

TRAVEL

# 9 Destinations Where You Can Escape Winter's Worst



by [Hudson Lindenberger](#)



## For the Fantasy Fan

The Star Wars universe seems to be continually expanding these days, with a new movie in the offing every year or so. To make those movies, the filmmakers travel around the globe to find unique locations, one of which is the picturesque city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Inside its towering medieval bulwarks, endless corridors and pathways wind amongst golden hued walls, instantly transporting visitors to another place. Maybe that's why the makers of *Star Wars Episode VIII: The Last Jedi* chose the city as the location of the casino city Canto Bight for the movie, or why *Game of Thrones'* directors have used the city as a stand in for King's Landing. [Zicasso Travel](#) has created weeklong tours centered around the two fantasy series where visitors get to sample the local wines and delicacies, all while touring filming locations for the famous series. It makes you feel transported to a place far, far, away.



## For the Food Lover

Mexico City offers the perfect escape from the winter doldrums for any food lover looking to add some warmth back into their life. A relatively quick flight (four hours from Atlanta or San Francisco, four and a half from Chicago, and five and a half from New York) puts you in the middle of one of the world's most vibrant culinary scenes, filled with up-and-coming chefs reinventing traditional Mexican dishes. They are highlighting the native spices and ingredients found throughout the country, all against the historic backdrop of one of the oldest cities in North America.

The **St. Regis Hotel**, located in the heart of the city, is the perfect basecamp for a weekend of delicacies. Within walking distance are markets, restaurants, and bars offering spicy fried insects, flavorful sauces, and smoky mezcals. Once the sun dips below the horizon a myriad of food carts appear offering fresh food that most restaurants would kill to have on their menu. And every Saturday, the hotel offers chef-led tours of the local markets where you can learn the tricks of the trade from professionals. [Learn more here.](#)



Facebook/Les Jardins de Villa Maroc

## For the Explorer

Morocco is a land of mystery. It's where the sprawling Sahara Desert sweeps towards the coast, the place where millennia old cities give birth to tales of intrigue, and most importantly it's where any traveller wanting to explore the upper reaches of the continent of Africa can head to without breaking the bank. Essaouira is a laid back city where Berbers from the desert and fishermen from the sea mingle. (It's also where Jimi Hendrix was said to have penned Castles Made of Sand, where Led Zeppelin laid down riffs, and where the Wailers rolled spliffs.) You can spend hours in the city's sprawling medina searching through decrepit storefronts for spices and silver trinkets, or you can rent a camel and ride down to the beach. The parched countryside is just outside the city with a myriad of villages waiting for visitors. In between your adventures head back to your quiet room in the [Les Jardins de Villa Maroc](#) to refresh in the pool, sip some coffee in the lounge, and sleep in your own oasis. [Learn more here.](#)



## For the Golfer

Nothing is better in the middle of winter, when the weather is at its worse, than jumping on a plane to escape to somewhere warmer with your golf clubs and a few buddies in tow. **The Puntacana Resort & Club**, which has been called the best course in the Caribbean, has two oceanside courses with 45 holes between them. There are cliffs and coves to carry, lakes to avoid, and expansive greens to aim for. Located on the eastern tip of the Dominican Republic, the resort will host its first ever PGA event in March—so now is the time to visit. With two hotels on site, you have a variety of rooms to choose that will fit any budget, plus all of the amenities you would expect. And on the off chance you get sick of the links, there's deep-sea fishing available just a quick boat ride away.



## For the Skier

There's no shortage of mountains that are overcrowded with long lift lines, skied out runs, and spotty snow. Not so in the heart of Big Sky Country at Bridger Bowl. With over 350 inches of snow annually, the 2,000-acre resort offers a front side crisscrossed with a variety of runs, and a backside packed with miles of untrammed powder. There are four large bowls all within reach with chutes, glades, and gullies galore—without the attendant lift lines found in other popular ski areas. **The Lark** offers you the chance to stay in the heart of Bozeman, where after a day on the mountain you can dine on rustic cuisine, slug down tasty craft beers, and recharge in comfort that won't break your wallet. The staff will even arrange all of your adventures for you, so all you have to do is dream about hitting the Cold Smoke that the nearby mountains are known for.



## For the Wine Lover

Santa Barbara, California is the perfect place to head in the middle of the winter for a wine escape. It is located in the Pacific Ocean and—unlike Sonoma and Napa—is easy to get to, boasting beautiful weather almost every single day. With the Santa Maria and Santa Ynez Valley wine regions just to the north of the city, there are hundreds of wineries specializing in Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Syrah a short drive away. The perfect place to stay is the quirky **Canary Hotel** located just on the edge of the city's Funk Zone (an eclectic area filled with restaurants, wine tasting rooms, and galleries). From the hotel you can sit on the rooftop deck sipping wine after a day spent amongst the grapes and wineries. The hotel staff will lay out detailed tasting tours, arrange driver services, and make reservations at smaller vintners for you. [Lean more here.](#)



## For the Retreat Lover

The endless parties, dinners, and jingles of the holidays can wear out even the most spirited among us. If you need to recharge and disconnect, the [Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health](#) is a perfect place to do it. Located in the Berkshire Mountains of western Massachusetts, it allows you to quickly escape the noise and unplug for a while. Their full schedule of retreats offer visitors the chance to reboot their diet, jump-start their fitness, dive into yoga, or just spend some time in quiet with their own thoughts. In between activities you can get the kinks worked out by professional masseuses, choose from a variety of spa treatments, and attend seminars led by professionals. After some time there, you'll be refreshed enough to dive back into your daily life with all cylinders firing—or at least with a bit more serenity.



Courtesy of Conrad Bora Bora Nui

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## **For the Luxury Lover**

Sometimes you just have to throw caution to the wind and do something truly memorable. In the middle of winter, one of those somethings is flying to the South Pacific for a week of pampered luxury on a tiny island in the middle of nowhere. The **Conrad Bora Bora Nui** is perched over the edge of a tropical lagoon surrounded by baby blue water, brilliant white beaches, verdant jungle, and not much else—which makes the private villas at this resort feel that much more private.

After a day of unwinding on the beach you can head to the spa for a treatment, or dine on fresh-caught seafood at one of the resorts restaurants. Relaxation never felt (or tasted) so good.