

# WHERE TO GO IN 2020



Where will 2020 take you? Over the following pages, you'll find 28 destinations to kick-start your travel dreaming and scheming. We've surfaced emerging places. We've highlighted unexpected spots. And we've blown out a handful of classic destinations—the places we return to again and again, such as Italy and Japan—with alternatives to the big cities and the most crowded seasons. Turn the page to begin your 2020 journey, and find more tips and news at [afar.com/wtg2020](https://www.far.com/wtg2020).



**JAPAN**

This year, all eyes will be on Japan as the **2020 Summer Olympics** (July 24–August 9) kick off in Tokyo. But the summer season is also a wonderful time to explore beyond the capital city by cooling off in the mountains of Nikko, exploring Hokkaido's flower-strewn hills, or cycling through the rural islands of Shikoku and Kyushu.

**NEED TO KNOW**  
In 2019, Delta launched direct flights from Seattle to Osaka, the closest international airport to Shikoku. The seasonal route starts up again on March 30.

year-round activities. At the new 50-suite Ritz-Carlton Reserve, local mountain guides will lead hiking tours, and a glassy eight-story Park Hyatt will be located within walking distance of trails on adjacent Mount Niseko-Annupuri. Beyond Niseko, the Asia custom tour specialist Remote Lands is expanding its 2020 Hokkaido tours with wildflower hikes to Lake Hangetsu, a volcanic lake at the foot of Mount Yotei, as well as visits to Upopoy, the first national museum dedicated to Japan's indigenous Ainu peoples, opening in spring 2020. —ADAM H. GRAHAM

● **NIKKO**  
One of Japan's most skimmed-over destinations is ready for a deeper dive.

**When to go:** Mountainous Nikko, just two hours north of Tokyo, is a cool respite from the sweltering city. During the annual Ryuou Festival in late July, locals carry Shinto shrines through the streets to encourage prosperity.

**Why go:** For years, Nikko was known as a day-trip destination. Travelers would take the train up from Tokyo to wander the 103 buildings that make up the Shrines and Temples of Nikko, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and to explore Nikko National Park. Until recently, there were few hotels to tempt overnighters, but this summer, the ryokan Nikko Fufu will open near the Toshogu shrine with 24 suites featuring private outdoor baths. In spring 2020, the 94-room Ritz-Carlton, Nikko, will open in the mountains above town, with views of Lake Chuzenji. From the Ritz-Carlton, travelers will be able to walk to the lake's thundering Kegan

● **HOKKAIDO**  
Visit this northern island for summer blooms, festivals, and some of Japan's finest hiking.

**When to go:** By June 1, wildflowers blanket the rolling hills. But the Hokkaido Shrine Festival (June 14–16) is the true summer opener, ushering in a string of events celebrating lavender, fire, and traditional dance.

**Why go:** With its legendary ski slopes and powder, Hokkaido has long attracted winter travelers, but summer hasn't been as much of a draw. This year brings a change, as well-known luxury hotels open in the ski town of Niseko with an emphasis on



Falls and to the former British and Italian embassies, where the grounds have been converted to parks and the historic residences to lakeside cafés. —ELAINE GLUSAC

● **SOUTHERN ISLANDS**  
Surrounded by the Seto Inland Sea, the quieter islands of southern Japan offer spectacular bike routes and a new hotel that nods to history.

**When to go:** In June, rhododendrons bloom across Mount Aso. Later in the season, the port city of Tokushima hosts the Awa Odori dance festival (August 12–15), which brings together some of Japan's best dance teams.

**Why go:** The islands south of Honshu, Japan's main island, are uniquely suited to cycling. A new, eight-day trip from Raid Cycling introduces travelers to some of the highlights. The trip starts in Onomichi on Honshu at the stylish Hotel Cycle. From there, guests first tackle the Shimanami Kaido, a 43-mile cycling route that crosses bridges and takes riders through Setonaikai National Park before ending in the city of Imabari on the island of Shikoku. (The trip doesn't include an overnight on Shikoku, but come spring, travelers to the island's Ehime Prefecture will be able to stay in Ozu Castle, a re-creation of a 14th-century wooden fortress that overlooked the Hijikawa River.) Travelers return to Onomichi, then ride to Hiroshima and spend the night, before packing up and boarding a high-speed train to the island of Kyushu, a diverse mix of mountains and farmland. Riders spend the second half of the trip winding through green tea fields and shiitake farms and sleeping in ryokans. The grand finale is a 43-mile ride up Mount Aso, an active volcano. —ALEX SCHECHTER



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### ● GREENLAND

Unburdened by mass tourism, this arctic island is an outdoor enthusiast's dream destination.

