

# Jaunting

The Magazine of Recreational Travel

ESCAPE TO THE

# ISLANDS

Azores' São Miguel

Palau's Jellyfish

Loving Galveston

Mackinac Island

Historic Terceira

July 2023



The Gem of the Azores

# Terceira

By Debbie Stone

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## Palau's Peaceful Jellyfish

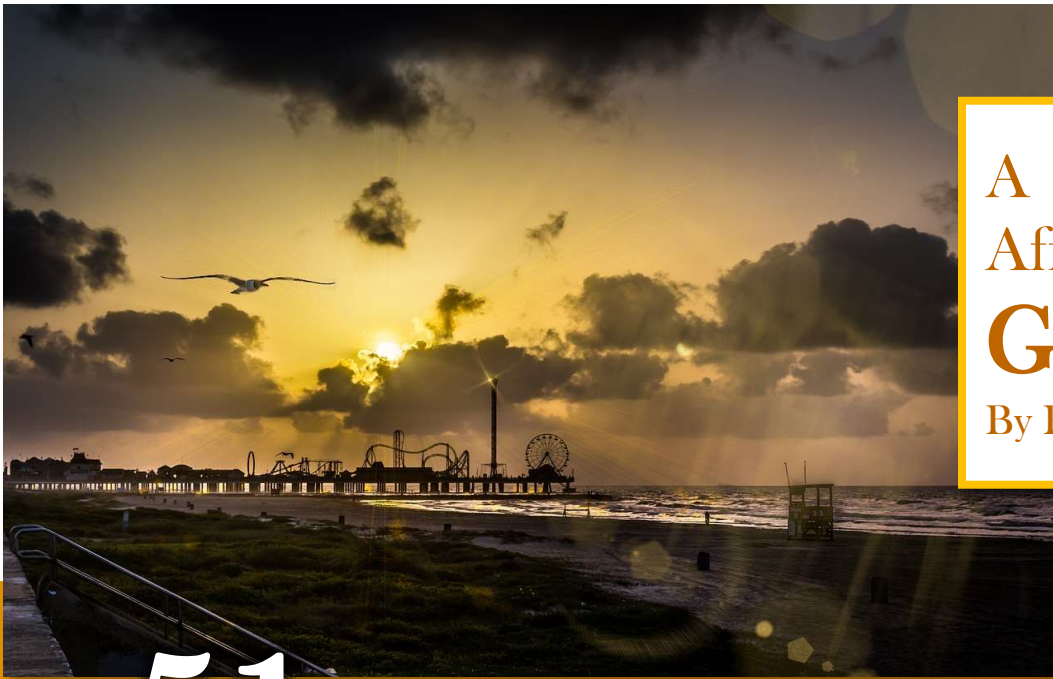
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The background of the page is a vibrant tropical beach scene. In the foreground, there's a sandy beach with gentle waves lapping at the shore. The water is a clear, bright turquoise. In the mid-ground, a thatched-roof hut sits on a wooden pier extending into the water. The sky is a deep blue with a few wispy clouds. Large palm fronds frame the top and right sides of the image, casting shadows on the beach.

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## **Jaunting Magazine**

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Warwick, RI 02886  
jaunting.com  
401.480.9355

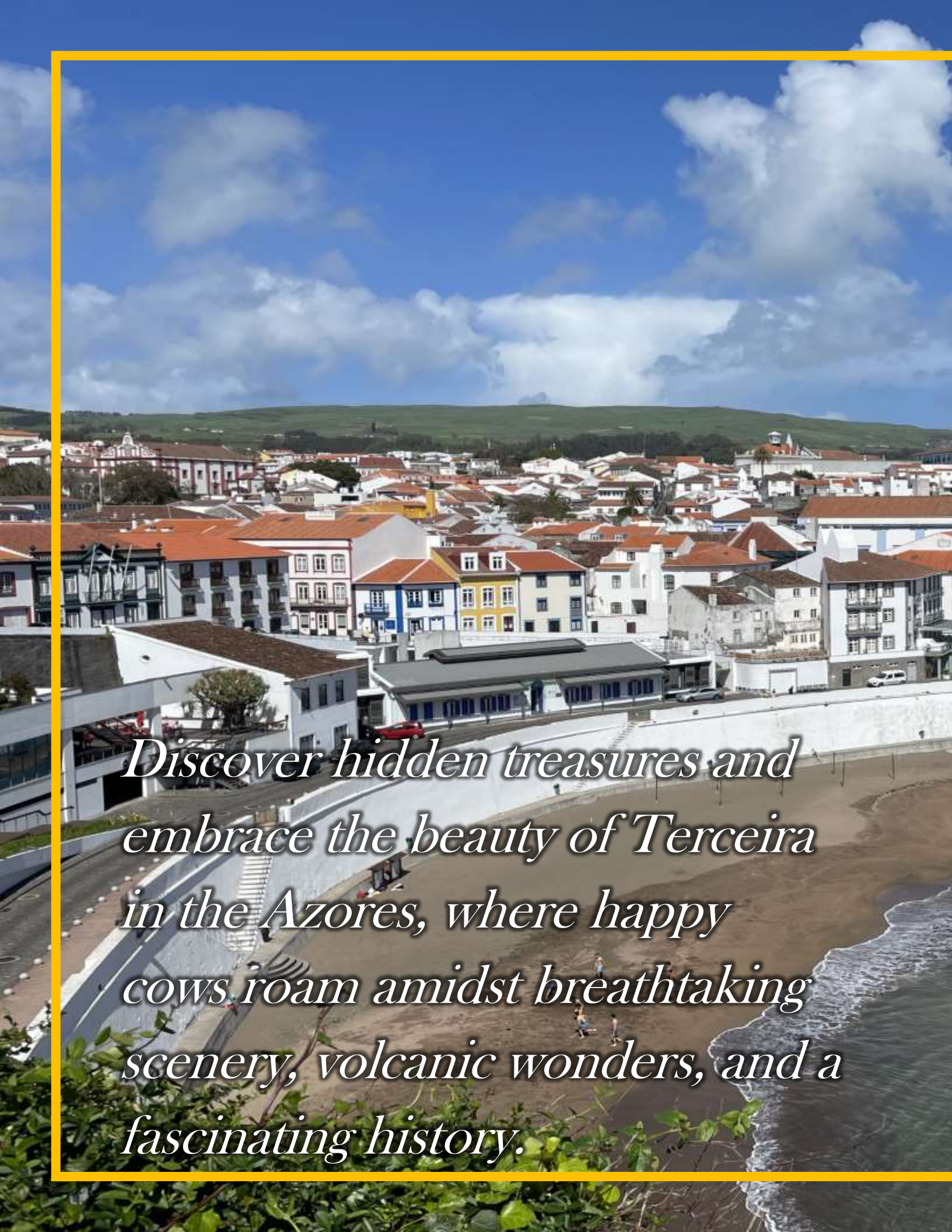
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Confirm directions and critical  
information before traveling.  
Be aware of health and other  
concerns.

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*Discover hidden treasures and embrace the beauty of Terceira in the Azores, where happy cows roam amidst breathtaking scenery, volcanic wonders, and a fascinating history.*

# The Gem of the Azores: Terceira



Feature by  
Debbie Stone



**I**f you're looking for treasure in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, head to Portugal's Azores Islands. You'll discover breathtaking scenery, geological marvels, inspiring UNESCO Heritage Sites, and a rich culture marked by old world customs and traditions. Oh, and did I mention happy cows?

The Azores were formed when volcanoes under the Atlantic erupted, creating nine major islands: São Miguel, Santa Maria, Graciosa, Terceira, São Jorge, Pico, Faial, Flores and Corvo. The most populated island is São Miguel. It's also where the region's international airport is located.

Travelers living on the East Coast of the U.S. can take a five-hour nonstop flight from Boston to São Miguel. Others may opt to spend time on Portugal's mainland

before flying to the Azores.

For my eight-night trip, I chose to work with Archipelago Choice, a company with a stellar reputation in the industry. For over 25 years Archipelago Choice has been pioneering exciting, personalized vacations to the Azores for people who love nature at its best and yearn to explore one of the world's most charming archipelagos.

I was incredibly impressed with the company's efficiency and service, both prior to and during my trip. Accommodations were well-curated and the guides were excellent, providing an array of informative tours to the main attractions on the two islands I visited: Terceira and São Miguel.

My Azores adventure began on Terceira, after having spent several days in Lisbon and Sintra.

Terceira is the third largest of the Azorean islands, so named because it was the third of the nine islands to be discovered in 1427. But it is the second most populous of the archipelago and has played a significant role in Portuguese and world history, hosting numerous prominent individuals over the years, including presidents, prime ministers, kings and even a Pope.



Most visitors base themselves in Terceira’s main city, Angra do Heroísmo, or simply Angra. This UNESCO World Heritage site was historically the most important city in the Azores, serving as the seat of the Bishop of the Azores and previously as the capital city of Portugal. It was given this name for two reasons: its location and as a result of an act of bravery. The name means cove or bay, describing the location, a strategic place in the middle of the Atlantic. Queen Maria II bestowed “Heroísmo” on the town due to the heroism the citizens demonstrated while defending the island in 1829 against the Spanish.



The historical center of Angra is a picturesque and idyllic enclave of charming colonial streets bedecked with black and white mosaics and colorfully painted

buildings sporting wrought iron balconies. The number of impressive churches, monasteries, convents and civic buildings are indicative of Angra's former importance. Look for a statue of famed Portuguese explorer Vasco



da Gama, overlooking the sea. On his way back to Lisbon from his first voyage to India, Vasco's fleet took a wider course to catch better winds. His brother, Paulo da Gama, however was gravely ill, so the ships headed for the Azores, disembarking on Terceira. Paulo died in



Angra  
and was  
buried  
there.  
Vasco is  
said to  
have  
spent  
several  
months  
on the  
island,  
grieving  
his  
brother's  
death.

Looking around town, you'd never imagine that just 43 years ago, on Jan. 1, 1980, a huge earthquake destroyed a substantial part of the area. True to the

Azorean  
spirit, the  
people  
did not let  
this tragic  
catas-  
trophe  
define  
them, and  
instead  
started re-  
building,  
carefully  
pre-  
serving  
the



majority of the town's original architectural features.

The sea makes a lovely backdrop for the city and as my husband and I walked along the waterfront, our guide Tiago told us this bay belies many mysteries. It was quite the unfortunate place for ships. In fact, since the mid-1500s, nearly 100 ships are reported to have wrecked in these waters and most have not yet been discovered. It's basically an underwater archeological park and points to how important the city was for trans-Atlantic maritime traffic.

One of Angra's treasures is the Duke of Terceira Garden. With its huge variety of flora, representing dozens of species from



around the world, this landscaped greenspace in the middle of town is a great place to stroll. When you're done moseying around the lower sections of the garden, climb up to the Outeiro da Memória, a monument erected in 1846 in honor of King Pedro IV, the fourth king of Portugal and the first king of Brazil. It was constructed from the first stone the King stepped on when he arrived on the island.



The design of this mustard-colored obelisk is shaped like an upside down ice cream cone and has a slightly Asian look to it.

Tiago noted that it might be a reflection of the influence coming from ships hailing out of

Asia, passing by the Azores on their route to and from the Portugal mainland. The monument stands atop a hill, offering sweeping views of the entire town.

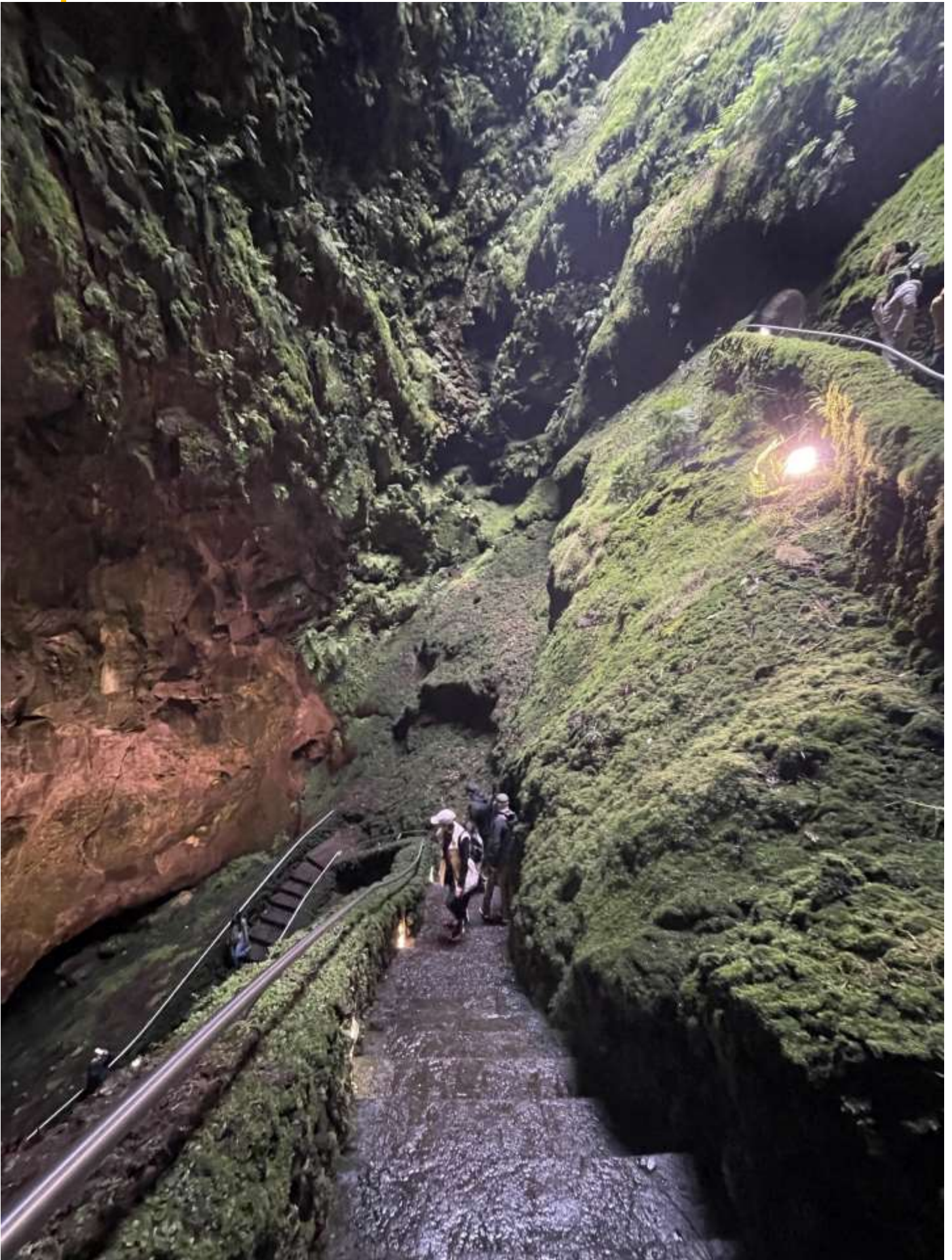
Another icon in Angra is the Castelo de São Joao Baptista, which is situated at the foot of Mount Brasil. The 16<sup>th</sup> century castle and fortress is the largest of its kind built outside Spain. Mount Brasil is a now an extinct

volcano, and today, the area is a protected landscape and natural park with numerous hiking trails. It, too, offers great vistas.

