

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



A perfect coolcation: Blazing fire and fynbos views at Babylonstoren.

Embrace the Pace: Coolcations and Slow Travel

Dear Friends,

If you've noticed a trend among your luxury travelers toward quieter moments, unhurried escapes, and destinations lower on the mercury scale, you're not alone. Coolcations, where travelers escape rising temperatures and sweltering summer days of sightseeing, and slow travel, where JOMO (joy of missing out) is exactly the point, are on the rise.

Many wanderers are trading packed itineraries for meaningful moments, opting to linger a little longer and more deeply connect with the cultures, landscapes, and people that make their vacation destination unique. Slow travel is a mindset, about savoring a morning coffee at a local cafe for as long as feels right, walking the same market streets enough times that vendors wave hello or spending hours immersed in the beauty of the outdoors instead of dashing off with a list in hand of the places one must visit that day.

Coolcations are, quite literally, cooler, taking travelers to Nordic countries, alpine getaways, and breezy destinations while offering respite from the heat and moments of awe-inspiring natural beauty. Sweltering heat takes a backseat to refreshing mountain breezes and crispier days where everything looks and feels in sharper relief.

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Just a few of our partner's refreshing coolcation and slow travel ideas:

- Stargazing in New Zealand's stunning winter night skies from a remote mountain lodge in an International Dark Sky Reserve
- Sipping butter tea with locals and visiting ancient monasteries in the Indian Himalayas of Leh Ladakh
- Biking and wine-tasting in the Loire Valley as spring gardens awaken
- Learning about South Africa's water buffaloes and their milking process, then ending the day with a meal that incorporates handmade water buffalo milk products
- Securing a sought-after table at an intimate Napa Valley restaurant after a day of touring vineyards and wineries on foot in comfortable temperatures
- Discovering the charms of Sri Lanka's Emerald Season and joining in local Sinhala and Tamil New Year festivities
- Pausing to explore stone-built villages like Dimisana in Greece, or truffle hunting with a local guide
- Exploring an ancient Irish Oakwood temperate rainforest while staying within the stained-glass windows and modern comforts of a Kenmare estate

Read along for tips, trends, and destinations that will inspire your clients' next unhurried escape. You'll be prepared to help them experience the joy of traveling slower, cooler, and with the stories that matter most.

Fondly,

Rebecca



Rebecca enjoying a moment with a gentle friend at a beautiful winery.

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[News from Europe](#)



Off-season in Greece isn't just about smart timing — it's a chance to meet a different side of the country and connect with it in your own authentic way.

[Curated Greece](#) - Discovering Off-Season Greece

When you hear of Greece, your mind probably jumps to whitewashed houses, crystal blue waters, and the “Mamma Mia” type of summer dream. While that’s certainly part of the charm, the full package is actually a year-round destination rich in culture, nature, and local life that thrives in the quieter months.

Traveling during the off-season, typically October to March, means enjoying the perks of fewer crowds, no extreme heat, greater flexibility with availability, and most importantly, a more personal, mindful pace. It’s the perfect time to embrace what we call the “slow travel” approach.

Picture this: Metsovo, local wine by the fireplace after a lakeside walk in the snowy Pindus mountains. Or truffle hunting followed by a visit to the breathtaking rock towers of Meteora. In Arcadia, your clients can hike through the forested trails of Lousios Gorge, then pause in stone-built villages like Dimitsana for a warm cup of coffee. And in the always buzzing Thessaloniki, they can explore the vibrant street life and museums ranging from ancient history to modern art.

Off-season in Greece isn't just about smart timing, it's a chance to meet a different side of the country and connect with it authentically. After all, thanks to Greece's topography, the day can start at sea level and end above the clouds without catching a flight.

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Making a splash in the beautiful Adriatic.

[Dinaric Adventures, Croatia and Beyond](#) - A Return to the Simple Joys of Travel

Traveling during the shoulder or off-season offers fewer crowds, more authentic experiences, and the opportunity for a deeper connection with the local community. Lower prices, without commercial content, and the ease of booking restaurants, for example...

In Croatia, tourists are often enchanted by empty stone towns, the cheerfulness and openness of the locals, and their communication and playful banter while hanging laundry on the terraces, walking through the streets, or spontaneously singing a traditional song under the arches and in authentic locations that call us to the wild, which during the peak summer season become crowded and lose their acoustic charm.

At this time of year, your clients can expect a land that is unburdened, free, and peaceful, with vast spaces and a wonderful gastronomy. Artichokes, fava beans, asparagus, grapes, squid, and a variety of fruits are just a few of the local delights waiting to be savored. These seasons provide a perfect balance of relaxation and indulgence in the simple joys of life, without the hustle and bustle of the summer crowds.

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[Découvertes, France](#) - Spring Serenity Awaits in the Loire Valley

Escape the crowds and discover the Loire Valley this spring (March – May), where “coolcations” and slow travel reign supreme. The region’s iconic châteaux – Chambord, Chenonceau, and more – stand majestically, free of summer busloads, their gardens awakening with vibrant blooms under soft sunlight.

This shoulder season is your clients’ chance to savor uncrowded bliss, pedaling between castles on a rented bike or picnicking by the Loire River with fresh goat cheese and crisp Sancerre wine from local producers.

Stay longer and dive deeper—they can join a garden tour with a passionate horticulturist or chat with artisans in quaint riverside villages, soaking in the royal history and pastoral charm that define this UNESCO gem. With mild weather and fewer tourists, they’ll connect authentically with the land and its people, from the echoing halls of Renaissance palaces to the quiet beauty of the countryside.

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Embark on a guided foraging walk with local experts and connect with nature in the Dão region.

