (summer).




Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca, Mexico

The Puerto Escondido, popularly known as the Mexican Pipeline offers spectacular waves for surfing. The hollow waves, fast and power-packed, break both to the left and right and can reach as high as 20 feet. They are considered the largest and most dangerous beach break in the world. The most popular surfing spot is the Zicatela Beach. The tides and waves are very powerful here and are only suitable for highly experienced surfers. Playa Marinero has gentle surf suitable for beginners. Various surfing competitions are held every November here.

Best time to surf: May to October.





There are many popular surfing destinations apart from the ones listed above. You may even have your personal list of favourites depending on your style of surfing. Be it surfboarding, bodyboarding, longboarding, shortboarding or paddle boarding there are a whole lot of fantastic destinations out there to choose from regardless of your style or level of proficiency. The idea is to have fun and get your adrenaline pumping with this thrilling water sport, as Duke Kahanamoku famously said, “The best surfer out there is the one having the most fun”.

Africa

*The top ten must
see attractions*



The Dark Continent

Nature in all her raw and untouched splendour can perhaps be seen nowhere better than in Africa. Mysterious, exotic, teeming with wildlife and thick forests, home to ancient tribal cultures, Africa was unknown and unexplored for many years earning it the sobriquet of 'Dark Continent'. However the 'Dark Continent' is slowly revealing its secrets and travellers are marvelling at the unspoilt beaches, virgin forests, stunning wildlife and spectacular natural beauty of this alluring continent.

If you are heading to this wonderful land, there are simply too many things for you to see and experience in one visit. However, if you have to make such a list, there are some top places and experiences which by popular opinion are simply 'unmissable'. Take a look at them!

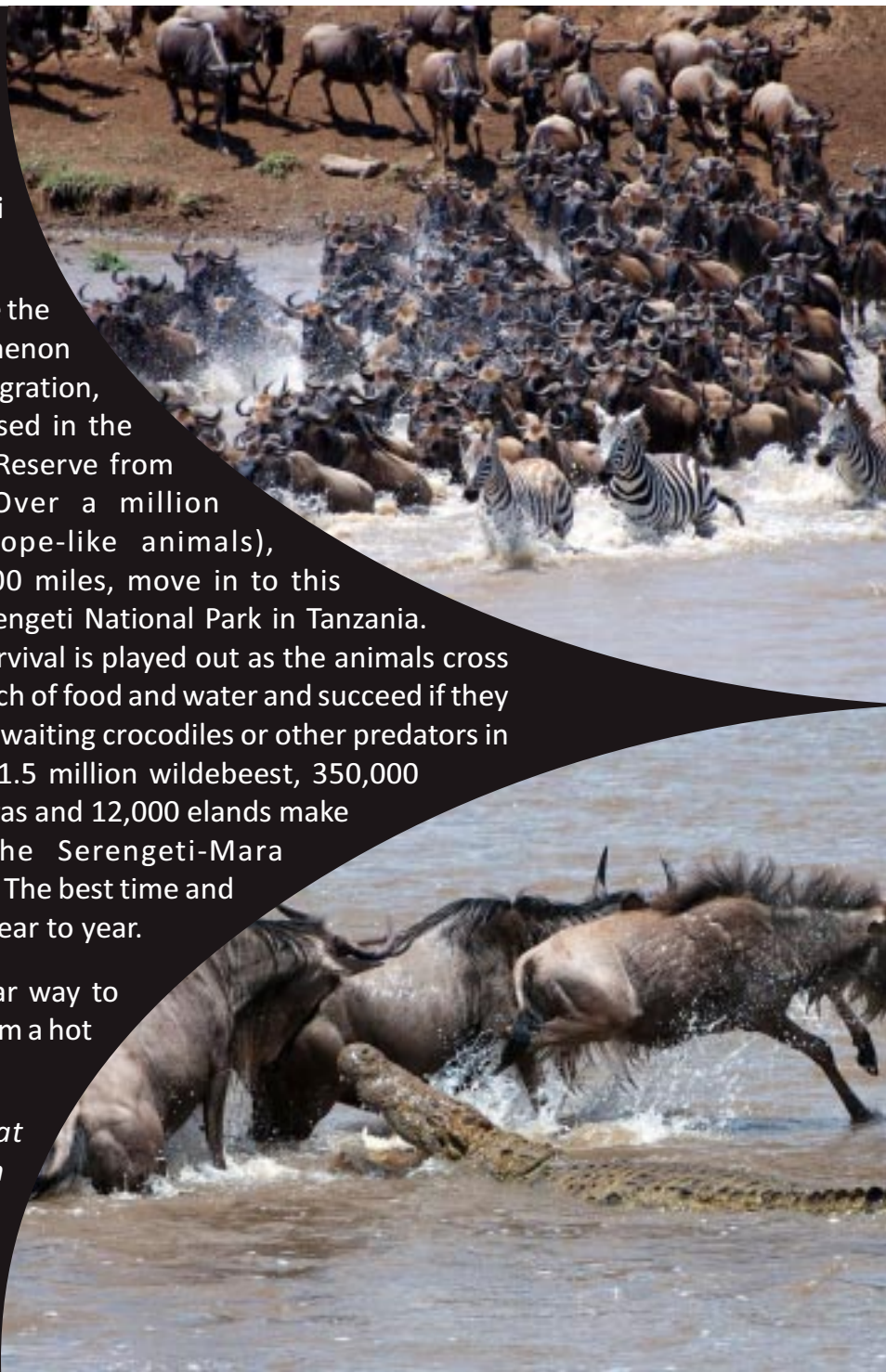
The Top Ten

1. Wildebeest Migration, Maasai Mara, Kenya

No words can describe the awe-inspiring phenomenon of the Wildebeest Migration, which can be witnessed in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve from July to October. Over a million wildebeests (antelope-like animals), covering around 1800 miles, move in to this reserve from the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. The grim drama of survival is played out as the animals cross the River Mara in search of food and water and succeed if they do not fall prey to the waiting crocodiles or other predators in the reserve. Around 1.5 million wildebeest, 350,000 gazelles, 200,000 zebras and 12,000 elands make this crossing in the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem every year. The best time and location varies from year to year.