Exploring the island with Tiago was a delightful experience. As a volcanic island, Terceira is home to many geographical sights. It boasts one of the world's few volcanoes that you can descend into, Algar do Carvão.

Once inside this splendid formation, you can make out stalactites and stalagmites, deep caverns and lumps of





basalt that were dumped when lava flowed through the caves. A large, cavernous area with a domed roof is appropriately named the “Cathedral.”

Its shape creates great acoustics and concerts are occasionally held here.



The “Black Mysteries” offer another volcanic-related scene. This is where the lava came out of the volcano. People at that time weren’t able to explain what these streams were, so for lack of a better name, they called them as such. You can take a half-day hike in this area around the volcanic domes and through the forested landscape. And you never have to worry about encountering any snakes, as there are no snakes on the Azores. What a plus!

Cows, though, are ubiquitous on the island. Consider that the population of Terceira is approximately 56,000 and that there are twice as many cows as people. Azoreans have always had a strong connection to cattle, dating back to the 1400s, when the Portuguese discovered the islands and decided to settle them. Initially, they left some livestock to see if they could survive in the rocky terrain. When they returned a few years later, they saw the cows thriving – a good sign this was a habitable place.

It comes as no surprise to learn that milk is the major

export of the Azores. Dairy cows are milked twice a day and farmers are strict about the quality of



milk and how these animals are fed. Tests are done randomly on all milk because the island has a reputation to uphold. Along with the milk comes cheese, typically in a semi-hard form, possessing a creamy texture and sharp flavor.

Among the cows, you'll observe the rare and now protected Ramo Grande breed, which came with the first settlers. Locals call them "happy cows," as they get to simply graze and enjoy the land. The government gives farmers a subsidy to have these animals in order to keep the breed alive for heritage reasons. And not surprisingly, they look quite content with their lives!



We were curious as to why there are no barns on the island and learned that because the climate is mild year round, there's no need for such structures. Farmers

regularly move the cattle to fresh pastures and use specially marked cattle lanes. You definitely know you're on these routes when you see herds of lumbering creatures blocking the road, creating an Azorean traffic jam!



You'll also see bulls on Terceira. These creatures are revered here, primarily due to their role in history. In 1581, when Spanish forces tried to conquer the island, they attempted to attack the Bay of Salga. A group of local women thwarted this attempt by releasing the bulls from their farms, letting the animals charge at the Spanish troops. The Spanish were driven back to their boats.

Throughout the year, each village on the island hosts a “running with the bulls” event, with a slight twist. The bull has a rope around its neck and it is controlled by the

men in the village, as it runs through the streets. It is never killed and is only allowed to engage in





this activity one day. When the event concludes, the bull returns to its farm to rest. Those who participate in this activity do so at their own peril, as it is obviously a dangerous sport that can and does have serious consequences.

Such events coincide with the festivities that are held during eight months of the year here.

Tiago amusingly noted that the Azores consist of eight islands and one amusement park-Terceira! He said the people fully embrace and

enjoy life here.

If you're interested in taking a dip in the clear waters, know that many of the island's beaches are typically rocky and known for their crashing waves. But, on the north coast, in the town of Biscoitos, you'll find coves and natural swimming pools, where the locals have built platforms to make some of the pools accessible for swimmers. The pools are outlined with black rocks from the volcanic eruptions. This is a popular spot and even





if you don't go in the water, the dramatic wave action is worth the trip.

Views are plentiful on Terceira and one notable spot is atop of a ridge in the Serra do Cume mountain range. Standing on the observation platform, you

can see for miles across the middle of the island, with the shore of the bay on one side and the green patchwork-like Azorean fields on the other. The fields are divided by a grid of stone walls. This use of stone stems back to when the Portuguese arrived on the island, which was covered in volcanic rocks. They began to clear the rocks and stack them, eventually making thousands of low walls that became property dividers. Though many of the original walls are long gone, some still remain, while new ones continue to be constructed.

Another day, we headed to the port city of Praia da Vitória, which features a large bay and the only sizeable sandy beach on the island. Here's where we started an e-bike tour, cycling through town and along the coast,

taking in various places of interest. Like the Monumento al Inmaculado Corazón de María, a Monument to the Immaculate Heart of Maria, patron saint of the town. The site has a nice viewpoint, Miradouro do Facho, that overlooks the town and bay. There's also a curious looking telegraph device here, which was used to communicate along the coast during a battle in 1829.

Colorful buildings are in abundance around Praia. The Império da Caridade, for example, is very photogenic.

This small chapel is dedicated to the Holy Spirit. For nearly nine centuries,

Azoreans have pledged special devotion to the Holy Spirit. There are around seventy such chapels on





Terceira alone. Many are decorated with bright hues and topped by an imperial crown on the roof. Inside, there's a silk covered altar, a silver crown and scepter. Processions of the Holy Spirit take place on Easter and other noteworthy Feast Days, followed by the sharing of meat, wine and bread among the villagers.

As for the island's culinary specialties, there are several. Alcatra is perhaps the most well-known dish. It's a type of beef stew, using a rump, which has been seasoned with wine, garlic and other spices and then cooked in a large, unglazed clay pot for six to seven hours until tender. Sausages are also served, and if you're a fan of blood sausage, you're in the right place!

Fish and other types of seafood reign supreme. Tuna, caught in the waters around the island, is ubiquitous, as are swordfish, mackerel, shrimp and octopus. And of course, cod - always cod in Portugal! You'll find these offerings stewed, fried and baked, and accompanied by Azorean

sweet potatoes or yams.

On the sweeter side of things is something called Doce de Vinagre, a dessert with the texture of rice pudding, sprinkled with cinnamon on top. Then there are the pastries. Conde da Praia da Vitória, a small cake-like goodie, is a meld of spices and potatoes, and tastes heavenly. As does the famous Queijada da Dona Amélia, the traditional tea cake of Terceira, which earned its name as a tribute to Queen Amélia. She was offered it on her first royal visit to the island in 1901.

As for libations, don't pass up the chance to try the local beer, wine and liqueurs made with passion fruit and pineapples.



While on Terceira, we stayed at Quinta das Mercês, an historic hotel dating back to the 1600s.



Purportedly, the King of Spain once stayed here. Located just outside the city center, across from the water, the property is traditionally decorated and rooms are spacious and comfy, with all the necessary amenities. An ample breakfast is included. There's also an outdoor pool and gardens, making the hotel a serene respite for travelers.

And now onward to São Miguel!

For more information

- [www.azoreschoice.com](http://www.azoreschoice.com)

A woman wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a black dress with a vibrant floral pattern in shades of pink, yellow, and white is walking away from the camera on a sandy beach. Her arms are outstretched to the sides, and she appears to be enjoying the view. The background shows the blue ocean under a clear sky, with a pier visible in the distance. A seagull is flying in the upper right portion of the frame.

# How To Plan Your Island Escape

*It's time to plan your journey  
into a realm of breathtaking  
landscapes, secluded tranquility,  
and thrilling water-based  
activities that will create  
memories that last a lifetime.*



**V**acationing on an island can offer a unique and distinct experience that sets it apart from mainland destinations. The combination of stunning landscapes, seclusion, and water-based activities creates a captivating allure for travelers seeking an extraordinary getaway. Here's why planning your island escape is worth every moment:

First, you're surrounded by natural beauty: Islands boast breathtaking landscapes and coastal scenery that are truly awe-inspiring. Imagine pristine white sandy beaches, crystal-clear turquoise waters, coral reefs teeming with marine life, lush forests, and dramatic cliffs. From the iconic beaches of Bali, the Maldives, and Santorini to the volcanic wonders of Maui and Bora

Bora, each island has its own natural charm waiting to be explored.

Islands often offer a sense of seclusion and exclusivity, making them perfect for those seeking privacy and tranquility.

With fewer visitors and lower population density, you can escape the hustle and bustle of the mainland and find serenity amidst stunning surroundings.

The surrounding waters of islands open up a world of exciting water-based activities. Dive into the depths of vibrant coral reefs, embark on thrilling snorkeling

adventures, or enjoy sailing, kayaking, and surfing in the pristine waves. You may not need to go to the Maldives, Phuket, and the Great Barrier Reef in Australia to these activities, practically every island that has a tourism-based



economy has their own version of these activities.

Each island also has its own unique culture and traditions, shaped by its isolation and geographical characteristics. Immerse yourself in the local culture, taste traditional cuisine, and experience the indigenous



arts and crafts that make these destinations so captivating.

On many islands, that unique culture brings a laid-back

atmosphere, allowing you to embrace a slower pace of life. Leave the stress behind as you indulge in the soothing island vibes.

Enjoy lazy days on the beach, indulge in rejuvenating spa treatments, or simply unwind with a tropical

cocktail while watching a breathtaking sunset.

But even the laid-back islands have an element of adventure because of their detachment from the

mainland. Whether you choose to fly, take a ferry, or hop on a private boat, the limited accessibility creates a sense of anticipation and escapism. It's as if you're leaving the ordinary world behind and stepping into a realm of natural wonders and serenity.



And the islands aren't just detached from the mainland with regard to the people and culture, that same stretch of water means that islands often boast distinct ecosystems and abundant biodiversity. Encounter unique wildlife species and explore lush tropical rainforests. From the exotic wildlife of the Galapagos Islands to the endemic species of the Hawaiian Islands, the natural beauty and diverse flora and fauna of these destinations



will leave you awe-inspired.



Of course, a when arranging a trip to an island, there are several special considerations to keep in mind to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience.

From transportation to accommodation and safety, here are the essential factors to consider:

Islands often require specific transportation arrangements.



Research and plan your travel to and from the island, whether it's by flights, ferries, or private boat charters.

Popular destinations like Bali, Santorini, and Phuket have

well-established transportation options to cater to visitors, but the more remote and off-the-beaten-path

you go, the more challenging it will be to get there... but the more adventurous it will be too. Remember that water travel is much slower than land travel.

Islands may have limited access to certain supplies, so it's important to pack essential items you may need during your stay.

The unique cultures that develop on islands often result in unique

sets of rules and cultural norms. You'll need to familiarize yourself with the local regulations, customs, and cultural norms of the island you plan to visit.





Islands have distinct weather patterns and seasonal variations, even from one side of the island to the other. Sometimes the weather can be extreme. Tsunamis, hurricanes, and volcanoes can happen on the mainland, but islands are frequently the targets of such challenges, and when they hit, help is farther away. Personal emergencies, like appendicitis or a broken leg, might mean that you are hours away from a hospital.

Everything on an island has to be brought to the island, so expect prices on islands so be prepared for potentially higher prices due to the island's remoteness and limited resources.

Islands often have delicate ecosystems and natural beauty worth preserving. Be environmentally responsible during your visit.

By considering these special factors when arranging your island escape, you'll be well-prepared to make the

most of your trip. From transportation logistics to safety precautions and cultural sensitivity, thoughtful planning ensures a memorable and fulfilling experience on your chosen island paradise.

Consider these steps in planning your unforgettable island vacation.

**Step 1: Choose Your Island Destination:**

Research and select an island destination that aligns with your preferences. Consider factors such as climate, activities, culture, and accessibility. Whether you seek relaxation, adventure, or a mix of both, find an island that offers the experiences you desire. Consider popular destinations like Bali, Jamaica, or the Seychelles because they have a well developed hospitality industry, if that fits your taste, or find an uninhabited rock with a shack if that is the adventure you're looking for.



## **Step 2: Determine the Best Time to Visit:**

Investigate the island's weather patterns and peak tourism seasons. Consider whether you prefer a bustling atmosphere or a quieter time with fewer visitors. Balance weather conditions, affordability, and availability to choose the best time for your island escape. Consult



reliable sources and travel guides to gather information about the climate and tourist seasons.

## **Step 3: Set Your Budget:**

Determine your budget for the trip, including flights,

accommodation, meals, activities, and transportation. Research the average costs associated with your chosen island destination and create a realistic budget that suits your financial means. Consider both the upfront expenses and the daily costs during your stay.

## **Step 4: Research and Book Accommodation:**

Explore various accommodation options such as resorts, hotels, vacation rentals, or eco-lodges. Evaluate their amenities, proximity to attractions, and reviews from previous guests. Book your accommodation well in advance, especially during peak seasons, to secure your preferred choice. Consider the type of accommodation that suits your preferences and budget.

