Where to Go in 2024

The 25 most exciting places around the world to visit next

November 28, 2023

AFAR
WHERE TO GO
IN 2024

From a British city reimagining its industrial past and a laid-back Kenyan island free of cars to the best place in North America to see the total solar eclipse, our 25 picks for where to go next year have several traits in common: Each is an awe-inspiring, joy-inducing destination where human connection and creativity define the travel experience. These 25 places (listed in no particular order) offer ample opportunities for conscientious, sustainable exploration—exactly what AFAR's travelers who care are seeking right now. Cheers to a year of getting out there.—*The Editors*

Friendly reef sharks swim among guests at Vomo Island. Courtesy of Vomo Island Fiji

1. Fiji

Fiji's marine life is famously beautiful: a colorful show of turtles, rays, and sharks swirling amid sun-dappled shades of green and blue. The main stage for this dazzling performance is its array of coral reefs—fragile ecosystems in which the symbiotic relationship between plants and fish plays out daily, their delicate dance a microcosm of our ever more stressed planet.

For the full story from Tim Chester, read: In Fiji, A Vivid Underwater World Awaits.

ALASKA NATIVE CULTURE
AKA
ALSO KNOWN AS
STORIES TOLD IN SONG AND DANCE
TRAVEL ALASKA

The Sydney Opera House will celebrate its 50th year in 2024. Photo by Michele Heimerman

2. Sydney

Best known for its looming concrete "shells," the Sydney Opera House is a master class in modern expressionist design. The iconic building turned 50 in October 2023 to great fanfare. Enjoy dinner at Midden, the new Indigenous restaurant located within the compound; the next day, wake up early for an exclusive Backstage Tour, which will take you through corridors to rehearsal spaces and the orchestra pit. Check out the Opera House's 2024 special programming throughout the year, including the London International Animation Festival in January and an evening with author Fran Lebowitz in February. Or consider a trip in May or June for the annual festival Vivid Sydney, when art and light installations transform the harbor into a mind-bending light show. —*Michael Callahan*

In 1956, Tangier was reintegrated into the newly independent Moroccan state. Photo by Stephanie Foden

3. Tangier

With a skyline that resembles a handful of dice tossed haphazardly on the cliffside, Tangier has long stood apart from other Moroccan cities. For several decades in the 20th century, it was administered by a cluster of foreign countries, including Italy and Spain. It lured writers and artists from Europe and the United States, imparting a cosmopolitan vibe that lingers today. In the past five years, though, Morocco's northernmost city has reconnected with its national roots.

EMERALD CRUISES
BEST DEAL OF THE YEAR
CYBER SALE
ENDS NOVEMBER 30
UP TO $6,000 BONUS SAVINGS PER SUITE*
COMBINABLE WITH 2 FOR 1 FARES
BOOK NOW

In 2018, Africa's first high-speed train line linked Tangier with Casablanca. The journey now takes two hours.

It was part of an extensive infrastructure investment to bolster the region. The arrival of new luxury hotels is a boon, including the 133-room Fairmont Tazi Palace and the boutique Villa Mabrouka, a 12-room makeover of Yves Saint Laurent's onetime home by fashion designer Jasper Conran. Waldorf Astoria will join them, likely in early 2025.

The city's two main squares, the Grand Socco and Petit Socco, showcase the talent of creative Moroccans. Alma Kitchen, owned by a local jeweler and her photographer husband, serves dishes such as charred eggplant and anise-and-cardamom-spiced potatoes. Idle over a coffee at Cinémathèque de Tanger on the larger square, a historic cultural venue that first opened in 1938 and was refurbished in the mid-2000s by French Moroccan artist Yto Barrada. Just outside the medina, Las Chicas focuses on Moroccan-made homewares, clothing, and organic wellness products by the women-owned Zoâ Beauty; linger for a mint tea, or *atay*, here, too.

Stop by El Morocco Club, a piano bar and restaurant inspired by, and named after, the louche New York City nightclub that opened in the 1930s. Today the club—with its monochromatic photos and zebra-print sofas—is the perfect shorthand for old and new Tangier in one. —*Mark Ellwood*

With hilly terrain ribboned with spring-fed rivers, the Hill Country is arguably one of the prettiest places in Texas. Photo by Wynn Myers

2024 Vacation Inspiration
ALABAMA BEACHES
GULF SHORES & ORANGE BEACH TOURISM
GET THE GUIDE

4. The Texas Hill Country

This year, all eyes are turned to the Texas Hill Country, since it falls smack-dab in the path of totality for the 2024 solar eclipse on April 8. As the moon passes between the sun and the Earth, the day will turn to night. North America saw a total eclipse in 2017, but the last time the land now known as Texas experienced one was back in 1397. Visibility will depend on two things: location (the Hill Country will get close to four and a half minutes of totality, out of a possible seven and a half) and weather (Central Texas's annual average of 300 sunny days bodes well).