**When to go:** From June until September, summer temperatures hover at an agreeable 50 degrees, and long days mean more time to soak in the scenery. Travelers can join locals as they celebrate Greenland's National Day on June 21 with traditional music, folk dancing, and patriotic ceremonies in town squares.

**Why go:** As Iceland struggles with its popularity, Greenland has become an alluring option for travelers who want polar adventures without the crowds. Travelers can explore the planet's largest national park and test their mettle with a trek on the 100-mile Arctic Circle Trail. Clocking in at just over 836,000 square miles, Greenland is the world's biggest island—nearly 80 percent of which is covered in ice. These attributes mean that the country feels the effects of climate change more starkly, and two new trips in 2020 from the

Norwegian company 50 Degrees North are putting the issue front and center. Led by Greenlander Lykke Geisler Yakaboynu, the five- to six-day tours include these highlights: Travelers cruise to the 656-foot tall Eqi Glacier by boat, go whale-watching in Disko Bay, and visit such UNESCO World Heritage sites as the Ilulissat Icefjord. Yakaboynu puts the sites in context for travelers by discussing the effect of climate change on the country's melting ice sheet. —NORA WALSH



## WHERE TO GO IN 2020



**NEED TO KNOW**  
In 2020, two new airports will open in Nepal in Pokhara and Lumbini.

### ● NEPAL

Nearly five years after a massive earthquake, community-minded tourism is on the rise.

**When to go:** Autumn (September through November) offers mild weather, clear mountain views, and festivals such as Tihar, the Nepali festival of lights (November 15–17).

**Why go:** The five-year anniversary of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake that devastated parts of the country in April 2015 is a good time to invest in ongoing reconstruction efforts and local livelihoods. Visitors can start in the Kathmandu Valley, with its seven UNESCO World Heritage zones, including Patan Durbar Square, a complex of ornate temples, a former palace, and the Patan Museum, which have all been painstakingly restored. Thanks to the women-run Community Homestay Network, travelers can now stay with local families in 19 rural areas across Nepal, from the beautifully preserved town of Panauti to the indigenous Tharu village of Barauli. To trek for a good cause, consider Sasane Sisterhood Trekking and Travel, a new outfitter from the nonprofit Sasane, which is run by survivors of sex-trafficking and human-trafficking. G Adventures' new Himalaya Highlights tour offers a cultural immersion that supports local guides, craftspeople, and environmentalists, and includes a talk with one of the Sasane survivors. —SERENA RENNER

### ● MOZAMBIQUE

Experience the revival of Gorongosa National Park via the stylish new lodges slated to open this year.

**When to go:** During the dry season from June through September, temperatures rarely rise past the mid-80s, and it's the prime time to view game: Animals cluster around the few watering holes that remain.

**Why go:** More than 15 years after the end of a brutal civil war that stripped Gorongosa National Park of most of its large mammals, Mozambique's rehabilitation efforts got a \$40 million boost from American philanthropist Greg Carr. In 2008, his foundation partnered with the Mozambique government on a long-term restoration project to reintroduce wildlife and lift local communities through ecotourism. We're

starting to see the results. Come July, travelers can check into one of six stylish tented suites on the banks of the Mussicadzi River at Muzimu Tented Camp. The highly anticipated Royal Gorongosa from hotelier Liz Biden will have eight well-appointed tents, each featuring a plunge pool. Both properties will offer game drives, boating safaris, and bushwalks to see the park's flourishing lions, hippos, and elephants. —N.W.



## WHERE TO GO IN 2020



### ● TRONDHEIM, NORWAY

The port city is Scandinavia's next can't-miss dining destination.

**When to go:** In warm summer months, daylight stretches late into the night, which makes for beautiful evenings along the city's canals. Starting July 30, local farmers, seafood purveyors, and other producers will converge in the city center for the annual three-day Trondheim Food and Brewers Festival.

**Why go:** It's no surprise that Trondheim, a fjord-side city 300 miles north of Oslo, has deep commercial fishing roots. Possibly more surprising is the city's growing reputation as a dining destination, thanks to

new spots serving, yes, modern Nordic cuisine, but also updated Norwegian comfort foods. In 2019, two restaurants earned Trondheim its first Michelin stars: Fagn, where chef Jonas Andre N avik dreams up artful dishes inspired by nature, and Credo, where the flavors and presentation pay tribute to the farms, waterways, and woods from which ingredients are sourced. (Credo, led by chef Heidi Bjerkan, also received the first Michelin Nordic Guide Sustainability Award.) Locals wonder if a star might soon be awarded to Speilsalen, the fine-dining restaurant inside the newly reopened Britannia Hotel where chef Christopher Davidsen also showcases local ingredients. —LINDSAY LAMBERT DAY

At Fagn, dishes such as wood grouse smoked with juniper put nature front and center.