[Patamar Select, Portugal](#) - Reconnect with Nature and Tradition

For travelers seeking something meaningful and unhurried, the Dão region in central Portugal offers a slower rhythm rooted in nature, tradition, and sustainability. Best enjoyed in the shoulder seasons—spring and early autumn—this is when the landscape is alive with fresh growth, soft light, and fewer visitors. Guests can explore serene hiking trails, forested bike paths, and winding rivers by canoe, or join local experts on foraging walks through pine and oak woods. The peaceful countryside offers a chance to connect with the land and its people, whether visiting small mountain villages, tracing Jewish heritage in Belmonte, or sharing stories with artisans and winemakers.

Staying longer means settling into spaces that invite rest and reconnection. Intimate, design-forward hotels like Puro Dão, Valverde Santar, Devagar, and Burel Panorama House offer comfort rooted in sustainability, with spa rituals, forest-view soaking tubs, and treatments using local botanicals. Families are especially welcome here, with outdoor adventures tailored to children, interactive nature walks, and hands-on workshops with local artisans, like wool felting, bread baking, or cheesemaking. Culinary experiences bring everyone to the table, whether it's a chef's table showcasing seasonal ingredients, a farm-to-fork lunch in the vineyard, or a foraged picnic in the woods.

Patamar Select curates exclusive escapes that balance luxury with authenticity—perfect for couples, solo travelers, or multigenerational families. From private wellness retreats and vineyard picnics to intimate music moments in garden courtyards or historic estates, each itinerary is designed to be immersive, enriching, and deeply personal.

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Experience the best of Zürich with stays at the Storchen Hotel, Widder Hotel, and Alex Lake Zürich, part of The Living Circle's luxury fed by nature philosophy.

[The Living Circle - Luxury Fed by Nature, Ascona and Zürich](#) - Three Hotels, One Way of Life

Zürich shines during the shoulder season: fewer tourists, more authentic city vibes, and the perfect setting for an unforgettable stay. Whether you're seeking a hideaway to unwind, an inspiring space for creative minds, or a stylish retreat for urban explorers, the real Zürich is waiting. The Living Circle's hotels are havens for discerning travelers who appreciate understated luxury and the extraordinary in the everyday.

An urban retreat with history, the Widder Hotel is located in the heart of Zürich's Old Town, combining historic charm with contemporary design by renowned Swiss architect Tilla Theus and her distinct personal touch. Here, guests experience the city like locals—stylishly, at ease, and with inspiring encounters. It's the perfect address for those who seek authenticity without compromising on luxury.

Where Zürich shines, Storchen Zürich has embodied heartfelt hospitality for over 660 years. Centrally located yet peaceful, it offers stunning views over the city, the river, and the Swiss mountains. It's the perfect place to start the day with a stroll along the Limmat, enjoy a glass of champagne on the terrace, or let the concierge guide one towards hidden cultural gems.

With the lake, the city, and inimitable style, Alex Lake Zürich is just minutes from the city center, offering *la dolce vita* with direct lake access. Here, design meets nature, and privacy blends with boutique luxury. Perfect for longer stays—with kitchenettes, private balconies, and the chance to see Zürich from a fresh perspective, perhaps by private boat shuttle or with a glass of rosé by the water.

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[News from Ireland](#)



From 1-hour trail riding to full-day rides, experience the best of bucolic life with horse riding at Ashford Castle.

[Ashford Castle](#) and [The Lodge at Ashford Castle, County Mayo, Ireland](#) - Experience Nature's Beauty and Heritage

Tucked away in the west of Ireland, the Ashford Estate offers an idyllic escape during the quieter shoulder seasons. With 350 acres of rolling gardens, tranquil woodland, and shimmering lakefront, it invites guests to slow down and connect deeply with nature and heritage. Mornings might begin with a sunrise stroll alongside the resident hounds or a visit to the Cr  Kitchen Garden, where guests can meet expert gardeners and sample produce freshly picked from the soil.

Afternoons unfold at a gentler pace—fly fishing on Lough Corrib, cycling along quiet forest trails, or enjoying the serenity of a horseback ride through ancient woodlands. A highlight for many is a private wooden boat journey to Chief's Island, complete with a decadent picnic hamper—pure romantic seclusion. The dedicated Guest Services team curates every detail, ensuring each stay is as active or as relaxed as guests desire. For those in search of deep relaxation, The Spa at Ashford Castle—Ireland's only Forbes Five-Star spa—is an essential indulgence.

Just moments away lies the captivating Connemara region, a jewel along the Wild Atlantic Way, where dramatic landscapes and raw natural beauty offer unforgettable exploration. For the ultimate private escape, The Boathouse is a dream—a stand-alone, lovingly restored hideaway perched at the water's edge on Lough Corrib, just a few minutes from the castle. Whether guests choose the stately grandeur of Ashford Castle or the laid-back luxury of The Lodge, the Estate invites a truly meaningful connection with time, place, and tradition.

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[Park Hotel Kenmare, County Kerry, Ireland](#) - A Visit to the Ancient Dromgarraiff Rainforest

During their stay at the Park Hotel Kenmare, guests can visit sister property, Dromgarraiff Rainforest. Located just 30 minutes away by car, over the breathtaking Caha Pass, in the neighboring County Cork, Dromgarraiff Rainforest lies on the outskirts of the charming town of Glengarriff. An ancient Irish Oakwood temperate rainforest, Dromgarraiff is one of the few of its kind left in Ireland. The Park Hotel Kenmare is dedicated to preserving its historic beauty and rewilding the land with native oak trees. With several waterfalls, access to wild swimming and hiking, and unique flora and fauna, Dromgarraiff Rainforest is the perfect place to visit for a day trip to learn more about this invaluable micro-ecosystem.

