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ALL AGES

EUROPE

Europe is exciting for parents and children alike; it is rich with history and art, magnificent food, beauty, wonderful parks and recreation. You have fewer language barriers and non-stop flights. What could be easier?

Below is a list of our top picks!

UK

In addition to the world-class cities of London and Edinburgh, offering famous sights and performing arts, explore the vast national parks, royal gardens, historic castles and glorious countryside. Visit seaside resorts, quaint villages and towns steeped in history. Live like English Country nobles on a grand estate, or follow the path of Harry Potter.

Italy

We Italians may be biased, but Italy is the best country in Europe! Ancient history, Renaissance art, hill towns frozen in time, endless beaches and the world's most scrumptious gelato! Rent a villa and live the dolce vita. The Italians love children and will treat yours as their own.

France

Americans have long had a love-hate relationship with the French, but what's not to love about France? You can spend a month exploring Paris and never see it all – the monuments, the museums, the parks and the bakeries. Like Italy, France is a perfect place to rent a villa, and learn to live like the French, enjoying good food, great wines and a civilized pace of life. We enjoyed exploring the countryside by bicycle.

Spain

This flamboyant country, known for its bullfights and flamenco, is spectacular and diverse. From the rolling green hills of the North that resemble Ireland, to the Catalan culture of Barcelona and the Moroccan landscapes and architecture of Andalusia, Spain is unforgettable.

Switzerland

Small, mountainous and wealthy, with a population of just 7.5 million, Switzerland is renowned for its enviable quality of life in a country that runs like clockwork. It is a wonderland for families in both winter and summer, and don't forget to savor the chocolate!

Special Mention:



Family Adventures

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There are some wonderful destinations in Eastern Europe, which have all of the beauty, culture and excitement of Western Europe but for a fraction of the price and far fewer crowds! Countries to consider: Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia and Poland!

Thailand

Where else but Thailand can you cruise on a converted rice barge, roar upriver in a long-tail boat and take a white-knuckle ride on a bamboo raft, ride an elephant then stay in jungle tree houses, as guests in the homes of hill tribe villagers, or on raft houses floating on a river? Equally memorable are the trails leading deep into the rainforest past cooling waterfalls, and the simple beauty of the translucent sea lapping onto endless soft white sand. Not to be missed is dynamic Bangkok, a city that is larger than life, with its futuristic high-rise buildings juxtaposed against the glittering Grand Palace.

Australia

It's diverse, laid back, wild and as big as the United States, requiring return trips to see it all. Spectacular deserts, rainforests, waterfalls, canyons and a huge array of strange flora and fauna are just some of the reasons to go this distance. An Australian Safari on Tasmania or Kangaroo Island will be rich in kangaroos, wallabies, koala bears, echidnas and perhaps the elusive platypus. White sand beaches stretching to infinity and the Great Barrier Reef provide some of the best snorkeling, surfing, diving and lounging on the planet. Some cosmopolitan cities are home to cutting-edge arts, music and cafe cultures. Amazing contrasts lie in the anonymity of the Outback and Red Centre, underpinned by an ancient and fascinating Aboriginal past.

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Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands

(Children should be able to swim!)

Giant Galapagos tortoises meander distant highlands, and prehistoric marine iguanas sun themselves on black lava rocks along the shore. Flightless cormorants and tiny penguins dart through the waters while graceful red-billed tropic birds screech across the sky. With no predators, the animals naturally are as curious about you as you are about them. You'll feel as though you've stumbled across the best zoo in the world and no one is telling you to leave. Magical for all ages!

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Antarctica

Like the great Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton once said: "Men go out into the void spaces of the world for



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various reasons. Some have the keen thirst for knowledge, and others are drawn away from the trodden path by the 'lure of little voices', the mysterious fascination of the unknown."

Bragging rights and otherworldly beauty, a trip to Antarctica will educate both you and your children on climate change and how our world is forever adjusting to its challenges.

China

Beijing's Forbidden City, The Summer Palace and Great Wall, a city with contrasts and conflicts. From Tibet to Xian and its terracotta warriors, follow the Silk Road, sail down the Yangzi River or explore the Dr. Seuss landscapes of Guangxi Province, China has something exciting for everyone. It is a wonderful destination to learn about ancient civilizations, and China's emergence on the world stage.

Turkey

Straddling two continents, Europe and Asia, and bordering the Middle East, Turkey has an unrivalled history stretching back thousands of years. From the ancient Hittites to the Ottomans, dozens of civilizations have made Turkey their home, leaving behind them a dazzling historical and archaeological heritage. It's friendly, beautiful, culturally rich and a good value for money. It's modern enough to be comfortable yet traditional enough to be interesting. Explore the exotic, luxurious city of Istanbul, from the Sultan's Palace to the richly decorated mosques to the ultimate shopping experiences in the Grand Bazaar and the Spice Bazaar. Moving to the Anatolian plateau, Cappadocia awaits discovery with its underground cities and hotels carved into caves. It is the perfect landscape to observe from above - in a hot air balloon. And in the summer months, visiting the ancient ruins and seaside towns along the Aegean Coast by a privately-chartered gulet is a unique adventure. The Turks have a strong tradition of hospitality, and wherever you travel in this welcoming country, the words "Hos Geldiniz," literally meaning, "your coming brings happiness," will ring in your ears.