### ● BARILOCHE, ARGENTINA

A total solar eclipse and a meteor shower give astronomy buffs two good reasons to visit the Lake District.

**When to go:** The mountainous Lake District in Argentine Patagonia is best known for its ski resorts. But on December 14, 2020, just before summer begins in the Southern Hemisphere, a total solar eclipse will cut a path across Patagonia north of the region's main resort town, Bariloche.

**Why go:** The eclipse, of course, is a primary attraction. But stargazers can arrive early to witness the peak of the Geminid meteor shower the day before (December 13), which nearly coincides with a new moon—meaning the sky will be close to fully dark. Bariloche doesn't lie within the path of totality—the swath in which the moon completely blocks the sun—but with its hotels, microbreweries, and easy access to nature, it's the best base for eclipse-watchers. Travelers can spend a week hiking and exploring the region's plentiful lakes and then, to witness the total eclipse, drive 2.5 hours northeast of the city to the town of Piedra del  guila. The best bet for beating traffic and securing an ideal viewing spot in the remote area is to book a tour through an outfitter. GeoEx and Intrepid are both offering multiday tours that include an eclipse-day outing to a private viewing site, accompanied by an astronomy expert. —LYNDSEY MATTHEWS



Camel thorn trees are a common sight in the Namib Desert.

● **NAMIBIA**

In Africa's only International Dark Sky Reserve, a reimagined desert lodge looks to the stars.

**When to go:** During April and May, prices are reasonable, days are warm, and nights are cool. Best of all, the skies are often cloudless and animals congregate by watering holes—ideal for photography.

**Why go:** The Namib Desert is the oldest desert in the world—and arguably the most stunning. Fifty-five million years have

churned its sand into tiny gems that reflect light in unique ways, shifting from bright red to shadowy purple. Namibia is also gaining attention for its unusual safari wildlife, such as desert-adapted elephants, giraffes, oryx, and rhinos, plus lions that hunt seals on the beach. Several new lodges bring a luxury experience to the area, including the Olupale Safari Lodge, which is projected

to open in early 2020 just outside Etosha National Park. But Namibia's best-kept secret remains its night sky. The NamibRand Nature Reserve is Africa's sole International Dark Sky Reserve (though there is a new International Dark Sky Sanctuary in South Africa), and it's one of the darkest places in the world at night. The newly rebuilt and Beyond Sossusvlei Desert Lodge is the place to marvel at that starry sky, thanks to its remote location (87 miles from the nearest town), open design (floor-to-ceiling windows,

above-bed skylights), and state-of-the-art observatory where astronomers lead nightly stargazing sessions with a research-grade telescope. The Kwessi Dunes lodge, slated to open in March 2020, is also taking advantage of the darkness in the NamibRand Nature Reserve: Each of its 12 accommodations will have a "stargazer" room open to the sky. —BILLIE COHEN

RYAN JOHNSON

# WHERE TO GO IN 2020



## ITALY

As the marquee Italian destinations grapple with overtourism, here are four places to get off the beaten path—one for each season.



### ● RIMINI

**When to go:** Starting in September, the throngs disperse and harvest season ramps up.

**Why go:** Rimini, 73 miles southeast of Bologna, is the hometown of the Italian film director Federico Fellini—and the setting for such Fellini classics as *Amarcord* and *I Vitelloni*. In 2020, the 100th anniversary of Fellini's birth, the coastal city will salute him with the opening of the new Federico Fellini International Museum. The indoor-outdoor attraction will include the recently restored Cinema Fulgor theater,



where a young Fellini fell hard for film. CircAmarcord, an outdoor art space, will link the cinema to the Renaissance-era Sismondo Castle, where Fellini became captivated by a circus held on the castle's grounds. Exhibits in the castle will reproduce Fellini film sets in both real life and virtual reality. No Fellini tour would be complete without a pilgrimage to the 1908 Grand Hotel Rimini, which the director re-created in *Amarcord*. It's one of the many stops on a new self-guided walking tour map, available at the city's tourism office. —E.G.

### ● THE DOLOMITES, SÜDTIROL

**When to go:** Most ski resorts open December 1, which typically coincides with Advent and the opening of Christmas markets across the region.

**Why go:** When commercial flights to the Dolomites region of Südtirol ended in 2015, there was concern about a loss of tourism to the area, where 700-plus miles of pistes connect 30 ski resorts. But the closure, which thinned out the crowds, prompted hotels and outfitters to refocus on slow tourism, especially around food, wine, and wellness. A microboom of new hotels includes the Adler Lodge Ritten, which offers yoga, cycling, and guided hikes, as well as a scattering of black-timber chalets that circle a lake. In late winter 2020, the outfitter Discover Your Italy will roll out snow hikes in Val Duron, as well as mountaintop pop-up dinners, and Butterfield & Robinson launches a new Dolomites winter adventure that will include runs on the Sella massif and snowshoe hikes to taverns serving wines from the neighboring Alto Adige province. —A.H.G.

