



40 YEARS
OF AMAZING EXPERIENCES

EUROPE

40 Amazing Experiences



FREE

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40 Amazing Experiences



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THE EIFFEL TOWER, PARIS

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Europe is not just a continent, it is a state of mind.

Famous for giving the world fine wine, the Renaissance, high fashion, opera and the sandwich, these days this captivating collection of countries also allows you to enjoy experiences as diverse as surfing some of the world's biggest waves, sipping afternoon tea, exploring ancient ruins, and discovering your inner pop star.

With such a vast array of things to do, perhaps the greatest challenge is working out what to do first. Will you kick off in one of Europe's great capitals – Paris, say, for wonderful views across this most romantic of cities, or London for a look at refined Georgian England? Will you get off the beaten path and immerse yourself in dramatic Mediterranean landscapes, or let your appetite lead you on a gastronomic tour of Spain? Swim the Greek Islands, eat with Venetians, or just relax at a Barcelona beach bar? These are just a few of our 40 amazing Europe experiences. And once you've enjoyed these, there are plenty more to discover for yourself.

1

Hike the Mani

Although it can no longer be described as 'remote', the Mani peninsula still holds a magic unlike anywhere else in Greece. For centuries the feuding families here were literally a law unto themselves, and this has contributed to the unique and proudly independent Maniot culture. These days, footpaths though wonderful landscapes draw hikers from around the world, eager to visit everything from rugged rocky highlands and hidden lush green oases, to small fishing tavernas and severe rock-solid tower houses.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET GREECE 10th EDITION*

LIMENI FISHING VILLAGE, THE MANI





STIRLING CASTLE, SCOTLAND

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2

Lay siege to Stirling Castle

Hold Stirling and you control Scotland. This maxim has ensured that a fortress of some kind has existed here since prehistoric times. Commanding superb views, you can't help drawing parallels with Edinburgh castle, but many find Stirling's fortress more atmospheric – the location, architecture and historic significance combine to make it a grand and memorable sight. This means it draws plenty of visitors, so it's advisable to visit in the afternoon; many tourists come on day trips from Edinburgh or Glasgow, so you may have the castle to yourself by about 4pm.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET SCOTLAND 7th EDITION*

Cruise Turkey's Turquoise Coast

3

For many travellers to Turkey, cruising from beach to beach along the country's beautiful Turquoise Coast is a highlight of their trip. Traditional sailing boats known as *gülets* make the journey from Demre to Olympos, calling at such scenic spots as Ölüdeniz and Butterfly Valley. Organise it with friends or make new friends onboard.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET TURKEY 13th EDITION*

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Find your inner gladiator at Rome's greatest monument

Rome's most iconic monument, the Colosseum, is a compelling sight. You'll already know what it looks like from pictures, but no photograph can prepare you for the thrill of seeing it for real. For 2000 years, this arena has stood as the symbol of Roman power, as the striking embodiment of the terrible awe that Rome once inspired. You can climb its deeply stacked stands, trying to imagine them full of frenzied spectators screaming for blood, and also head underground to the hypogeum, the complex of corridors beneath the main arena.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ROME 7th EDITION*

Eat and drink like a Spaniard

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Having joined Spaniards around the table for years, we've come to understand what eating Spanish style is all about. If we could distil the essence of how to make food a highlight of your trip into a few simple rules, they would be these: *always* ask for the local speciality; *never* be shy about looking around to see what others have ordered before choosing; *always* ask the waiter for their recommendations; and, wherever possible, make your meal a centrepiece of your day.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET SPAIN 9th EDITION*

TAPAS BAR, SAN SEBASTIAN, SPAIN



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6

Marvel at the Alhambra

The Alhambra is one of the world's great architectural wonders. If the Nasrid builders of the complex proved one thing, it was that, given the right blend of talent and foresight, art and architecture can speak far more eloquently than words. Perched on a hill with the peaks of the Sierra Nevada as a backdrop, Granada's towering Moorish citadel has been rendering visitors speechless for nigh on 1000 years. The reason: a harmonious architectural balance between human ingenuity and the natural environment. Fear not the dense crowds and the snaking queues; this is an essential pilgrimage.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ANDALUCÍA 7th EDITION*

THE ALHAMBRA, SPAIN



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Surf the waves in El Quemao, Lanzarote

