

TRAVEL TIPS

# How to Plan a Movie-Themed Vacation

It's easier than you may expect to find, visit, and enjoy the places where your favorite movies were made.



By **Shivani Vora** March 8, 2018

Whether it's the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy in New Zealand or "Roman Holiday" in Rome, many noteworthy movies are filmed in appealing locales all over the world that travelers may want to visit and enjoy.

According to Angela Tillson, a film location manager in Kauai who has worked on the set of films including "Jurassic Park: The Lost World" and "The Descendants," exploring a beloved movie set destination through the eyes of the film makes for an enjoyable vacation.

"Seeing a place with a focus on a movie you love will give you a perspective that the average tourist doesn't usually get," she said. Here are her tips to get started.

## Choose Your Destination

If there's a movie you love, you can find out where it was filmed by looking at the credits at the end of the film or by going online to [The Internet Movie Database](#), also known as [IMDB](#), which often lists filming locations. Once you know the locale, you can start planning your trip.

Or, consider doing what Ms. Tillson often does when deciding on where to vacation: pick a spot you're interested in visiting, and find out what movies have been filmed there. Then, plan an itinerary based around a film that you've seen and liked. "It's fun to sometimes let a destination determine the movie you're going to live rather than the other way around," Ms. Tillson said.

There are even some books available on movies shot in certain destinations such as [The Hawaii Movie and Television Book](#) and [New York: The Movie Lover's Guide](#). Do an online search for more options.

## Get in the Mood

Before you head to your destination, be sure to rewatch the movie. A rewatch not only reminds you of identifiable spots to look out for during your trip, but it also

adds to the excitement of your upcoming exploration.

If the movie is based on a book, considering reading the book, too. It may have details about the locale that the movie doesn't touch on. Also, books often have scenes that don't make it into the movie adaptations, which gives you a deeper view of the destination. Ms. Tillson also recommended downloading the movie's soundtrack or score, and listening to it throughout your trip.

## Book a Themed Trip

Some travel companies sell set itineraries focused on popular movies. Luxury tour operator [Zicasso](#), for example, has [an eight-day trip to Ireland](#) inspired by "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" and [Wild Frontiers](#) has [an 11-day trip to India](#) inspired by "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel." Ms. Tillson suggested doing a web search or checking with a travel agent to find out about such trips.

Also, in some destinations, local tour operators and hotels sell movie-themed tours. For instance, [The St. Regis Princeville Resort](#) offers a tour that includes a private helicopter ride to Manawaiopuna Falls, made famous in "Jurassic Park," and an ATV tour of filming locations of movies such as "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Pirates of the Caribbean." Lunch is even included. The cost is \$5,674 for two adults.

A more affordable option, in Rome, is [the four-hour Roman Holiday themed excursion](#) from [HR Tours](#), where travelers ride a Vespa with a driver and see all the sites from the movie; the cost is 170 euros per person.

## Hang Where the Movie Crew Did

When they're not working, movie crews enjoy hitting local bars and casual restaurants that serve tasty local cuisine, Ms. Tillson said.

Find out where the behind-the-scenes staff of your film spent their time by asking your destination's tourist board or your hotel's concierge, and check out a few of the spots. "It's another way to get entrenched in the film and spend time in bars and restaurants that you wouldn't normally think to hit," she said.

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