The vision for Dromgarraiff Rainforest is to highlight the splendor of the relationship between land and sea in this unique part of Europe. After a short walk into the rainforest, guests become part of the movement to preserve and nurture one of the last remaining temperate rainforests in Ireland, where trees, insects, and birds are in perfect harmony with nature and ourselves.

The property of 96 acres of woodland and meadows has many thousands of trees and around two kilometers of coastal shoreline on Glengarriff Harbour. The lush beauty of the Dromgarraiff Rainforest exists because of the benign effect of the Gulf Stream and the mild climate that allows sub-tropical tree ferns, scarlet fuchsia, magical moss, and tender lichen to flourish side by side with the ancient oaks and gigantic conifers, trees planted over a century ago.

It is a joy to slow down, wander through the rainforest, and be immersed in this gorgeous, healing, and grounding place of preservation and growth.

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Slow Travel, Kenmare & Art at the Park

Since their arrival at Park Hotel Kenmare in 2023, owners Bryan and Tara Meehan have introduced an expansive collection of internationally reclaimed art. The hotel's new collection includes Irish artists as well as a diverse group of international artists, ranging across the globe. Guests can now enjoy an exceptional collection of mixed-media art unique to the Park Hotel Kenmare.

Artists such as Dorothy Cross, Sean Scully, Elizabeth Columba, Guggi, Theaster Gates, Park Seo Bo, and Andy Warhol are featured along the corridors, creating an exciting juxtaposition of modern art against an 1897 historic Irish hotel. By displaying this art, the team hopes to represent a diverse community and invite guests and visitors to partake in conversation and contemplation that their pieces invoke. Guests are invited to slow down and join in an uplifting story that spans across the globe, amplifying voices of communities that may be underrepresented. Join the daily art tour that is open to guests of the hotel as well as visitors, so that anyone interested in hearing the story of the art and how it came to be at the hotel can learn more.

A stay in the spectacular surrounds of Park Hotel Kenmare places guests at the doorstep of a host of wonderful experiences of the destination, from fishing to hiking, boat trips, touring the Ring of Beara, climbing Ireland's highest mountain, Carrauntoohil, golfing, and more. Of course, the luxurious setting at Park Hotel Kenmare invites leisurely pursuits onsite, including tennis, cycling, and croquet, while the option to read a book in the Living Room, wander the garden paths, or enjoy a drink on the terrace are equally appealing. Wander the streets of the Heritage Town of Kenmare, meet the locals, enjoy traditional music, and much more at a slow pace where one can truly live like a local.



The majestic Dromgariff waterfall, a hidden gem in Ireland's ancient rainforest.

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[News from Africa](#)



[The Twelve Apostle Hotel & Spa, Cape Town, South Africa, Red Carnation Hotel Collection](#) - Pause, Reconnect, and Embrace the Gentle Art of Slow Discovery

Winter in the Southern Hemisphere brings a quieter, more soulful rhythm to Cape Town, making June through August an ideal time for your clients to discover the city at its most enchanting. Perched between the Atlantic Ocean and the Twelve Apostles Mountain range, The Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa offers a serene coastal retreat where the sea breeze is cool, the skies are crisp, and the experience is deeply restorative. With mild temperatures and fewer crowds, it's the perfect season for romantic picnics on a fynbos-covered mountainside, intimate hikes along Lion's Head and Table Mountain, or guided coastal walks where the sound of the waves sets a meditative pace.

Guests can explore the surrounding winelands, play world-class golf courses in the soft winter light, and, most memorably, witness the arrival of Southern Right Whales as they breach just offshore. Back at the hotel, guests are enveloped in warmth and tranquility, whether indulging in holistic treatments at the award-winning spa or watching the sun set into the sea over a glass of local wine.

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Unwind and rejuvenate in the soothing waters of Babylonstoren's vitality pool.

[Babylonstoren, Franschhoek Wine Valley, South Africa](#) - Have a Winter of Wellness in South Africa

Winter at Babylonstoren is a secret best shared slowly. It's a time when South Africa's Cape Winelands hum with quiet magic—crisp mornings, golden light, and moments of deep calm and beautiful bursts of adventure. Paint a picture for your clients of quiet garden walks in soft winter sun, joining a water buffalo tour to learn about the milking process, and ending their visit at Babel Restaurant with a tasting of the farm's handmade water buffalo milk products. Or, set them up on a scenic mountain drive to a breathtaking pool fed by a natural waterfall. They can swim, relax, enjoy a picnic, and raise a toast to the beautiful views.

Your clients at Babylonstoren will unwind in bliss or dive into farm adventures. They'll stroll the gardens, do some mindful stretching, join a tour, taste the wines and olives, get hands-on in a workshop, sink into farm comforts with signature hot spa treatments, or step back in time to a working farmyard of the 1800s at Soetmelksvlei.

One more night on Babylonstoren means more stories, more stillness, and deeper connection. Book for four nights and pay for three, until the end of August. That's an extra day to linger over a slow lunch, or to take the mountain drive to the lookout point and sip a sundowner as the sky burns in farewell. It's a wonderful time to come and stay.

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Animals on the Maasai Mara. [Photo credit.](#)

[Exeter Safaris Company, East Africa](#) - Discovering the Magic of the Maasai Mara Off-Season

Coolcations and slow travel are transforming the way we approach safari, and Kenya's Maasai Mara is an ideal destination for embracing this shift! While the Mara is famed for the Great Migration, having wildlife present year-round makes it a fantastic option even outside the traditional peak season. The shoulder months — particularly October to December and March to May — offer exceptional game viewing with the added bonus of fewer safari vehicles at sightings, creating a more intimate and peaceful experience.