### **Step 5: Plan Your Itinerary:**

Research the island's highlights and must-see attractions. Consider activities like water sports, hiking, exploring cultural sites, or simply unwinding on the beach. Create a flexible itinerary that balances relaxation and exploration, allowing for spontaneity and free time. Research local tour operators or guides who can provide insights and recommendations.

### **Step 6: Arrange Transportation:**

Determine the best mode of transportation to reach the island, whether it's by air, ferry, or a combination of both. Compare prices, schedules, and travel times to select the most convenient and cost-effective option. Book your transportation tickets in advance to secure your preferred dates.

Consider any connections or transfers needed for a smooth journey.

### **Step 7: Pack Smart:**

Consider the climate, activities, and local customs when packing for your island escape. Include essentials like lightweight clothing, swimsuits, sunscreen, insect repellent, comfortable footwear, and any specific gear required for activities such as snorkeling or hiking. Pack a travel adapter, basic medications, and important documents. Consider luggage restrictions and weight limits for flights



or ferry trips.

### **Step 8: Check Travel Requirements:**

Research and fulfill any travel requirements for your chosen island destination, including visas, travel insurance, and health precautions. Check for any specific entry or vaccination requirements and ensure you have all the necessary documentation before your departure. Consult with your local embassy or consulate for up-to-date information.

### **Step 9: Embrace Local Culture:**

Learn about the local customs, traditions, and etiquette of the island you're visiting. Respect the local culture, traditions, and environment. Familiarize

yourself with local phrases or basic language to enhance your interaction with locals and immerse yourself in the island's unique atmosphere.

Research appropriate clothing and behavior norms.



### **Step 10: Stay Safe and Insured:**


Prioritize your safety during your island escape. Familiarize yourself with local emergency contact numbers and healthcare facilities. Consider purchasing travel insurance to protect yourself from unforeseen events, such as trip cancellations, medical emergencies,

or lost luggage. Follow safety guidelines for activities like swimming, snorkeling, or hiking.



Planning your perfect island escape is an exciting journey that begins with understanding the allure and unique experiences islands offer, the special considerations that an island vacation requires, and making sure that you're well-prepared to embark on a memorable island adventure. So, start dreaming, researching, and planning your island escape today. Get ready to immerse yourself in the beauty and tranquility of these paradisiacal destinations, leaving behind the ordinary and embracing the extraordinary. Your perfect island escape awaits, where memories are made, and a world of enchantment awaits your arrival.



A close-up photograph of a golden jellyfish, showing its translucent, bell-shaped body and delicate, flowing tentacles. The jellyfish is illuminated from the right, creating a bright, golden glow that contrasts sharply with the dark, almost black background. The texture of the jellyfish appears soft and ethereal. The overall composition is artistic and serene, capturing the beauty of this marine creature.

*Dive into Palau's Jellyfish Lake  
and discover a world where  
friendly golden jellyfish caress  
your body and vibrant Rock  
Islands create a surreal  
backdrop – a paradise for  
adventurers and nature  
enthusiasts alike.*



Swimming with Palau's

# Peaceful Jellyfish

Feature by

**Molly Blaisdell**

Jellyfish Photos by

**Lorry Heverly**



“Swimming in warm, golden Jellyfish Lake, I’m surrounded by friendly intelligent jellyfish,” says Sharon Spence Lieb. “At first I’m afraid I’ll be stung. But these creatures are different: They caress my body and embrace my face. These gelatinous orbs seem downright curious. If I could laugh under water I would. Who would ever think jellyfish could be so harmless? I’ll remember this sensational wildlife encounter as one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. You’ve got to experience this for yourself.”

Lieb lives near the Atlantic Ocean and the beaches of Charleston, South Carolina. She knows that encounters with jellyfish can often end in pain. “I once got tangled in a jellyfish’s tentacles,” she recalls. “I was covered in painful welts. But Palau’s jellyfish don’t sting. They’ve

evolved without predators, and they're living peacefully in Palau. Maybe they're official greeters. Jellyfish Lake is one of the reasons Palau is called the 8th Natural Wonder of the World as well as one of The Seven Underwater Wonders of the World.”

Most have heard of Palau as one of Planet Earth's legendary dive and snorkel destinations. But for those who wonder where it is, you're not alone. Located in the westernmost corner of Micronesia, Palau is an archipelago of over 586 islands. Only 20,000 people call this area home. But those willing to travel a to this remote paradise will swim in the translucent Pacific Ocean with over 1400 species of fish, 500 species of coral living underneath the stunning Rock Islands....and incredible jellyfish in Palau's Jellyfish Lake.





“Jellyfish Lake is a well-known tourist destination,” says Yositaka Adachi, Governor of Koror State. “To swim among millions of harmless jellyfish is an unforgettable experience. Our government is vigilant about conserving and managing our ecological integrity. We are devoted to preserving our natural environment as part of our heritage and culture.”

The golden jellyfish found only in Jellyfish Lake are called “Mastigias Papua Etpisoni.” Living in their tissues are zooxanthellae, which are symbiotic dinoflagellates. There is a special relationship: the jellyfish rotates in a circle and swims around Jellyfish Lake, making sure the zooxanthellae get enough sunlight for photosynthesis. In exchange, the zooxanthellae provide

their jellyfish with energy and nutrients.

The jellyfish capture tiny organisms for food, with stinging cells inherited from their ancestor, Mastigias Papua. But they did not evolve to eat large vertebrates like humans. They bob peacefully in the sun and are completely harmless to snorkelers exploring beautiful Jellyfish Lake.

These unusual jellyfish swim in a migratory pattern seen only in Jellyfish Lake. At sunrise, they swim towards the east shoreline, stopping at the shadow line formed by overhanging trees and rocks. They hover there in the sunlit seawater. As the sun arcs overhead throughout the day, the jellies turn and swim towards the west shoreline, again stopping to bob at the shadow line. Like sunflowers, and tourists snoozing on the beach, Palau's jellyfish are ardent sun worshippers.



“For twenty years, I’ve traveled the world, publishing articles about my intense encounters with wildlife,” says travel journalist Sharon Lieb. “I’ve kayaked with orca killer whales, snorkeled with beluga whales, swum with forty foot long whale sharks and photographed wild Canadian polar bears. But, never in my life have I been

lovingly touched by a creature that is supposedly dangerous. Their curiosity and intelligence is humbling. Holding a jellyfish in your hand is a real The Twilight Zone moment. I suspended my fear, and floated into the Fourth Dimension, where all creatures share the joy of being alive. Open your heart for this life changing experience.”

The mesmerizing beauty of Palau's underwater world extends far beyond its golden jellyfish. The Rock Islands, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, add a touch of ethereal enchantment to the already stunning landscape. These 445 limestone islands, scattered across turquoise waters, create a surreal backdrop for divers and snorkelers. Exploring the labyrinthine caves, vibrant coral reefs, and hidden lagoons nestled among the Rock Islands is like stepping into a magical realm.





In addition to its underwater wonders, Palau offers a wealth of cultural experiences for visitors to delve into. The Palauan people have a rich heritage rooted in their connection to the land and sea. Traditional practices, such as storytelling, dance, and craftsmanship, are celebrated through vibrant festivals and community gatherings. Immersing oneself in Palauan culture provides a deeper understanding of the symbiotic relationship between the island's people and their awe-inspiring surroundings.

This remote paradise offers much more than meets the eye. From the mesmerizing Jellyfish Lake and its friendly golden jellyfish to the ethereal Rock Islands, Palau's underwater world captivates the imagination. But beyond the turquoise waters, the cultural tapestry of the Palau's 20,000 residents adds depth to the experience. Through vibrant festivals and traditional practices,

visitors can connect with the island's rich heritage and gain a profound appreciation for the harmony between the people and their awe-inspiring surroundings.

Located in the westernmost corner of Micronesia, Palau's 586 islands beckon to adventurous travelers seeking unrivaled natural beauty. Whether you are diving into the translucent Pacific Ocean, exploring vibrant coral reefs, or immersing yourself in Palauan culture, this destination promises an unforgettable journey into paradise.

Embark on your own Palauan adventure and prepare to be amazed by the wonders that await you in this extraordinary corner of the world.



**For more information**

PalauTourism [www.visit-palau.com](http://www.visit-palau.com).

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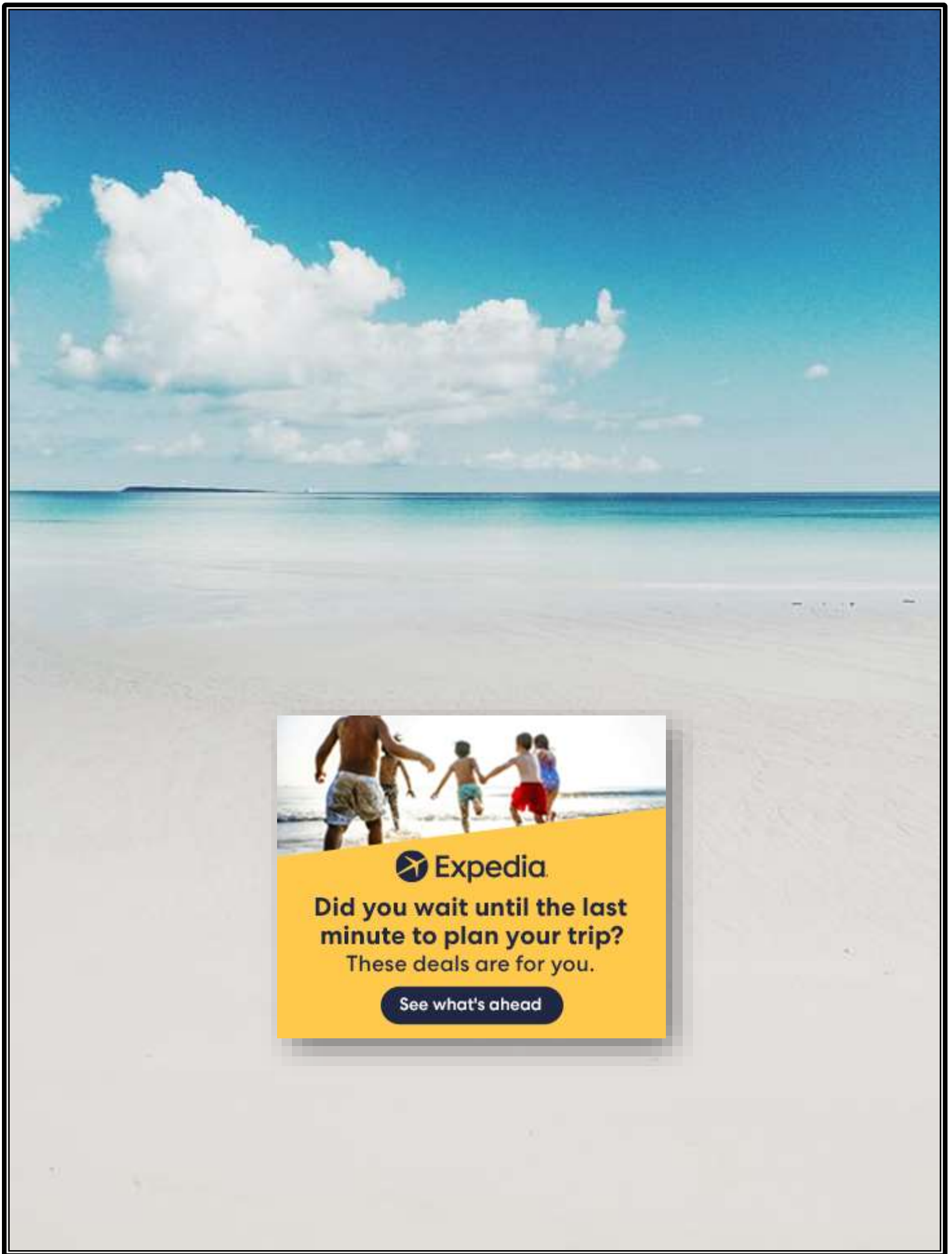
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*Galveston Island, where the vastness of the Gulf of Mexico meets the captivating tales of its resilient past, the allure of its natural wonders, and the lively spirit of its vibrant festivals, all waiting to be discovered and cherished.*



A dramatic sunset over Galveston Island beach. The sky is filled with large, dark clouds, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and long shadows. In the foreground, a sandy beach is visible with a lifeguard stand and a Ferris wheel in the distance. The overall mood is serene and nostalgic.

A Lifetime Love Affair with  
**Galveston Island**

Feature by  
**Paul Pence**



**W**hen I was 17, I looked out for the first time across the flat sand of Galveston Island to the unending expanse of the Gulf of Mexico and was awestruck. I had grown up hundreds of miles away from the coast, where the largest expanse of water was a lake barely big enough to canoe upon and here was water that stretched to the horizon and beyond.

The waves weren't the Pacific monsters I had expected from surfing movies but instead were easily tamed by bouncing up and down in them or by swimming along with them back to shore. The beach held an abundance of delicate seashells and sand dollars, each one a unique treasure waiting to be discovered. As I dug my toes into the soft sand, it seemed to stretch endlessly in both directions, mirroring the vastness of the

Gulf itself.

Every time I return, I'm reminded of why I fell in love with this island. Galveston has always been a place of enchantment for me, where history whispers through the streets, nature captivates the senses, excitement ignites the spirit, and relaxation finds its perfect spot on the sandy shores.