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## ● PONZA

**When to go:** From June through August, this sleepy island—the largest of the Pontine Islands, an archipelago off the coast of Naples—comes alive, as Romans and other Italians arrive on holiday. Every June 20, locals celebrate the island's patron saint, San Silverio, with concerts, fireworks, and a religious procession.

**Why go:** Ponza resembles the nearby Amalfi Coast, down to the winding roads that lead to scenic lookouts and footpaths that descend to rocky coves. But it's not nearly as bustling—yet. Though most of Ponza's tourists are Italians, the island is starting to appear on the radar of international travelers, so go now, before the crowds descend. There's no better place to embrace the Italian *dolce far niente* (sweet idleness). Travelers can swim in secluded bays such as Cala Fèola, or hire a private boat to explore grottoes only accessible by sea. There aren't any five-star hotels on Ponza, but the Hotel Chiaia di Luna offers a location overlooking Chiaia di Luna Beach, plus floors with majolica tiles and a breezy terrace restaurant. Nearby, Baretto 99 serves aperol spritzes and other *aperitivi* from a pineapple-shaped kiosk. Baretto's makeshift sofas are the perfect spot to watch the sunset before strolling to the portside restaurant L'Aragosta for spaghetti *alle vongole* (with clams) and the catch of the day. —LAURA ITZKOWITZ

In Veneto, prosecco is best paired with regional snacks, such as soppressata and parmesan.

## ● VENETO

**When to go:** The Primavera del Prosecco Superiore (March–June) is considered the most important wine event in Veneto, the region that fans out from its capital, Venice. During the festival, travelers can join tastings, enjoy meals with wine pairings, and stroll through vineyards open to the public.

**Why go:** In 2019, UNESCO finally recognized the prosecco production area—50,000-plus acres of terraced vineyards, rolling green hills, and medieval towns—as a World Heritage site. Travelers can sip their way through the towns of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene, where small, family-run vineyards

still use traditional methods to make sparkling wine. It's easy to explore beyond the towns, too. Visitors can drive or cycle along the winding Strada del Prosecco, a 55-mile loop lined with 90 wineries, tasting prosecco and other wines along the way. The region also has plenty of restaurants that highlight the land's abundance, including the Michelin-starred Ristorante La Corte. The best way to experience farm life is to stay in one of several agriturismo accommodations in the area, such as Borgoluce, which produces its own wine, beer, honey, cured meats, and buffalo mozzarella. For the insider track, travelers can book a custom tour of Veneto with Imago Artis Travel. —DEVORAH LEV-TOV





## WHERE TO GO IN 2020



### ● DUBAI

Dive into a heady mix of creativity and innovation at the first World Expo to be hosted in the Middle East.

**When to go:** Travelers can time a visit with the launch of Expo 2020 Dubai on October 20, or with Diwali, the over-the-top, five-day festival of lights that begins on November 14.

**Why go:** This year, Dubai will host the Expo, a six-month exhibition that brings together 192 nations to showcase human ingenuity as it's applied to three themes: opportunity, mobility, and sustainability.

At the 1,080-acre Expo site in the Dubai South district, travelers will be able to engage with the themes through global fare (from street food to haute cuisine), VR and AI experiences, 60 live performances per day (including music, comedy, and dance), large-scale art installations, and the world's largest 360-degree projection dome. The innovation won't stop there. Dubai's Museum of the Future, slated to open in 2020, will house

**NEED TO KNOW**  
Emirates and Etihad Airways are expected to add flights from major cities around the world during the Expo.

groundbreaking inventions and function as an interdisciplinary incubator. At least seven hotels are opening (or reopening) in 2020, including the Royal Atlantis Resort & Residences and ME by Meliá Dubai, designed by the late Iraqi British architect Zaha Hadid. —N.W.



The large toucan is one of the easiest birds to spot in the Pantanal.

### ● THE PANTANAL, BRAZIL

Explore an under-the-radar wildlife region that's home to South America's top predator: the jaguar.

**When to go:** The optimal—and most comfortable—time to spot wildlife is during the drier months (May through September). June and September are the best months to see a jaguar and avoid high-season crowds.