Tip: The most popular way to witness this sight is from a hot air balloon!

Wow fact: *The Great Wildebeest Migration is ranked among the "Seven New Wonders of the World"!*



2. Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town is one of the hottest tourist destinations in Africa. The spectacular Table Mountain dominates the city towering at a height of 1086 m. The lovely beaches are no less popular and offer a plethora of activities like kayaking, surfing and sailing. The trendy Clifton Beach, the penguins at Boulders Beach, whale watching at False Bay are all great things to do in Cape Town. Not to be missed are the Cape Winelands, which are always



bursting with beautiful landscapes and great wines. The Victoria and Alfred Waterfront are the hotspots for entertainment, restaurants and nightlife. Robbens Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned), Kalk Bay, Chapman's Peak and Noordhoek are all worth a visit.

Tip: Best time to visit is mid-January to April.

Wow fact: *Firing of the Noon Day Gun every day at noon in Cape Town is a 200 year old tradition.*

3. Victoria Falls, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Aptly named as Mosi-oa-Tunya or 'smoke that thunders', the Victoria Falls plunges down from a height of 108 m. It is the world's largest waterfall, earning the distinction due to its 1.7 km width (and not due to its height). Discovered by Dr Livingstone, it was named after Queen Victoria. It lies between Zambia and Zimbabwe and is shared by both. The roaring, cascading waters create a spray which rises 1000 high and can be seen

from as far as 30 miles away. Popular tourist activities include swimming in the Devil's Pool, bungee jumping, jet boating and white water rafting. The area around the waterfall is also a good place to spot wildlife species like rhinos, elephants and giraffes.

Tip: March to May is the best time to view the waterfall!

Wow fact: Do not miss the surreal spectacle of 'lunar rainbows' on full moon nights here! They are caused due to the light of the moon getting refracted by the water sprays!



4. Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

Africa's tallest walkable mountain and the world's largest freestanding mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania is 19,336 feet high. This dormant volcanic mountain, located in Tanzania, in Kilimanjaro National Park, has three peaks – Mawenzi, Shira (extinct peaks) and Kibo (dormant). A biosphere reserve and a World Heritage Site, it is home to many varieties of mammals, animals and unusual plants. A journey to the summit takes you through five varied ecological zones including rainforest,

moorland (home to the giant lobelia and groundsel, two plant species unique to this area) and alpine desert. Walking to the summit is the most popular activity here. Though no special equipment or training is needed, make sure you are physically fit and take the help of an experienced guide. Other popular activities include wildlife watching, hiking and visiting the Chala Crater lake.

Tip: January to March and September to October are the best times for climbing the mountain.

Wow facts: Although just 330 km away from equator, Mt Kilimanjaro has snow and glacial peaks all year round!



5. Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza, Egypt

One of the most enduring images of Egypt is the iconic Great Pyramids and the mysterious looming figure of the Sphinx. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Great Pyramid of Giza is believed to be the tomb of Pharaoh Khufu and around 5000 years old! The other two main pyramids are the Pyramid of Kafhre and the Pyramid of Menkaura. Around 2 million blocks of stone weighing 2.5 tons each and 20,000 labourers were used to build the Great Pyramid. How such large weights were transported and lifted atop the pyramid is a subject of discussion and amazement even today. In front of the pyramids stands the

majestic statue of the Sphinx, half man-half lion, a structure carved out a single block of stone. It is 65 feet tall, 20 feet wide and 260 feet long. Its origin and purpose are still under speculation adding to its mystery. Catch the Pyramids Sound and Light show for historical titbits.

Tip: Negotiate with camel drivers beforehand and beware of touts. Do not climb the pyramids. It is forbidden and dangerous too.

Wow fact: *The Great Pyramid lies exactly in the centre of the landmass of the earth!*



6. Marrakech, Morocco

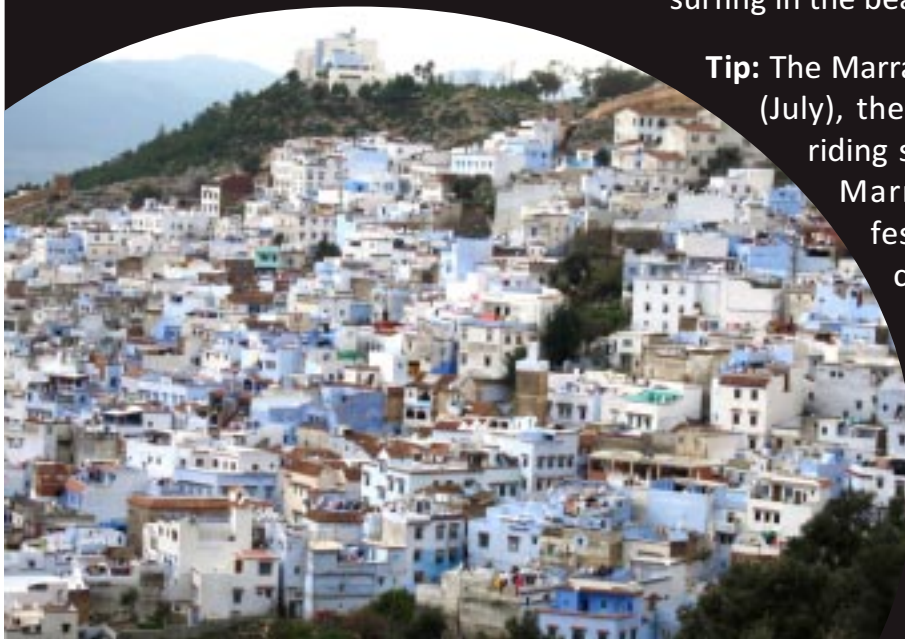
The city of Morocco is a fascinating destination with its rich culture, history, colourful markets (souqs) and exotic sights and experiences. Set against the backdrop of the Atlas Mountains, Morocco offers tourists many interesting things to see and do. The Atlas Mountains beckon with promises of great trekking and a halt at the lovely 'blue' town of Chefchaouen where the streets and buildings are painted a bright blue. Stay in a Riad in Medina and explore the town with its quaint winding streets and busy souqs selling everything from carpets to spices and bags to cooked snails. The tanneries of Fes have been operating since medieval times and worth a visit, especially to buy the famed leather products here. If