For the full story from Mae Hamilton, read: A Total Eclipse, Fresh Peaches, and Small-Town Charm: Why This Destination Is Worth a Trip This Year.

From left: The restaurant Anima at the Rome Edition hotel serves regional fare; The Anantara Palazzo Naiadi hotel combines traditional Italian architecture with elevated cuisine. From left: Photo by Nikolas Koeni; Courtesy of Anantara Palazzo Naiadi Rome

5. Rome

The meal started with octopus carpaccio, wagyu beef gyoza, and yellowtail sushi. After my husband and I polished that off, the waiter set down Ibérico pork marinated in soy and truffle. Seated on a snaking banquette at Seen by Olivier, the rooftop restaurant at the new Anantara Palazzo Naiadi hotel, we enjoyed dish after dish. When I first moved to Rome in 2009, I was hard-pressed to find such globally inspired fare; though it is a major European capital, it had tended to the traditional. But the Eternal City is changing.

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

For the full story by Laura Itzkowitz, read New Hotels, Restaurants, and Experiences: Why Now Is the Time to Book a Trip to Rome.

Intrepid Travel now offers a way for visitors to experience a lesser-seen side of Machu Picchu. Photo by Amanda Villarosa

6. Machu Picchu

Peru's most popular attraction can sometimes seem to buckle under the weight of its visitors. Now, Intrepid Travel is offering a way to experience a lesser-known side of the Sacred Valley, using not the popular Inca Trail but a route based on the Quarry Trail. Its new itinerary features the dramatic Perolniyoc Cascade waterfall; an Inca quarry that gave the original trail its name; and a viewpoint, called Wayrapunku, that overlooks the village of Ollantaytambo, whose ruins include the 900-year-old Temple of the Sun. —*Michael Callahan*

Photo by Lachlan/Unsplash

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

7. Martha's Vineyard

It was the book that made people afraid to go into the water: *Jaws*. Celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2024 with a tour of sites on Martha's Vineyard where the movie was filmed in 1974. Beyond the realm of the great white shark, explore the quintessential New England beauty of the 87-square-mile island: the dramatic clay cliffs of Aquinnah that appear to change color throughout the day; Offshore Ale Company, which serves malty fish and chips; and the 147-year-old carousel in Oak Bluffs, the oldest in the country. Visits in the "shoulder seasons," late spring and early fall, come with mild weather and a respite from the island's infamous summer traffic. —*Michael Callahan*

LUC
TABASSAM
CAFE

Lamu hosts several events a year, including competitive dhow races and a yoga festival. From left: Photo by Khadija M. Farah; Eric Lafforgue

8. Lamu

Walking the sandy, winding streets of Shela—a village on the southeastern coast of Kenya's Lamu Island—is an exercise in trusting the process. The island is essentially free of motor vehicles, and the alleyways are only wide enough for pedestrians and donkeys. Even after visiting a dozen times, I take it as a given that I will get lost. I also trust that Shela is small enough that I will eventually stumble upon that patch of fiery fuchsia bougainvillea I had passed earlier, or that carved wooden door, or that mosque with the atonal call to prayer singer, and I will find my way once again.

For the full story from Sarika Bansal, read: Immerse Yourself in This Trapped-in-Time East African Island.

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

The 250-mile-long Trans Bhutan Trail passes through villages and valleys, alongside dozens of Buddhist stupas and temples. Photos by Ken Spence Photography

9. Bhutan

The last remaining Buddhist kingdom in the world is not easy to reach, but that's what makes arriving even more rewarding. After our pilot landed between 18,000-foot Himalayan peaks at Bhutan's Paro International Airport (which looks more like a temple), I soon realized I was in a place unlike anywhere else.

Bhutan only opened its doors to tourism in 1974 and has put measures in place to make sure that tourists don't overrun its pristine nature or long-preserved culture. With a strong conservation mindset, it is the world's first carbon-negative country: 60 percent of its landscape must be covered in forest, and tourists have always been required to pay a daily fee. Since 2022, the fee has supported local community and conservation projects.