**Why go:** Effective June 17, 2019, Brazil waived visas for U.S. citizens. While the Brazilian Amazon gets a lot of attention—both for its biodiversity and for the many threats to it—the

Pantanal region, 1,500 miles south, is the world's largest freshwater wetland and has the highest density of wildlife on the continent. Spanning more than 68,000 square miles, this UNESCO World Heritage site encompasses floodplains and rivers, grasslands and forests, and lakes and mountains. A staggering number of endemic species live in the region, including jaguars, hyacinth macaws, giant anteaters, marsh deer, capybaras, caimans, and tapirs, to name just a few. The Pantanal's northern section, more famous for jaguar sightings, attracts more people. To escape the crowds, travelers can book a cabin on the recently refurbished 10-suite *Peralta* luxury expedition ship, which offers four-day sailings on the Paraguay River as well as excursions to donate toys, jackets, and other supplies to local schoolchildren. The southern region is more remote and gives travelers a chance to experience traditional *Pantaneiro* (cowboy) culture at former cattle ranches transformed into ecolodges. Guests staying at the Caiman Eco-Lodge, a 131,000-acre working farm and ecological refuge, can observe research activities at the Onçafari Project, Brazil's innovative environmental initiative to protect jaguars. —N.W.

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**NEED TO KNOW**  
United Airlines and Qantas recently launched direct flights from SFO to Melbourne.

## ● THE GRAMPAINS, AUSTRALIA

Drink in dramatic views on a hike in Grampians National Park, then drink in the region's top-notch wines.

**When to go:** The spring months, September through November, are great for trekking. September brings the Seriously Shiraz wine festival.

**Why go:** Many hikers set their sights on the Blue Mountains outside Sydney. But the less-trodden Grampians range in Grampians National Park—three hours northwest of Melbourne—offers more dramatic topography, as well as the most Aboriginal rock art of any park in southern Australia. Now, thanks to the multimillion-dollar Grampians Peaks Trail, it's a backpackers' paradise. The first stage, a 22-mile loop, is already complete. Once finished at the end of 2020, the roughly 99-mile trail will span the length of the park. After hiking, travelers can pay homage to Aboriginal Australians at Brambuk, the cultural center in the gateway village of Halls Gap. Brambuk's Aboriginal guides also offer tours of the park's five rock art sites. Also worth a stop: the Grampians' lesser-known wine region, just 30 minutes east. Best's Great Western winery makes sparkling shiraz and cabernet sauvignon from some of the oldest vines in the country. —N.W.

## ● PARIS

The French capital welcomes a wave of haute hotels and cultural centers.

**When to go:** The mild days between September and October are ideal for checking out new museum exhibits, such as the Botticelli retrospective at the Musée Jacquemart-André (September 2020–January 2021).

**Why go:** “New” and “novel” could define Paris any year, but the terms are especially apropos in 2020. La Samaritaine, the century-old department store that closed in 2005, will shine once more on its perch on the Seine when it reopens as a multipurpose complex. Expect new boutiques, a fine-dining restaurant with Michelin

ambitions, and Cheval Blanc, the 72-room marquee hotel project from luxury group Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy. Equally grand in scale—though a few miles outside the city—is Le Grand Contrôle. The new boutique hotel from the Airelles Collection will occupy a trio of 17th-century buildings on the grounds of the Château de Versailles. But it's Les Halles that will get one of the city's biggest cultural landmarks. The 130-year-old Bourse de Commerce is slated to reopen in June as the Bourse de Commerce–Pinault Collection, a contemporary art museum featuring nearly 5,000 pieces, including work from such greats as Cindy Sherman and Cy Twombly, all sourced from Kering fashion group founder François Pinault's personal collection. —LINDSEY TRAMUTA

Autumn in Paris means art, culture, and picnics along the Seine.



Kalalau Beach is the stretch of sand that welcomes hikers at the end of the Kalalau Trail.

## NEED TO KNOW

Airfares to Hawaii from the West Coast are dropping as competition soars. Southwest begins direct flights to Kauai from both Oakland, CA, and San Jose, CA, in January 2020.

## ● KAUAI

Hawaii's "Garden Isle" has rebounded from floods, and the Napali Coast's Kalalau Trail has reopened with sustainability top of mind.

**When to go:** June, the coolest of Hawaii's summer months, is an ideal time to visit. King Kamehameha Day (June 11) is a statewide holiday, with parades to celebrate the first monarch to unite the Hawaiian Islands.