you are overcome by the smell of the tanneries, scrub yourself clean and relax in a traditional hamam. Do not miss visiting the beautiful Majorelle Gardens, the mysterious Sahara desert, skiing in Oukaimeden and surfing in the beaches.

Tip: The Marrakech Popular Arts festival (July), the Fantasia (a grand horse-riding spectacle) and the Imilchil Marriage Feast (a marriage festival) are top events to catch here.

Wow fact: Djemaa el Fna, the city's famous square and tourist hub comes alive at night with acrobats, snake charmers, musicians and hundreds of food stalls!



7. Okavango Delta, Botswana

What happens when a lake dries up leaving a river to drain into a vast stretch of flat desert land? It breaks up into a unique network of lagoons, islands and water channels. This unique handiwork of nature, the Okavango Delta, is formed when the Okavango River drains into the Kalahari Basin. Stretching across 1600 sq. km, Okavango Delta is the world's largest inland delta. This inland wetland is home to a rich variety of wildlife which includes elephants, rhinos, crocodiles and leopards. Over 400 species of birds are also to be found here including the ostrich, crested crane, and the rare Fish Eagle. Hot air ballooning, canoeing along the waterways and safari drives through the park are great ways of spotting wildlife here.

Tip: July to September is considered the best months for visiting the delta.

Wow fact: The Okavango Delta is a hot spot of bio-diversity, home to 122 mammals, 71 fish species, 444 bird species, 64 reptiles and 1,300 species of flowering plants!

o f

8. Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania

Around 3 million years ago a giant volcano exploded and collapsed within itself creating the world's largest unbroken caldera. The Ngorongoro Crater lies at the heart of the 8300 sq. m. large Ngorongoro Conservation Area. This incredible crater, 610 m. deep and 19 km. wide has its rim 2286 m. above sea level. Thirty thousand animals live in the crater. Standing on the rim of the crater, you can see the small Lake Magadi at the bottom as well as glimpses of elephants, buffaloes and rhinos (including the rare black rhino). The lake is also a hotspot for hosts of pink flamingos.

Tip: Bird watching, photography, walking safaris as well as safari drives are popular tourist activities.

Wow fact: *The Ngorongoro Crater is a marvel of nature, a self-sufficient eco-system, which is over 2 million years old!*

9. Sossusvlei, Namibia

Sossusvlei is a salt and clay pan (dry lake bed) located in the Namib Desert. Sossusvlei is the drainage basin for the ephemeral River Tsauchab. The area is notable for the white (salt), dry basins and spectacular sand dunes which often rise up to 300 m. high. A photographers' delight, the stunning sand dunes are multi-hued ranging from apricot and orange to deep red. The strong winds here shape the dunes in amazing three to five star

of the place. A rare phenomenon is the filling of Sossusvlei with water from the River Tsauchab. A lovely lake is formed, lilies start blooming and insects and birds are to be found coming here too. Visitors stay at the numerous lodges dotting the area. Popular ways of exploring the beauty of the area is through hot air balloons, quad biking safari and horse riding safaris.

Tip: The best and only times to visit Sossusvlei are sunrise and sunset.



crests giving them the unique star shape (visible aerially). Stark, black, dead trees over 900 years old add to the atmosphere

Wow fact: The highest dune in the area is Big Daddy (325m) which faces another dune called Big Mama!

