

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

The Best Places to Travel in June



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The month of June is the official beginning of summer according to the calendar, and it's also the time when our thoughts drift to getting away from work, school, or whatever it is we've been doing all winter and spring. In many places, sunshine and warmth are signaling the approach of summer, while cool breezes are still tempering the heat. In others, June is the time to get a trip in before the busy tourist months of July and August.

Some of these destinations will be familiar, while some are lesser known locales to consider for your June escape. The California coast is always inviting, and even if you've taken a road trip in the Golden State before, there's always a new place to stop and admire the view from a fresh angle. Or if you're in the mood for somewhere more exotic, Sri Lanka or Mauritius might fit the bill. Festivals in Edmonton, Portland, and Massachusetts will let you join the crowd to celebrate the coming of summer. Food-centric trips are always a hit, and the Aspen Food and Wine Classic will be foodie heaven with top chefs in a spectacular locale. Celebrating food in Italy is always in fashion, and we suggest a quiet island and its humble but important ingredient. History and art lovers will always find something awe-inspiring in

Malta, Ireland, and Croatia.

For those who simply look forward to warm air, a balmy breeze, and a comfy lounge chair, we have some ideas for you, too.



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Koggala, Sri Lanka

This small coastal town on the southern coast of Sri Lanka is popular for snorkeling and scuba diving, as well as for exploring its history. Galle Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site, was built in 1588 by the Portuguese, fortified by the Dutch in the 17th century, and is now managed by the Sri Lanka Archaeology Department. Visitors also enjoy the Martin Wickramasinghe Folk Museum, former home of a writer who studied the island's culture and maintained a collection of historical artefacts. A visit to a tea plantation for Sri Lanka's renowned tea is a must for many tourists. Luxury hotels in the area include the new Alila Koggala Hotel on Koggala Lake opening in June, and the Amangalla, a meticulously restored historic building on the grounds of the Galle Fort.



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Edmonton, Canada

Capital of Canada's Province of Alberta, Edmonton is North America's northernmost large metropolis. June is a perfect time to visit, with the warming weather and lots of activities on the city's agenda. The Freewill Shakespeare Festival begins on June 19 and continues through mid-July, presenting "Hamlet" and "Comedy of Errors." Music, parades, beer gardens, art, food, and films mark the Edmonton Pride Festival from June 8 through June 17. Six weeks of concerts are presented through the Nuova Opera and Music Theater Festival beginning May 19. The West Edmonton Mall, with over 800 stores and 100 restaurants, also houses the unique Fantasyland Hotel with themed décor in many rooms for guests who want to pretend they're sleeping in Polynesia, Africa, a Western log cabin, or an igloo.



Hemis/Alamy

Copenhagen, Denmark

Springlike weather arrives in June making this a great time to plan a visit. Enjoy the country’s “hygge” or comfortable atmosphere while exploring the city through walking, biking, or taking advantage of their modern public transportation. Copenhagen’s canals and waterways have established its reputation as “Venice of the North,” and in the Nyhavn (New Harbor) district, colorful 17th-century buildings line the canal providing picturesque settings. Torvehallerne, Copenhagen’s expansive indoor food market, offers an array of dishes including seafood, pizza, baked goods, coffee, and the Danish specialty *smorrebrod*, open-faced rye bread sandwiches with various toppings. Tivoli Gardens, with rides, entertainment, and food dates back to 1843, the second oldest amusement park in the world. The Nimb, a five-star Moorish-inspired boutique hotel, is located in the Tivoli Gardens.



Courtesy of Ventana Big Sur, an Alila Resort

Big Sur, California

The 90-mile stretch of California Highway 1 between Carmel and San Simeon is one of the state’s most famous drives for good reason. Rugged coastline, magnificent views, beaches, forests, and plenty of photo ops attract new and returning travelers to the Pacific Coast Highway every year. Landslides have made this scenic road trip slightly more difficult, but also more rewarding. Repair crews are currently working on a section of the road about 15 miles north of San Simeon, so travelers will want to start from the north (cutting over to the coast from Salinas, toward Monterey) and know that at some point (around Gorda) they'll need to turn around. The dramatic Bixby Creek Bridge is best admired — and photographed — from the view point at its northern end. Visitors can tour the historic Point Sur Light Station and visit wineries along the central coast. While most of the Big Sur area is open, travelers will want to research accommodations beforehand. Campgrounds, inns, and luxury hotels are available in Big Sur and throughout the drive. Visitors can even book a luxury campsite near a creek at the newly renovated Ventana Big Sur for a camping experience that’s nothing like, well, camping.



Courtesy of One&Only Le Saint G eran

Mauritius, Africa

This Indian Ocean island nation is located about 1,200 miles off the southeast coast of Africa. Beaches, lagoons, and coral reefs line its shores, while the island's interior consists of mountains and rainforests, with gorgeous waterfalls and abundant wildlife. Watersports of all kinds are popular there, including diving, snorkeling, kitesurfing, and boating. With its southern hemisphere location, June is cool and breezy, after the heat and humidity of summer. The Champ de Mars Racecourse, a thoroughbred horse race track in Port Louis, is one of the oldest in the world, inaugurated in 1812 by the Mauritius Turf Club. For a VIP experience, enjoy the races from the steward suite of The Crown Lodge. The renovated beachfront One & Only Le Saint Geron Hotel offers ocean view rooms and a luxurious spa.



Emily Riddell/Lonely Planet Images/Getty Images

Solta, Croatia

This small hilly island is a short ferry ride from Split. Known for honey and olive oil, Solta is quickly becoming popular with tourists who are discovering its beautiful bays, secluded beaches, and clear blue water. Boating, hiking, swimming, and exploring are favorite activities on the island. A destination in itself, the Heritage Hotel Martinis Marchi is located in a three hundred year old castle. Its seven carefully restored suites are each named after historical figures who were connected to the hotel. A full-service spa, heated pool, sun terrace, and garden add to the luxurious experience. Their restaurant serves traditional Dalmatian cuisine made with local and regional ingredients, along with high quality wines.