New Zealand/South Pacific

New Zealand is a country of rare seismic beauty: glacial mountains, fast-flowing rivers, deep, clear lakes, hissing geysers and boiling mud. There are also abundant native forests, long, deserted beaches and a variety of fauna, such as the kiwi, endemic to its shores. Any number of vigorous outdoor activities - tramping (hiking), skiing, rafting and, of course, that perennial favorite, bungee jumping - await the adventurous. You can swim with dolphins, gambol with newborn lambs, whale-watch or fish for fattened trout in pristine streams and rivers.

Costa Rica/Central America

Costa Rica is one of Central America's eco-tourist hot spots. Although geographically a small country, Costa Rica is one of the most biologically diverse regions on the planet. Visitors encounter oceans, beaches, rivers, mountains, and an abundance of flora and fauna.

Mention Costa Rica and people think paradise. The country has a wonderful cast of creatures - ranging from howler monkeys to toucans - which are prolific and relatively easy to spot. The waves are prime, the beauty is staggering and the sluggish pace seductive. The incredibly varied topography means you can cruise a cloud forest one day, climb a volcano the next, and wind up swaying in a hammock on a sandy stretch of beach.



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While Costa Rica is certainly the leader in Central American tourism, Panama and Nicaragua also offer exciting options and are an even better value at the moment.

Argentina

Argentina's pleasures - stunning natural wonders, an elegant capital with a European-flavored sophistication, and a passionate culture - are as tempting as ever. Experience life on an estancia in the home of an Argentinean family, learn to tango in Buenos Aires and get your fill of adventure in Patagonia. This is one Latin American country where Europeans and North Americans can feel at ease and travel relatively inconspicuously. An interest in soccer and some nimble foot skills may be all you need to blend in with the locals.

Canada

In Canada, every season and province offers distinct experiences like viewing the Northern Lights-Aurora Borealis-that are as fleeting as they are exhilarating. Watch a fierce West Coast winter storm on Tofino's endless beach from the comfort of your luxury cabin. See icebergs the size of office buildings afloat off the coast of Newfoundland in summer. Heli-fish for salmon in the remote waters of British Columbia. Bike and hike from Banff to Jasper in the Canadian Rockies. Vancouver and Whistler, home to the 2010 (next) Olympic winter games, are a playground for families year-round. And if you'd like a little slice of Europe at a better exchange rate, bienvenue a Montreal et Quebec.

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Chile

From the salty desert top of Atacama, to the glacier-crowded bottom in Patagonia, this narrow trickle of a country is jammed with enough geysers, mountains, beaches, forests and volcanoes to keep adventure nuts happy for a lifetime. And while you're here, you can fly 2300 miles out to the world heritage site Easter Island, the most isolated place on Earth.

Egypt

No trip to Egypt is complete without taking in the high culture of Cairo, visiting the Pyramids, temples and breathtaking antiquities. But a trip down the Nile on a luxurious riverboat, and some time relaxing at the Red Sea really round out this adventure. And there are many religious monuments to visit as well. A day trip to Alexandria or a few more days to include the ruins at Petra in Jordan are also worth including once you've explored this far.



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African Safari

An African safari evokes mystery, wonder and above all else, adventure! As they say, “You can leave Africa but Africa never leaves you.” The most popular countries are Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa. If children are over 15, you can also include Gorilla trekking in Rwanda or Uganda. And after years of isolation from the world, South Africa is one of the most popular destinations where you can enjoy a combination of the cosmopolitan city of Cape Town and its surrounding winelands, the stunning southern coast, and spectacular wildlife opportunities in Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and South Africa. Both East and Southern Africa also offer spectacular islands in the Indian Ocean for some relaxation after your safari, and for the truly adventurous – there’s Madagascar!

Arctic

If there’s one place on earth that is disappearing before our eyes, it’s the Arctic. The Arctic ice cap is shrinking at an alarming pace, and with it goes the majestic Ice Bear. The Arctic is one of the least traveled places in the world, isolated and fascinatingly beautiful. It is a wonderful journey to see unique wildlife, and learn about our changing planet.

India

As the world’s most populous country, India is rich in history and culture. The sub-continent is vast and diverse, but a trip including Agra, home to the Taj Mahal, the colorful city of Jaipur, a tiger safari in Ranthambore and the spiritual heart of India, Varanasi, would certainly leave you with lasting memories of this intriguing destination.