10. Djenné, Mali

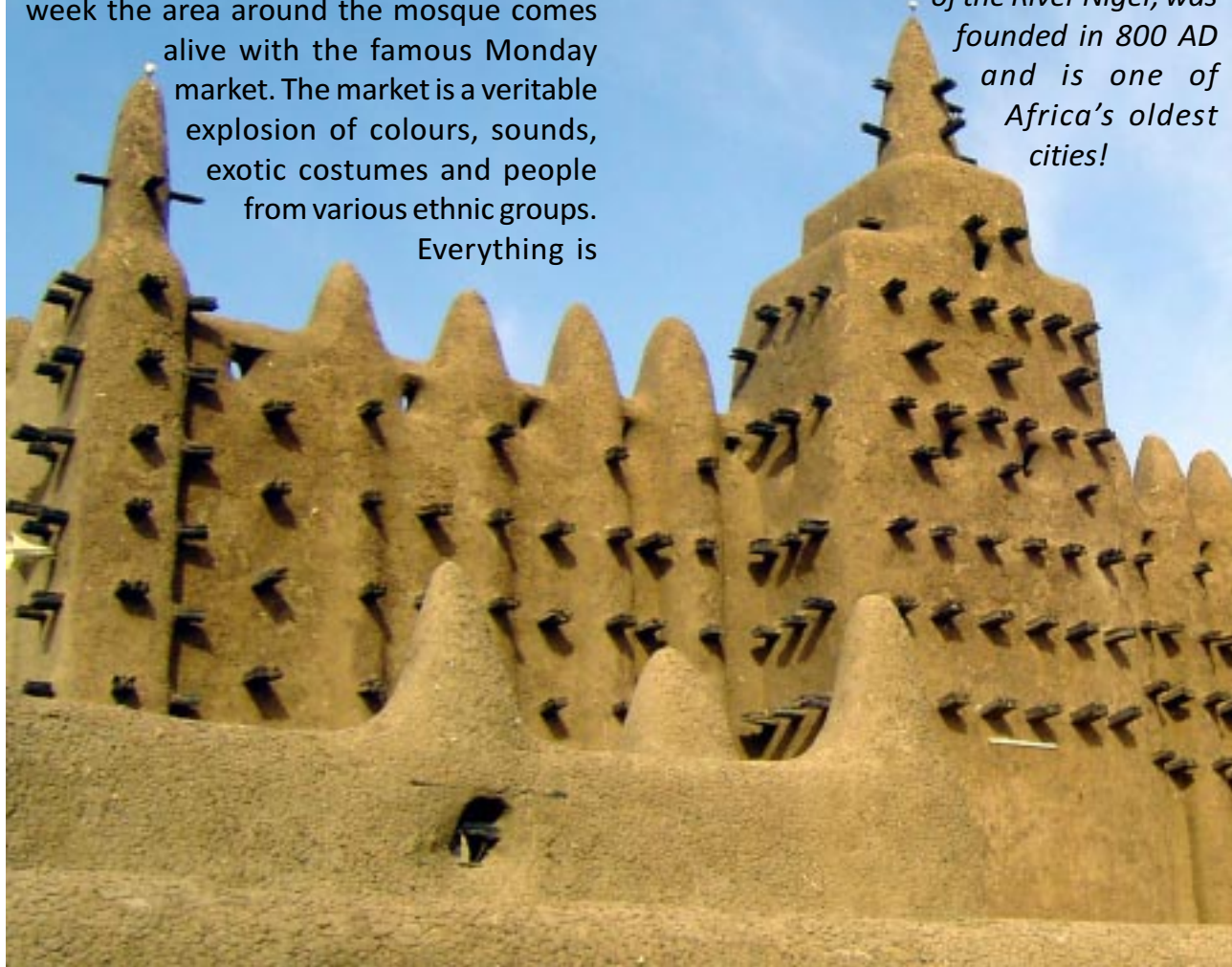
Djenné is a fascinating town. A famous trading centre in the past, it is known for its charming mud-brick houses and monuments. The Grand Mosque, the largest mud-brick building in the world, is a major attraction. Resembling a giant sand-castle, it has walls as thick as 24 inches and can hold up to 3000 people in the prayer hall! Every week the area around the mosque comes alive with the famous Monday market. The market is a veritable explosion of colours, sounds, exotic costumes and people from various ethnic groups.

Everything is

sold here from carpets, beads, cattle, pottery to frankincense and gold. Visiting the ancient ruined settlement of Jenne Jené, buying Pama Sinatao's mud cloth and eating at Restaurant le Fleuve are some of the other attractions here.

Tip: Best time to visit is August – September.

Wow fact: *Djenne, located on a delta-island of the River Niger, was founded in 800 AD and is one of Africa's oldest cities!*





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Thai Food

Five must-try
dishes in
Bangkok



Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, is one of the fastest growing cities of the world. Its affluence comes from the rare combination of the modern and the ancient. It is ranked third after London and Paris in MasterCard's Global Destination Cities Index and has been named "World's Best City" for three consecutive years by renowned travel magazines. With all its modernity, it still holds on to its rich heritage. Buddhist Temples are a common sight on most streets as is the sight of wondering tourists. This fusion of old and new is apparent even in the city's cuisine. Tourism being a major industry of Bangkok, it would be safe to say, the delectable food here is one of the many reasons for which people from all around the world flock to this city. With the innumerable street foods of all variety and a kaleidoscope of flavours, there are also some authentic recipes in Bangkok's menus. A very typical flavour in most foods of Bangkok is from "Galangal", an herb of the ginger family. This city boasts of a unique cuisine, which comes out of the melting pot of combinations of Chinese, Indian, Malaysian and Portuguese recipes and more. The repeated use of flavourful tamarind, coconut milk, lemon grass, fish sauce and herbs are prevalent with the combination of

sea food and meat. The list of foods that are 'not to be missed' is enormously long. However, here's presenting you the five dishes that one absolutely can't afford to miss while in Bangkok.

1. Tom Yum Goong (Spicy Shrimp Soup):

Every feast starts with a soup and this particular dish spells Thai flavours at its best.



Herbs like lemongrass, chilli, galangal, lime leaves, shallots, lime juice and fish sauce are the heart beats of this dish. The texture is built in with straw mushrooms and shrimps, all simmered in a spicy hot liquid gravy. A whiff of this aromatic presentation will have your taste buds tickled to a smile. Get a bowl of steaming goodness and enjoy till the last drop.



2. Som Tum (Spicy Green Papaya Salad):

A perfect starter for most meals is the salad, and Som Tum is one of a kind when it comes to taste. A rare combination of garlic, chillies, green beans, cherry tomatoes and shredded raw papaya, all mixed together to enhance the flavours. Originated from the north-eastern state of Isaan, the bold sweet-sour taste is often peppered with nutty bites of peanuts. Dried crabs or shrimps are also added occasionally. The whole array of tastes is rounded up by lime juice or tamarind juice, resulting in a serving most will never forget. Like most versatile dishes, this has its own variations too, making the recipe even more interesting. Bite into the crunchy freshness of the Som Tum, loaded with taste, and decide for yourself.





3. Pad Thai (Thai style Fried Noodles):

Food from the east cannot be complete without noodles being part of the menu. Every street and restaurant is filled with noodles of varieties of textures and tastes. Each has their unique identity, but Pad Thai is one which has the country's name in it. Pad Thai is one of the well-known dishes around the world, so it can be safely said it has gained an international status. A quick toss in a searing wok with noodles of your choice along with crunchy bean sprouts, onions and eggs and the Pad Thai is ready. This entangled, delightful plate gets to be accompanied by the condiment of your choice. So the chef leaves you to choose which flavours to play with by adding fish sauce, sugar, chilli powder and finely ground peanuts. Ten to one odds are you will request a second helping.