**Why go:** The Napali Coast on Kauai's North Shore has long beckoned travelers. There are the golden beaches, the precipitous cliffs rising out of the cobalt waters of the Pacific—and traversing it all, the 11-mile Kalalau Trail, an arduous trek that winds past a towering waterfall and lowland forest. There were also, however, crowds, especially on those golden beaches. So in mid-2018,

after the region closed following record rainfall that caused powerful floods and landslides, local officials and residents took the opportunity to reassess. During the year it took to make repairs, locals saw wildlife return to bays and beaches it had once abandoned due to flocking visitors. In late 2019 the area reopened under a new tourist management system that limits crowds in two preserves: Haena State Park and Napali Coast State Wilderness Park. The nearby Limahuli Garden and Preserve, which has endangered plants and

birds found nowhere else on the planet, also has a new booking system in place to reduce crowds. Hanalei, a walkable, tranquil town on a crescent bay, serves as the gateway to the Napali Coast, and it, too, is back on its feet after the storms. —TOVIN LAPAN

CZ PHOTOGRAPHY

# WHERE TO GO IN 2020



## ● THE FINGER LAKES, NEW YORK

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of U.S. women's right to vote in the birthplace of the suffrage movement.

**When to go:** The Finger Lakes shine when the days (and the waters) are warm. On August 26, 2020, the region—250 miles northwest of New York City—will honor the centennial of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

**Why go:** Largely known for its 11 shimmering lakes and 100-plus wineries, the region is also where the women's rights movement was born. To celebrate the centennial, the Finger Lakes region created a list of 100 ways to fete female empowerment throughout 2020, starting with the three-day Women March (January 17–19). Come summer, outdoor enthusiasts can hop on WomanTours' women-only cycling trip (July 9–12). The route includes visits to major historical sites in Seneca Falls and Rochester, including the courthouse where Susan B. Anthony was tried for the crime of voting (commemorations for her 200th birthday will also take place in 2020), and the Women's Rights National Historical Park, home to the Wesleyan Chapel, the site of the first women's rights convention. Travelers can also support the many women-owned and -operated businesses in the Finger Lakes, such as Lucas Vineyards, Silver Waters Sailing, and Firelight Camps, a glamping site. —N.W.

Snowshill is one of the English villages along the Great West Way.

## ● SOUTHERN ENGLAND

An extensive new touring route makes it easier than ever to explore the region's villages and towns.

**When to go:** The summer months (June through August) attract the most travelers. They also bring some of southern England's most worthwhile festivals and events, including the Royal Ascot horse races in Berkshire (June 16–20).

**Why go:** In late 2018, the Great West Way, a touring route based on one of the first Great Roads commissioned by the monarchy in the early 20th century, made its debut. The 125-mile route stretches from London to

Bristol, connecting small towns in between. Travelers can drive the Great West Way end to end, hop from town to town via the Great Western Railway, or cruise along the Thames and regional canals by boat. Bike paths and walking trails are ideal for travelers who want to explore the route's natural landscapes over the course of a day, a week, or more. In spring 2019, the bucolic Monkey Island Estate opened just minutes from Bray, a village with three Michelin-starred restaurants. Farther west, in the town of Bath, a UNESCO World Heritage site, new areas of the ancient baths, including a *laconicum* (Roman sauna) will open to the public in 2020, as will a new visitor's center. —L.L.D.



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## ● SALAR DE UYUNI, BOLIVIA

The world's largest salt desert is becoming a luxury outpost.

**When to go:** Come May, thanks to a mix of sunny and rainy days, travelers may be able to see the salt flats—located in southwest Bolivia—both dry and when they're flooded, which creates a surreal mirror effect.

**Why go:** The Swiss outfitter Amazing Escapes recently partnered with Bolivia's indigenous Jirira community to open Kachi Lodge, the region's first permanent luxury lodge. The sustainable camp, located at the foot of the Tunupa volcano, comprises six solar-powered geodesic domes. Reclaimed wood furniture, traditional *bayeta* textiles, and artwork from Gastón Ugalde (considered the Andean Andy Warhol)

decorate the lodge. Claus Meyer, the Michelin-starred chef behind the destination restaurant Gustu in La Paz, oversees the menu. In May, the classic journey across the flats from Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia, to Chile's Atacama Desert will also get a luxury upgrade. Explora will offer three high-end Bolivian camps with minimalist, wood-paneled guest rooms for its trips. Travelers can embark on 8- to 11-day expeditions, which combine driving and hiking. —N.W.

## ● SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

The flourishing city is now a cosmopolitan arts hub, food haven, and thriving green space.

**When to go:** In April, the wildflower fields outside the city burst with color. San Antonio's annual 11-day Fiesta (April 16–26) pays homage

to the city's storied revolutionaries with the Battle of Flowers Parade, live music, and regional fare.