Traveling during these quieter times allows your clients to truly slow down and immerse themselves in the rhythm of the savannah. They're not rushing from one sighting to the next; instead, they'll have time to observe animal behavior, enjoy deeper conversations with their guides, and fully appreciate the landscapes around them. With fewer tourists around, there's also more space to disconnect from routine and reconnect with nature, creating a more personal and enriching safari.

Finally, bear in mind that most safari lodges and camps offer significantly better rates and special promotions for travel outside of peak season. With a bit of special planning, it's easy to have 90% of the experience at 60% of the cost!

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[News from Americas](#)



Charleston's historic waterfront, a chapter worth savoring.

[Beyond Times Square, East Coast, United States](#) - Slow Down, Travel Deeper in Savannah and Charleston

When summer travel starts to feel more like a race — packed beaches, long lines, scorching heat — [Charleston](#) and [Savannah](#) offer something rare: the chance to *slow down*. In these two Southern gems, summer is actually a shoulder season. That means fewer tourists, better access to top experiences, and a more relaxed, meaningful connection to the destination. We call it a *coolcation* — where the pace is gentler, the stories richer, and the days feel designed just for you.

In Charleston, mornings begin with the clatter of a [horse-drawn carriage](#) rolling past pastel townhomes. The afternoon might find your clients savoring a private hands-on [farm-to-table experience](#) or taking an unforgettable journey through [historic Charleston](#) from the comfort of an air-conditioned luxury vehicle. As the sun dips low, they can board a [harbor cruise](#) and watch the city glow from the water.

Savannah charms in its own poetic way. Head to the Savannah River in the morning, where guests may board a charming riverboat for a [narrated cruise](#) of the city's historic waterfront. Or, board the air-conditioned "Buzzard Mobile" for a hauntingly memorable tour of [Bonaventure Cemetery](#), or perhaps enjoy a breezy private [pedicab](#) ride past Savannah's stunning squares and countless monuments. Pre-dinner, they can enjoy a happy hour bar tour, [cocktail in hand](#), thanks to the city's open-container culture.

This is slow travel at its best. No rushing, no noise—just space to breathe, taste, and truly connect. With [Beyond Times Square](#), your clients' summer escape becomes a chapter worth savoring.

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An amazing view of blue waters from the Bluff Suite.

[Curtain Bluff, Antigua](#) - Unplug and Unwind in the Caribbean

For travelers looking to unplug and luxuriate in Caribbean elegance, Curtain Bluff is an iconic beachfront resort with 72 beautiful rooms—all with oceanfront views, but none equipped with televisions. Guests are invited to enjoy a quiet-cation away from the noise of everyday life with luxury property amenities including two locally inspired restaurants, the largest wine cellar on the entire island, and four championship tennis courts with access to on-site pros. The adults-only Wellness Area is an extra quiet corner of the property, featuring a standalone yoga pavilion, infinity pool, and jacuzzi for guests to find their Zen, while just steps away, The Spa features four treatment rooms and a luxurious cliffside soaking tub. May is the ideal time to visit as the island experiences fewer crowds during the summer shoulder season, and it's also the final window to enjoy a stay at Curtain Bluff before its seasonal closure from June to October. The property's rate includes accommodation, all meals, and sports and leisure activities.

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Experience serenity amongst the treetops at Meadowood's Spa Tree House Room.

[Meadowood Napa Valley, California, United States](#) - Experience the Quieter Side of Napa Valley

A trip to Napa Valley is always a great idea. While Harvest Season is an energetic time of year in the valley, wineries and vineyards are in active operation year-round, and traveling to the area outside of peak season definitely has its benefits. What are the best reasons to visit in the quieter seasons (January – March, July – August, November – December)?

- **Ideal California Weather:** Napa Valley has a temperate, Mediterranean climate, ideal for grape-growing. Winter temperatures average a high of 59 degrees, while summer temperatures average a high of 89 degrees; spending time outdoors is always an option, with plenty of natural wonders, trails, and outlets for hiking, biking, running, swimming, and touring vineyards and wineries on foot.
- **Unique Winery Experiences:** With over 500 wineries, the vast majority are still family-owned and operated, allowing for curated experiences when guests visit. Once grapes have been harvested and brought into wineries, fermentation, blending, aging, and bottling take place throughout the remainder of the year. Vintners and winemakers have a break from the rush of Harvest and can spend time with guests. Many wineries offer hands-on experiences to allow guests to take part in the process.
- **Access:** Napa Valley wineries are often limited to the number of visitors they are permitted to welcome in a day, and restaurants in the Napa Valley are intimate in size. Ensure access to everything on your bucket list during quieter times of the year.

Our favorite activities at Meadowood, no matter the time of year: a Blind Tasting class with The Wine Center; hiking the trails and taking in the valley views from the Meadowood Labyrinth; indulging in an afternoon at the Spa; lounging poolside at one of three swimming pools; dining in the privacy of one's room or suite with ingredients from Meadowood Farm on the private terrace or in front of a cozy fire.

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[News from Asia](#)



Finding tranquility in the heart of Kathmandu. The courtyard of Dwarika's Hotel invites a gentler pace and quiet reflection.

[Dwarika's Hotel](#) & [Dwarika's Resort](#), Nepal - Discover the Quiet Magic of Kathmandu Beyond the Crowds

There's something magical about Kathmandu when the crowds fade. The pace is gentler, and the city reveals itself in subtler, more intimate ways. Without the flurry of peak season, one discovers the valley's quiet confidence: the chirping of birds in the morning, the scent of juniper and sandalwood drifting through ancient courtyards, and sacred sites that feel less like landmarks and more like living prayers.

