

NEW & NOTEWORTHY



WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS

When it comes to favorite cities, Paris has always ranked first with lovers. As it turns out, **the City of Light is also the favorite of the more than 1,000 travel writers, travel bloggers and travel agencies worldwide who responded to a World's Best Cities survey by Flight Network.** The well-traveled bunch was asked to nominate cities with a population of more than one million that best combined natural and manmade beauty, culture and weather. Paris topped the list of 50 finalists, followed by other familiar places such as New York City, London, Venice, Vancouver and Barcelona.

But explorers should also take note of other, less top-of-mind cities that made the list. We're talking such places as Bergen, Norway; Bruges, Belgium; Istanbul, Turkey; Quito, Ecuador; Cartagena, Colombia; Seoul, South Korea; Jaipur, India; and Singapore, all of which entice explorers with the best of big city living—and won't pop up on everyone else's Instagram accounts.

↑ **The Louvre Museum**
PHOTO BY SARAH SERGENT

CHOCOHOLICS, TAKE NOTE

For a chocoholic, there's no such thing as too much chocolate: truffles, dark chocolate bars, milk chocolate-covered fruit or nuts, chocolate milk, hot chocolate—it's all good.

So imagine cocoa aficionados' delight when they enter the newly opened Lindt Home of Chocolate in Kilchberg, Switzerland, and come face to face with a nearly 30-foot-tall chocolate fountain.

Accessible via public transportation from Zurich, the new facility includes an immersive multimedia exhibition of all things chocolate as well as a Chocolateria, where visitors can create their own chocolate masterpieces.

But the pièce de résistance has to be the center's Chocolate Heaven, where visitors can taste Lindt chocolates to their hearts' content. Sweet!

SEE THE USA

From a private performance of Cajun and zydeco music in Lafayette, Louisiana, to a sampling of fresh seafood at a fishing village near New Orleans, **Insight Vacations' new Cajun Country Escape immerses guests in the land, the people and the culture of the southern Mississippi River region. The trip is one of three seven-day domestic Escape Journeys introduced recently by Insight Vacations,** each of which is limited to 22 guests to allow for more personal space. Further enhancing health and safety, a Wellbeing Director will accompany every trip with more than 20 guests to ensure adherence to hygiene standards and protocols.

Spectacular Southwest Escape, the second of the three journeys, explores Arizona from Scottsdale to Sedona, with an excursion on the historic Grand Canyon Railway to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Guests on Insight Vacations Tropical Hawaiian Paradise Escape will savor a farm-and-sea-to-table lunch on the beach, a guided tour of Oahu's Historic District, and stargazing at a hotel world-renowned for its spectacular night skies. Ask your AAA travel agent for details.

MEET ME AT THE PIER



↑ **Dine al fresco at the new St. Pete Pier.**
COURTESY OF VISITSTPETECLEARWATER.COM

An urban beach, tree-lined walkways, restaurants, an ecotourism center, a playground—all of these await visitors at **the newly opened St. Pete Pier, a 26-acre entertainment district that serves as an extension of St. Petersburg, Florida's downtown.** St. Pete, as locals call their city, has seen numerous iterations of its pier since the late 1800s. This latest rendition, billed as **"the Southeast's largest waterfront entertainment district," promises a future filled with public art installations, concerts, markets and other community events.**

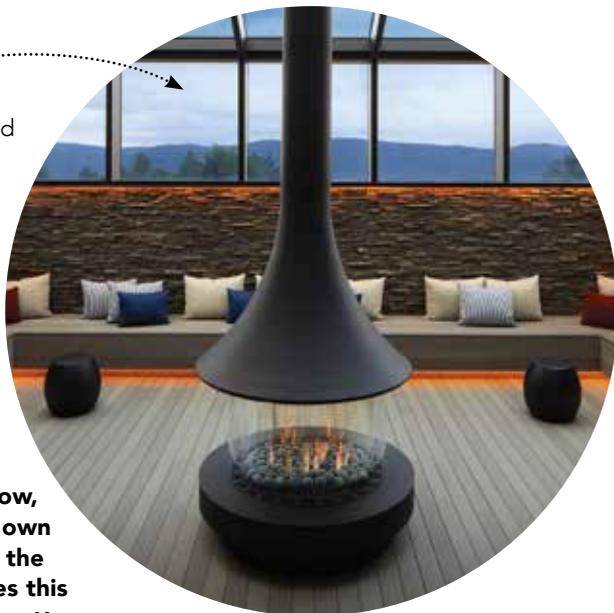
↓ **Zydeco musician**
COURTESY OF LAFAYETTE TRAVEL