Known to surfers as the 'Hawaii of the Atlantic,' the Canary Islands are full of world-class surf spots, but none comes with a bigger reputation than Lanzarote's radical left reef break, El Quemao. For expert surfers able to snag a wave off the locals, these huge barrels promise the ultimate rush. For those not quite up to El Quemao standard, nearby La Caleta de Famara offers ideal conditions for learners to get on a board and get wet.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET CANARY ISLANDS 5th EDITION*

Take afternoon tea in England

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Among England's many and varied traditions, afternoon tea is one of the most enticing and certainly one of the tastiest. Central to the ritual is the iconic beverage itself – brewed in a pot, ideally silver-plated, and poured carefully into fine, bone-china cups and saucers. Depending on where you are in the country, the tea is served with scones and cream, fruitcake or wafer-thin cucumber sandwiches – and sometimes all of the above. Fancy city hotels and traditional country cafes are among the best places to sample this epicurean delight.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ENGLAND 7th EDITION*

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EL QUEMAO, SPAIN



MORAVIAN VINEYARDS, CZECH REPUBLIC

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Enjoy sweeping city views in Paris

In Paris's 20th arrondissement, a few blocks east of boulevard de Belleville, the lovely but little-known Parc de Belleville ensnares a hill almost 200m above sea level. Stroll through lush gardens and up the steps to the top of the park for some of the best – and free – views of the city.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET PARIS 9th EDITION*

Head to the top of El Teide, Tenerife

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Start off gradually with a gentle hike around the base of Tenerife's El Teide, kidding yourself that you are enjoying a stroll around the surface of the moon; it really is that extraordinary. The trails take you deep into an alien landscape with red, yellow and brown craters resembling giant prehistoric molehills, bizarre volcanic rock formations and pebble-like lapilli. Top it off by taking the cable car to the summit for the ultimate heady experience. Wrap up warm though; it can get pretty chilly up there in the clouds.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET CANARY ISLANDS 5th EDITION*

Cycle between Moravian vineyards

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The Moravian wine experience is much more low-key and home-spun than similar experiences in California or Australia. Rather than flash boutique hotels and Michelin-star restaurants, the wine scene here is more likely to involve harvest festivals and leisurely bike rides between family-owned vineyards. Traditionally known for robust reds, in recent years late-ripening whites have taken centre stage – look out for varietals of Rulandské šedé, Ryzlink vlašský and Veltlínské zelené.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET PRAGUE & THE CZECH REPUBLIC 10th EDITION*

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Try ultimate 'slow' food in Piedmont

Though surrounded by lush wine country, the Piedmontese town of Cherasco is best known for its edible snails (*lumache*). In this neck of the woods they're dished up *nudo* (shell-less) and dishes to look out for – should you want to try them – include *lumache al barbera* (snails simmered in Barbera red wine and ground nuts) and *lumache alla piemontese* (snails stewed with onions, nuts, anchovies and parsley in a tomato sauce).

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ITALY 10th EDITION*

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EL TEIDE, SPAIN



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Dine in style at Al Sorriso Restaurant

Unassuming-looking Al Sorriso, near Lake Orta in northern Italy, is one of the country's best restaurants. Head chef Luisa Marelli has created a stellar reputation for herself with dishes like foie gras balanced with the sweetest red mountain currants or the reddish-purple prawns sourced in San Remo, describing her culinary style as Piedmontese with Mediterranean and international influences, and drawing adoring fans to this otherwise quiet village.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ITALY 10th EDITION*

Unwind in a Corsican paradise

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If there is one crescent of sand in Corsica you must not miss, it's Plage de l'Arinella, a serene, rock-clad cove with dramatic views of the citadel of Calvi across the water and one of the finest beach-dining experiences on the island. Wooden tables, strung on the sand and topped with straw parasols at Le MataHari immediately evoke a tropical paradise – and rightly so. From the stylish, shabby-chic interior of this hip beach restaurant to the big windows looking out to Calvi beyond the waves, this is one special hideaway. The cuisine is creative: penne à la langouste, squid, fresh *morue* (codfish) or a simple tuna steak pan-fried to pink perfection.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET FRANCE 10th EDITION*

CALVI, FRANCE

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OLIVES AND OLIVE OIL, ITALY

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Learn about Lake Garda's prestigious olive oil

