

## *The 10 Best Vacation Spots in Europe to Escape the Crowds*

Sarah Koller · May 31, 2018



This year's "Best in Europe" list includes recommendations by Lonely Planet travel experts who know a thing or two about finding hidden gems, especially during the peak travel months. "There is growing concern over the increase in tourism to popular European destinations, particularly over the busy summer months, so with this list we wanted to show that there are a wealth of incredible alternatives to discover across Europe," said company spokesperson and Editorial Director, Tom Hall.

Below are their top 10 off-the-map European destinations to explore this year:

1. Emilia-Romagna, Italy
2. Cantabria, Spain
3. Friesland, the Netherlands
4. Kosovo
5. Provence, France
6. Dundee, Scotland
7. Small Cyclades, Greece
8. Vilnius, Lithuania
9. Vipava Valley, Slovenia
10. Tirana, Albania

Overall, Emilia-Romagna, Italy, takes the cake as the best less-traveled destination, offering everything you'd find in Florence or Rome, minus the influx of tourists. "Whether you're looking for a cultural city break, spectacular scenery, or a buzzing foodie destination, there is something for every taste. You can find all of these things in Italy's Emilia-Romagna region, which flies under the radar compared to some of Italy's bigger-hitting destinations," said Hall.

In second place is the Spanish region of Cantabria, where the juxtaposition of scenic beaches and sprawling mountains makes for an ideal escape for travelers who want the best of both worlds. Friesland in the Netherlands follows in third with its bustling capital, Leeuwarden, which won the distinction of this year's European Capital of Culture. And of course, you can't forget about Dundee, Scotland, a waterfront city that merges history and innovation and will be the home of the newest branch of the V&A Museum this September, nabbing the sixth-place spot.

If a tourist-free getaway to Europe sounds like the perfect use of your PTO, any of the above 10 cities are sure to provide all of the culture and beautiful scenery you crave without the crowds. Happy travels!