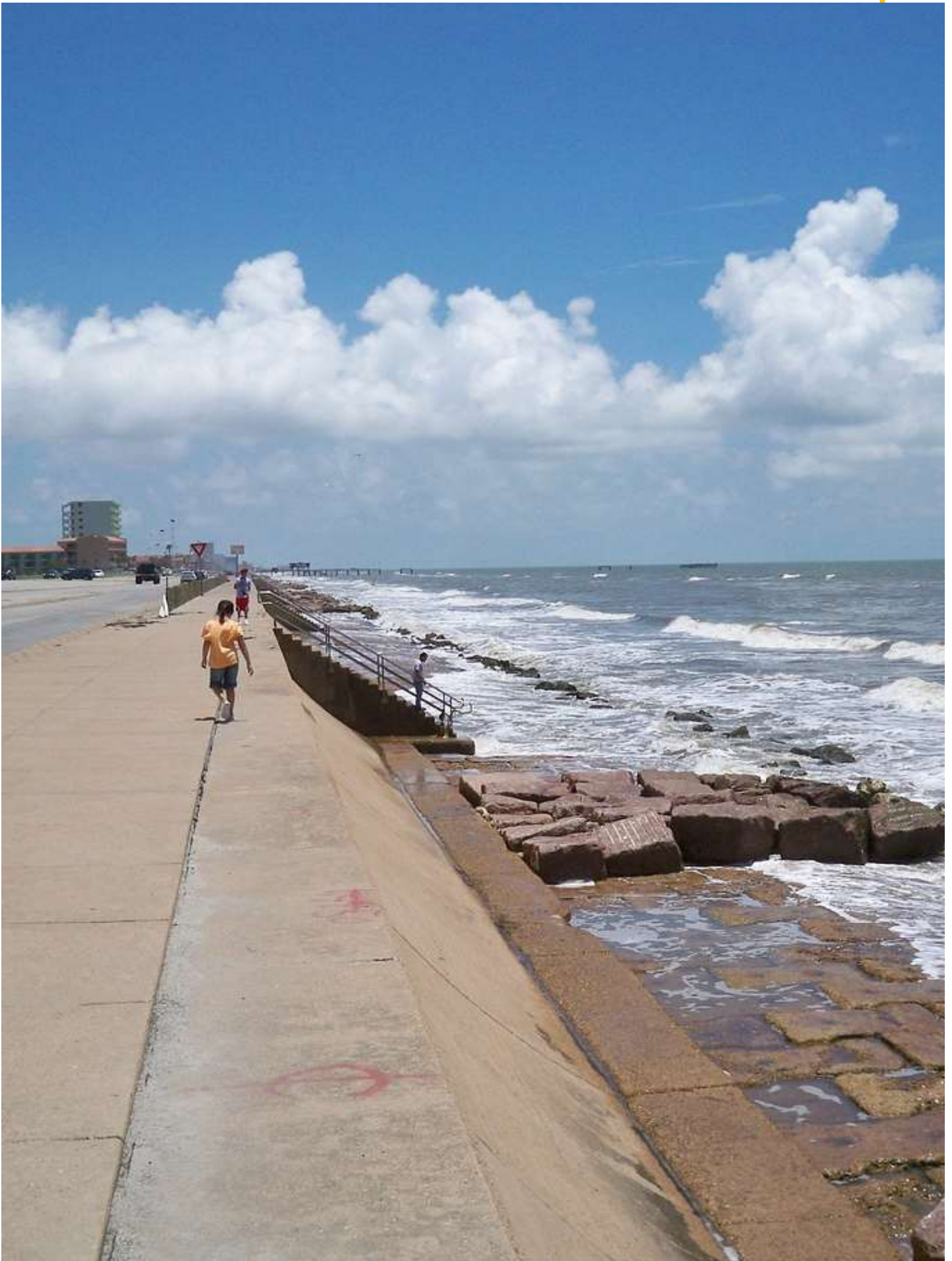
As a self-professed history buff, Galveston captured a special place in my heart. It's a city where the past inter-





twines with the present, and every corner tells a story.

The most prominent reminder of Galveston's history is the iconic Galveston Seawall. Built in response to the catastrophic hurricane of 1900 that devastated the city and killed over 5000, it stands as a testament to the city's resilience and determination to protect itself from future deva-station. The seawall starts at the eastern tip of the island and stretches almost 10 miles. If you're not aware of the history, you might think of it simply as Galveston's equivalent of another city's boardwalk, but it's an engineering marvel. Not only did they build this structure, but the citizens of the early 1900's also raised the height of the city 15 feet. They lifted what buildings survived the hurricane, built elevated foundations, and brought in soil and sand to raise the ground level. For two years, they pumped sand carried by sea water from dredging operations in the Gulf out onto the slowly growing island.



I was in my 20's before I discovered much of Galveston's history. The Victorian mansions exemplified by the Bishop's Palace, the commercial



district called "The Strand" from the same era, the various museums like the train museum, and of course the historic tall ship Elissa.

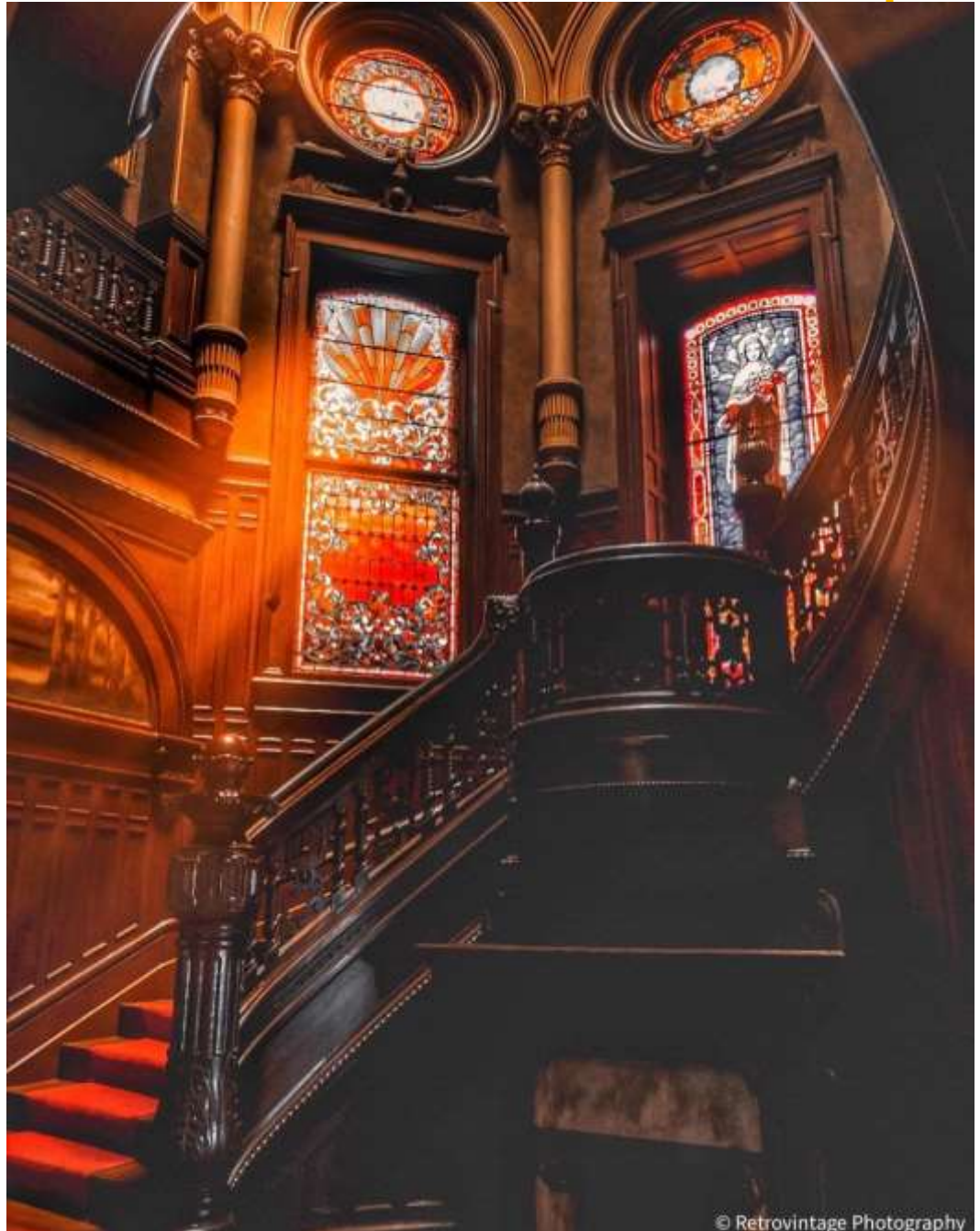
The Bishop's Palace, also known as the Gresham House, is a marvel

to behold. Its towering presence and intricate architectural details speak of a bygone era when Galveston was a prosperous and thriving city. Exploring the Bishop's Palace takes you on a journey through time, offering a glimpse into the opulent lifestyle of the past

and the legacy of those who shaped the island's history.

Galveston's commercial heyday was in the late 19th and 20th century, before the Houston ship channel begin carrying ships to harbors farther inland. The

Strand historic district is a captivating blend of architectural wonders of that era, formerly shops and business offices, now boutique shops, and enticing eateries. Walking along the Strand immerses visitors in a vibrant



© Retrovintage Photography

tapestry of the past and present. Exploring the Strand is like stepping into a living museum, with each building telling a story of Galveston's past.

Very close to the strand, where cruise ships dock and oil rigs are constructed and launched, the Elissa, an iron-



hulled barque with three square-sailed masts awaits visitors. It had sailed over a million miles in its career, before suffering years of neglect and abandonment and finally being rescued and

painstakingly restored to her former glory. Witnessing the dedication and



craftsmanship poured into her revival is awe-inspiring. From the meticulously recreated rigging to the intricate woodwork, every detail has been meticulously

attended to, ensuring that the Elissa stands today as a living museum, ready to share its captivating story with

all who step on board.

Adjacent to the Elissa, the Texas Seaport Museum

## *Galveston was once “The Ellis Island of the West”*

provides a deeper understanding of Galveston's maritime heritage. Discover fascinating exhibits that unravel the city's seafaring past, from the bustling days of the cotton trade to the significance of Galveston as a major port of immigration. Interactive displays, artifacts, and historical photographs offer glimpses into the lives of sailors, merchants, and immigrants who played a vital role in shaping Galveston's history.

Galveston was once the “Ellis Island of the West”, a gateway for thousands of immigrants seeking a new life in the westward expansion of the US. The Victorian Era, Galveston emerged as a prominent port of entry due to its strategic location and the expanding opportunities offered by Texas' growing economy. The port of Galveston served as a crucial entry point for immigrants, particularly those coming from Europe.

While Galveston's prominence as an immigration point diminished over time, the legacy of those who arrived and settled there can still be seen today. The Galveston Historical Foundation and various museums in the area document and preserve the stories and experiences of these immigrants, providing insights into Galveston's rich immigration history.

Galveston is also a haven for food enthusiasts, offering a diverse and vibrant culinary scene that caters to a range of tastes and preferences. From fresh seafood straight

from the Gulf to mouthwatering Tex-Mex flavors, Galveston is a treasure trove of gastronomic delights waiting to be discovered.

When I'm close to salt water, my palate turns toward seafood.



Shrimp boats unload their tasty cargo in nearby Kemah and other ports all along the Gulf Coast, so shrimp is always high on my seafood cravings list.

Seafood lovers like me find themselves in paradise as they savor the bounties of the Gulf of Mexico. From succulent shrimp and plump oysters to flaky fish

fillets, Galveston's seafood offerings are a true testament to the island's coastal location. Whether you're indulging in a delectable seafood boil or enjoying a plate of perfectly grilled fish, the flavors of the ocean will tantalize your taste buds and leave you craving for more. The Waterman Restaurant sits well away from downtown,

near Galveston Island State Park and is an ideal choice for steaks, seafood, and great service. It's especially popular with the people who boat along the intercoastal waterway.

For BBQ, I seek out Leon's on Broadway, a tradition for Galveston and for me since 1985. Leon Oneal's career started as an Army cook and culminated in a family business whose charm is just as great as his slow smoked meats.

Or how about a touch of international, with a restaurant on 61st street

whose name is effectively the menu - Cajun Greek - which embraces Cajun spices and Greek island cuisine traditions?

Galveston's culinary adventures are not limited to specific restaurants but extend to vibrant food festivals and farmers' markets. The island hosts a variety of food-



centric events throughout the year, where local chefs and vendors showcase their talents and offer a diverse range of flavors. Sample the culinary creations at the Galveston Restaurant Week, indulge in the delicious offerings at the Galveston Island Farmers Market, or Explore the Galveston Food & Wine Festival,

But food isn't Galveston's only excuse to celebrate. Galveston's vibrant festival scene is a testament to its lively spirit. Throughout the year, Galveston plays host to a myriad of festivals and events that bring the community together and provide visitors with an unforgettable experience. The best part? These festivities are not limited to the summer season, ensuring there's always something exciting happening in Galveston, no matter the time of year.



One of the most iconic and anticipated events in Galveston is the Mardi Gras celebration.

Held annually in the spring leading up to Fat Tuesday, Galveston's Mardi Gras is a colorful extravaganza that fills the streets with vibrant

parades, live music, and lively revelry. Beads are tossed, masks

are donned, and the festive spirit is contagious. The Mardi Gras celebration in Galveston is a true testament to the island's lively nature and brings a touch of New Orleans to the Texas coast. Whether you attend the celebration or not, if you're there during the parades, expect road closures.

But the festival scene in Galveston doesn't stop there. Throughout the year, you'll find events such as the Lone Star Motorcycle Rally, the Galveston Island Shrimp Festival, and the Dickens on The Strand festival, which transforms the historic Strand district into a Victorian wonderland during the holiday season. Galveston's



festivals offer something for everyone, whether you're a music lover, a history enthusiast, a foodie, or simply looking to immerse yourself in the vibrant spirit of the island.



Dickens on the Strand is an enchanting festival that holds a special place in my heart and the hearts of Galveston locals and

visitors alike. This annual Christmastime event, inspired by the works of



Charles Dickens, transports the historic Strand district back in time to the Victorian era. As I wandered through the Strand, I marveled at the sight of elegantly dressed

revelers in period costumes, street vendors selling traditional wares like roasted chestnuts, and lively

performances filling the air with music and laughter. The joyous ambiance and attention to detail create a truly immersive experience,

allowing visitors to step into the pages of a Dickens novel. From the lively parades and costumed characters to the charming shops and traditional food offerings,

Dickens on The Strand captures the essence of Victorian

England and brings it to life on the streets of Galveston, making it a truly magical festival to behold.