Here, time expands. You might find yourself seated across from a monk, not as a visitor, but as a quiet witness to centuries of wisdom. Or stepping into a hidden shrine where the only sound is the mantra chanting. With every unhurried moment, Kathmandu's layers unfold—not in spectacle, but in stillness.

To travel slowly here is to enter a conversation with the past. It's in the weathered brick of Newari Durbar Squares, the rhythm of festivals rooted in devotion, and the warmth of familiar faces of the neighborhood.

At The Dwarika's Hotel, this spirit of slow, meaningful discovery is mirrored in every detail—from centuries-old woodwork and antique artifacts to the mindful calm that lingers in its courtyards. More than a place to stay, it offers a timeless space where Kathmandu's layered history and living traditions unfold gently.

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Discovering the beauty of Ceylon Tea Trails on foot.

[Resplendent Ceylon Properties, Sri Lanka](#) - Finding Stillness in Sri Lanka

The Emerald Season in Sri Lanka, from April to November, offers travelers a unique blend of cultural festivities, wildlife spectacles, and serene escapes. Lush greenery blankets the countryside, wildlife thrives, and cultural celebrations abound.

During this period, Resplendent Ceylon's luxury resorts—Ceylon Tea Trails, Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Cape Weligama, Kayaam House, and Ahu Bay—curate special experiences that immerse guests in the island's rich traditions and natural beauty. In April, guests can partake in Sinhala & Tamil New Year festivities, enjoying traditional games and culinary delights. May brings Vesak celebrations, where the island illuminates with vibrant lanterns; guests are invited to craft their own eco-friendly lanterns and engage in World Leopard Day awareness programs focusing on local wildlife conservation.

Surf enthusiasts will find ideal conditions along the south coast, including Weligama, throughout the Emerald Season, while the east coast's Arugam Bay becomes a surfing hotspot from May to October. Additionally, the "Palu" season from May to July offers opportunities to witness Sri Lanka's sloth bears feasting on ripe fruits.

Visiting Resplendent Ceylon properties during the Emerald Season allows travelers to experience Sri Lanka's cultural vibrancy and natural wonders in a tranquil and intimate setting. The combination of fewer tourists, lush landscapes, and curated experiences makes this period an ideal time to explore the island's authentic charm.

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[Ventours International, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet](#) - Escape the Heat and Embrace the Himalayas

As the rest of India swelters through a scorching summer, there is one escape that quietly beckons: the high-altitude haven of Leh Ladakh. Here in the Himalayas stands the ultimate coolcation: refreshing mountain air, clear skies, and landscapes that appear as though they were sculpted by divine hands.

Spend the days sipping butter tea with locals while exploring ancient monasteries in peace or experience the absolute stillness of the desert night through stargazing.

Welcome to Leh Ladakh: a land of dramatic drives, soul-stirring scenery, and a culture as rich as the mountains are high.

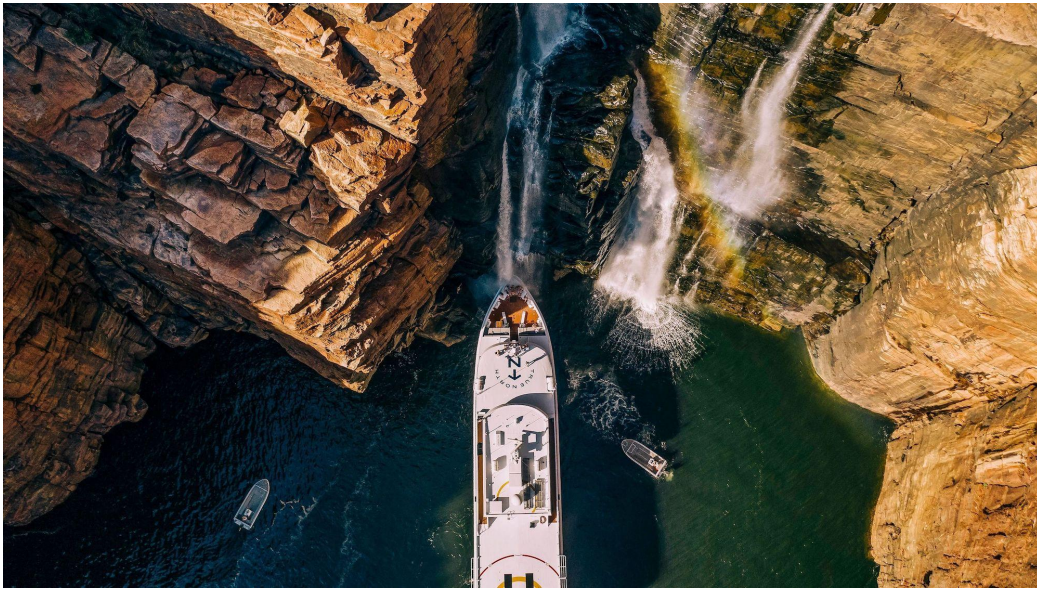
Where to stay:

