Easter Island (Rapa Nui)

**Includes**
- Hanga Roa ........... 398
- Parque Nacional Rapa Nui ........... 406
- Understand Easter Island ........... 407
- Easter Island Today .. 407
- History ............... 408
- The People of Rapa Nui ........... 408
- Arts ................... 409
- The Landscape .......... 409
- Survival Guide ........... 409

**Best Places to Eat**
- Au Bout du Monde (p404)
- Te Moana (p405)
- Mikafé (p404)
- Tataku Vave (p404)

**Best Places to Sleep**
- Cabañas Ngahu (p402)
- Hare Noi (p403)
- Cabañas Christophe (p402)
- Camping Mihinoa (p402)
- Cabalgatas Pantu – Pikera Uri (p403)

**Why Go?**
Few areas in the world possess a more mystical pull than this tiny speck of land, one of the most isolated places on Earth. Here, it’s hard to feel connected to Chile, over 3700km to the east, let alone the wider world. Endowed with the most logic-defying statues in the world – the strikingly familiar moai – Easter Island (Rapa Nui to its native Polynesian inhabitants) emanates a magnetic, mysterious vibe.

But Easter Island is much more than an open-air museum. Diving, snorkeling and surfing are fabulous. On land, there’s no better ecofriendly way to experience the island’s savage beauty than on foot, from a bike saddle or on horseback. But if all you want to do is recharge the batteries, a couple of superb expanses of white sand beckon.

Although Easter Island is world famous and visitors are on the increase, everything remains small and personable – it’s all about eco-travel.

**When to Go**

**Hangar Roa**

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<tr>
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<td>Jun</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>12/54</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

**Jan–Mar** Peak season. Highest prices and scarce hotels around February’s Tapati Rapa Nui festival.

**Jul–Aug** Chilly weather, not ideal for beaches but a good time for hiking and horseback riding.

**Apr–Jun & Oct–Dec** The shoulder season is not a bad time to visit; the climate is fairly temperate.
HANGA ROA
POP 6700
Hanga Roa is the island’s sole town. Upbeat it ain’t, but with most sights almost on its doorstep and nearly all the island’s hotels, restaurants, shops and services lying within its boundaries, it’s the obvious place to anchor oneself. It features a picturesque fishing harbor, a couple of modest beaches and surf spots, and a few archaeological sites.

○ Sights
Museo Antropológico Sebastián Englert
MUSEUM
(032-255-1020; www.museorapanui.cl; Tahai s/n; admission CH$1000; 9:30am-5:30pm Tue-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat & Sun) This well-organized

Easter Island (Rapa Nui) Highlights

1. Clip-clop on the flanks of the extinct volcano Maunga Terevaka (p406).
2. Hike along the ruggedly beautiful northern coast (p400).
4. Ogle the stunning limpid blue waters of Motu Nui (p399) on a snorkeling or diving trip.
5. Take a lesson in archaeology at Rano Raraku (p407), the ‘nursery’ of the moai.
6. Ponder the island’s mysterious past at Orongo ceremonial village (p406), perched on the edge of Rano Kau.
7. Watch the sun rise at the row of enigmatic statues at Ahu Tongariki (p407).
8. Take a snooze under the swaying palms at Anakena (p407).