One of the great things about Galveston's festival scene is that it spans the

entire year, ensuring that visitors can experience the island's lively atmosphere no matter when they choose to



visit. So whether you're planning a summer getaway or a cozy winter escape, Galveston's festivals are sure to add a touch of excitement and celebration to your visit.

Galveston is not only a city rich in history and vibrant festivals but also a haven for nature enthusiasts. With its stunning beaches, diverse ecosystems, and abundant wildlife, the island offers endless opportunities to connect with the natural world and unleash your inner explorer.

The expansive beaches of Galveston beckon, inviting you to soak up the sun, feel the sand between your toes, and listen to the soothing sounds of the crashing waves. Whether you're strolling along the shoreline, building sandcastles, or simply basking in the serenity of the coastal beauty, the beaches of Galveston provide a tranquil escape from the bustle of everyday life. Don't forget to keep an eye out for passing squadrons of pelicans and flocks of seagulls soaring overhead, as well as the occasional playful dolphin



frolicking in the distance.

Beyond the beaches, Galveston boasts an array of



nature preserves and parks that showcase the island's diverse flora and fauna. One such gem is the Galveston Island State Park, a coastal paradise where visitors can explore nature trails, go birdwatching, or enjoy a picnic surrounded by stunning coastal views. The park is home

to a variety of bird species, making it a birdwatcher's delight. Keep your binoculars handy, as you may spot graceful herons, colorful roseate spoonbills, or amazing ospreys.



The Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council's Coastal Heritage Preserve, a 1,200-acre preserve that encompasses marshlands, dunes, and prairies, provides a sanctuary for numerous plant and animal species. Take a leisurely stroll along the well-maintained trails, allowing the sights and sounds of nature to captivate your senses. Keep an eye out for migratory birds, butterflies fluttering amidst wildflowers, and even the occasional alligator basking in the sun.



Or find nature indoors, out of the sun and carefully curated, at Moody Gardens. These pyramid-shaped buildings host a tropical rainforest with exotic plants and butterflies and numerous exhibits on different aquatic environments.



If you're looking to explore the marine wonders of Galveston, consider embarking on a dolphin-watching tour or a fishing excursion. These experiences offer a chance to witness playful dolphins leaping through the waves and to try your hand at reeling in a big catch from the abundant Gulf waters. Whether you're an experienced angler or a first-time fisher, the thrill of the ocean and the possibility of a memorable catch will leave

you with  
unforget-  
table  
moments.

Or do  
what I do  
and catch  
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Bolivar  
ferry that  
takes you  
to the  
next  
island in  
the chain  
and keep  
an eye out



for dolphins bounding along playfully.

Galveston's natural wonders provide the perfect backdrop for outdoor activities such as kayaking, paddleboarding, and biking. Glide along tranquil waterways, paddle through marshes teeming with wildlife, or cycle along scenic routes, immersing yourself in the beauty of the island's landscapes. These adventures not only offer a chance to get closer to nature but also provide an exhilarating and invigorating

experience.

-When it comes to finding a tranquil retreat in Galveston, the options are as diverse as the island itself. Vacation rentals, grand hotels, resorts, timeshares, lofts, camper parks, and seawall motels abound. Whether you prefer pitching a tent on the sandy beaches, relaxing in a cozy timeshare, or exploring other accommodation choices, Galveston has something to suit every traveler's preference.

For those seeking an immersive coastal adventure, camping on the beach like I did when I was 17 is an great option.

There's nothing quite like falling asleep to the gentle sound of the waves and waking up to the breathtaking sunrise over the Gulf of Mexico. You can't just pitch a tent anywhere on the sand, but Galveston offers several beach camping options at state beaches and even private camping options like Stewart Beach right in downtown, allowing you to set up camp right by the water's edge and indulge in the serenity of nature. Imagine building a bonfire, roasting marshmallows, and gazing at the star-filled sky,





creating memories that will last a lifetime.

If you're looking for a home away from home with added amenities, timeshares abound in Galveston, providing a comfortable and convenient retreat. I've found in my later years that these vacation rentals often feature spacious living areas, fully equipped kitchens, and resort-like facilities such as swimming pools, hot tubs, and fitness centers. Timeshares allow you to enjoy the comforts of a private space while still being within easy reach of Galveston's attractions and natural beauty.



Galveston offers a range of other accommodation choices, from charming bed and breakfasts to luxurious beachfront resorts. Choose a historic inn nestled in the heart of the Strand district, where you can wander through the quaint streets and explore local shops and restaurants. Or opt for a beachfront resort that offers panoramic views of the Gulf, allowing you to wake up to the sight and sound of the ocean. No matter your preference, Galveston's accommodation options cater to various budgets and tastes, ensuring a restful and

rejuvenating stay.

Many visitors to the island choose to fly into William P. Hobby Airport (HOU) in Houston and rent a car to drive the 41 miles to Galveston, passing NASA's Houston Manned Spaceflight Center on the way.

As I reflect on my experiences and adventures in Galveston, I am filled with a sense of awe and appreciation for this remarkable destination. Galveston, with its beautiful beaches, rich history, exciting festivals, and tranquil retreats, has woven together a tapestry of experiences that captivate the hearts of visitors from near and far.

From the moment I arrived when I was 17, the open expanse of the Gulf of Mexico and the squadron of pelicans soaring overhead welcomed me to a world of relaxation and natural beauty. It's where I learned to make sand castles, splash in the waves, and hunt for sharks' teeth skittering through the sand and the surf. It's





where I discovered an appreciation of history and awe in the resilience and engineering prowess of the city. It's where I found discovered food as a celebration and found celebration as a way to excite the spirit.


But it is in the island's nature that I found a connection with the world around me. Whether it was strolling along the beaches, exploring the nature preserves, or embarking on outdoor adventures, Galveston's natural wonders revealed themselves in splendid ways. From the chirping of birds to the gentle sway of marsh grasses, I felt a deep sense of peace and harmony with the environment.

I hope that you can discover an amazing place for yourself the way I did when I started coming to Galveston.

**For More Information:**

- [www.VisitGalveston.com](http://www.VisitGalveston.com)





*Discover São Miguel Island,  
where vibrant landscapes,  
volcanic wonders, and  
captivating history converge in a  
nature lover's paradise.*



Jurassic Nature in Technicolor:

São Miguel

Island

Feature by

Debbie Stone



**S**ão Miguel is known as the “Green Island” due to its lush landscapes and rolling, verdant hills. It feels a bit like Ireland, Iceland and Hawaii all bundled up into one enchanting place.

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Most visitors to the island arrive in Ponta Delgada, the lively, cosmopolitan city that serves as the economic hub of the Azores. As with our previous experience on Terceira, Archipelago Choice scheduled several, privately guided tours for my husband and me, focusing on nature, landscape, history and food.

While on the island, we stayed in Ponta Delgada at Hotel Do Colégio, a conveniently situated property, steps from many attractions, restaurants and shops. This

boutique hotel is located in a manor house, built in the 19th century during the Golden Age of the orange trade between Ponta Delgada and England. It served as a school for many years, before eventually becoming a hotel.

The place combines historical charm with all the modern comforts. Rooms are spacious and tastefully decorated, with all the creature comforts you'd expect. Breakfast is a buffet with plentiful options, and there's a nice outdoor pool for a refreshing dip after a day's activities.

Our first introduction to the city was on the Ponta Delgada Food Tour, a combo history and food excursion, where we learned how Azorean cuisine, history, religion, agriculture and the sea are all inextricably linked. We started the tour off with cups of local green tea, along with queijadas, a milk and egg





pastry indicative to each island . This particular pastry had essences of pineapple, orange and Cinna-mon.

Azorean pineapples, we were told, are special – sweeter with less acidity – and they are the only

pineapples in the world grown in greenhouses. A later side trip on our own to Arruda Pineapple Plantation confirmed this fact, as we were able to see the plants at various stages of growth within a series of greenhouses.

While strolling around town, our guide noted the centuries-old architecture, cobbled streets (each marked by a different pattern of stones to help intoxicated sailors find their way home), city market and colorful waterfront, interspersing his commentary with snippets of historical background.



The authentic way to enter the charming town square is through its city gates, a structure of three arches built in the typical Azorean black basalt rock and whitewashed masonry. Nearby is the Church of St. Sebastian, a grand Gothic and Baroque style building with a façade of

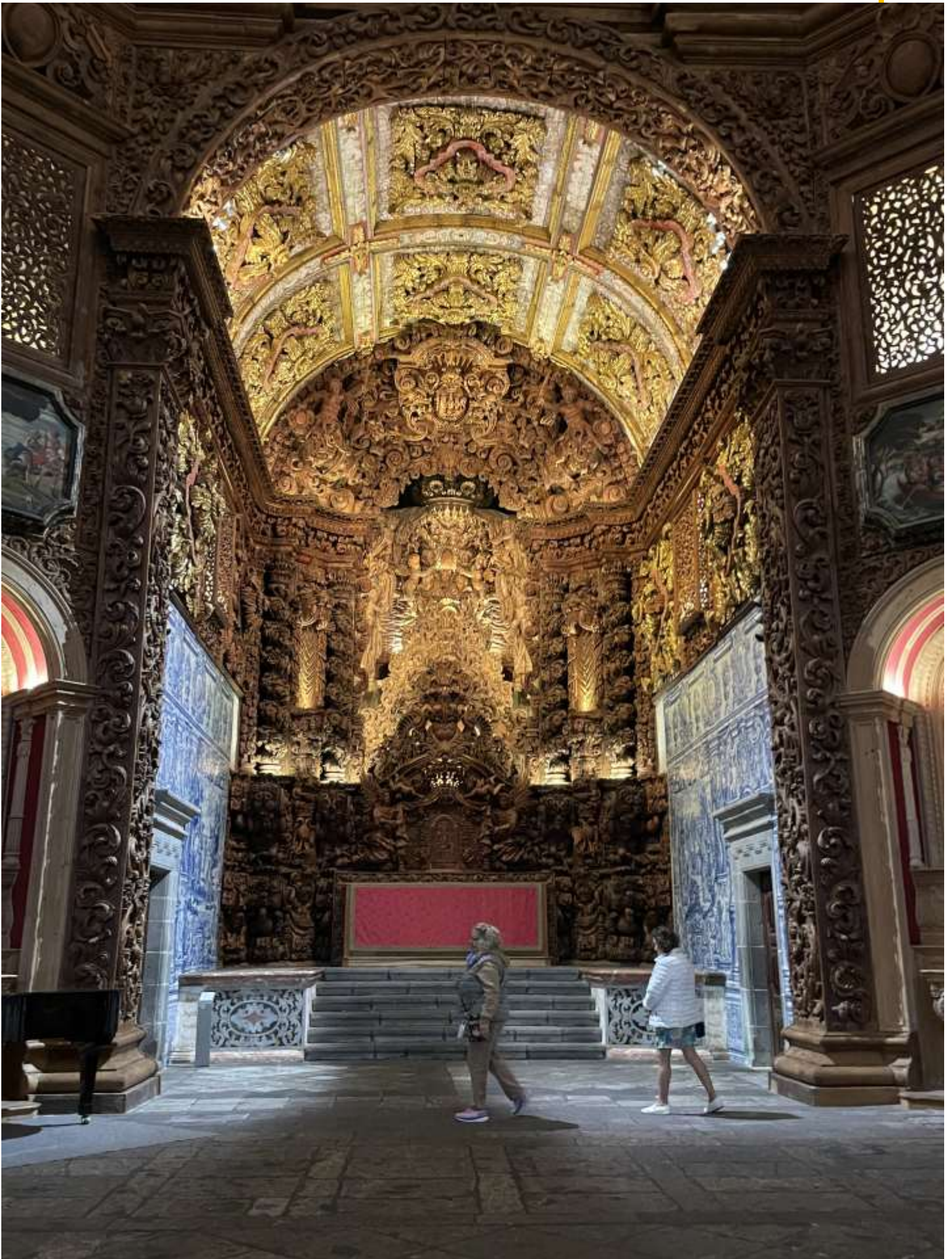
sculptures carved in basalt, and a magnificent entrance door.

Our guide then took us to the Jesuit College, a campus that includes a Baroque-style church, public garden, library and collection of sacred art from the Carlos Machado Museum. In the 1590s, Ponta Delgada welcomed Jesuit priests to open a school to teach Latin and other subjects. The church was not totally completed, as the Jesuits were expelled in 1790. Inside, the carved, gold altar and nave is a showstopper, albeit unfinished.

At Nossa Senhora da Esperanca Convent, we saw more riches on display in the ornately decorated small, 16th century chapel. There's stunning tile work, sets of









altars from different artistic periods, jewels, statues and more. The true treasure, however, is the Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres, an 18th century religious statue and piece of art, associated with an image of Christ depicted in the events of the New Testament. It is only taken out once a year after Easter to lead a procession through the streets of the city.

São Miguel's largest fortress, the Forte de São Brás, is another highlight. This formidable bastion once

protected the island from attacks by pirates and privateers. These days, it's home to the Military Museum of the Azores.

Our tour concluded with a fine dining experience of Portuguese specialties at a local restaurant. We were treated to an array of dishes including limpets, chicken



soup with rice, octopus, tuna with sweet potatoes (me) and steak cooked on a rock (my husband). Dessert was a “Volcano of Fire,” a merengue, cookie dough, ice cream and berries concoction in a volcano shape. The chef outdid himself!