- The Postcard in the Himalayan Willows
- TUTC Chamba Camp Thiksey

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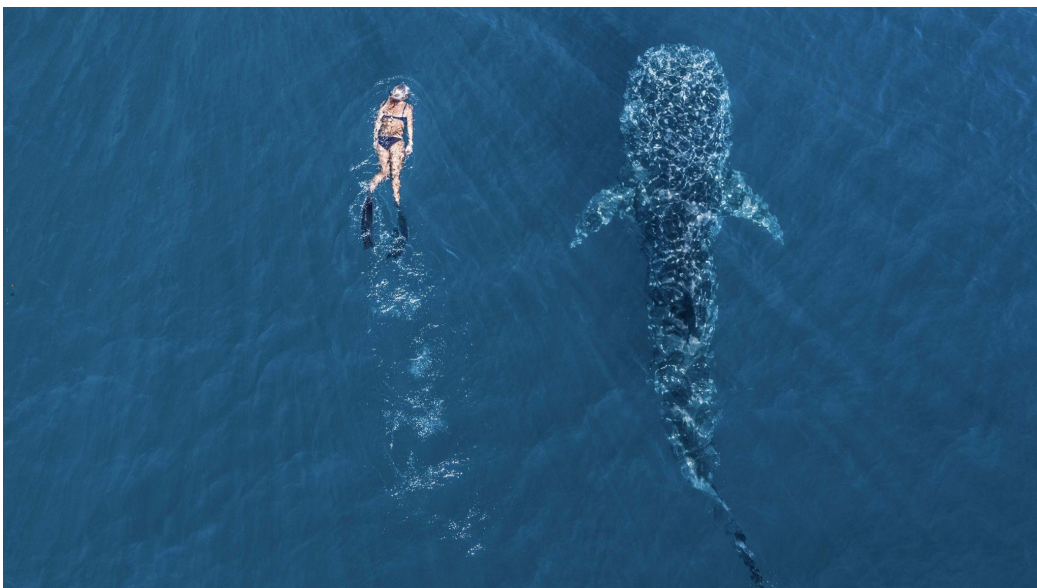
[News from Australasia](#)



[Southern Crossings, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji](#) - Unexpected Delights During the Down Under Shoulder Seasons

So often associated with sun-drenched beaches and relaxed summer vibes, visitors often assume that the summer months are the best time to visit. However, the lands Down Under also have much to offer outside the traditional peak summer months (December – February).

Not only do these shoulder seasons offer opportunities to beat the summer heat and avoid peak season prices and crowds, they also offer a collection of truly highlighted experiences.



WA Ningaloo whaleshark swim. Photo credit - Tourism Australia

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AUSTRALIA

Australia's winter months (June, July, August) offer some of the best conditions to visit the continent's tropical Top End (embracing the Kimberley, Kakadu, and the Great Barrier Reef), with opportunities to:

- Enjoy Kimberley Coast luxury expedition-style cruises (that generally operate between March and October) to see some of the most remote and naturally spectacular corners of Australia. Alongside well-established small-group experiences like [True North](#), visitors can now also enjoy private charter personalized catamaran sailing experiences—and from July 2025, will also be able to cruise with the new *Paspaley Pearl* (a luxury expedition ship for just 30 indulged guests that will also offer exclusive insights into the world of Paspaley pearls).
- Swim with gentle whalesharks on the Ningaloo Coast (late March to July—while enjoying spectacular stargazing at [Sal Salis](#) where the ocean meets the outback) or dive with Dwarf Minke Whales on the Great Barrier Reef (June/July)—an experience not offered anywhere else on the planet!
- Experience authentic Indigenous culture in Arnhemland or the Tiwi Islands
- Witness Broome's "Staircase to the Moon"; a natural phenomenon that creates the illusion of a staircase to heaven as the moonlight illuminates the Roebuck Bay mudflats every full moon between March and October
- Marvel at the outback's endless star-studded skies (while also being able to enjoy active outback adventures that avoid the harsh summer heat)

Elsewhere across the country, visitors can:

- Spot humpback whales cruising the East Coast on their annual migration
- Take in fabulous annual festivals such as Sydney's Vivid sound and light spectacular (May 23 - June 14, 2025) or Hobart's colourful "Dark MOFO" midwinter festival
- Hunt for truffles in Western Australia's Margaret River, Tasmania, or the Southern Highlands south of Sydney
- Catch the excitement of a local AFL football game (ask to arrange to see a game with a former player by your client's side to help explain the game and the locals' obsession with it)
- Spend the night in a "snowdome" in the Victorian Alps for the opportunity to snowshoe through snow gum trees and tour the high-country backcountry in a snowmobile

This year in particular, visitors will also be able to witness a rare natural spectacle as Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre is set to fill with water. South Australia's usually bone-dry shimmering salt flats are set to transform into a vast inland sea (from approximately late May/early June for several months) that also sees the desert bloom with birdlife and wildflowers, and that reflects a picturesque pink hue as the sun shifts. Best appreciated from the air, Australia's iconic Ghan rail journey will add a special scenic flight option to their off-train touring to witness this once-in-a-decade spectacle.

Australia's autumn (March, April, May) and spring (September, October, November) months equally offer more Australian highlights, from scenic drives through vibrant fall-hued landscapes to fields of wildflowers in spring bloom. With generally warm days and cool evenings, these seasons also provide the perfect conditions for enjoying some of Australia's fabulous multi-day hikes that traverse some of the country's most spectacular landscapes—from the outback to Queensland's Gondwana rainforests. Now is the time to book a

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place on Australia's newest lodge walk—the 5-day, 4-night Uluru-Kata Tjuta Signature walk through Australia's Red Centre that launches next April (and which will operate between April and September).



The Lindis, located within the International Dark Sky Reserves, offers opportunities to see Aurora Australis.

NEW ZEALAND

“Coolcationers” are also discovering the joys of visiting New Zealand outside of the traditional peak summer season. Many travelers aren’t aware of the fabulous collection of alpine adventures (from heli-skiing and snowboarding to snowshoeing and ice-caving) available in New Zealand’s spectacularly scenic snow-covered Southern Alps between June and September, or the stunning star-gazing experiences served up in New Zealand’s winter night skies—with International Dark Sky Reserves and remote mountain lodges (such as [the Lindis](#), [Flockhill](#) or [Minaret Station](#)) offering spectacular opportunities to see Aurora Australis (the Southern Lights).