4. Khao Phad (Fried Rice):

Rice is another staple ingredient in eastern cuisines. It grows in abundance in the region making it affordable and easily available. Translated literally 'Khao' means rice and 'Phad' means almost fried. This fried rice is prepared from aromatic Thai Jasmine Rice. This variety of rice is quite different from the long grained rice used in most of the Chinese fried rice recipes. Chicken and flavours of the sea from crabs and shrimps blend with egg, garlic and tomato tantalise the palate in this dish. The whole dish is seasoned





generously with soy sauce, sugar, salt, possibly some chilli sauce and the ever present fish sauce. Different regions of the country put in their own versions with a tweak here and there.

The plate of steaming rice is served with the freshness of cucumber, tomato, spring onions as well as a sprinkle of cilantro. Every grain has a flavour filled story to tell.

5. Gaeng Daeng (Red Curry):

Renowned Chef Chat Mingkwan defines Gaeng Daeng or Thai Red Curry is, “the most often cooked curry in the Thai household”. He continues saying, “If a home chef can’t decide which curry to prepare that would please all family members, he or she will end up making red curry. Its paste can be easily made with staple ingredients in the Thai pantry, such as



dried chillies, garlic, shallots, and dried herbs and spices. The paste also pairs well with nearly all ingredients, especially any vegetables that grow near the house or those that have been left in the refrigerator.”

After such an introduction, it is obvious that this particular dish holds the actual essence of Thai food. The dish is a pool of gravy made of curry paste with especial generosity with regards to red chillies. To thicken the curry coconut milk is added. A variety of non-vegetarian items such as chicken, beef, pork, duck, shrimp or tofu can be the star ingredient in this bowl of red gravy.



Touring the high modernity and the quaint heritage of Bangkok, every individual would enjoy its food and discover new sensations in taste. Most meals end with a sweet tooth satisfying the palate, we would like to end this savoury journey with a plate of Layered Crepe Cake. Thin layers of delicate crepes slathered with whipped cream and doused with strawberry sauce are an exhilarating gastronomic experience. Along with the visual treats and feast for your senses, go ahead and taste the gourmet delights of this city as well. Have the great experience of a food holiday in Bangkok!





Meet the Speakers



Selina Power



Sheila Scarborough



Avijit Arya



Sanjay Vijaykumar



Adam Franklin

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Darwin

A year round destination



The capital city of Northern Territory of Australia was named after Charles Darwin. Darwin is an amalgamation of a frontier town, Asian village and modern life. People hailing from more than 50 countries make up this modern metropolis.

Darwin is also the gateway to Kakadu National Park, Katherine Gorge and the Kimberley. Take a day or two to wander the pleasant streets and parklands, see the wildlife attractions, and explore the region's history

in the museums and galleries. The markets, parks, beaches and boats are the places where all the actions take place. According to research, it is the best value city for tourists in Australia and considerably cheaper than Sydney.

Best time to visit – May to September.

Climate type – Darwin has a tropical savannah climate with distinct wet and dry seasons and the average maximum temperature is similar all year round.



Tourist Attractions:

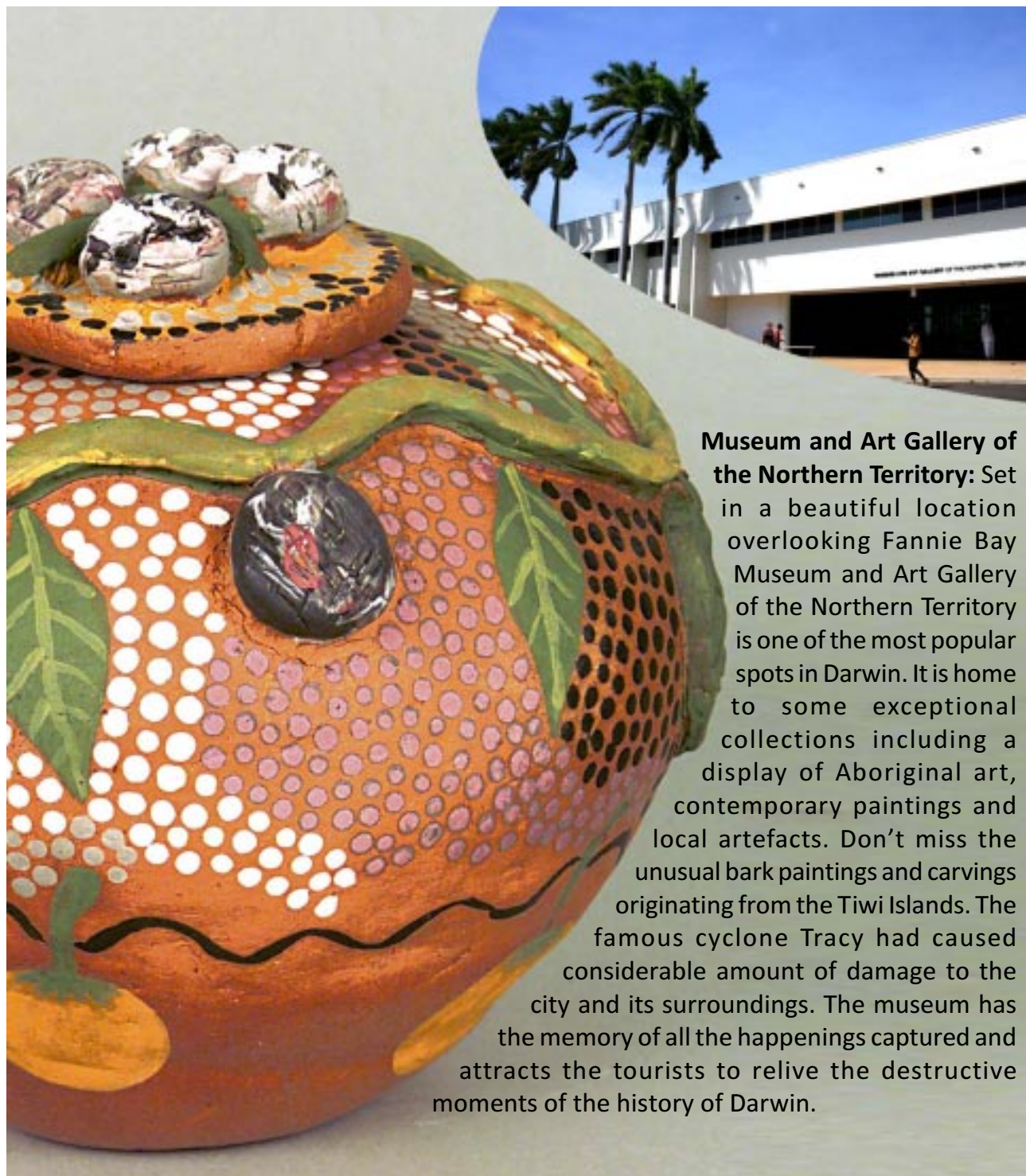
Australian Aviation Heritage Centre: Set along the outskirts of Stuart Highway Australian Aviation Heritage Centre is a non-profit organisation. The museum offers an insight into not only the Australian but also the alternative history of the Southeast Asian Air powers. It brings forth the stories of the civil and military