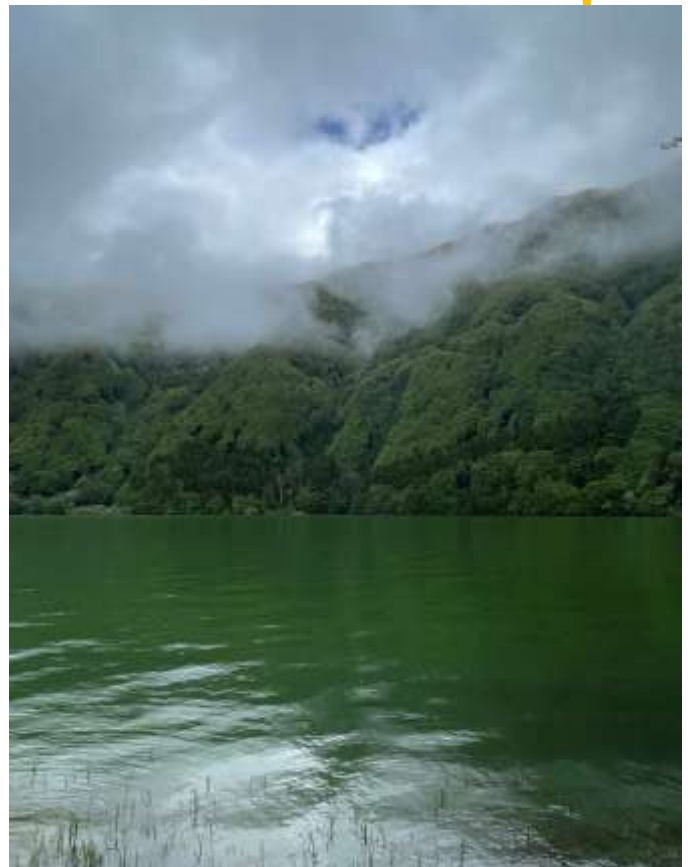
In the ensuing days, we explored the island's

natural marvels, including its many volcanic features. São Miguel is actually the most volcanically active of the nine islands.

One day, we drove to Sete Cidades or Seven Cities area, named for the seven peaks that surround a large caldera with twin lakes. As one of the Seven Natural Wonders of Portugal, these lakes, Lagoa Verde and Lagoa Azul, have become a symbolic image of the Azores.

The lakes are distinctly blue and green in color and their formation is often explained by a legend involving the tears of a green-eyed princess and a blue-eyed shepherd who shared a forbidden love. The scientific explanation, though, is simple: the depth of the larger lake, Azul, reflects the sky, while the smaller, shallower Verde mirrors the verdant hues of its surroundings.

To fully appreciate this scene, visitors head up to the King's Viewpoint. Unfortunately, this vista point was mired in fog when we arrived, so we were not able to get the full panoramic experience. We discovered there is much truth behind the adage that you can experience four seasons in one day on the





Azores! However, we did enjoy kayaking on the lakes and paddling through the arches that separate the bodies of water.

We then stopped in the Village of Sete Cidades for lunch. A very photogenic, neo-Gothic style church with a promenade of Japanese

cedars caught my eye and my camera.

In the afternoon, we headed to Mosteiros, where the Islets of the Monasteries are located. These are four sea stacks, constituting the eroded remains of a coastal

caldera that were destroyed in an eruption. Together, they look like a monastery, creating a mystical, haunting scene.

We ended the day on the west coast of the island at Ponta da Ferraria, where you can actually swim in a volcanic hot pool. The water here is naturally heated by underwater vents from the Sete Cidades caldera. Go an hour before to an hour after low tide for the warmest water.





One of my favorite destinations on the island is the Furnas Valley. Furnas is the most easterly volcano on São Miguel, and this is where the island's volcanic nature is most on display. On the shores of Furnas Lake, we witnessed an otherworldly geothermal scene of bubbling mud pools and sulfurous steam vents, akin to a mini Yellowstone. But Yellowstone doesn't have a burial





ground of cooking holes!

These holes have been specially dug and serve as ovens for the area's traditional dish, Cozido

das Furnas, a stew that's cooked in the ground by chefs using the natural geothermal heat. The stew, which is a combination of different cuts of meat and blood sausage, along with veggies and potatoes, goes into the pot, which is then inserted into the hole. There it will cook for the

next six to eight hours.

This time-intensive dish dates back nearly 100 years. And the recipe and method of



cooking have been handed down through generations of local families.

Visitors interested in seeing the pots come out of the holes try to arrive at the lakeshore around noon, as this is when men from the nearby restaurants come and collect the pots for lunch. As paparazzi, we gathered, cameras aimed, and watched in fascination as the men completed what is simply a normal day's chore in these parts.



The village of Furnas is also a geothermic mecca with thirty springs and geysers, varying in temperature and chemical composition. The geysers are remains of the original Furnas volcano. A nearby laboratory studies and preserves the micro-organisms which live in and around the geysers.



Water seems to spout from every corner of the town. Some of the streams are hot, some cold and some are even carbonated. We got to touch and taste. It was quite a unique

treat to drink sparkling water from a spring!

Terra Nostra Park is also on many visitors' must-see attractions. This park contains the 200-year-old Terra Nostra botanical gardens, featuring species from around the world. It originated in 1775 when American expat Thomas Hickling built a summer house on the site. Fast forward a few centuries and today, it's a paradise of

grottos, ponds, waterfalls, colorful vegetation, aromatic flowers and topiary. You can spend hours just wandering along the paths.



The park has its own natural hot springs, too, which feed a ginormous thermal pool, a popular spot for locals and visitors. Soak in the warm, mineral-rich water, for the ultimate in relaxation. Note: the muddy, brown water might leave marks on your swimsuit!

As a tea drinker, I was delighted with a visit to Gorreana Tea Plantation. Founded in 1883, this is the oldest tea factory in Europe that's still in operation. The island's mild climate, as well as its acidic volcanic soil, are ideal for production of the company's 100% organic black and green teas. A self-guided tour takes you through the entire tea process, from picking to packaging, followed by the opportunity to sip a sample or two of the company's products while overlooking the spectacular tea fields.



Driving around São Miguel, you'll find numerous viewpoints or miradouros, offering memorable vistas.



Stop and take them in. Waves crash against the rocks, as you look down from the cliffs at the mesmerizing seascape. It's hard to tear your eyes away from such dramatic beauty.

Though I took many pics, I tried to cement the scenes within me, so I could call them up at will when long gone from this magical island.

On our final day of the trip, we did a birdwatching tour with Gerby Birding. Our guide and owner of the company, Gerby Michielsen, is a longtime resident of the Azores by way of Holland. He is passionate about nature and especially ornithology. With close to 400 species, the Azores is a birding mecca.

Though my husband and I are not birders, we were intrigued at the prospect of seeing some of these species, particularly the elusive Azores Bullfinch, one of

Europe's rarest birds. We heard that people come from all over the world just to get a glimpse of this creature.

You can imagine our excitement then to spot not one, but several of these birds, with their distinct black cap and tail, perching on bushes and in the trees. We also spied the São Miguel Goldcrest, Azores Woodpigeon, both Common and Roseate Tern, Greenfinch, Chaffinch and Grey Wagtail. These sightings were all made possible with the assistance of Gerby's eagle eyes, well-attuned ears and patient observation. We dutifully followed his rules: stay close, no sudden moves and keep quiet. And the rewards were many.



### For more information:

- [www.azoreschoice.com](http://www.azoreschoice.com)

# Easter Island



A large, dark, weathered Moai statue stands prominently on a grassy hillside. The statue is positioned in the middle ground, facing left. The background shows a clear blue sky and a distant horizon. The foreground is filled with green grass and some small plants. The overall scene is a typical landscape from Easter Island.

Easter Island is called Rapa Nui by its inhabitants

It is one of the most remote inhabited islands in the world, 2300 miles from Chile

There are about 900 Moai statues on Easter Island.

The largest Moai is 32 feet tall and weighs 75 tons.

The Rapa Nui people's written language has never been deciphered.



**1-Hour cruise of Ellis Island  
and the Statue of Liberty**

**Museum of Modern Art**

**Smartphone Audio App of NYC**

**Skip the lines at the Empire State Building!**





A Timeless Paradise

# Mackinac Island

*Discover Mackinac Island, where the absence of cars creates a tranquil haven immersed in nature, fostering a close-knit community and offering visitors a unique and enchanting experience.*



**I**magine stepping onto an island frozen in time, where the gentle clatter of horse-drawn carriages echoes through the streets and the sweet scent of lilacs fills the air. Welcome to Mackinac Island, a captivating gem nestled in the turquoise waters of Lake Huron. As you arrive, the vibrant colors of blooming flowers and historic Victorian architecture greet you, creating a picturesque setting that feels like a scene plucked from a storybook.

What makes Mackinac Island truly appealing is its pristine beauty and the absence of motor vehicles. As you wander along the charming streets, the only sounds you'll hear are the clip-clop of hooves and the laughter of visitors. The island boasts over 80 miles of peaceful trails, inviting you to embark on a leisurely bike ride or

a serene hike through dense forests. Immerse yourself in the island's tranquil ambiance as you explore its natural wonders, from the breathtaking limestone bluffs overlooking the azure lake to the enchanting Arch Rock, a towering limestone formation that stands as a testament to the island's ancient geological history.

The absence of motorized vehicles on Mackinac Island has a profound impact on its culture, residents, and visitors, shaping a unique way of life that sets the island apart from any other destination. This intentional choice to preserve the island's tranquility and charm has fostered a community where time seems to slow down, and people connect with each other and their surroundings on a deeper level.

For the residents of Mackinac Island, the absence of cars is not just a novelty; it is a way of life.



Instead of navigating busy streets and dealing with the noise and pollution of motor vehicles, the islanders rely on bicycles and horse-drawn carriages as their primary modes of transportation. This reliance on traditional means of travel creates a close-knit community where people greet each other with smiles, engage in conversations, and

share a sense of camaraderie. The pace of life is slower, allowing residents to savor the simple joys of island living and fostering a strong sense of community spirit.

Visitors to Mackinac Island are instantly captivated by the absence of cars and the tranquil atmosphere it creates. As they traverse the island's winding paths, they find themselves immersed in a world where nature reigns supreme and the sound of hooves on the pavement becomes a soothing symphony. The lack of motorized vehicles enhances the island's appeal as a retreat from the hectic pace of modern life. It encourages visitors to disconnect from their daily routines, embrace a slower tempo, and embrace the island's enchanting beauty. Whether it's renting a bicycle to explore the scenic trails or taking a leisurely carriage ride through the streets, visitors are given the opportunity to fully embrace the



island's charm and connect with its peaceful ambiance.

The absence of cars also has a significant environmental impact. With no vehicle emissions polluting the air and no constant rumble of engines, the island remains an oasis of clean air and tranquility. This commitment to sustainability and eco-consciousness aligns with the island's dedication to preserving its natural beauty. Visitors can experience the pristine landscapes, breathe in the fresh air, and appreciate the delicate balance of nature that thrives on the island.

It shapes its culture, nurtures a sense of community, and offers visitors a unique and enchanting experience. It is a testament to the island's commitment to preserving its rich history, natural wonders, and tranquil way of life. Whether you are a resident or a visitor, embracing the absence of cars becomes a profound part of the





Mackinac Island experience, immersing you in a world where time slows down, connections deepen, and the beauty of the island shines through.

Beyond its natural allure, Mackinac Island boasts a rich historical tapestry. Steeped in Native American heritage and serving as a pivotal point of the fur trade in the 17th century, this island holds stories waiting to be discovered. Explore Fort Mackinac, a well-preserved military outpost from the Revolutionary War era, where reenactments and inter-active exhibits breathe life into the past. Stroll

through the idyllic Main Street, lined with charming boutiques and cafes, each exuding a unique charm that harkens back to the island's Victorian era.

To arrange your



trip to this idyllic island, begin by planning your transportation. Mackinac Island is easily accessible from the mainland via ferry service, with departures available from Mackinaw City and St. Ignace. Choose between several ferry companies, such as Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry and Star Line Mackinac Island Ferry, both offering a comfortable and scenic journey across the sparkling waters. Once on the island, choose from a range of accommodations, including historic grand hotels, cozy bed and breakfasts, and quaint cottages. Be sure to book in advance, as Mackinac Island's popularity can lead to limited availability during peak seasons.



Mackinac Island beckons to travelers seeking a respite from the fast-paced world. Its untouched natural beauty, captivating history, and charming ambiance create an atmosphere that transports you to a bygone era. Whether you seek outdoor adventures, a glimpse into the past, or simply a chance to relax and unwind, Mackinac Island promises an unforgettable experience. So, dear wanderer, pack your bags and set your sights on this timeless paradise—Mackinac Island awaits, ready to bestow upon you a journey that will leave an indelible mark on your soul.

### For more information

- [www.mackinacisland.org](http://www.mackinacisland.org)



*Solitude, breathtaking nature, rich history, and a wealth of cultural experiences add up to create the ultimate island getaway.*



The Top Ten (Secluded)

# US Island Destinations





**D**reaming of an island getaway that offers a perfect blend of solitude, breathtaking nature, rich history, and a plethora of activities? Look no further, as we unveil the top 10 US island destinations that have been carefully curated to cater to every wanderer's desire for an island experience like no other.

These enchanting islands have been chosen for their authentic island feel, abundant wildlife, diverse amenities, cultural and historical significance, and accessibility, with a strong emphasis on the cherished pursuit of solitude.

Explore these secluded havens where time slows down, and the rhythms of the natural world take center stage. From the remote wilderness of Isle Royale,

Michigan, to the sun-kissed shores of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, each destination beckons you with its unique allure and promises an escape from the bustling mainland.



**Isle Royale**, located in the northwest corner of Lake Superior, is a captivating and secluded destination for nature enthusiasts seeking an unparalleled wilderness experience. This pristine island, part of the state of Michigan, offers a breathtaking landscape of dense forests, crystal-clear lakes, and rugged shorelines. The island's isolation and limited access contribute to its unspoiled beauty, making it a haven for hikers, kayakers, and wildlife lovers. Exploring Isle Royale means immersing oneself in a serene and untouched environment, where the sights and sounds of nature take center stage.