Visitors at this time may also share in the Matariki Maori New Year celebrations (marked by the rising of the Pleiades star cluster around June/July - June 20 in 2025)—alongside local celebrations such as this year’s special Luma Enchanted event (June-August)—an innovative sound, light and native wildlife storytelling experience in Queenstown’s “Kiwi Park” wildlife sanctuary.

New Zealand’s cooler winter months also invite visitors to cozy up by a fire in one of the nation’s stunning luxury lodges with a glass of local Central Otago Pinot Noir, see the famous New Zealand rugby “All Blacks” perform their trade-ark traditional Haka, watch whales migrating along the Kaikoura Coast, heli to a hot tub for a most memorable mountain-top soak or visit one of New Zealand’s healing geothermal spa experiences—such as the fabulous new Wai Ariki in Rotorua (their multi-sensory “Restorative Journey” is a cultural-wellness experience worth traveling for!). Visitors to New Zealand this winter can also be amongst the first to experience the fabulous new ROKI Collection Queenstown’s lakeside luxury accommodation,

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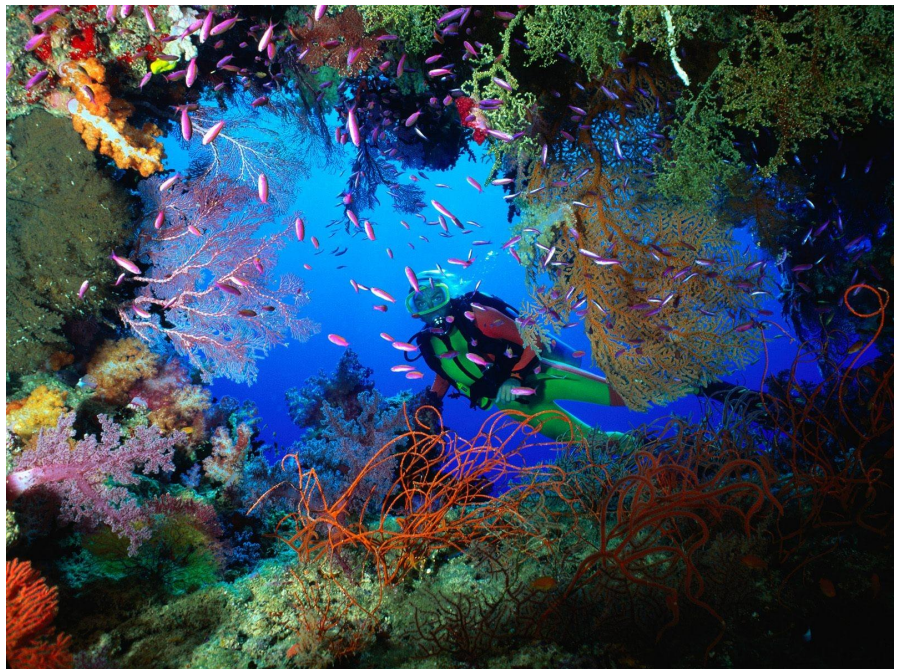
wellness facilities, and destination dining experiences (the new luxury property is scheduled to open in June this year).

New Zealand's uncrowded shoulder seasons also deliver their own inviting reasons to visit with colorful wine harvest festivities and vibrant scenic drives in the autumn (March, April, May), along with spectacular flower displays, thundering waterfalls, and breathtaking hikes in spring (September, October, November).

FIJI

A winter wonderland experience in New Zealand pairs perfectly with a vacation in the tropical islands of Fiji. The Southern Hemisphere winter months offer some of Fiji's best surfing and scuba diving conditions (for consistent swells and excellent visibility), as well as the ideal time to swim with manta rays and idyllic warm sunny days with lower humidity.

(Note: July–September is one of Fiji's peak visitor periods, especially during the Australian and New Zealand local school holiday breaks.)



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[Blanket Bay New Zealand](#) - A Restorative Escape on the Shores of Lake Wakatipu

Blanket Bay, New Zealand's premier luxury lodge, offers a restorative escape on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, surrounded by the majestic snow-capped Southern Alps. The lodge's focus on luxury, activities, and the relaxing atmosphere of its location make it an enchanting destination year-round. Discover the magic of this idyllic retreat that is particularly appealing during New Zealand's winter (June-September).

Envision a peaceful, private experience where the breathtaking panorama of Lake Wakatipu and the frosted Southern Alps unfolds without the crowds of peak season. While the lodge provides a wonderful destination throughout the year with its luxurious amenities, diverse activities, and captivating ambiance, winter offers a unique charm.

Adventurous guests can enjoy world-class skiing and snowboarding in nearby Queenstown or experience the ultimate exhilaration of Heliskiing, with a convenient pick-up directly from Blanket Bay's grounds before returning to a roaring fireplace in The Great Room, where enormous windows frame the spectacular scenery beyond. This focus on luxury, adventure, and tranquility makes Blanket Bay an exceptional destination, especially alluring in its serene winter setting.

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[News from the United Kingdom](#)



Enjoy a private autumn picnic at Ashford Castle, County Mayo, Ireland.

[Dream Escape, United Kingdom and Ireland](#) - Discover the Autumn, a Favorite Time of the Year to Travel the UK & Ireland

The enduring allure of the UK and Ireland is their versatility as year-round destinations. As summer melts into autumn, the UK and Ireland start to transform. Crisp and (sometimes) clear skies, saturated earthy hues, and fun activities make visiting at this time of year a unique opportunity. Temperate enough to enjoy the great outdoors but cool enough to appreciate a warm fire, this season definitely has its benefits.