aviation of the region. It is a great place to experience the unparalleled magic of the legends of the Australian Air Force.

Crocodylus Park: Set up in 1981, the park houses over a thousand crocodiles and other wildlife. The crocodiles vary in age and size from 30-centimetre hatchlings to adults measuring 4.8 metres and weighing half a ton. Another one of the popular national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in Darwin is the **Darwin Crocodile Farm**. It aims at commercial production and display of the Crocodile along with the preservation, protection and promotion of the reptiles. It is regularly updated and there have been multi-million dollar improvements in recent times.





Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory: Set

in a beautiful location overlooking Fannie Bay Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory is one of the most popular spots in Darwin. It is home to some exceptional collections including a display of Aboriginal art, contemporary paintings and local artefacts. Don't miss the unusual bark paintings and carvings originating from the Tiwi Islands. The famous cyclone Tracy had caused considerable amount of damage to the city and its surroundings. The museum has the memory of all the happenings captured and attracts the tourists to relive the destructive moments of the history of Darwin.

Aquascene: It a very happening spot, famous for its fish feeding activity. Every day at high tide a huge shoal of fish swim into the shallow bay. It's amazing what a few scraps of bread flung to a mullet can start. The number of fish turning up for a free meal grew and grew as the original

mullet population has been joined by a host of other species including catfish, milkfish and bream over the years. The tourists get the fun of feeding some of the most exciting sea creatures here. Check the local paper or contact Aquascene for exact feeding times.






Darwin Military Museum: The city's first museum, the Darwin Military Museum displays war memorabilia, gun aiming equipment, firearms and aviation, navy and army exhibits. There is also a video showing live footage of the Japanese bombing in Darwin. The surroundings are part of the East Point Reserve.

Fannie Bay

Gaol: It is known as one of the most important heritage sites in Darwin. The rich historical legacy of Darwin clearly reflects at the site. The site was functional as a prison during the imperial regime. The site served as the labour prison from September 1883 until September 1979.

• THE FIRST AEROPLANE TO FLY •
FROM ENGLAND TO AUSTRALIA •
• LANDED HERE •
• 10TH DECEMBER 1919 •



The Indo Pacific Marine Exhibition: Located at the Wharf Precinct in Darwin, the Indo Pacific Marine Exhibition was established in 1971 as a private research project. Indo Pacific Marine is at the international forefront in the development of closed, self sustaining marine ecosystems and has won a national award and 13 territory awards in areas of excellence in tourism, education and ecotourism.

Chinese Temples: The Chinese temples have been located in Darwin since 1887. Most significant one has been damaged and rebuilt multiple times. The new temple is now a place of worship for a number of Confucians, Taoists and Buddhists residing in Darwin. This temple is known as Chung Wah Temple or Darwin's Temple. Beside the temple is a Chinese museum that displays artefacts and photos that serve as reminders of the difficult and important struggles of the Chinese immigrants and their gradual development in Darwin.

Just a short trip from Darwin City will take you to the **Outer Darwin Region** including the Cox Peninsula. It is a delightful place to spend some time and discover the attractions and historical sites. Along the coastline colourful coral reefs and mangrove forests offer excellent fishing opportunities, whilst inland the floodplains of the river systems and the dry woodlands host an abundance of wildlife. The area once provided a bountiful larder for the Aboriginal people of the region and later hosted a booming crocodile hunting and buffalo shooting industry. Skydiving in this region is also widely popular.



How to go there:

Darwin's International Airport is well served by numerous airlines. Darwin, being the closest Australian capital city to Asia, it has regular international air services from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei.

You can also opt to travel by **train** and enjoy the experience of one of the great overland journeys of the world on the legendary Ghan train from Adelaide to Darwin travelling through the stunning Australian outback.





Excellent **highways** ease of access into Darwin. The Stuart Highway is sealed all way from Adelaide, the Barkly Highway from Queensland and the Victoria Highway from Western Australia.

Getting around:

Darwin is well connected to other major Australian cities by **train**. To reach Darwin by train, visitors can take the Ghan from Sydney, Melbourne or Adelaide to Alice Springs and on to Darwin.