To fully appreciate the wonders of Isle Royale, visitors can embark on the island's extensive network of hiking trails. From leisurely strolls through lush forests to challenging treks along rocky ridges, there is a trail for every level of adventurer. As they traverse the island,

hikers may encounter a diverse array of wildlife, including moose, wolves, foxes, and a variety of bird species. The surrounding waters also provide ample opportunities for exploration, with kayaking and canoeing routes allowing visitors to navigate the stunning coastline and discover hidden coves and secluded beaches.

To ensure a memorable stay on Isle Royale, accommodations range from rustic campsites to cozy cabins, providing visitors with a chance to reconnect with nature in a comfortable setting. As a designated national park, the island is committed to preserving its pristine environment, offering visitors an authentic and unspoiled experience. Before planning a trip to this remarkable destination, it is advisable to consult the official website of Isle Royale National Park, managed by the National Park Service, at [www.nps.gov/isro](http://www.nps.gov/isro). Here, travelers can find up-to-date information on park regulations, hiking permits, ferry services, and other essential details to make the most of their visit to Isle Royale.

**Kiawah Island**, situated along the scenic coast of South Carolina, is a premier destination for beach lovers and outdoor enthusiasts alike. This barrier island offers miles of pristine sandy shores, lush maritime forests, and diverse wildlife, making it an idyllic retreat for those seeking relaxation and natural beauty. With its tranquil atmosphere and abundance of recreational activities, **Kiawah Island** is a perfect escape for families, couples, and nature enthusiasts.

One of the main draws of **Kiawah Island** is its stunning beaches. The island boasts 10 miles of uninterrupted shoreline, with soft sand and gentle waves that beckon visitors to unwind and soak up the sun. Whether



strolling along the shore, building sandcastles with the kids, or enjoying a refreshing swim, the beach experience on Kiawah Island is nothing short of spectacular. For those looking to explore the island's natural wonders, the extensive network of biking and hiking trails provides an opportunity to discover the island's diverse ecosystems, including maritime forests, marshes, and dunes.

In addition to its natural splendor, Kiawah Island offers world-class golf courses that have hosted major championships. Golf enthusiasts can tee off on the island's championship-level courses, designed by renowned architects and set against a backdrop of breathtaking coastal scenery. Moreover, Kiawah Island boasts luxury resorts and vacation rentals that cater to the discerning traveler, ensuring a comfortable and memorable stay.

For more information on planning a trip to Kiawah Island, visitors can visit the official website of the Kiawah Island Golf Resort at [www.kiawahresort.com](http://www.kiawahresort.com). This comprehensive website provides details on accommodations, dining options, recreational activities,



and upcoming events, helping travelers make the most of their visit to this picturesque island.

**Cumberland Island**, located off the coast of Georgia, is a captivating and unspoiled destination renowned for its pristine beaches, untouched wilderness, and rich history. This barrier island, designated as a national seashore, offers a unique and immersive experience for nature lovers and history enthusiasts alike. With its sprawling maritime forests, abundant wildlife, and secluded shores, Cumberland Island is a true hidden gem waiting to be explored.

One of the main highlights of Cumberland Island is its untouched natural beauty. The island is home to a diverse array of ecosystems, including lush forests, marshes, and pristine beaches. Visitors can embark on scenic hiking trails that wind through dense foliage, providing glimpses of native wildlife such as wild horses, deer, and a variety of bird species. The pristine beaches offer a serene escape, with miles of untouched shoreline where visitors can relax, swim, and bask in the tranquil atmosphere.

Cumberland Island is also steeped in history, with remnants of the island's past adding a layer of intrigue to the experience. The island was once home to the Carnegie family, and visitors can explore the ruins of the grand Dungeness Mansion, a testament to the island's storied past. Additionally, the island's historic district showcases charming cottages that were once part of the African American community of the island.

To plan a visit to Cumberland Island, it is advisable to consult the official website of Cumberland Island National Seashore, managed by the National Park Service, at [www.nps.gov/cuis](http://www.nps.gov/cuis). The website provides essential information on ferry services, camping permits, and guided tours, ensuring that visitors can make the most of their time on this enchanting island. Exploring Cumberland Island promises an unforgettable journey into nature, history, and tranquility.



**Lopez Island**, nestled in the picturesque San Juan archipelago of Washington state, is a charming and

serene destination that embodies the essence of island life. Known for its idyllic landscapes, friendly community, and abundant recreational opportunities, Lopez Island offers a tranquil escape for those seeking a slower pace and a deep connection with nature.

The island's unspoiled beauty is a major draw for visitors. Rolling hills, farmland, and lush forests create a picturesque backdrop for exploration. Outdoor enthusiasts can immerse themselves in a variety of activities, including hiking along scenic trails, cycling along winding roads, and kayaking in the island's calm bays and inlets. Lopez Island's pristine beaches provide a tranquil setting for picnics, beachcombing, and taking in breathtaking sunsets over the water.

Lopez Village, the island's heart and main community hub, exudes a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The village is home to an array of charming shops, boutiques, art galleries, and restaurants offering locally sourced cuisine. The Lopez Island Farmers Market, held weekly during the summer months, showcases an abundance of fresh produce, handmade crafts, and local delicacies, allowing visitors to sample the island's vibrant and sustainable agricultural scene.

For more information on planning a visit to Lopez Island, travelers can consult the Lopez Island Chamber of Commerce website at [www.lopezisland.com](http://www.lopezisland.com). The website provides valuable resources and insights into accommodations, dining options, local events, and recreational activities, ensuring that visitors have all the necessary information to make the most of their time on this enchanting island.

Lopez Island, with its tranquil beauty and welcoming community, offers a haven for relaxation, outdoor exploration, and a true escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.



**Mount Desert Island**, located off the coast of Maine, is a captivating destination that combines rugged natural beauty with charming coastal communities. Known for its stunning landscapes, including Acadia National Park, Mount Desert Island offers a diverse range of outdoor activities, cultural attractions, and picturesque coastal scenery.

The crown jewel of Mount Desert Island is Acadia National Park, a 49,000-acre wilderness paradise that showcases a unique blend of mountains, forests, lakes, and rocky shorelines. Hiking enthusiasts can explore an extensive network of trails, including the iconic Jordan Pond Path and the challenging Precipice Trail, which offer breathtaking vistas of the island's rugged coastline and granite peaks. Scenic drives, such as the Park Loop Road, provide panoramic views and access to iconic landmarks like Cadillac Mountain, the tallest peak on the U.S. Atlantic coast.

Beyond the national park, Mount Desert Island is dotted with charming coastal villages and towns. Bar Harbor, the island's largest town, serves as a vibrant hub for dining, shopping, and entertainment. Visitors can

savor fresh seafood, browse local boutiques, and enjoy live music performances. The town's proximity to the ocean also offers opportunities for whale watching excursions, fishing trips, and leisurely boat tours, allowing visitors to fully immerse themselves in the island's coastal charm.

To plan a visit to Mount Desert Island, travelers can consult the official website of the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce at [www.barharborinfo.com](http://www.barharborinfo.com). This comprehensive resource provides information on accommodations, dining options, local events, and outdoor activities, ensuring that visitors can make the most of their time on this enchanting island. Mount Desert Island truly offers a unique and unforgettable experience, where nature, culture, and coastal allure seamlessly blend together.

**Mackinac Island**, located in Lake Huron between the upper and lower peninsulas of Michigan, is a charming and enchanting destination that captures the essence of a bygone era. Renowned for its timeless beauty, historic charm, and car-free environment, Mackinac Island is a place where visitors can step back in time and experience a slower pace of life.

One of the defining features of Mackinac Island is its prohibition of motor vehicles. With cars absent from the streets, the island is a peaceful retreat where bicycles, horse-drawn carriages, and walking become the primary modes of transportation. This creates a unique and nostalgic ambiance, allowing visitors to explore the island's picturesque streets, lined with Victorian-era architecture and beautifully manicured gardens.

Mackinac Island is home to iconic landmarks, including the majestic Grand Hotel. This grand dame of



the island, with its distinctive white facade and sweeping verandas, has welcomed guests since 1887. Strolling through the hotel's elegant grounds and enjoying afternoon tea on the porch is a cherished tradition. Fort Mackinac, a well-preserved military outpost from the 18th century, offers a glimpse into the island's rich history and provides captivating reenactments for visitors.

Nature lovers will be delighted by the island's natural beauty. Mackinac Island State Park, encompassing over 80% of the island, boasts scenic trails, limestone cliffs, and stunning vistas of Lake Huron. Visitors can embark on leisurely hikes or rent bicycles to explore the island's natural wonders, including Arch Rock, a breathtaking limestone formation overlooking the lake.

To plan a visit to Mackinac Island, travelers can consult the official website of Mackinac Island Tourism at [www.mackinacisland.org](http://www.mackinacisland.org). The website provides comprehensive information on accommodations, dining options, ferry services, and events, ensuring that visitors

have all the necessary details to make their visit to Mackinac Island truly memorable. With its timeless charm, natural splendor, and unique transportation system, Mackinac Island offers an unforgettable escape from the modern world.



**Nantucket Island**, located off the coast of Massachusetts, is a picturesque and storied destination that exudes quintessential New England charm. Known for its cobblestone streets, historic homes, and pristine beaches, Nantucket Island offers a timeless escape where visitors can unwind and immerse themselves in the island's rich maritime heritage.

Nantucket's cobblestone streets are lined with impeccably preserved homes, many of which date back to the 18th and 19th centuries. The island's historic district, with its charming architecture and beautifully manicured gardens, invites visitors to take leisurely walks and explore its fascinating past. The Whaling Museum

showcases Nantucket's seafaring history, offering a glimpse into the island's whaling era through engaging exhibits and artifacts.

The island's natural beauty is equally captivating. Nantucket boasts pristine beaches with soft sand and clear waters, providing an idyllic setting for sunbathing, swimming, and beachcombing. Surfside Beach and Cisco Beach are popular choices for beach lovers, while those seeking tranquility can escape to the serene shores of Great Point or Madaket Beach. Nature enthusiasts can also explore the island's moors and conservation areas, which are home to a variety of bird species and offer scenic hiking and biking trails.

Nantucket's charming town center, also called Nantucket, is a hub of activity, with boutique shops, art galleries, and world-class restaurants. Visitors can indulge in fresh seafood, browse unique shops for island-inspired treasures, and admire local artistry. The island's vibrant cultural scene is also highlighted by annual events, such as the Nantucket Film Festival and the Nantucket Book Festival, which celebrate the arts and bring together renowned artists, writers, and filmmakers.

To plan a visit to Nantucket Island, travelers can consult the official website of Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce at [www.nantucketchamber.org](http://www.nantucketchamber.org). The website provides valuable information on accommodations, dining options, transportation, and upcoming events, ensuring that visitors can make the most of their time on this enchanting island. Nantucket Island truly offers a delightful blend of history, natural beauty, and coastal charm that is sure to captivate all who visit.

**St. John**, one of the U.S. Virgin Islands, is a tropical paradise renowned for its pristine beaches, turquoise



waters, and untouched natural beauty. With the majority of the island protected as a national park, St. John offers a unique blend of relaxation, outdoor adventures, and breathtaking vistas, making it a must-visit destination for nature enthusiasts and beach lovers.

The island's crown jewel is Virgin Islands National Park, which encompasses over two-thirds of St. John's land area. This protected paradise features lush forests, vibrant coral reefs, and a diverse array of wildlife. Visitors can embark on hiking trails that wind through the park, immersing themselves in the island's untouched wilderness and enjoying panoramic views of the Caribbean Sea. Snorkeling and diving enthusiasts will be captivated by the crystal-clear waters, encountering colorful coral gardens, tropical fish, and even sea turtles.

St. John's pristine beaches are simply breathtaking. Picture-perfect strands of soft sand, fringed by swaying palm trees, invite visitors to bask in the sun or take a refreshing dip in the azure waters. Trunk Bay, with its powdery sand and underwater snorkeling trail, is often

hailed as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Other popular beach destinations include Cinnamon Bay, Maho Bay, and Hawksnest Bay, each offering its own unique charm and opportunities for relaxation and water activities.

Cruz Bay, the island's main town, is a lively and vibrant hub filled with shops, restaurants, and local art galleries. Visitors can savor Caribbean cuisine, sample local rum, and explore the colorful streets lined with boutiques and craft stores. The Mongoose Junction, an inviting shopping complex, offers a blend of upscale boutiques, galleries, and restaurants, making it a perfect spot for leisurely strolls and souvenir hunting.

To plan a visit to St. John, travelers can consult the official website of the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism at [www.visitusvi.com](http://www.visitusvi.com). The website provides comprehensive information on accommodations, transportation options, local events, and attractions, ensuring that visitors have all the necessary resources to plan their perfect island getaway. St. John promises an unforgettable experience of sun-soaked beaches, lush landscapes, and a laid-back Caribbean vibe that will leave visitors yearning to return.

**Amelia Island**, located on Florida's northeast coast, is a captivating destination that seamlessly blends natural beauty, rich history, and Southern charm. Known for its pristine beaches, moss-draped oak trees, and Victorian architecture, Amelia Island offers a serene and welcoming escape for travelers seeking relaxation and a touch of old-world elegance.

The island's main attraction is its stunning coastline, which stretches for 13 miles and boasts unspoiled, sandy beaches. Visitors can sink their toes into the soft sand, swim in the refreshing Atlantic waters, or simply soak up



the sun while enjoying breathtaking ocean views. Fernandina Beach, the island's charming seaside town, offers a range of activities, including fishing charters, boat tours, and water sports, allowing visitors to fully immerse themselves in the island's coastal allure.

Amelia Island's rich history is palpable throughout its historic district, where Victorian-era architecture and well-preserved landmarks create an enchanting atmosphere. Centre Street, the island's main thoroughfare, is lined with boutique shops, art galleries, and restaurants housed in meticulously restored buildings. Visitors can delve into the island's past by exploring Fort Clinch State Park, a 19th-century fortress, or by taking a guided tour of the Amelia Island Museum of History, which provides insights into the island's diverse heritage.

