



22
NORTH
QUEENSLAND



6
SEPANG
GOLD COAST

APRIL 2014

ENDLESS VACATION

PLAY | EAT | SHOP | RELAX | EXPLORE



FAVORITE BEACHES

SOME OF THE BEST
SPOTS AROUND THE
WORLD FOR SUN
AND SAND

SPECIAL 40TH ANNIVERSARY
MEMBER SECTION

TREASURE HUNT
FIND THE 40s AND
WIN AN IPAD



Because your vacation means...
una vacanza romantica
{romantic vacation}



Because your vacation means the world to us®

RCI®

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April
2014

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ON THE COVER

Liguria, **Italy**.

Check out endlessvacation.com

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All prices are in Singapore dollars unless otherwise specified. For full membership terms and conditions please call our friendly reservation consultants or check out our website RCI-asia.com.

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Welcome

This issue of Endless Vacation® magazine marks RCI's 40th anniversary and we have plenty of great reasons to celebrate with our readers.

The world has transformed a lot over the past 40 years with new technology and advances rapidly changing the way we do things. We can now book our flights, accommodation and tours from our cell phones, take photos on numerous mobile devices and share them instantly across the world through social media.

Through all these changes, RCI has been right there with you. Just check out some of the new blue tooth wireless speakers on their way in our Travel Gear section (page 5). With greater technology, there comes a higher expectation in the variety and quality of accommodation that our RCI members would like to experience. Nevertheless the fun and excitement of taking a well earned vacation will always stay the same.

This issue is bursting with some exciting vacation options. Check out our 40 favorite beaches from around the world (pages 11-16) and the 40 ways RCI is celebrating with you to make your vacations special (pages 28-38.)

There's shopping in Hangzhou, China (pages 8 & 9), plus a planning calendar to help you book your next memorable vacation experience. Don't forget to check out our members' stories as they share some of their wonderful vacation experiences from across the globe (pages 39-41.)

We are grateful to have been part of your vacation memories for the past 40 years and we look forward to making the next 40 years even more memorable.

Happy vacations from all of us at RCI.

Adrian Lee
Managing Director – RCI Asia Pacific

JOIN IN THE TREASURE HUNT AND WIN AN IPAD!

To celebrate RCI's 40th anniversary, the Endless Vacation team hid the number 40 (in red) throughout the magazine. See if you can find all 12. Their locations will be revealed in the next edition of Endless Vacation. Here's a hint - the first one is on page 7. Find all 12 and email a short story (up to 250 words) and photo of your favorite RCI vacation and go in the draw to win*. Entries close 5pm 30 May 2014. The winner will be notified by email at the end of June 2014. Send your entries to marketingsupport@rci.com. *Conditions apply



BEIJING

Asian Attraction

This year's Asian Attractions Expo promises to be bigger and better and will be held on 17-20 June at the China National Convention Centre in Beijing.


ready,
set,
go

MAGNETIC ATTRACTION:
There is no city more appropriate for the Asian Attractions Expo than Beijing.

The Expo is the one stop destination for leisure and attractions industry professionals, including operators, suppliers, investors, and developers from businesses as diverse as amusement and theme parks, zoos and aquariums, museums and science centres, hotels and resorts and historic tourist attractions.

Industry leaders will gather for the premier conference and exhibition designed specifically to attract professionals in the Asian market. Members will be able to take their business to new heights with the knowledge, connections and expertise gained from the Expo.

It is expected that more than 250 exhibiting companies from around the world with new ideas and products to sell. There will be special education sessions on issues that affect business success, including safety and marketing. Why not take a behind the scenes tour while you are there to discover strategies used by some of Singapore's top attractions.

5,000 professionals representing all segments of the attractions industry from over 60+ countries are expected to attend.
www.iaapa.org/expos/asian-attractions-expo/home 



ready,
set,
go

THAILAND

Spa Masterclass

Centara Hotels & Resorts is proudly organising The Thai Spa Master Class from 12 – 16 May 2014 at Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket, Thailand.