Nicolas Kipourax Paquet/Getty Images

County Kerry, Ireland

This southwest region located on a peninsula facing the Atlantic Ocean boasts rugged coastline and one of Ireland's most popular road trips, the 111-mile Ring of Kerry. The shorter drive around the Dingle Peninsula is also scenic, and the quaint town of Dingle should not be missed. Its natural beauty was the setting for several films including "Ryan's Daughter" (1970) and "Far and Away" (1992). County Kerry's Killarney National Park, the oldest in Ireland, includes the Lakes of Killarney, forests, moors, waterfalls, and huge moss-covered trees. Hotels, inns, bed and breakfasts are available throughout the area. A favorite is the upscale Killarney Park Hotel near the town center and convenient to the National Park.



Courtesy of Grand Hotel Excelsior

Valletta, Malta

Valletta is the capital of the 12.2-square-mile island of Malta, located south of Sicily. A walled city dating to the 1500's, Valletta is known for its museums, palaces, and churches, especially the Baroque St. John's Co-Cathedral, home of Caravaggio's "The Beheading of St. John." The Valletta Film Festival, Malta's largest cinema event with over 40 feature films and 25 short films, will be held this year from June 8 through June 17 at both indoor and open air theaters. The Malta International Arts Festival, a cultural exhibition of multidisciplinary works including music, visual arts, theater, dance, opera, and film will begin June 29 and close July 15. The elegant Grand Hotel Excelsior includes a luxurious spa, indoor and outdoor heated pools, and a small private beach.



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Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

This popular resort on the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California peninsula has recovered nicely from last fall's devastating Tropical Storm Lidia. June is the right time to take advantage of Cabo's white sand beaches, water sports, horseback riding, and sailing before all the summer vacationers arrive. Hotels, inns, resorts in a wide range of prices are available. The luxurious Resort at Pedregal boasts an entrance through Mexico's only privately-owned tunnel as well as spacious rooms and suites, each with a private plunge pool and ocean views. Another luxe option is The Cape, with Cabo's only rooftop lounge.



Getty Images

The Berkshires, Massachusetts

Located in western Massachusetts, this mountainous area boasts gorgeous scenery, historic sites, outdoor activities, Herman Melville's home, and the Norman Rockwell museum. In summer, it is the home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the site of the Tanglewood Music Festival. Drawing over 350,000 visitors each year, the festival includes all musical forms and styles. This year's June entertainment will include Roger Daltrey of The Who performing the group's rock opera "Tommy," David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Judy Collins, Harry Connick, Jr., the Boston Pops with singer Audra McDonald, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Guests enjoy the music from reserved seats or picnic on the lawn. For information and tickets, visit bso.org.



George Rose/Getty Images

Aspen, Colorado

Snow is not required for a great time in Aspen, and June is all the proof you need. Weather in the 70's is perfect for hiking, biking, golf, and strolling through the village. The Food and Wine Classic to be held June 15–17 is another reason to visit, with presentations by culinary celebrities like Claudine and Jacques Pepin, Geoffrey Zakarian, Ludo Lefebvre, and more. Get ready to indulge with some pre-festival exercise on June 14 when Blackberry Farms and The Little Nell, two Relais & Chateaux resorts, partner on a benefit bike ride. The Little Nell's Chair 9 will host late night parties during the FOOD & WINE Classic, featuring Dom Perignon, Veuve Clicquot, and DJ's. On June 15, the Chateau Palmer Wine Dinner, a five-course meal prepared by Executive Chef Matt Zubrod paired with rare vintages will be held at The Little Nell's Element 47. On June 16, the Little Nell will host the Harlan Estate Wine Dinner, with the Chef's five courses paired with the highly rated Harlan Estate wines.



Slow Images/Getty Images

Salina Island, Italy

The second largest of the Aeolian Islands, Salina has remained relatively untouched, and that is one of its beauties. June is an ideal time to visit, before the summer heat sets in. The land is fertile, with over 400 types of plants, including the island's claim to fame: the caper. The flavorful buds are hand harvested and preserved in salt and oil, to be used in sauces and salads, on pizza, meats, and pasta fillings. Every year, during the first weekend of June, the Festa Del Cappero in Fiore celebrates the caper. There are parties, dinners, wine tastings, music, and games from Friday through Sunday, ending in the Piazza di Sant'Onofrio in the town of Pollara. Salina is also known for a golden dessert wine called Malavasia and for the salt gathered from its small salt lake, hence the name of the island. The Principe di Salina Boutique Hotel offers elegant rooms with private terraces overlooking the sea.



Getty Images

Portland, Oregon

Portland is called the “City of Roses” because of its ideal weather for growing the colorful flowers. The June weather is also perfect for visitors and residents, with warming temperatures and increasing sunshine. The city celebrates with the annual Portland Rose Festival, over sixty events beginning with fireworks on May 25 and continuing until June 10. The final weekend’s activities include the two-day Dragon Boat Races on the Willamette River. Fleet Week is a highlight of the festival with ships from the US Navy, Coast Guard, and Royal Canadian Navy along the waterfront and floral floats from the Spirit Mountain Casino Grand Floral Parade. Concerts, games, rides, and children’s shows are all part of the three-weekend event. Portland’s newly renovated Dossier Hotel would be a comfortable and convenient home base. Take advantage of their membership in the Knott Springs spa with a discount on your visit to its soaking tubs, sauna, and steam room. Enjoy the décor and a cocktail at the hotel’s Opal Bar.