Lake Garda's microclimate ensures ideal olive-growing conditions, and Frantoio Montecroce's farm, set in the hills above Desenzano, is the perfect place for a tutored tasting in the area's oil. The same family has been harvesting olives for four generations and their oils have won numerous prestigious prizes. The mill's granite wheels, gleaming machines and stainless steel vats give a real insight into the modern production process, while family members provide tasting tips.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ITALY 10th EDITION*

Eat like a king (or queen) in the Lake District

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If you can drag yourself away from the beauty of Ullswater and its surrounding hills, then just north of the lake you'll find gastro-pub gorgeousness at the atmospheric, centuries-old Yanwath Gate Inn. It's been named Cumbria's Top Dining Pub three times by the Good Pub Guide, and the grub puts many of the country's gastronomic restaurants to shame: expect wild venison, saltmarsh lamb, Brougham Hall chicken and crispy pork belly, chased down by Cumbrian cheeses and beers from three local breweries.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET GREAT BRITAIN 10th EDITION*

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MOSAIC IN OSTIA ANTICA, ITALY

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Imagine ancient Roman life in Ostia Antica

Not many people make it out to Ostia Antica, Rome's version of Pompeii, but make the effort and you'll find that its wonderfully preserved ruins are easily on a par with the more famous sites in the city centre. Walk along the central strip, the Decumanus Maximus, or potter around the Thermopolium, an ancient café, and you'll get a much better idea of what a working Roman town looked like than you ever will exploring Rome's forum. The site gets busy at weekends but is usually exhilaratingly empty during the week.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ROME 7th EDITION*

Get off the beaten track in Sardinia

As much for the getting there as the being there, Sorgono rewards a detour. Deep in the heart of the Mandrolisai, the remote hilly area to the west of the Gennargentu, the village is surrounded by huge tracts of forest, full of ilex, cork, chestnut and hazel trees. In the vicinity, the Biru 'e Concas archaeological site boasts one of the largest collections of menhirs in Sardinia, while, in town, the Cantina del Mandrolisai is one of the area's most important wine producers, famous for its beefy reds.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET SARDINIA 4th EDITION*

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Hit the hay on an Irish farm

If you are beguiled by the beautiful Waterford countryside, on Ireland's south coast, why not bed down in the middle of it, with only the sound of a snoring cow to break the silence? Waterford Farm Accommodation arranges stays on local farms, with places such as Dungarvan (and its commanding Norman castle), Ardmore (and its ancient church), and the Ring Peninsula (with its Gaelic-speaking locals) all close by and worth exploring.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET IRELAND 10th EDITION*

DUNGARVAN CASTLE, IRELAND



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Step back in time in Lisbon

Stroll back to an age when purchases were still hand-wrapped, shopkeepers knew customers by name, and stores traded solely in tinned fish, buttons and bowler hats in the cobbled alleyways of Baixa in the centre of Portugal's capital. And after you've tired yourself out at the speciality shops, toast the city's past (and your new purchases) Lisbon-style, with a glass or two of *ginjinha* (cherry liqueur).

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET POCKET LISBON 2nd EDITION*

Travel round southern Crete by boat

This is for escapists, beach lovers and adventurers – and it's so easy! Large sections of southern Crete's mountainous coast are accessible only by sea, and a hop-on, hop-off boat service allows you to see some remarkable sites, such as the glittering jewel of Loutro, tucked between secluded beaches, and laid-back Sougia, with its friendly folk and fresh seafood. The beginning and end of the voyage – Paleohora and Hora Sfakion – represent two of the most iconic (and affordable) towns in Crete, full of rugged individuals and live Cretan music.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET CRETE 5th EDITION*

SOUGIA FERRY, GREECE

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MALLORCAN SUNSET, SPAIN

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Do very little in Betlem, Mallorca

Not much goes on in this small village on Mallorca's north coast – which is reason enough to visit it when the norm on the rest of this island is often loud and lively package-holiday resorts. Along the coast, a 3km 4WD trail hugs the Aleppo-pine-fringed shoreline until it reaches a tiny protected bay called Es Caló. A couple of sailboats occasionally find shelter here, a handful of people stretch out on the stony strand and swim in the turquoise waters, and dramatic limestone hills rise sharply behind – all in all, a peaceful but rewarding escape from Mallorca's tourist traps.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET MALLORCA 2nd EDITION*

