

EAT LIKE THE LOCALS

There is no better way to learn about the culture of a place than through its local cuisine...



A yummy food platter in Hungary

HUNGARY
 ● Old-style dishes are mostly attentive around meats, pork in particular, seasonal vegetables, fresh bread, cheese and honey. However, there's one thing that Hungarian cuisine is known for i.e. the substantial use of paprika. At a market you would come across peppers in an extensive variety of colours, shapes and flavours running the gamut from the sweet tomato paprika, mild apple pepper to the deadly cherry chilli. The most iconic traditional main courses are chicken paprikás, stuffed cabbage and stuffed peppers, the stews, Foie Gras and pork dishes. Be sure to try the Mangalica pork and you could also try the lángos; a big piece of fried dough topped with garlic, sour cream or cheese. Visit a bakery or a cafe and try the strudel and the cakes with a cup of tea.

ISRAEL
 ● Famed as the land of milk and honey, Israel has such amazing food that it starts right from Breakfast replete with an abundance of Yemenite style Jakhnun which is basically a fat

GERMANY
 ● Relax; grab a glass of Glühwein (the famous hot spiced wine) in winters or just some Riesling any time of the year. For a bite, endorsements go all out for a large bowl of 'Schupfnudeln', these potato dumplings are doused in crème fraiche, sauerkraut, pepper, fresh herbs, and onions, and are a perfect therapy to a cold winter day! Besides there are also Flammkueche (An Alsatian and German dish, which looks quite like a pizza) and local specialties like some countless cheeses, sausages, schnitzel, pork knuckles, meatballs and special chocolate



Salad in Singapore

all out for the congee, Laksa and the famed 'Kaya toast' with half boiled egg...amazingly decadent. 'Milo Dinosaur' an icy malted drink is another must try.

FOODIE'S CORNER



Germany sausage

laden pastry baked overnight to the Shakshuka with its three mandatory ingredients of tomatoes, hot sauce and eggs! Falafel and Shawarma are synonymous with Israeli food and the Laffa basically a flatbread sandwich with stir fried steak strips and flame roasted eggplants is hugely popular. Pita in Israel is a mainstay of the way Israelis eat. Not to be missed is the chewy, sweetish Jerusalem Bagel and the golden, warm and sinfully rich 'Bourekas'. Ptitim...the Israeli



Israel bread

couscous is great with some of the best fish dishes the Jewish communities are famed for. And do not leave without trying the many types of bread and certainly the Israeli jelly doughnuts.

SINGAPORE
 ● A visit to Singapore is incomplete without paying a visit to the Hawker Centre. You can sample authentic local favourites without forking out too much moolah (plus that is where the locals eat). Recommendations go all out for the huge tumblers of refreshing and sweet sugar cane juice and chai too kway (fried carrot cake). Recommendations go

LOUISIANA
 ● The rich intricate Creole cuisine of New Orleans and the homey, country-style Cajun cuisines of Acadiana (French Louisiana) depend profoundly on many ingredients that are made and grown ingeniously. Cajun dishes are more likely to feature ingredients from the country, like crawfish and are spicy. Jambalaya, a one-pot dish with meat, vegetables, rice and stock, is strictly a Creole dish. Getting your morning beignets at 'Cafe du Monde' is a prized ritual in New Orleans. A New Orleans coffee uses chicory, so it has an exceptional taste and is a must have with the beignet. The Poboyos (there are numerous kinds, not just seafood) and Muffalettas, are just a few of the examples of must try food here. Remember to tummy up to the bar by the Mississippi for bourbon and oysters that come inexpensive by the dozen! New Orleans has very tranquil licensing and it is permissible to drink in the street, so do try that at famed Bourbon street.

Rupali Dean is a Delhi-based food writer

ASK THE TRAVEL EXPERT



Rakshit Desai, Managing Director

Rakshit Desai, Managing Director for Flight Centre Travel Group's Indian subsidiary, answers your questions on Travel – how-tos, trends, recommendations and more.

Send in your questions to: askrakshit@in.fcm.travel

Two travel companies have given me different prices for the same itinerary and the price difference is vast. What should I do?

While it's easy to be swayed by a holiday that looks cheap, the right way to do this is to break down all the components of your holiday and compare. The price difference could be because of different category of hotels, quality of vehicles for sightseeing and transfers or tour managers. Check if the holiday is all-inclusive or comes with hidden charges like visa, taxes etc. Another check to have in place is the background of the travel agency you're booking with. Go with someone your friends or family have already travelled with or someone who has good reviews – it's more important that your trip does not throw up any unpleasant surprises!

