



by Travel + Leisure Staff

Putting together our annual list of the best places to travel is a process that takes several months—we survey writers based around the world, talk to our [A-List travel specialists](#), and look at the most exciting hotel and restaurant openings. While news and global events have a large impact on the places we choose, we also pay attention to cities that are worth revisiting: Philadelphia, in particular, may surprise you with the amount of growth and development it has seen in recent months. North America made a strong showing on this year's list—more than a quarter of these places are within reach for a long-weekend trip from the United States.

We know that people will travel far and wide for incredible food and drink, which is why that was a key factor in our decision-making. In 2017, you'll want to head to Jerusalem for its exciting Levantine food, Oslo for its coffee culture, Belgrade for craft beer, and Valle de Guadalupe for coveted Mexican wines.

While beach vacations are timeless—you truly don't need much more than a comfortable resort, warm waters, and a good book to read—tack on a bit more time if you're visiting these places: Tofino, in British Columbia, has a wild food scene; Honolulu will host its first arts biennial this year; and Málaga has amazing hidden museums.

Technology and globalization can make the world feel small and thoroughly explored. But there are always places to discover—and rediscover—for yourself. Take a look at [last year's list](#) for additional inspiration, and share your own picks with us on social media using [#TLBestPlaces](#).



Suzhou, China

A half-hour from Shanghai by bullet train, 2,500-year-old Suzhou has two faces. Most know of its classical gardens (nine UNESCO-designated), celebrated in Chinese art and poetry for centuries, and its canal-filled Old Town with traditional white-washed buildings. But there's also the high-rise-filled Suzhou Industrial Park (built in partnership with the Singaporean government), which has lured many Fortune 500 companies and is a recreational spot for locals and expats. It has a shopping and entertainment district named Times Square, a London Eye-like Ferris wheel, multiple Western and Asian restaurants, bars, theaters, and a concert hall, plus colorful musical fountains on Jinji Lake at night—and it's all just a 20-minute subway ride from the heart of Old Town. Over the next two years, W Hotels, Sheraton, and the Luxury Collection join a stampede of Western hotel brands that include the stylish Tonino Lamborghini, a Hilton, and a Hyatt Regency. — *Sharon McDonnell*