**Why go:** In October 2019, the hotly anticipated contemporary art center Ruby City joined a roster of world-class art galleries and museums, including the upgraded Witte Museum. Designed by British architect Sir David Adjaye, the striking crimson Ruby City presents selected works from the Linda Pace Foundation's private collection of more than 900 paintings, sculptures, and installations. Another addition to the cityscape: a retrospective exhibit (through May 2020) that features the large-scale works of acclaimed Mexican sculptor Sebastián throughout the city. San Antonio's close ties to Mexico are perhaps most keenly experienced on the plate, at such restaurants as Carnitas Lonja, Lala's Gorditas,



and a new restaurant from local chef Johnny Hernandez. Travelers can also explore San Antonio's new outdoor spaces, notably the Mission Reach, an eight-mile extension of the city's famous River Walk promenade that connects four UNESCO-listed Spanish colonial missions. The expanded botanical garden, new ecofriendly Confluence Park, and the developing San Pedro Creek Culture Park are also worth a stroll. —N.W.

In Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni, salt is raked from the desert and left in piles to dry.

# WHERE TO GO IN 2020



## NEED TO KNOW

In late 2020, American Airlines will introduce a direct flight from LAX to Christchurch, the first ever nonstop flight from North America to the South Island.

### ● CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

Almost a decade after two earthquakes devastated the city, Christchurch is buzzing once again—and showcasing its deep Māori roots.

**When to go:** Christchurch earns its “Garden City” nickname September through November, when daffodils awaken and cherry and magnolia trees are in bloom. Spring is also a great time to score discounts on the TranzAlpine and Coastal Pacific train routes.

**Why go:** Founded in 1856, Christchurch is the oldest city in New Zealand—but in many ways, it’s also the newest. The city center has been largely rebuilt, and travelers who want to explore the revived district can stay at the glossy new Sudima Hotel, snack at the new Riverside Market, and take yoga classes and eat organic food at the Welder, a large-scale wellness center—the first of its kind in New Zealand. More recent rebuilding efforts have placed a spotlight on the country’s historically overlooked indigenous Māori heritage. The Te Pae civic center, launching in October on the banks of the Avon River, will host cultural events in its 1,400-seat auditorium. And Puari Village, a 2,690-square-foot riverside attraction scheduled to open in late 2020, will feature indigenous art, exhibitions, and cuisine, as well as river tours in *waka* (canoes) that touch on the aquatic traditions of the Māori people. —N.W.

The nine-room Firehouse Hotel occupies a former fire station built in 1927.

### ● LOS ANGELES

Hospitality gets a boost thanks to a hotel boom and the return of the Michelin Guide.

**When to go:** There’s really no bad time to visit Los Angeles. But in September and October, the temperature is in the mid-70s most days and the chance of rain is slim to none.

**Why go:** Over the last year, the city has welcomed a flood of new hotels—and the development shows no signs of abating. The growing downtown district (DTLA) now has a Hoxton hotel, with the Downtown L.A. Proper Hotel set to open just across the street. About two miles east, the Soho Warehouse and the Firehouse Hotel are energizing the once-desolate Arts District.

In Century City, the Fairmont will open come summer in the former Century Plaza Hotel, staying true to the Plaza’s midcentury roots. But a trip to L.A. this year isn’t only about where to stay—it’s also about where to eat and what to do. The return of the Michelin Guide to Los Angeles (part of the first-ever all-California guide) after a 10-year hiatus, celebrates the vibrancy of the city’s fine-dining scene. N/naka and Vespertine are among six L.A. restaurants that received two Michelin stars. The slated 2020 opening of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures and the designation of the area’s first UNESCO World Heritage site (Frank Lloyd Wright’s Hollyhock House in East Hollywood) are among the cultural highlights. —L.M.





## CANADA

With its diverse cities and **wealth of outdoor spaces**, Canada has always been a playground for travelers. Here are four new ways to celebrate our neighbor to the north—one for each season.

Pacific Rim National Park Reserve on Vancouver Island includes beaches—and temperate rain forest.

### ● VANCOUVER ISLAND, B.C.

**When to go:** Melting snow and blooming trees mark the beginning of spring in British Columbia. Bears come out of hibernation, orcas and humpbacks start their migration north, and restaurants brim with seafood (salmon, spot prawns) and foraged treats (spruce tips, fiddlehead ferns). May 1 marks the start of hiking season on the renowned West Coast Trail.

**Why go:** This island—which has the capital city, Victoria, and the wood-shingled surf town Tofino—packs a lot into its 12,000 square miles. In 2020, there are even more ways to explore. In Tofino, where travelers can surf and kayak, there are additions to the flourishing culinary scene, such as the Tofino Distillery and the vegan restaurant Bravocados, and new suites at the Pacific Sands Resort. The reigning queen of Tofino hospitality is still the Wickaninnish Inn, however. Its renovated Pointe Restaurant and On the Rocks bar—all wood and ocean-view windows, with a bar fashioned from local marble—will open a new wine cellar and event space in time for its Surfrider Foundation fundraiser (March 7) and World Oceans Day (June 8). A new, nearly 15-mile multiuse trail that stretches from Tofino to its coastal neighbor, Ucluelet, is in the works. Travelers can book cycling tours with Pacific Rim Eco Tours in Ucluelet. The island is also home to 50 First Nations communities, with many offering immersive ways for travelers to connect with Native traditions. Homalco Wildlife & Cultural Tours will offer two different day-long trips on their traditional territory in Bute Inlet that highlight various aspects of the Homalco culture. —S.R.