Is it difficult to get visa for Bhutan?

Bhutan practices a 'minimum travellers' policy to avoid commercialism in the country. Tourism in Bhutan is controlled by the country's Tourism Council

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and it is advisable to book your holiday either through them or through an authorised travel agent. As an Indian traveller, you don't require a visa for travelling to Bhutan; just carry any of these two documents – a valid Indian passport with minimum 6 months validity and/or your Voter Identity Card, issued by the Election Commission of India.

beautiful gardens and hilly landscapes. Macao has also rightly earned the title of the 'Oriental Las Vegas' and is home to some of world's largest casinos!

What places in India and internationally would you recommend to watch snow this winter?

Though Shimla and Auli are favourites when it comes to experiencing snowfall in India, I would also recommend Tsomgo Lake and Yumthang in North Sikkim. These places are covered with snow almost all around the year, making it easy for travellers to choose any month. Another stunning location is Mumsiyari in Uttarakhand, also called 'Little Kashmir' for its serenity and beauty. It is snow-clad from December to February and even has natural hot-water springs in the midst of snow!

Outside of India, though there are numerous places to experience snow but nothing comes close to Gstaad in Switzerland. Gstaad has beautiful Swiss architecture and untouched landscape – a perfect place to experience white mornings!

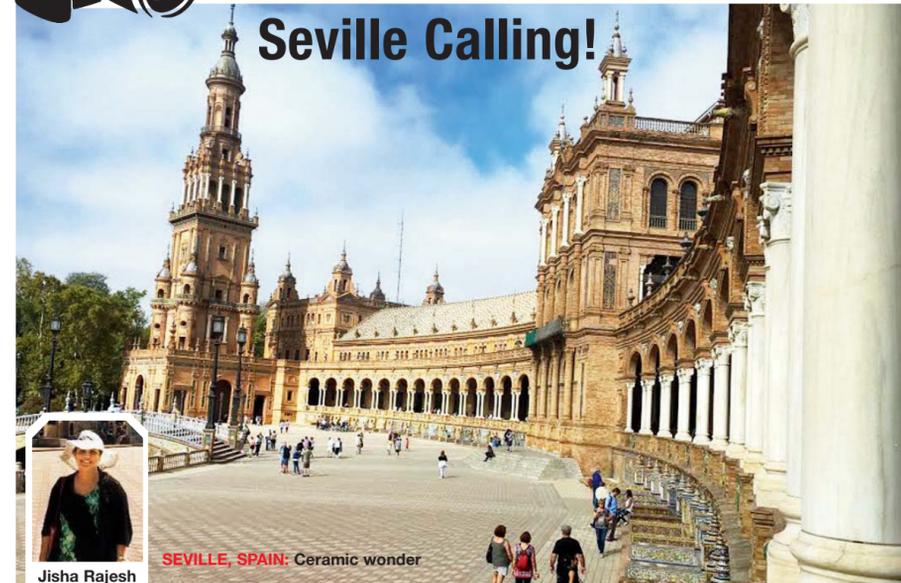
TRAVEL TIP
 Be careful when travelling to snowy regions. A lot of areas may be prone to blockages and shut downs due to heavy snow. Make sure to check and confirm before you plan a trip to these places.

I want to take my family for a holiday to Vegas or Macao to experience casinos. Which one is recommended?

If you are planning to travel with your family, then I would recommend Macao. The city has world class entertainment and untouched shopping attractions,



PICS OF THE WEEK: ET-PTravel thanks its readers for their top shots with season's greetings



Seville Calling!

Jisha Rajesh

SEVILLE, SPAIN: Ceramic wonder

ET-Panache Travel reader **Jisha Rajesh** shares her holiday experience in Seville, Spain: "In October, my family including me, husband and my 11 year old son went for a trip to Spain and visited Seville, Spain. Seville is the capital and largest city of the autonomous community of Andalusia and the province of Seville, Spain. We could see orange trees all around Seville. It is a beautiful historic city. One of the must see attraction is Plaza de Espana. It is a large brick building flanked at each end by a high tower with fifty eight benches in recesses decorated with ceramic tiles, depicting historic episodes for each province of Spain. The Plaza is the size of five football pitches. The panoramic view of this building is breathtaking. It is really a gorgeous place, just like a setting of a fairy tale.