Spa therapists from all over the world are expected to attend the Masterclass in order to perfect their Thai spa techniques. The seminar will be taught in an exotic and serene environment and will focus on age old treatment techniques with local herbs.

With the growing global appeal of Thai spa treatments, the five day seminar will allow spa therapists to deepen their knowledge of holistic health and wellness philosophy and master new techniques by learning from one of the country's top spa trainers. The event is aimed at hotel staff members and people working at day spas. Centara Hotels & Resorts are a leading hotel chain in Thailand. www.traveldailynews.asia



Nan Province



Phrae Province

INDONESIA

Indo 500

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy for the Republic of Indonesia (MOTCE) has revealed plans to develop 561 tourism villages in 2014. The project will span 19 provinces and is designed to help visitors discover traditional life at local Indonesian villages, where residents maintain indigenous cultures and live just as their ancestors did.

Throughout 2014, MOTCE will improve facilities in more than 500 communities by developing tourism and providing support for the local people. Each village will receive funding, plus training sessions offered in foreign languages, art, culture and culinary skills to support lowincome residents and enhance tourists' enjoyment of the rural area.

Among the tourism villages being developed is Kembangarum in Yogyakarta, one of the leading cultural regions of Java. This rural area will offer a variety of ways for visitors to gain a unique insight into local life. From fascinating batik courses and learning about Javanese gamelan music at the nearby Arum Laris Art House, to discovering how to plough fields and plant rice saplings with local farmers, the opportunities for tourists to enjoy unforgettable travel experiences here are endless.

"With more than 350 different ethnic groups, Indonesia is blessed with a cultural diversity unlike any other. The exciting plans to develop 561 tourism villages this year will offer a rare opportunity to experience true Indonesian village living, with many meaningful travel experiences designed to create everlasting memories for visitors." UK Country Manager for Indonesia, Richard Hume said.



4 APRIL 2014

THAILAND

Thailand Tourism Promotes Phrae and Nan Provinces

Two of Thailand's unexplored gems in the northern part of the country are being now promoted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand as alternative destinations.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is planning a series of tourism development projects and marketing promotional strategies for the province of Phrae as part of its plans to draw more visitors to this lesser known northern area of the kingdom, as well as neighbouring Nan province. Phrae and Nan, were once part of the ancient kingdom of Lanna and so they share a rich history and culture.

Both destinations are home to various ethnic groups. Nan is currently the more developed of the two provinces in terms of tourist infrastructure, which is why it is suggested that visitors see both regions to enjoy the delights of both.

Both destinations are easily accessible out of Bangkok with Nok Air operating a daily direct flight to Phrae and Nan from Don Mueang Airport.



No Wires Necessary

Today's portable Bluetooth wireless speakers stream music from your mobile device with the touch of a button (some can even work as speakerphones). Here are some of our favourites.

BY ADAM BAER



1



2



3



4



6



5

1 LOGITECH® UE™ BOOMBOX

A boom box for a new era: Eight mini speakers produce a smooth mix of sound frequencies with significant bass and the box connects to three devices at once and remembers eight.

2 Jawbone Mini Jambox

Weighing in at just over 450gms, this aluminium encased mini speaker/speaker-phone comes in nine colours with five grill textures for some stylish sounds.

3 JBL Charge

Its battery lasts 12 hours and it can charge your mobile devices with a microUSB cable while it plays. With a neoprene carrying case, it can go anywhere you need power.

4 Panasonic SC-NT10

Skip the wait for the phone-to-speaker pairing, since NFC technology speeds the connection. The device has a rugged shell designed to stand up to heat and cold.

5 Sony Splash Proof Speaker

Relatively lightweight, it's also splash proof and has superior sound for poolside placement. One of five colour options will match any cabana.

6 Sony SRSBTM8B

With an NFC Smartphone Connection this speaker provides 20 hours playback with just 4x AA batteries. Make hands free calls without missing a beat.