In September 2023, Bhutan halved its tourist fee to $100 per day to attract more travelers. Visitors are encouraged to stay longer to experience the country's new and renovated five-star hotels, such as Zhiwa Ling Heritage, andBeyond Punakha River Lodge, and Pemako Punakha, all of which are required to be built in the traditional Bhutanese style. And with the restoration of the Trans Bhutan Trail, visitors can explore new parts of the country.

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

I hiked the historic pilgrimage route, which dates to the 16th century, soon after it reopened in 2022. We were some of the first foreigners to walk through remote villages on our way to see fortresses and stupas.

It was easy to understand Bhutan's deep reverence for nature as we trekked through thick pine forests and fog-blanketed mountains—some with peaks that have never been scaled to avoid disturbing spirits. Hearing that made walking under their shadow feel only more sacred. —*Kathleen Rellihan*

Philadelphia took home more James Beard Awards in 2023 than any other city. Photo by Ted Nghiem Photography

10. Philadelphia

Travelers who love food and art should make a beeline to Philly this year. The city garnered more restaurant and chef awards than any other at the 2023 James Beard Foundation competition. Make time to try the seasonal tasting menu at Friday Saturday Sunday, which won Outstanding Restaurant, or Thai cuisine at Kalaya, where Chutatip "Nok" Suntaranon won Best Chef: Mid-Atlantic. On the art side, the Rodin Museum is hosting a sculpture exhibition, *Rodin's Hands*, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art will feature the photographic exhibition *In the Right Place*, recognizing the pioneering photographers Barbara Crane, Melissa Shook, and Carol Taback. —*Amy S. Eckert*

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

BISTROT
BIENVENUE
33
35
LE SANCERRE

Paris, long known for its arts and culture scene, will be taking on the sports world in 2024. Photo by Nico Knaack/Unsplash

11. Paris

The City of Light has been preparing to host the 2024 Summer Olympic Games and the Paralympics with signature French élan. (Swimming events in the Seine! BMX freestyle on the Place de la Concorde!). "There is much to consider if you want to be in Paris for the Olympics," says Martha King, whose namesake agency is helping travelers who want to attend the Games. There are over 3,500 combinations of Olympic events and sessions; hopeful attendees should act quickly, King says. The city is, of course, festive throughout the year and worth a visit any time. Visitors before April 2 may enjoy the Mark Rothko exhibition at the Fondation Louis Vuitton; afterward, go for a champagne spritz and Eiffel Tower views on the rooftop of the recently opened Hôtel Dame des Arts. —*Michael Callahan*

Lemon Grove at the Aster hotel is a new addition to L.A.'s rooftop dining scene. Photo by Emil John Ravelo

12. Los Angeles

Growing up in Los Angeles, I always felt it was so spread out that nothing quite tempted me to leave my neighborhood. Now, as an adult who recently returned from living in New York, I'm willing to battle traffic and get to know more of the city. From contemporary art exhibits at The Broad downtown to sunny afternoons spent at Hollywood's new rooftop garden atop the Aster hotel, L.A. offers cultural and outdoor experiences all year round.

SCENIC° LUXURY CRUISES & TOURS
BEST OFFER OF THE YEAR
BLACK FRIDAY SALE
ENDS NOVEMBER 30
UP TO $15,000 BONUS SAVINGS PER SUITE*
COMBINABLE WITH 2 FOR 1 FARES
BOOK NOW

In February, the largest public art project devoted to Black artists in the United States will open in the city. The 1.3-mile-long open-air museum, called Destination Crenshaw, will be filled with permanent and temporary outdoor installations featuring works by more than 100 Black artists displayed across four acres of green space. Established and emerging artists will include painter Kehinde Wiley, artist and sculptor Melvin Edwards, and graffiti artists the RTN crew.

"The creative energy of the Black community in South L.A. drives popular art that's born locally, copied nationally, and consumed globally," says Jason Foster, Destination Crenshaw's president and COO. "Nonetheless, these artists have received neither the public acknowledgment nor economic advantage from decades of creative productivity. Destination Crenshaw powerfully makes this case, visually stamping South L.A. as the West Coast's cradle of Black creativity."

