

20 trending travel destinations for 2020

Looking for the best holiday destinations for 2020? With the help of a few local travel experts, here's a list of carefully rounded up 20 unmissable getaways to add to your travel wishlist.

Rwanda

Rwanda has experienced a somewhat stratospheric rise from the ashes and recently secured the top spot in *Travel Lemming's* list of trending destinations to visit in Africa in 2020. The award comes just one month after Kigali, the capital, earned an enviable fifth place on *Forbes's* list of the 20 Best Places to Visit in 2020.

Mozambique

With more airlift and steadily improving roadways, Mozambique should be on the itinerary of every South African traveller in 2020. It's ideal for a long weekend getaway from Johannesburg, a leisurely honeymoon and even team building. Easy to access, the weather is excellent and there's a good selection of hotels and restaurants.



Culinary tourism is booming here, and Dana Tours, based in Maputo, has a popular guided food tour of the capital that allow visitors to immerse themselves in the unique and vibrant flavours of Mozambican cuisine. South Africans on a budget can also try the recently launched luxury InterCape coach service – which connects Durban to Maputo from R280.

Poland

Poland has earned a spot on *National Geographic's* 2020 hotlist. With its historic cities, affordable food and beer, there's more than enough to keep visitors occupied. While the historic city of Kraków is loved by many, an atypical recommendation is the Białowieża Forest – a Unesco World Heritage site protecting some of the last patches of primeval forest in lowland Europe.

Georgia

Nowhere near US soil, you'd be forgiven for struggling to find this one on the map. Extending along the Northeast border of Turkey, intersecting Europe and Asia, Georgia and its neighbour Armenia are former Soviet republics, virtually untouched by tourism. The Travel Corporation (TTC) has noted a surge of interest in this type of off-the-beaten-track, alternative European destination.

It predicts even more travellers will find their way here in 2020. South African wine-lovers will feel quite at home in Kakheti, the heart of Georgia's wine region. Connect with locals in the village of Sagaredjo and enjoy a lunch and wine tasting, complete with a masterclass in how to bake traditional Georgian bread and churchkhela sweets.

Jordan

Jordan was recently ranked one of the three top business climate improvers in the 2020 Doing Business rankings, owing to a series of economic reforms enacted over the past year. The momentum has been a boost to tourism and officials are looking to welcome seven million tourists in 2020.

Egypt

Cairo recently landed the top spot on Lonely Planet's list of the top 10 cities to visit next year, but the game-changer is the 2020 opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum. It will house artefacts from around the country, including King Tutankhamun's entire burial collection of more than 5,000 pieces.



Portugal

Another Flight Centre recommendation, Portugal wore the crown in terms of Europe's most trendy destinations in 2019. Named Europe's Leading Destination at the World Travel Awards, it doubles up as a rand-friendly option. There are several flight options from Johannesburg and Cape Town, including a new route serviced by Qatar Airways.

Sicily, Italy

Most travellers head straight to Venice and Rome, but Sicily, an island just off the boot of Italy (and the largest island in the Med.) is full of seaside villages, honey-hued buildings and unspoilt beaches surrounded by turquoise waters. The Mediterranean climate guarantees sunny days year-round.

Norway

There's no better place to enjoy the Northern Lights than Norway, especially from the bow of a Hurtigruten ship. In 2020, travellers can unpack their winter woollies once and watch the kaleidoscopic shades of green and blue dance across the sky while making their way along the rugged Norwegian coastline.

Cape Town

2020 is definitely the year for cruising, and if you can't make it all the way to Norway, there's nowhere better to board your ship than the Mother City, Cape Town – which welcomes both Norwegian Cruise Line and Oceania to its shores in the new year.

Stellenbosch

Expect more than red wine and roaring fires when you head to Stellenbosch during the 2020 winter season. The second-oldest town in South Africa, Stellenbosch will host a range of cultural and art experiences in 2020. Before winter, diarise Triennale – which begins in February 2020 and promises to take public art in Stellenbosch to new heights.

The Garden Route

Keep it local with a game of golf, days spent relaxing in the pool, at the beach or restoring body and soul at the spa at the iconic Fancourt Estate in George. Keep George as your base for a range of adventures – from strawberry picking (year-round) to ziplining, cruising on the Knysna lagoon or lazy afternoons on your private patio. Expansion plans are also in the pipeline for George Airport, and work is due to start in March/April 2020.

Nepal

Looking across the map to South East Asia, Nepal is a destination that's coming in hot and a top pick from the team at Big Ambitions, a specialist South African travel marketing company. According to the team, the country is one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations for adventure travellers and backpackers. Since South Africans can obtain a visa on arrival, travelling to this incredible country is easier than you think. *Namaste!*

Republic of Ireland

If you're fortunate enough to be making your way to Ireland in 2020, Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG), recommends a visit to Ireland's most northerly county, Donegal. Known for its beaches, heather-clad mountains, precipitous cliffs and network of ancient monuments, the destination recently received a €5m investment in a bid to boost tourism at Slieve League cliffs in Donegal. 2020 also marks the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St. Colmcille, another of Ireland's patron saints.



Vietnam

While Thailand will forever be a firm South African favourite, Vietnam has seen its share of tourist traffic in recent years. The destination is coming in strong for 2020, being rand-friendly and visa-free for South African 'green mamba' passport holders. The capital city of Hanoi will host the Vietnamese Grand Prix in April.

The Galápagos Islands

Located in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Ecuador, The Galápagos Islands existed mostly untouched for millions of years. An all-star cast of plants and animals found their way here over time – and thrived. Today, more than 200,000 people visit the Galápagos each year. Plus, we've got confirmation from Flight Centre's Cruiseabout cruise specialists that the area will remain a favourite for cruise-enthusiasts in 2020

Colombia

There is little doubt that Colombia is one of South America's hottest tourist destinations. After decades of political discord, conflict and warring drug cartels, Colombia is experiencing an extraordinary tourism revival. According to Development Promotions, which represents and markets global travel companies in South Africa, it's an exciting port of call for cruise ships.

Seychelles

Picture-perfect and stunning, the 115 Seychelles islands make the top 20 with ease. It's an unforgettable holiday destination, visa-free (for South African passport holders) and super easy to reach with direct daily flights ex-Johannesburg operated by Air Seychelles.

Maldives

According to the Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC), official stats show a steady increase in arrivals from South Africa since 2015. It's an enticing destination for surfers, scuba divers and fly-and-flopper holidaymakers. No visa needed for South African passport holder either!

Slovenia and the Balkan countries

Slovenia is another rand-friendly European pick. The clear waters of Lake Bled, topped by a quaint church and medieval

castle, is a must-do, as is Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital. Straight from the pages of your favourite fairy tale, Ljubljana was named the European Commission's Green Capital of Europe in 2016.

Many South Africans are eager to embrace a Balkan adventure in 2020.

The USA

Across the US, Airbnb predicts more visitors will lean towards eco-conscious and environmentally friendly locations in 2020, and forgo trips to traditionally popular cities in exchange for "hidden gems" including Seattle, Washington and Portland, Maine (not to be confused with Portland, Oregon).

Morocco

Morocco is having a moment that will last long into 2020, with time-honoured attractions complemented by local restaurants serving up seasonal produce, and coastal wellness retreats with a yoga and surfing mix. Thanks to improving infrastructure, it's becoming easier to get around by road. And, with Africa's first high-speed train located here, you can zip from Casablanca to Tangier in just two hours.

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