Nature enthusiasts will find ample opportunities to explore Amelia Island's natural wonders. Egans Creek Greenway, a protected area of salt marshes and maritime forests, offers scenic walking and biking trails. The island is also home to Amelia Island State Park, a pristine sanctuary where visitors can hike along nature trails, go

birdwatching, or enjoy a picnic amidst the unspoiled coastal landscape.

To plan a visit to Amelia Island, travelers can consult the official website of the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council at [www.ameliaisland.com](http://www.ameliaisland.com). The website provides comprehensive information on accommodations, dining options, local events, and outdoor activities, ensuring that visitors have all the necessary resources to plan their perfect island getaway. Amelia Island invites visitors to unwind in a tranquil setting, indulge in Southern hospitality, and create lasting memories amidst its natural splendor and historic charm.

**San Juan Island**, located in the picturesque San Juan archipelago of Washington state, is a captivating destination known for its stunning natural beauty, abundant wildlife, and rich history. With its breathtaking landscapes, charming coastal towns, and diverse range of outdoor activities, San Juan Island offers a serene and unforgettable getaway for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers.

One of the main attractions of San Juan Island is its incredible marine wildlife. Visitors can embark on whale watching excursions to witness the majestic Orcas (killer whales) that frequent the surrounding waters. These magnificent creatures are often seen breaching, spy-hopping, and foraging, providing a thrilling and awe-inspiring experience. Additionally, the island's waters are home to seals, sea lions, porpoises, and a variety of bird species, making it a paradise for wildlife enthusiasts and birdwatchers.

San Juan Island is blessed with picturesque landscapes, including rolling hills, tranquil bays, and rocky shorelines. Moran State Park, located on the

nearby Orcas Island, offers fantastic hiking trails and stunning viewpoints, including Mount Constitution, the highest point in the San Juan Islands. On San Juan Island itself, visitors can explore American Camp and English Camp, two historic sites that played a significant role in the Pig War dispute between the United States and Great Britain. These sites provide fascinating insights into the island's past and offer scenic vistas of the surrounding landscapes.

Friday Harbor, the main town on San Juan Island, is a vibrant and charming community that serves as a hub for dining, shopping, and cultural activities. Visitors can enjoy fresh seafood, browse unique boutiques, and visit art galleries featuring local artists. The town also hosts events such as the Friday Harbor Film Festival and the San Juan County Fair, which showcase the island's vibrant arts and cultural scene.

To plan a visit to San Juan Island, travelers can consult the official website of the San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau at [www.visitsanjuans.com](http://www.visitsanjuans.com). The website provides valuable information on accommodations,



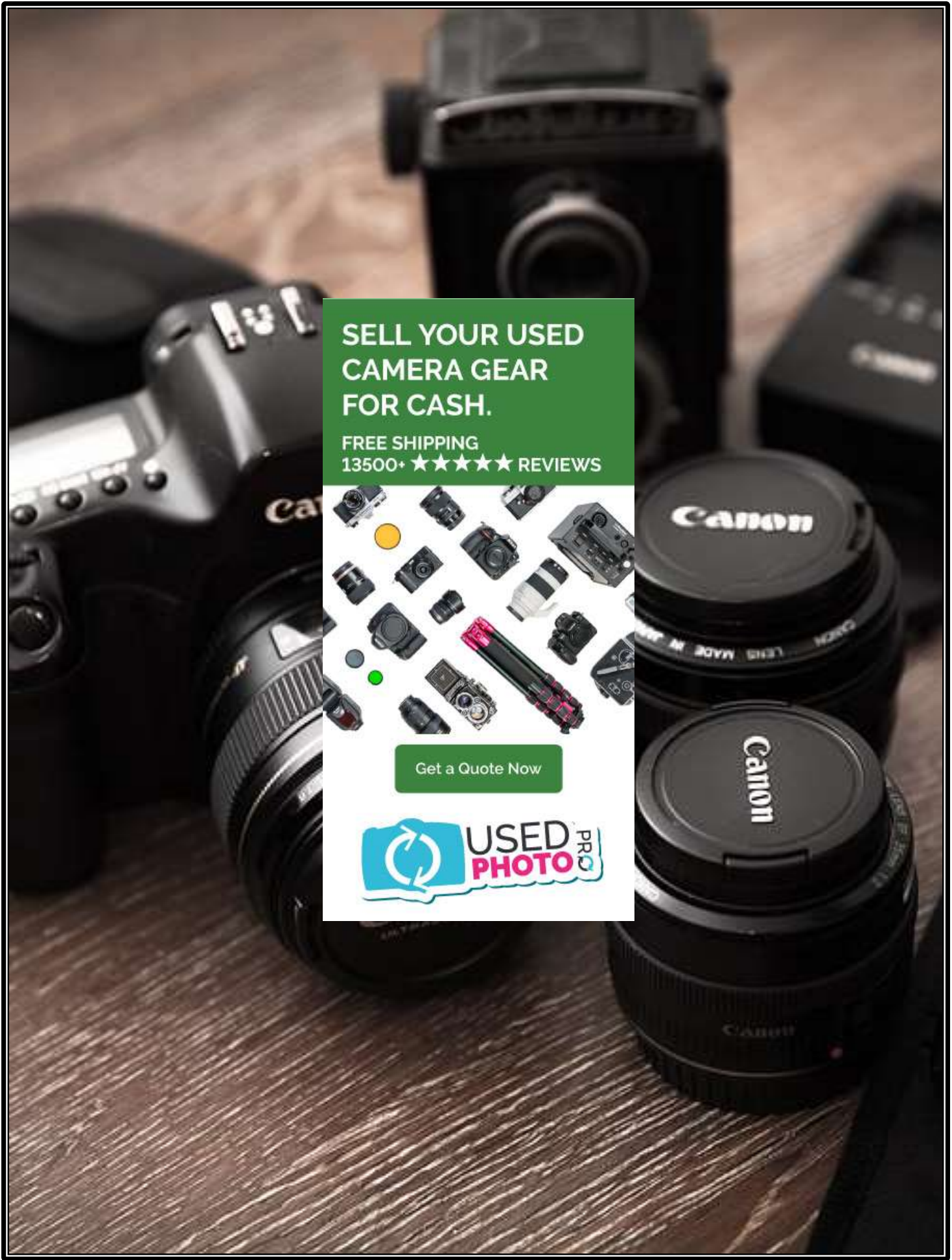
transportation options, local events, and outdoor activities, ensuring that visitors have all the necessary resources to plan their perfect island getaway. San Juan Island offers a tranquil retreat where visitors can connect with nature, immerse themselves in history, and discover the unique charm of the San Juan archipelago.

These top 10 US island destinations embody the essence of an idyllic island getaway, showcasing their unique island feel, stunning natural landscapes, vibrant cultural heritage, and abundant amenities. These selections were meticulously chosen based on a rigorous scoring system that prioritized solitude—the very reason why people seek refuge on islands. However, it's important to note that even with a comprehensive evaluation process, certain beloved destinations like Maui did not make the cut due to the heavy emphasis on solitude.

While our ranking system aimed to capture the essence of what makes an island truly special, it's crucial to remember that personal preferences vary. Each traveler seeks different experiences, and what may be a priority for one may not hold the same significance for another. Some individuals might be drawn to the vibrant energy and bustling activities of popular destinations, even if solitude isn't their primary motive for seeking an island escape.

In the end, what truly matters is the joy and fulfillment we find in exploring the world, discovering hidden gems, and creating cherished memories that last a lifetime. So, embark on your own island adventure, soak in the solitude or embrace the vibrant crowd, and let the spirit of wanderlust lead you to the island destination that resonates with your soul.





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# Architecture And Art Casa Platform Venezia 2023

Photos by Angelo Dadda and Cristina Bigliatti

*Embark on a transformative journey through architecture, design, and art at Casa Platform Venezia's 'The New Together' exhibition, where the past meets the future in the enchanting city of Venice.*



**W**hile exploring the captivating island city of Venice, don't miss the opportunity to include Casa Platform Venezia's "The New Together" on your itinerary. Discover the fascinating world of architecture, design, and art as it responds to the changing times and forges connections across cultures. Delve into the exhibition's diverse projects, engage in the lively Platform Architecture Festival, and enrich your understanding of these creative disciplines. It's a remarkable experience that awaits you at Casa Platform Venezia.

The Scuola Grande di Misericordia serves as the ideal backdrop for this event. Designed by famed renaissance artist and architect Sansovino in the 1500's and

meticulously restored in 2015, this historic space is a testament to Venice's rich cultural heritage. Located in the charming Cannaregio district, between Ca' d'Oro and San Marcuola, it has become a destination for prestigious exhibitions, installations, and cultural gatherings. Step into this magnificent setting and appreciate the interplay between architectural splendor and the city's enchanting atmosphere.

The Scuola Grande di Misericordia, or “The Great School of Mercy in English” stands as a testament to the rich history and architectural prowess of Venice. This magnificent structure has withstood the test of time and continues

to awe visitors with its presence. Originally built as a charitable institution, it served as a place of compassion and



assistance to those in need. The Scuola boasts a harmonious blend of architectural styles, showcasing elements of Renaissance and Gothic influences. Its façade, adorned with intricate details and elegant arches, invites you to step inside and explore its storied past. The interior is equally captivating, with spacious halls and grand staircases that exude a sense of grandeur. In 2015, the building underwent a meticulous restoration,

ensuring its preservation for generations to come. Today, it stands as a cultural hub, hosting prestigious exhibitions, installations, and events that celebrate the arts. A visit to the building offers not only a glimpse into Venice's architectural heritage but also an opportunity to immerse yourself in the history and spirit of this enchanting city.

Hosted by Platform magazine, "The New Together." exhibition that runs through July 30, 10AM to 6PM invites visitors to explore inspiring showcase that unveils the evolution of



architectural design and its response to the changing times we live in.

"The New Together" represents a dynamic initiative that brings together international cultural initiatives and fosters networking opportunities. Curated by Luca Molinari, the Editorial Director of Platform, in collaboration with Simona Finessi and a talented curatorial team, this exhibition delves into the innovative approaches employed by 140 architecture firms worldwide. Discover how these firms are reimagining the spaces we inhabit to meet the needs of our modern world.

The exhibition, curated by Superluna, an innovative

architecture studio founded in Como in 2017 by Luca Sartori and Marco Bonfatti Paini, presents a captivating visual

representation of the 140 projects. Through 14 thematic structures reminiscent of buoys, each housing 10 projects, visitors can explore the diverse range of architectural marvels. These projects transcend traditional boundaries, offering fresh perspectives and fostering a renewed sense of community.

In addition to the exhibition, Platform has curated a series of engaging side events throughout the exhibition period. Visitors can participate in informative forums, attend insightful conferences, and be inspired by enlightening lectures, gaining valuable insights into the world of architecture, design, and art. Immerse yourself in the latest trends and innovations, connect with industry experts, and become an active participant in shaping the future of these creative disciplines.



During the exhibition, the Platform Architecture Festival takes center stage from June 23rd to June 26th, 2023. Architects from the participating firms will engage in lively discussions and thought-provoking debates, fostering collaboration and embracing diverse perspectives. Witness the creativity and expertise of these architects as they contribute to a new era of unity and shared vision within the field of architecture.

As you embark on your exploration of Venice, seize

the opportunity to immerse your-self in

Casa Platform Venezia's "The New Together"

exhibition. This

event offers a unique chance to delve into the world

of architecture,

design, and art, discovering the

innovative

approaches that shape our modern spaces. Make the most of your visit to this captivating city by engaging with the vibrant Platform Architecture Festival, attending insightful forums, conferences, and lectures. Expand your horizons, connect with like-minded individuals, and leave inspired by the transformative power of creativity. Casa Platform Venezia's "The New Together" is an invitation to embrace the possibilities of our built environment.

### For More Information:

- [www.platformarchitecture.it/en/the-new-together-a-possible-manifesto/](http://www.platformarchitecture.it/en/the-new-together-a-possible-manifesto/)



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Paul Pence not only writes many of the articles in the pages of this magazine, he is also the publisher and editor of all of the magazines in the Amygis Publishing's family of travel magazines.



He loves exploring, traveling the back roads, experiencing the world, and finding what is unique and memorable about the places he visits.

And he loves writing – poetry, short stories, essays, non-fiction, news, and, of course, travel writing.

For over 20 years, he has shared his explorations with readers in a wide variety of outlets, from groundbreaking forays into the first stirrings of the dot-com boom to travel guides, local newspapers, and television, including Runner's World, Travel Lady, Providence Journal, and Northstar Travel Media. He currently publishes and writes for Amygis Publishing's magazines Jaunting, Northeast Traveler, and Rhode Island Roads.

Debbie Stone is an established travel writer and columnist, who crosses the globe in search of unique destinations and experiences to share with her readers and listeners. She's an avid explorer who welcomes new opportunities to increase awareness and enthusiasm for places, culture, food, history, nature, outdoor adventure, wellness and more.



Her travels have taken her to all fifty states and nearly 100 countries, spanning all seven continents.

Her stories reach over three million readers and listeners, and appear in numerous print and digital publications, including Luxe Beat Magazine, Big Blend Radio & TV Magazine, Parks & Travel Magazine, Northwest Prime Time, Woodinville Weekly, Santa Fe Fine Lifestyles Magazine, Edmonds Beacon, Outdoors Northwest, Southwest Stories Magazine, Go World Travel and Travelworld International Magazine, among others. She can also be heard sharing her travel adventures on Big Blend Radio.

A dramatic sunset over a rocky coastline. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and pink, with the sun low on the horizon behind dark, jagged rocks. Waves are crashing against the rocks, creating white foam and splashing water. The foreground shows a sandy beach with gentle waves washing onto it.

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