One of the easiest ways of getting around the city is by **taxis**. Taxis are available to/from the airport.

You can also avail the Darwin **bus** services operated by several private bus companies, shuttling between Darwin's major places of interest.

A unique mode of transportation available in Darwin is **mini bus**. This is a bit like a cross between a bus and a taxi.

Ferry service is also popular in Darwin and there is no denying that the city has wonderful **cycling trails**.

Cars for rent are also available.

In spite of its rich history and heritage, Darwin still feels young, vibrant and cosmopolitan. The city's mood is illustrated by an evening on buzzing Mitchell Street or by joining the fitness fanatics





cycling, hiking and jogging through the lush parks and waterfront suburbs. The fact that Darwin is an ocean city isn't always fully appreciated – to make sure you do, soak up Darwin's balmy weather and the melting pot of food and cultures in the city's many outdoor festivals and markets. Make time for a day trip to the waterfalls and wildlife of Litchfield National Park, a one-and-a-half hour drive from Darwin. Swim in the crystal-clear swimming hole at the base of Florence Falls and bushwalk through monsoon rainforest to Walker Creek. Picnic next to the Wangi Falls and see sweeping valley views at Tolmer Falls. Visit Stokes Hill Wharf, Cullen and Fannie Bays; visit East Point and do a sunset cruise.



Happenings

June Festivals around the World



The Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen)

Where: Vienna, Austria

When: May 10 – June 16, 2013

One of the most awaited cultural events of Europe; the Vienna Festival is a five-week extravaganza of over 200 music, dance, theatre and visual arts performances. Luc Bondy, the world famous director is in charge of the festival since 2002. The festival traditionally opens at the Vienna's City Hall Square and is an open air event with free admission. The

festival is famous for its fantastic diversity, offering plays, concerts, lectures, films and musical shows. Music ranges from classical, modern and jazz to world music. Featuring around 40 productions with 175 performances and 70 concerts, the event attracts around 180,000 visitors worldwide.

***Trivia:** The beautiful venues are a notable part of the festival; the Theatre an der Wien, Konzerthaus, Imperial Court Theatre and the Opernhaus are all lovely, famous historical buildings.*

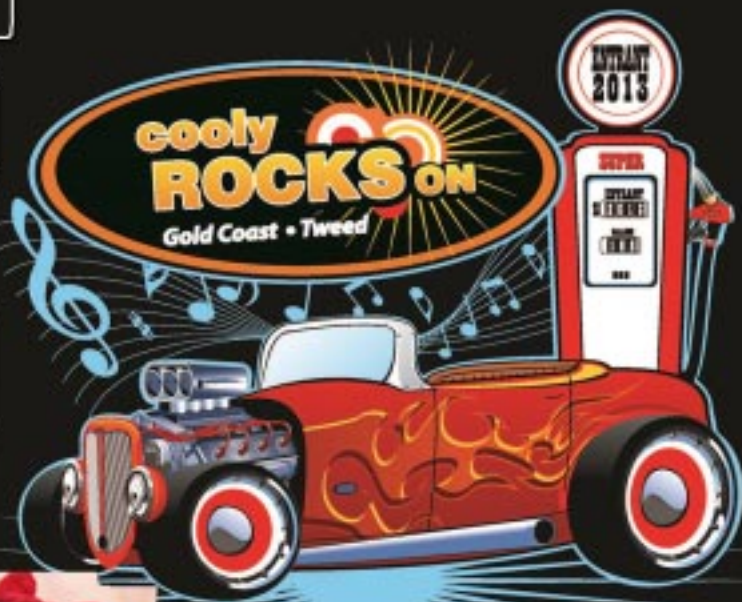


Cooly Rocks on

Where: Gold Coast, Australia

When: May 31 – June 10, 2013

This is Australia's most popular Rock and Roll Nostalgia festival held in Coolangatta and Tweed Heads every year. Rock n Roll music shows, Rockabilly, Swing and great performances from the 50s and 60s are the highlights of the event. A unique



cooly ROCKS on
Gold Coast • Tweed
31 May - 10 June 2013

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NUMBER ONE 50'S & 60'S
NOSTALGIA FESTIVAL
NOW SELLING

ROCK 'N' ROLL
ROCKABILLY
SWING
DANCING
CARS
FASHION
MARKETS
& MORE



car show displaying over a thousand hot rods, vintage and classic modern cars is a huge crowd puller and an extremely popular part of the festival. The vintage atmosphere is enhanced by memorabilia displays, live music, street parades and concerts all centring around the yesteryears' theme. Visitors can visit the past at the retro market stalls and eat vintage-style food.

Trivia: This fantastic family event, with free entry, draws over 70,000 visitors annually!



Lajkonik Festival

When: Krakow, Poland

When: June 6, 2013

This quirky festival celebrates the defeat of the Tartars by the Polish in 1241. The Lajkonik or bearded man in a pointed wizard's hat and costumes rides a wooden horse followed by a live band of musicians and the townsfolk in colourful costumes. Collecting 'ransoms' of food and alcohol on

his way and rapping people with his mace (said to confer good luck to the receiver!), he marches on to meet the mayor. The procession culminates at the Market Square where the Mayor waits with ransom money and a chalice. A toast is made for the wellbeing of the town and its people. It is followed by revelry and partying the whole night.

Trivia: *The festival has been celebrated every June for the past 700 years!*

El Colacho (Baby Jumping Festival)

Where: Burgos, Spain

When: June 6, 2013

This strange festival, rated one of the most dangerous in the world, involves El Colacho (a man dressed as the Devil) jumping over tiny babies who lie on mattresses below. It is a heart stopping moment when the El Colacho takes a jump and you will catch your breath waiting for him to land safely without hurting the babies. However, this festival is celebrated with much gusto among the locals. The idea here is that this ritual absolves the babies of 'original sin' and also protects them from evil spirits and illnesses.