African Lore

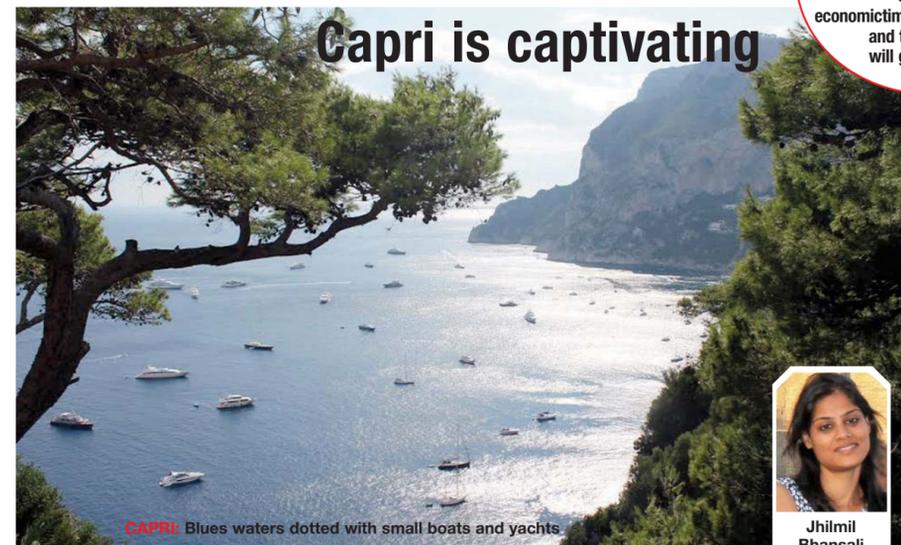
KENYA: Visually appealing landscape



Aditya Gupta

ET-Panache Travel reader **Aditya Gupta** says that when you think of Kenya and you will think of beautiful wildlife, the various shades of green and this would make you feel very close to mother nature. Kenya is named after Mount Kenya, the second highest mountain in Africa. Mount Kenya was originally referred to as 'Mt. Kirinyaga' by the indigenous people. 'Kirinyaga' or 'Kerenyaga', meaning 'mountain of whiteness' because of its snow capped peak'. The name was subsequently changed to Mt. Kenya because of the inability of the British to pronounce 'Kirinyaga' correctly. The country has a warm and humid climate along its Indian Ocean coastline, with wildlife-rich savannah grasslands inland towards the capital. Nairobi has a cool climate that gets colder approaching Mount Kenya, which has three permanently snow-capped peaks.

HOLIDAY MOMENTS
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Capri is captivating



Jhilmil Bhansali

In the southern coast of the Mediterranean sea of Capri, lies the Faraglioni Rocks. It emerges out of the tranquility of the deep blue sea, with the average height of about 100 meters. There are 3 Faraglioni Rock formations each with its distinct name – Nearest to the shore: Stella, Middle One: Faraglione di Mezzo which has a unique natural central cavity, well enough for the passage of a small boat and the third; the smallest, Faraglione di Fuori (Scopolo). Scopolo is home to the famous 'Blue lizard' found only here in the world and possibly the colour adaptation (Blue) is due to the blue sky above and blue sea below. Every view of these rocks ensure praise of God's creativity, it poses such a serenity during the day, gorgeousness during the sunset and a rock solid sight by the night that none can go without 'Chanting Capri'. The best way to explore Capri is a round about in the sea by boat and the nearest tourist city to Capri is Naples with the tag of 'Pizza originator' to grab the authentic 'Neapolitan pizza'.



GONDESHWAR TEMPLE: Etched in stone

Jyoti Katira with family

Often search the world for treasures, ignoring the jewels in our backyard. Gondeshwar temple is one such unpolished jewel, says ET-Panache Travel reader **Jyoti Katira**. A 12th century Shiva temple in Sinnar town, Gondeshwar is an hour's drive from Nashik on the Nashik-Shirdi road. It has lovely carvings and a peaceful atmosphere. Built in the Hemadpanthi style of architecture, the main temple is surrounded by four smaller temples of Ganesha, Parvati, Vishnu and Surya. The entire temple complex is very picturesque. Gondeshwar stands in solitary splendour, graceful and braving the test of time.