The city's food scene is thriving, too—a reflection of its diverse residents. Chef Rashida Holmes's pop-up, Bridgetown Roti, will open its first brick-and-mortar location in 2024, bringing Caribbean cookery to East Hollywood. At Kinn in Koreatown, chef Ki Kim's crispy octopus with gochujang aioli is one of many tasting menu highlights served in the 20-seat space. More than enough reason to explore the city more deeply—and venture further afield. —*Kristin Braswell*

goodall gallery

Manchester is filled with students; there are five universities in the city. Photo by Wambam Photography

Disappear from the ordinary.
GO TO BERMUDA

13. Manchester

Let's start by saying that you know more about Manchester than you think you do—that the northern England city of red-brick Victorian buildings, old universities, and public squares already lives in your pop-culture subconscious, the backdrop for era-defining events that outshone the city itself.

For the full story from Billie Cohen, read: This Northern English City Has Been Nurturing Its Arts Scene for Years—and It's Paying Off.

Weifang, China, prides itself on being the World Kite Capital. Photo by Laurence Coulton

14. Weifang, China

This eastern Chinese city between Beijing and Shanghai is often proclaimed the kite capital of the world, thanks to its annual international kite festival each April that draws tens of thousands of people, and the Weifang World Kite Museum, where five exhibition halls explore the craftsmanship and folklore of kites. But Weifang works to protect *all* of its cultural heritage, with a focus on preserving traditions that earned it status as a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art in 2021 and as a 2024 Culture City of East Asia. For example, Shihuyuan Intangible Cultural Heritage Park teaches visitors about art forms, including clay modeling and paper cutting, as well as kites. Travelers can try their hand at kite-making and wood-block printing at Yangjiabu Folk Art Grand View Garden. A thriving evening food market scene ensures a delicious end to a day; try barbecued seafood or *chao tian guo*, a dish of pork offal and pickled vegetables wrapped in a thin pancake. —*Tim Chester*

EMERALD CRUISES
BEST DEAL OF THE YEAR
CYBER SALE
ENDS NOVEMBER 30
UP TO $6,000 BONUS SAVINGS PER SUITE*
COMBINABLE WITH 2 FOR 1 FARES
BOOK NOW

Long known for its stunning Caribbean landscapes, the island of St. Kitts is also embracing its storied history of rum making. Courtesy of St. Kitt's Tourism Authority (L); Photo by Tom Philips

15. St. Kitts

St. Kitts, in the eastern Caribbean, is an island of thick rain forests and sunny beaches. But during its early colonial era it was blanketed with sugar plantations that were farmed by enslaved African people. Much of the crop was turned into rum, creating a lucrative business for the British. After St. Kitts gained independence in 1983 and shut down its cane sugar production in 2005 (it couldn't compete with the global industry's turn to beet sugar), the legacy of Kittitian rum was not forgotten. Now two locally owned companies are reviving the island's distilling heritage with a proud Kittitian spin.

"We have a tradition of making rum called hammond, or bush rum," says Roger Brisbane, the founder of Hibiscus Spirits and owner of beachside restaurant Spice Mill. "People made it in the mountains. This was roots-style, over a coal pot with contraptions to distill the alcohol from the molasses." Today, his company blends regionally sourced rum with tart hibiscus, a nod to a Caribbean Christmas drink called sorrel.

Jack Widdowson is also building on the island's history. Archaeologists unearthed a 17th-century distillery on the former plantation where he grew up, and in 2020, he founded the Old Road Rum Company there. For now he's blending signature bottles (using molasses-based rum from other Caribbean countries) while renovating the distillery so it can produce 100 percent Kittitian rum again.

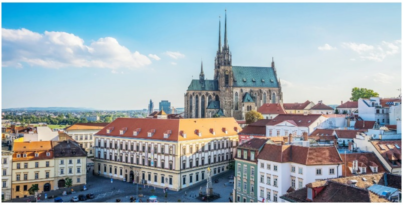
BUDAPEST
VISIT BUDAPEST
THE SPICE OF EUROPE
HUNGARY

The Kittitian RumMaster experience from the St. Kitts Tourism Authority introduces visitors to both projects. But as Widdowson explains, "A visit to Old Road Rum is not merely a historical tour or tasting session. It's an opportunity to be part of an evolving narrative that respects the past while shaping a new chapter for rum production in St. Kitts." —*Rosalind Cummings-Yeats*

València is the third largest city in Spain. Photo by Charlie Gallant/Unsplash

16. València, Spain

Valencia, the 2,150-year-old city on Spain's east coast, earned the title of European Green Capital 2024 by passing muster in 12 categories, including air, noise, nature and biodiversity, and energy efficiency. See this in action with a stroll through the city center's old town (home to Valencia Cathedral, which is said to house the Holy Grail). Or wander Turia Garden, nearly six miles of green space along a former riverbed crossed by bridges built in various centuries. Cyclists can see the city from 125 miles of bike lanes. —*Billie Cohen*