Chill out in Barcelona's beach bars

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During Barcelona's long summer months, small wooden beach bars – affectionately known as *chiringuitos* – open up all along the sand, from Barceloneta all the way up to Platja de la Nova Mar Bella. Here you can dip your toes in the sand and nurse a cocktail while watching the city at play against the backdrop of the deep blue Mediterranean. Ambient grooves add to the laid-back environment.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET BARCELONA 8th EDITION*

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LEROS CASTLE AND TOWN, GREECE

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Relax in Leros

Laid-back Leros, one of Greece's Dodecanese islands, feels both remote and happening. With a beautiful port town, cool cafes, some great dining and lovely vistas, it's a popular spot with domestic travellers but doesn't see many foreign guests. The island is crowned with a stunning medieval castle, one of a number of worthwhile sights, and its small, sandy beaches offer good swimming. If you're after relaxation in comfort, Leros is a very good choice.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET GREECE 10th EDITION*

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Spend an evening in Georgian London

Hidden on a side street in the Spitalfields area of east London is Dennis Severs' House, a quirky hotchpotch of an eighteenth-century house, named after a late American eccentric who restored it and turned it into what he called a 'still-life drama'. Visitors wander through ten rooms, each recreating a specific time in the house's history from 1724 to 1914. It's a unique and intriguing proposition by day, but the 'Silent Night' tours by candlelight every Monday evening are even more memorable.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET LONDON 8th EDITION*

Go wild on Mull

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The Isle of Mull, off Scotland's west coast, offers varied landscapes and habitats, from high mountain and wild moorland to wave-lashed sea cliffs, sandy beaches and seaweed-fringed skerries. And if that wasn't enough to make you book the next boat over there, the waters around the island also offer the chance to spot some of Scotland's rarest and most dramatic wildlife, including eagles, otters, dolphins and even whales.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET SCOTLAND'S HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS 2nd EDITION*

DUART CASTLE, ISLE OF MULL, SCOTLAND



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Laze away a summer's day at Amsterdam's Vondelpark

On a sunny day it seems the whole of Amsterdam converges on this sprawling equivalent of New York's Central Park. Couples kiss on the grass, friends cradle beers at the outdoor cafes, while others trade songs on beat-up guitars. Street performers work the crowds, and kids rush the playgrounds. It's all very democratic, and sublime for people watching. The English-style layout offers an abundance of ponds, lawns, thickets and winding footpaths that encourage visitors to get out and explore the free-wheeling scene.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET AMSTERDAM 8th EDITION*

Live the high life in medieval Èze

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Perched on its rocky pinnacle, 427 metres above the French Riviera, the medieval village of Èze is today a beautiful home for the one-off galleries and artisan boutiques hidden within its walls. The high point is the Jardin d'Èze, a slanting cliffside garden of exotic cacti with views of the Med all the way to Corsica (on a good day). To explore the village's nooks and crannies after the tour buses have left, stay at the magnificent Château Eza, which also has a lofty gastronomic restaurant and terrace.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET FRANCE 10th EDITION*

THE MEDITERRANEAN FROM ÈZE, FRANCE



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BAŠKA BAY AND TOWN, CROATIA

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Find seaside serenity in Croatia

Many of the beaches on Krk, Croatia's largest island, are heavily developed and crowded in summer, but take the superlative drive south of the village of Punat, through steep parched hills and lunar scenery, to Stara Baška and 500m before the first campsite there you'll find a series of gorgeous pebble-and-sand coves with wonderful swimming. You'll have to park on the road, and then walk down one of the rocky paths for five minutes to get to the coast but it's well worth it.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET CROATIA 7th EDITION*

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DUNE DU PILAT, FRANCE

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Beat the crowds at the Gorges du Verdon

What's special about Europe's deepest canyon and one of France's most popular summer hotspots? The fact that you can enjoy it in so many different ways, many of which will see you escaping the crowds too. You can walk, you can cycle, you can drive along the cliffs, and you can thunder down the river on a raft or in a kayak. However you do it though, you're guaranteed to be mesmerized by the ethereally green water and the sheer scale of this natural wonder, whose impact not even the many other visitors can diminish.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET PROVENCE & THE COTE D'AZUR 7th EDITION*

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Feel the sand between your toes on the Dune du Pilat

The Dune du Pilat, southwest of Bordeaux, is a 'mountain' that just has to be climbed. Not only is the coastal panorama from the top of Europe's largest sand dune a prize-winner – it takes in the Banc d'Arguin bird reserve and Cap Ferret across the bay – but the nearby beaches have some of the Atlantic Coast's best surf. Cycle here from Arcachon and top off the heady trip with a dozen oysters, shucked before your very eyes and accompanied by *crêpinettes* (local sausages).