Send your clients to the Lake District for a patchwork of glowing colors and the very best foodie scene. If they are brave enough, they'll have some of the best wild swimming in the UK on their doorstep. Further north, the Scottish Highlands never disappoint, and luxury accommodation choices provide a comforting cocoon from which to explore.

The sophistication of the local cities is a lure at any time of year. Autumn is quieter; the crowds of the summer have disappeared, but the buzz still remains. Your travelers will enjoy theatre, exhibitions, exquisite dining, and private experiences from Dream Escape's "little black book" of contacts, whatever their passion.

Wherever your clients decide to travel in the UK and Ireland, considering the shoulder season months will ensure they can find availability at their first choice of accommodation and experiences and, importantly, enjoy the space to thrive.

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Spend a sun-dappled afternoon by the heated outdoor pool with a glass of English sparkling wine during a Nyetimber Pool Day at Great Fosters.

[Great Fosters Estate, Egham, Surrey, England](#) - Slow Travel at Its Finest

There's a quiet magic in traveling just outside the rush of the summer season—and no place captures that magic quite like Great Fosters near Royal Windsor in Surrey. A stately Tudor estate with charm and romantic gardens, Great Fosters is a regal base from which to explore the nearby historic sites of London and Windsor, especially in the months of May, August, and September. These are the golden windows when the estate and its surroundings shine.

A coolcation at Great Fosters promises to enchant guests with each month providing unique ways to enjoy the exquisite location:

- **May** brings the gardens to life—wander through blooming wisteria, enjoy an al fresco afternoon tea, or a horse-drawn carriage ride around Windsor Great Park.
- **August** is when many Brits jet off to find a beach, and a wonderful time for guests to enjoy peaceful, sun-dappled mornings by the heated outdoor pool and late evenings on the terrace with a glass of English sparkling wine in hand.
- **September** is a local secret: crisp air, golden light, and harvest flavors as the seasons change and autumn approaches.

During a stay at Great Fosters, guests can take time to connect with the rich local history (Windsor Castle and Runnymede—notable for the sealing of the Magna Carta—are just moments away). Explore the National Trust homes and gardens nearby with no crowds in sight. Or simply spend the days doing absolutely nothing, in one of England's most enchanting settings.

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[Hartwell House & Spa, Buckinghamshire, England](#) - Experience the English Countryside at a Slower Pace

Traveling outside the peak season and perhaps for a longer stay during the months of April to June offers the opportunity to travel and experience one's destinations with greater ease and perspective.

Hartwell House, set in its own green park, is not only a destination in itself, but is also a center to explore the Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire countryside at a measured pace, taking in historic towns, local markets, and cultural landmarks with time to engage more fully.

Explore the estate and nearby attractions, with visits to other nearby National Trust properties, such as Waddesdon Manor or Stowe landscape gardens history away from high-season crowds.

Dining at Hartwell is always a special experience with a focus on seasonal and estate-grown ingredients, highlighting the best of local produce, and served at a leisurely pace in a splendid setting. Nearby Oxford provides access to museums, independent bookshops, and historic colleges to explore at leisure, and the next-door market town of Thame offers a sense of everyday English life.

Thus, choosing to travel out of season and extending the duration of a stay at Hartwell House allows for a deeper and unhurried understanding of a place—its history, people, and traditions.

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The beautifully decorated entrance to The Hari.

[The Hari, London, UK](#) - A Season for London's Hidden Gems

If, like many others, your clients prefer to travel out of peak season to avoid the mad influx of tourists, let this be the sign to plan a quieter, more relaxing trip to Britain's capital. Located within the charming residential streets of Belgravia, The Hari Hotel is a stylish retreat that offers guests the perfect place to practice slow travel, whether that be by exploring the charming local neighborhood, taking a bubble bath in a Studio King Suite, or making the most out of the quieter than usual tourist hot-spots.

Nearby, the local neighborhood of Belgravia offers guests the chance to explore beautiful, cobble-paved streets that are lined with spectacular cafes, independent shops, and wellness boutiques. The staff's top recommendation is Elizabeth Street, a delightfully decorated street where travelers can grab a drink before popping into the many shops and boutiques.

If, instead, your clients would like to experience more of the well-known London attractions, then traveling out of season is by far the best option. Conveniently located within walking distance of The Hari, top attractions like Buckingham Palace and Battersea Power Station can be enjoyed to the full extent, without the big crowds one typically finds in the peak season.

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The Archibald at 100 Princes Street.

[100 Princes Street, Edinburgh, Scotland, Red Carnation Hotel Collection](#) - Linger Longer to Truly Live the Edinburgh Experience

Edinburgh is a city that shines all year round, but autumn and early spring bring a special kind of magic. At 100 Princes Street – recently crowned the No.1 Best New City Hotel in the World by *Travel+Leisure* – guests enjoy the rare privilege of exclusivity, with the intimacy of a residents-only experience. Located along the historic thoroughfare of Princes Street and boasting uninterrupted views of Edinburgh Castle, the hotel is a haven for those seeking a more meaningful, unhurried escape. In these shoulder seasons, Scotland’s capital becomes a tapestry of culture and color, ideal for travelers wanting to immerse themselves in local life without the summer bustle. Guests can sip their way through some of the 100 rare and storied whiskies in the Ghillies Pantry, join a private kilt fitting or design their own Scottish gin, and enjoy a plethora of cultural attractions from the Scottish National Gallery, National Museum of Scotland, and the Writers Museum, all within walking distance. Curated partnerships with Scottish artisans and storytellers mean every stay is rich with connection, craft, and culture. With fewer tourists and more room to roam, 100 Princes Street encourages your clients to linger longer and truly live the city, not just see it.