Vetsiges of the old city and fresh elements of modern culture intermingle in Brno, Czechia. Photo by Leonhard Niederwimmer/Unsplash

Discover the World
with Tauck
EXPLORE MORE

17. Brno

Pronounced Burr-NO, ideally with a luxuriously rolled "r," Czechia's second-largest city is roughly a quarter the size of Prague and receives almost none of its international tourists. Yet it is Brno, not the capital, that has been named one of UNESCO's Cities of Music, honoring its thriving network of bars, clubs, and concert spaces, along with its world-class festival calendar. The scene here offers everything from the banjo punk of homegrown band Poletíme to JazzFestBrno, whose 2024 performers include Grammy Award–winning singer Samara Joy. Between the golf ball–shaped and acoustically advanced Sono Centrum venue and the imposing medieval walls of Špilberk Castle (where the city's philharmonic performs), there are few spots in Brno that aren't pressed into musical service.

For the full story from Emma John, read: This Music-Filled City Is Stepping Out of Prague's Shadow.

New developments are slowly breathing life back into Detroit. Photo by Lex Brisbey/Unsplash

18. Detroit

Detroit's Michigan Central, a Beaux-Arts former train station, has been reimagined as a transportation R&D lab with retail, dining, and community spaces—just one example of how everything old is new again in this city. The Motown Museum will roll out a $65 million upgrade throughout 2024 that includes performance spaces, interactive exhibits, and a music education center. The hip Cambria Hotel (in a 1936 radio broadcasting building by Albert Kahn, one of Detroit's great architects) is the latest in a string of landmarks refashioned as boutique hotels. And a new glass-and-steel tower on the site of the 1927 Hudson's store will open a 48th-floor observation deck in 2024. —*Amy S. Eckert*

Travel Tales by AFAR

San Diego and Tijuana are strengthening their bond with one another through arts and culture. Photo by Robert Briggs/Shutterstock

19. San Diego and Tijuana

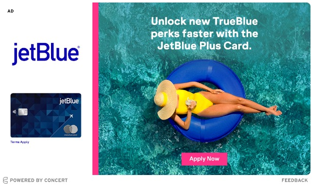
Cross-border collaboration is the theme here, as these two cities, just 20 miles apart, share the biennial designation as the World Design Capital of 2024. That translates to a series of events in both places. *La Frontera*, an exhibition focused on jewelry design, will take place January 27 to August 4 at San Diego's Mingei International Museum and February 16 to June 9 at the Tijuana Cultural Center (CECUT). In September, the week-long World Design Experience, an interactive showcase of design, will appear at various venues in San Diego. Additional travel-worthy art and architecture await: In San Diego, seek out the

Salk Institute, a landmark of modern concrete buildings, or the University of California San Diego's geometric Geisel Library (named for Dr. Seuss); in Tijuana, visit CECUT for its dramatic dome and garden full of replica Mesoamerican sculptures. —*Tim Chester*

Surrounded by fjords and home to a thriving Arctic creative scene, Bodø is a 2024 European Capital of Culture. Photo by Tim E. White/Getty Images

20. Norway

Norway is a great place to feel the awe of nature, and that experience is getting even better. Starting in 2024, there will be more opportunities to take in the beauty and bounty of the country—and, in true Norwegian style, these travel adventures are also kinder to the Earth.



AD

Unlock new TrueBlue perks faster with the JetBlue Plus Card.

Apply Now

Terms Apply

POWERED BY CONCERT

FEEDBACK

For the full story from Laura Hall read: Why This Nordic Country Should Be at the Top of Your Travel Bucket List

The International African American Museum was built where Gadsden's Wharf was once located. The Wharf was the disembarkation point of an estimated 40 percent of all enslaved persons in the United States. Photo by Sahar Coston-Hardy/Esto

21. Charleston

When the International African American Museum opened in 2023, Charleston put itself at the top of must-see lists for 2024 and beyond. Exhibitions share the many facets of the African American story, delving into slavery and the civil rights movement along with modern-day challenges and triumphs. A genealogy center helps families search for their histories too. Overnight at one of two new additions to the city: the Palmetto Hotel, where the contemporary decor is accented by works from Charleston artists of the early 1900s; or the Pinch, a stylish boutique property with a bike-share program, sailing tours, and a kitchen in every room. —*Amy S. Eckert*