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET FRANCE 10th EDITION*

Delve into history in Baeza and Úbeda

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These two little-visited Andalusian outposts, etched in the olive groves of Jaén province, look more Italian than Spanish. It's the perfectly intact Renaissance architecture that deceives you. Remodelled by urban planners in the 16th century, the monumental palaces and symmetrical civic buildings introduced Renaissance ideas to Spain and ultimately provoked its transference to Latin America. In 2003 Baeza and Úbeda joined the Holy Trinity of the Alhambra, Córdoba's Mezquita and Seville's cathedral as an Andalusian Unesco World Heritage Site, yet they get far less foot traffic.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ANDALUCÍA 7th EDITION*

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Unwind in Cacela Velha

Portugal's Algarve coastline has plenty of places to relax but the enchanting, small and cobbled village of Cacela Velha is something special. It's a huddle of whitewashed cottages, a pocket-sized fort, orange and olive groves, and gardens blazing with colour, all sitting above a gorgeous stretch of sea, with a couple of excellent cafés, restaurants, splendid views and a meandering path down to the long, white beach.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET PORTUGAL 8th EDITION*

HOUSE FRONT IN CACELA VELHA, PORTUGAL



© JUANPIPER / GETTY IMAGES

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Picnic on city walls in Tuscany

Picnicking atop Lucca's city walls – on the grass or at a wooden picnic table – is as lovely (and typical) a Lucchesi lunch as you'll find. Buy fresh-from-the-oven pizza and focaccia with a choice of fillings and toppings from fabulous 'n' famed bakery Forno Amedeo Giusti (Via Santa Lucia 20), then nip across the street for a bottle of Lucchesi wine and Garfagnese *biscotti al farro* (spelt biscuits) at Antica Bodega di Prospero (Via Santa Lucia 13); look for the old-fashioned shop window fabulously stuffed with sacks of beans, lentils and other local pulses.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ITALY 10th EDITION*

Float down the Cetina River

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The Cetina is the longest river in Dalmatia, the sea-kissed jewel in Croatia's crown. Stretching 105km from the eponymous village, it flows through the Dinara mountains and the fields around Sinj, before gathering speed and pouring into a power plant around Omiš. It is an extraordinarily scenic journey as the limpid blue river is bordered by high rocky walls, thick with vegetation, and the best way to enjoy it is on a rafting trip, braving the rapids on a three- to four-hour trip.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET CROATIA 7th EDITION*

CETINA RIVER, CROATIA



BEARPIT KARAOKE, GERMANY

See who's got the x factor at Berlin's Bearpit Karaoke

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From roughly late spring to autumn, the German capital's greatest free entertainment spectacular kicks off on Sundays around 3pm when Joe Hatchiban sets up his custom-made mobile karaoke unit in the Mauerpark's amphitheatre. As many as 2000 people cram onto the stone seats to cheer and clap the stream of eager crooners ranging from giggling 11-year-olds to Broadway-calibre belters. Give generously when Joe passes the coffee can, for this show must go on forever.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET GERMANY 7th EDITION*

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Tuck into Venetian produce at inventive Venissa

A single roasted scallop daintily dips its red foot in a black espresso reduction: starting with her highly amusing amuse-bouche, Venissa's chef, Paola Budel, treats local ingredients with the evident delight of an Italian chef returned home from restaurants abroad. The culinary stars (including the Michelin variety) are aligning over Mazzorbo, Venissa's lush garden-island home. And you can practically eat the island landscape here in Budel's bowl of breadcrumb gnocchi swimming in a fragrant, herbal broth of wild fennel and asparagus shoots.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET VENICE & THE VENETO 7th EDITION*



SWIMMING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, GREECE

© WAYNE WALTON / GETTY IMAGES

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Take a St Bernard for a walk

