

Where Foodies Should Go in 2016

By SHIVANI VORA JAN. 8, 2016



The National Cherry festival takes place in Traverse City, Mich. John L. Russell

The renowned chef René Redzepi of the two-Michelin-starred Noma in Copenhagen wasn't exaggerating when he said, "People will travel anywhere for good food — it's crazy." Indeed, food lovers are now trooping around the world to both accessible and remote destinations. Perhaps Mr. Redzepi should have added that overindulging is almost certainly the case with — and maybe the point of — any culinary-inspired trip.

It's hard, for example, to hang on to discipline at the [International Alba White Truffle Fair](#) in Italy's

Piedmont region. Coming off its 85th anniversary last year, the more than monthlong extravaganza is homage to the profusion of the area's prized white truffles come fall. A market in the city center has stands where truffle hunters sell their finds and an eatery where it's possible to try small plates of truffle-themed dishes like handmade egg pasta with white truffle shavings. And restaurants around town feature menus highlighting the delicacy (tentatively scheduled for Oct. 8 to Nov. 13).

For an indulgence that's easier on the wallet, there's the [North Sea Beer Festival](#) in Belgium's picturesque coastal town of Ostend, about a 75-minute train ride from Brussels. The country has no shortage of beer-themed fetes, but this baby of the bunch (this is its second year), where beer fans can throw back more than 200 varieties from large and small producers, is one of the handful held in an open-air setting and claims to be the only one set along the beach (Aug. 26 to 28).

It's possible to drink too much beer, but can you eat too many cherries? When a European missionary planted the first cherry trees on a peninsula in Traverse City, Mich., more than 150 years ago, locals discovered that the combination of the sandy soil and proximity to Lake Michigan made it a ripe spot for growing cherries.

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A half-century later, the [National Cherry Festival](#), celebrating its 90th birthday this year, was born. Visitors to the eight-day love fest can expect multicourse cherry meals and a farmers' market where vendors sell cherry edibles like granola and barbecue sauce; there's also a tent where they can imbibe cherry beers, wines and cocktails (July 2 to 9).

From fruits of a tree to fruits of the sea: Seafood is the culinary darling of New Zealand in 2016 with four festivals spotlighting local crustaceans. Green-lipped mussels are the lure at the [Havelock Mussel & Seafood Festival](#) in Marlborough (March 19) while oysters are what brings the crowds to the seaside township of Bluff for the [Bluff Oyster Festival](#) (May 21). At the [Whitianga Scallop Festival](#) on the Coromandel Peninsula on the North Island, the namesake shellfish is served up in every imaginable iteration from shots to kebabs (Sept. 10), and at the [Kaikoura Seafest](#) on the South Island, the seafood includes crayfish and tiny whitebait fish (Oct. 1).

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But there are times when dining and drinking might be more fun with some star wattage and glamour thrown in. A big lineup of celebrity chefs is to be found at the [South Beach Wine & Food Festival](#), marking 15 years this winter. Here, the Spanish chef José Andrés is hosting a paella party at the see-and-be-seen SLS South Beach, and Momofuku Milk Bar's Christina Tosi will serve up her strawberry lemon cake and other sweets at the former home of Gianni Versace. All told, it's an affair of more than 85 dinners and tastings around South Beach, and, for the first time this year, Fort

Lauderdale too. And when you need a break from partying, there's always the beach (Feb. 24 to 28).

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