



TIPS + TRENDS

## 7 Underrated Destinations You Haven't Visited Yet—But Should

by LAURA ITZKOWITZ

Consider a wildlife-filled safari through Tanzania for your next vacation. (Photo: Getty Images)

Already checked off the world's most visited countries—France, the U.S., Spain—and not sure where to go next? These lesser-known spots may just become the next best vacation spots in the world.

Consider planning a trip to overlooked gems like Slovenia, Uganda, Belize, and Bhutan, where less-crowded cultural attractions have made them more appealing than ever this year.

## Tanzania

When people think about a typical African safari, they often picture Kenya à la *Out of Africa*—flat plains, baobab trees, and wildlife roaming the savannah. However, recent political unrest has many travelers turning their eyes (and travel plans) to its southern neighbor, Tanzania.

This is where you'll find Serengeti National Park, which, at 5,700 square miles, is so massive that the landscape changes from one part of the park to the next. Get a taste of both areas on a trip with with tour operator Extraordinary Journeys, which might start at Roving Busstops in the Central Serengeti (famous for its prime wildlife viewing and typical flat plains) and advance to Serengeti Busstops in the north (which is hillier and broken up by rock formations).

## Slovenia



Slovenia is slowly growing into a must-visit spot for travelers in the know. (Photo: Getty Images)

Ever since chef Ana Ros (whose appearance on *Chef's Table*, among the likes of Enrique Olvera and Massimo Bottura, helped solidify her international acclaim) took over her now-famous restaurant Hiša Franko in Slovenia's alpine Soca Valley, travelers have been flocking to this idyllic corner of Europe.

Today, Slovenia continues to evolve as one of the world's great culinary hubs. Plan to explore the Hapsburg architecture and tree-lined riverbanks of Slovenia's capital city before venturing out to its village-dotted countryside.

## Laos



Stunning natural beauty awaits in Laos. (Photo: Getty Images)

If you've already backpacked your way through Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia and are ready to dig deeper into Southeast Asia, a trip to Laos might be right for you.

While you won't find any white-sand beaches, this landlocked nation offers everything else you'd hope to see in this part of the world, from elephant sanctuaries, waterfalls, and caves to Khmer ruins and ancient Buddhist monasteries.

## Belize



See the underwater sights in Belize. (Photo: Getty Images)

You've probably been to Mexico, but what about its southeastern neighbor, Belize? Despite its small size, the Central American nation has it all: tropical jungles, Mayan ruins, beautiful Caribbean beaches, and, for avid divers, the largest coral reef in the northern hemisphere, known for some of the best scuba diving in the world.

## Uganda

For decades, Rwanda has been the go-to destination for gorilla tourism, but last year's dramatic increase in park permit costs has begun convincing travelers to choose neighboring Uganda (which offers many of the same attractions at a fraction of the cost) as a more affordable alternative.

## Bhutan

After being closed off for decades, the country that prides itself on measuring Gross National Happiness instead of GDP is slowly opening itself up to the rest of the world.

Among the most devoted visitors to this Himalayan nation are hikers and mountain climbers, whose bucket lists include treks to some of the country's most beautiful sites such as Tiger's Nest Monastery, which is precariously perched on the edge of a cliff.

## Madagascar



Get off the grid in Madagascar. (Photo: Getty Images)

If you—like us—have been dreaming of visiting the African island of Madagascar ever since the Disney movie came out, you're (finally) in luck. This is the place to come when you want to get truly off the grid: unless you splash out on a trekking excursion to see the island's endemic lemurs, there's not much to do besides relaxing on the beach, snorkeling, scuba diving and jet skiing. Pack a good book and get ready to unplug.

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