Big softie or not, everyone loves a St Bernard, so Fondation Barry has come up with a clever plan. From July to September, you can take these doe-eyed dogs for a 1½-hour walk on the Col du Grand St Bernard – a one-off chance to lap up the incredible Alpine scenery in the company of these world-famous canines.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET SWITZERLAND 7th EDITION*

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Go swimming in Greece

One of the more unusual tours in Greece takes you island hopping under your own steam. Swim Trek offers swimming adventure holidays through the closely knit islands of the Cyclades. In fact, its Little Cyclades' venue has got to be one of the finest, inspired by the wild swimming activities of the poet Lord Byron, who famously swam the Hellespont (known today as the Dardanelles in Turkey) and is said to have also braved Cycladean waters between penning a poem or two. Participants swim approximately 5km each day with dolphins, turtles and monk seals along isolated coastline.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET GREECE 10th EDITION*

Get your boots on in Northern Italy

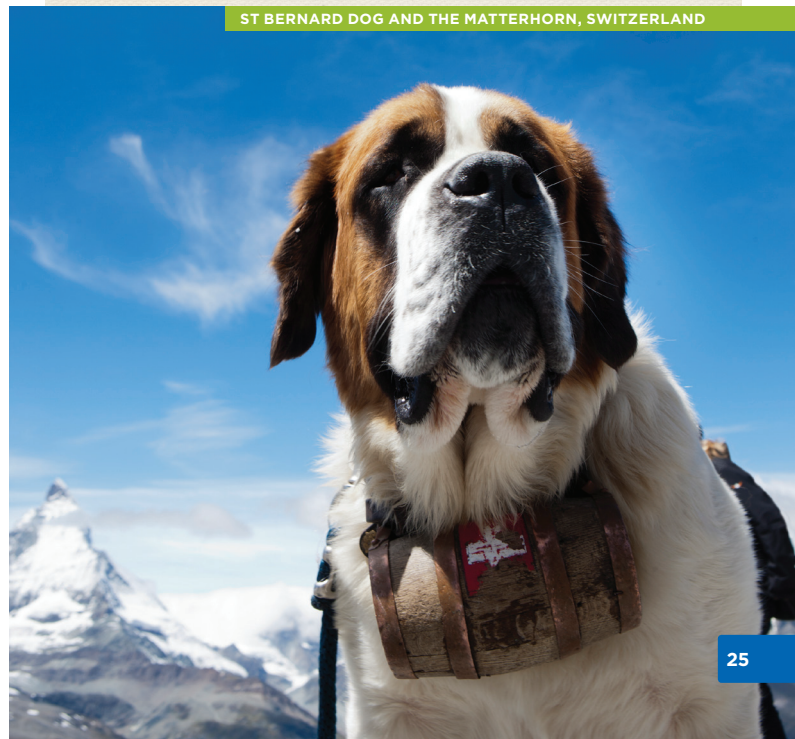
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Northern Italy crowded? Not if you bring your hiking boots. Shoe-horned between the rice-growing plains of Piedmont and the sparkling coastline of Liguria lie the brooding Maritime Alps – a small pocket of dramatically sculpted mountains that rise like stony-faced border guards along the frontier of Italy and France. Smaller yet no less majestic than their Alpine cousins to the north, the Maritimes are speckled with mirror-like lakes, foraging ibexes and a hybrid cultural heritage that is as much southern French as northern Italian, all just a hike away from being discovered.

FOR MORE, SEE *LONELY PLANET ITALY 10th EDITION*

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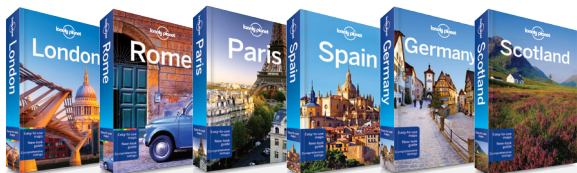
ST BERNARD DOG AND THE MATTERHORN, SWITZERLAND



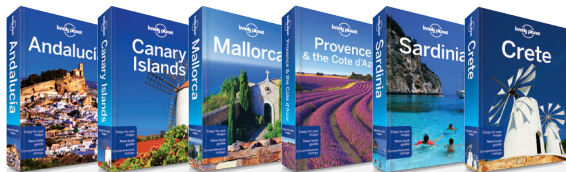
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