***Trivia:** The festival dates back to 1620 and is a part of the Corpus Christi celebrations.*



Dragon Boat Festival

Where: Hunan Province, China

When: June 12, 2013

The Dragon Boat Festival takes place on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month every year. Celebrated in honour of Qu-Yuan, a patriot who protested against the Qin state's invasion by throwing himself into the river, this popular event is symbolic of warding off evil spirits and diseases. Dragon-



like boats sail across the rivers in competition with the enthusiastic cheering of the onlookers and beating of drums adding to the tempo. People hang calamus and moxa on the front door, 'fetch noon water' from wells to cure illnesses, hand fragrant sachets to children and display pictures of Chung Kei, the demon slayer. Dragon dances and fireworks also add to the fun.

Trivia: Unlike in the West, where dragons are evil creatures, in the East they are worshipped as benevolent beings.





Feast of St Anthony

Where: Lisbon, Portugal

When: June 12 – 14, 2013

The patron saint of Lisbon, Saint Anthony, has a feasting day in his honour which is marked by high revelry and sardines. The saint is believed to have drawn fish from the sea in a sermon and the townsfolk celebrate the event by gorging themselves on grilled sardines. This is not the only kinky custom. Single girls write their suitors' names on pieces of paper, roll and place them in a bowl of water under their bed; the one which has unfurled the most indicates the chosen one. Men also have their rituals to appeal to the match-making saint, such as presenting a basil plant with a love poem to their beloved. The tradition of St Anthony's Bread (pressing bread rolls with prayers written on them to the saint's portrait) is also a popular custom. Needless to say, many marriages take place on this day.

Trivia: *St Anthony, born in 1195 A.D was famous as an orator and a miracle worker.*



Isle of Wight Festival

Where: Isle of Wight, England

When: June 13 – 16, 2013

The Isle of Wight Festival is held every year at Seaclose Park, Newport. Originally held from 1968 to 1970, the

music festival saw unprecedented crowds in 1970. An Act limiting crowds was passed and the festival was revived in 2002 at Seaclose Park. Top international names as well as local talent features on the list of performers. Various genres of music including pop, hip-hop, rock and Urban are part of the line-up. Several legendary names have been associated with the festival including Bob Dylan, Jay- Z, Paul McCartney and Bruce Springsteen.

***Trivia:** The 2013 line-up includes Bon Jovi, Ellie Goulding and The Stone Roses.*



Inti Raymi (Festival of the Sun)

Where: Cuzco, Peru

When: June 24, 2013

The ancient Festival of the Sun or Inti Raymi was an important ceremony of the Incan Empire. It was a celebration of the Winter Solstice. Colourful processions, dances and animal sacrifices marked the festivities. The modern celebrations still involve music, colourful processions and fantastic costumes. There are live bands, free concerts, street fairs and theatrical representations involving the Sapa Inca (the emperor) and his wife Mama Occla. The emperor, empress, priests and nobles form the head of a procession which goes to the ancient fortress of Sacsayhuamán where huge crowds await them. The ceremonial (mock) sacrifice of a llama and other rituals follow. Traditional dancing and music finish the show.

***Trivia:** The city of Cuzco is believed to be in the shape of a puma, the sacred animal of the Incas with the fortress of Sacsayhuaman forming its head.*





Glastonbury Festival

Where: Pilton, England

When: June, 26 – 30, 2013

The Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts was first held in 1970 (when it attracted 1500 hippies) and since then the festival has grown in popularity with around 150,000 people attending it annually now. Today, it is the largest green field open air event of its kind in the world. Though mainly a music festival, it also includes dance, theatre, comedy and



circus. Shows are held on the Pyramid, Dance Village and Jazzworld as well as on smaller stages and locations. Various film screenings are also held. The healing fields offering massages and relaxing music are also very popular. There is also The Kidz Field, dedicated to children's activities. Camping and pitching tents are popular forms of accommodation.

Trivia: *Torrential rain has on many occasions turned the festival site into a mud-bath site for its fans.*

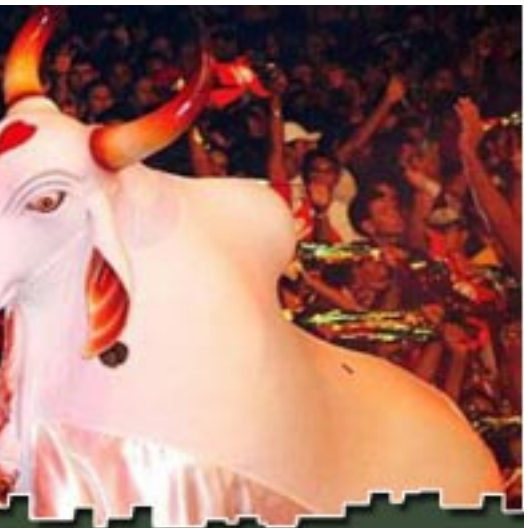
Boi Bumba

Where: Parintins, Brazil

When: June 29 – July 2, 2013

Boi Bumba literally translating to 'Beat the Ox' is the foremost cultural event of Brazil. The dazzling theatrical performance, weaving together music, drumming, a giant puppet show and fantastic costumes, revolves around the story of a bull, which is killed by a man to satisfy his pregnant wife's craving for beef tongue. The man is saved from being jailed by a shaman's help whose





rituals revive the bull. The resulting celebrations evolved from a simple street procession to the fantastic folk festival that it is today. There are various versions of this story and two rival teams Garantido and Caprichoso compete for 3 nights putting up spectacular presentations of the story. The shows are followed by feasting and drinking. The whole event is marked by passion, vibrant colours and amazing music and dance.

***Trivia:** The town is literally split into two colours, red for Garantido or blue for Caprichoso with even houses painted in the colours of the favourite team!*





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