NEW & NOTEWORTHY

BERKSHIRES BEAUTY

For those in the know, the word “Miraval” is synonymous with luxury spa resort. The company launched its first comprehensive wellness spa—Miraval Arizona—25 years ago in Tucson, adding a second location just last year in Austin, Texas. Both of those resorts were rated among the top 15 US spas in *Travel + Leisure* 2020 World’s Best Awards survey. **Now, the East Coast can boast its own Miraval wellness resort with the opening of Miraval Berkshires this past July in Lenox, Massachusetts.**



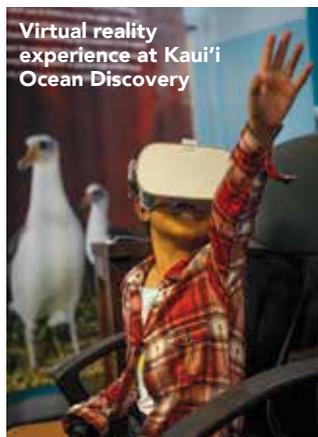
↑ The women’s spa lounge at Miraval Berkshires
PHOTO BY JAMES BAIGRIE

Devotees of the brand will find the same amenities at Miraval Berkshires that they’ve come to love at other Miraval locations: refined guest rooms designed to encourage rest and relaxation; healthful, all-included meals; a Life in Balance Spa (at 29,000 square feet and with 28 treatment rooms, it’s the brand’s largest); Miraval’s signature equine programming; a challenge course; and daily yoga and meditation. **This new Miraval also showcases four seasons of spectacular scenery thanks to its setting in the lush mountains of western Massachusetts.**

WE HEART THE OCEAN

It’s probably safe to say that most people who visit Hawaii have an affinity for oceans—after all, they’re flying an awfully long way to reach this remote island chain with its spectacular beaches and ethereally blue waters. So the new Kaua’i Ocean Discovery on the island of Kaua’i should hold plenty of appeal.

The ocean-centric educational facility features videos, interactive displays and hands-on activities relating to the archipelago and its sea life, including humpback whales, Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles and other ocean animals, as well as Hawaiian cultural traditions about humans’ connection to the ocean and lessons in ocean stewardship. The free discovery center is a collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Kaua’i Ocean Discovery is one of three national marine sanctuaries visitor centers in Hawaii, joining the Sanctuary Visitor Center in Kihei, Maui, and the Mokupapapa Discovery Center in Hilo on the Big Island.



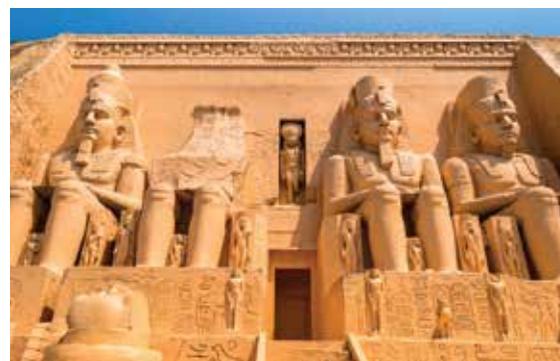
Virtual reality experience at Kaua’i Ocean Discovery

PHOTO BY MATT MCINTOSH

TREASURE MAP

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee marks its 45th anniversary in 2021, but its vital cultural preservation work harkens back to the 1960s, when UNESCO launched its Nubia Campaign to move Egypt’s Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel and the Sanctuary of Isis at Philae to prevent their obliteration by the construction of the Aswan Dam on the Nile.

The 20-year effort rescued more than 20 monuments and saved the two magnificent temples. **The success of the campaign led to the creation of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 1976.** Two years later, the first World Heritage List inscribed 12 sites of “outstanding universal value,” ranging from Yellowstone National Park in California to the Ecuadorian city of Quito. **Today, the World Heritage List includes 1,121 properties.** To be eligible to nominate a site, countries must commit to protecting their natural and cultural heritage.



→ The Great Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, Egypt
PHOTO BY AUIMEESRI/STOCK.ADOBE.COM

WALK THIS WAY

When England’s newest, longest and most challenging national trail is completed in mid-2021, it will rank as the longest coastal walking route in the world. **The 2,717-mile National England Coast Trail follows the entire coast of England, linking popular seaside towns with hidden wild beaches, Roman ruins with Napoleonic Martello defensive towers, and the White Cliffs of Dover with northeastern industrial cities.** High on a cliff in Whitby, walkers can explore the remains of Whitby Abbey, inspiration for Bram Stokers’ *Dracula*, while in Tintagel, they can tour the ruins of the medieval castle associated with the legends of King Arthur. The country’s official National Trails website (nationaltrail.co.uk) provides route descriptions, outlines suggested itineraries and highlights places of interest along the trail.