## WHERE TO GO IN 2020



### ● TORONTO, ONTARIO

**When to go:** Toronto launches

summer with a slew of June events, including the music-and-gaming festival North by Northeast (June 12–21), the Toronto Jazz Festival (June 19–28), and Toronto Pride (June 26–28), which draws upwards of a million people for its parade, march, and family programs.

**Why go:** There's never been a better time to visit Canada's largest and most diverse city. Nearly half of all residents—46

percent—are immigrants (versus about 20 percent nationally), and they speak more than 170 languages. There are many ways for travelers to engage with that diversity. In May, the city will celebrate the second iteration of Indigenous Fashion Week (May 28–31), presenting clothing and textiles from Native designers via runway shows, markets, workshops, and exhibits. Travelers can also celebrate the city's large LGBTQ community. Ticket sales

for the 30th anniversary of Inside Out, the LGBTQ film festival (May 21–31), help support new outreach initiatives such as the RE:Focus Fund, which provides financing to LGBTQ women, nonbinary, and trans filmmakers. Visitors in 2020 will be able to check into Canada's first Ace Hotel, slated to open in the Fashion District, and the expanded Drake Hotel, a beloved homegrown, art-filled gathering place showcasing local artists and musicians. —E.G.



In winter, polar bears occasionally wander into town, so a voluntary 10 p.m. curfew (for humans!) curbs unplanned encounters.

### ● CHURCHILL, MANITOBA

**When to go:** In October and November, polar bears migrate to the coast to await the return of winter sea ice. To catch the northern lights, travelers should aim for January through March, when the skies are at their clearest.

**Why go:** Six hundred miles north of Winnipeg, Churchill is an isolated enclave on the western edge of Hudson Bay, where beluga whales congregate in summer and the northern lights dance above the tundra 300 days a year. But the region's biggest

draw, of course, are the hundreds of polar bears that flock to the area in winter. No roads reach Churchill, so the community is largely reliant on a train that ferries in both supplies and travelers from Winnipeg. Historic floods in 2017 washed away sections of the track, but train service resumed at the end of 2018, so Churchill—and its polar bears—are fully accessible again. The best way to avoid the crowds is to visit in late November or early February, and the best way see the bears is with a tour. Frontiers North Adventures converts a chain of rugged tundra buggies into an overnight wilderness camp complete with dining, sleeping, and lounge cars, while luxury outfitter Churchill Wild uses backcountry lodges for 7- to 11-day small-group walking safaris where visitors observe the massive mammals at eye level (albeit at a safe distance). Visitors who want to learn more should stop by the new Polar Bears International House, opened in fall 2019, where conservation scientists discuss bear ecology and their ongoing research on the impressive mammals. —SARAH FELDBERG



# WHERE TO GO IN 2020

## ● JASPER, ALBERTA

**When to go:** Between the summer tourist season and the arrival of winter, October is the ideal month to visit the town of Jasper and Jasper National Park. It's Dark Sky month, when the annual Dark Sky Festival takes place (October 16–25).

**Why go:** Tucked up against the jagged Canadian Rockies and

Jasper National Park, Jasper (population 4,795) is surrounded by natural beauty, attracting outdoor adventurers and nature lovers from around the world. But stunning views aren't limited to daytime hours in this mountain hideaway. In 2011, the 4,247-square-mile Jasper National Park was designated a Dark Sky Preserve and UNESCO World Heritage site, meeting strict light-pollution limits

to sustain some of the best stargazing on the planet. As part of a series of park upgrades, Whistlers Campground, the park's largest camping area, is closed for renovation until late 2020, but travelers can still see the Milky Way above the thundering Athabasca Falls. More than 15,000 stargazers descend on Jasper every October for the Jasper Dark Sky Festival, a celebration

that includes chats with former astronauts and leading astronomers, laser-guided tours of the constellations, evening hikes at Lake Annette, and much more. There's also the Dark Sky Dark Hefe beer at local Jasper Brewing Co. and Star Sessions, a three-course dinner followed by a late-night tram ride—proof that fall in Jasper is all about nature's nightly light show. —KADE KRICHKO

Jasper National Park is one of the best places in Canada to see the aurora borealis.