GOOD VALUE
Sepang Gold Coast

Paradise found

FIND A HIDDEN SLICE OF PARADISE ON THE LITTLE-EXPLORED MALAYSIAN GOLD COAST. WITH MANGROVES STRETCHING INTO THE STRAIT OF MALACCA AND JUNGLE DIPPING ITS TOES INTO THE SEA, SEPANG IS THE PERFECT MALAYSIAN GETAWAY.

CASSIE HARREX

Just 35 minutes from Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia's Sepang Gold Coast is a perfect place to rest and unwind. While its Formula One racetrack steals the spotlight, the beaches, rainforests and outdoor activities make this an ideal place to experience the best of Malaysia at any time. Our Golden Palm Tree Iconic Resort & Spa offers luxurious over-water villas that are meticulously laid out in the shape of a giant palm tree. Stretching almost a kilometre into the sheltered Strait of Malacca, it offers everything from adventure activities to full spa facilities and guarantees you a luxury vacation unlike any other. Three- and four-night stays are available.



Adventure time on Sepang

Rev your engines

No Sepang vacation is complete without a visit to its Formula One racetrack and adjoining National Automobile Museum. Here you can view classic cars, learn about the circuit and hear stories from its many motoring events. Entry is free and the museum is open 9 am–6 pm daily.

Linger on Lover's Bridge

By far the most spectacular spot to watch the sun dip into the sea, this bridge juts in to the sea and

is held together with a mix of concrete and, the further out you go, simple wooden planks. Watch fisherman reel in their daily haul, then grab a seat as nature puts on its finest show.

Tour the river

Discover the wealth of flora and fauna dotting the Sepang River as you putter along this mighty waterway in a wooden boat. Once you've finished spotting monkeys, otters and waterbirds, refuel on ikan bakar, a grilled fish specialty offered at the seafood restaurants dotting the shoreline.



DISCOVER SEPANG BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE DOES:

Selangor has it all, exotic wildlife, close proximity to Kuala Lumpur and myriad adventure activities all in a tropical beachfront setting with a palm tree shaped over water resort.



EAT

Perahu T (603) 3182 3600

No. 67, Jalan Pantai Bagan Lalang,
Kg Bagan Lalang, 43950 Sungai Pelek,
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.

Perahu serves a wide selection of Malay style barbeque and grilled seafood, specialising in local marinades.

www.goldenpalmtree.com

Passage Thru India T (603) 2145 0366

KL International Airport, Sepang, Malaysia

Try the Indian cuisine or enjoy vegetarian meals in a quiet relaxed atmosphere.

www.bestpenangfood.com

PLAY

Golden Palm Tree Sea Villa & Spa

T (603) 3182 3600

A five star haven of peace, perfect for eco adventure, non motorized water sports, family friendly fun or just relax and unwind.

www.goldenpalmtree.com

EXPLORE

Selangor International Circuit

T 603-8778 2200

Jalan Pekeliling, 64000 KLIA,
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Home of the Malaysian Grand Prix and the Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix. Take a behind the scenes circuit tour. Adults \$50. Students \$25.

www.sepangcircuit.com

STAY RCI AFFILIATED
GOLDEN PALM TREE ICONIC
RESORT AND SPA:

**Golden Palm Tree Iconic - 3 Night
Studio - \$390**
Available from August onwards

**Golden Palm Tree Iconic - 4 Night
Studio - \$525**
Available from June onwards

**For additional resort
listings visit RCI.com**



SHOPPING
Hangzhou, China

Something old, something new

TIME TRAVELLING IN HANGZHOU IS A REALITY WHEN ANCIENT MONUMENTS RUB SHOULDERS WITH MODERN MEGA-MALLS.

A day out shopping in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang, showcases what 'new China' is all about – the perfect introduction of East meets West, with old enhancing new. From the sensuous pleasure that is shopping for famous Hangzhou textiles to the international brands offered around Wulin Square, Hangzhou deserves its reputation as a shopper's paradise.





LOOK BACK WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE:
(clockwise from above) No signs of quaint historic buildings here, Hangzhou Convention Centre shows Hangzhou's modern face. Two roads that illustrate perfectly Hangzhou's split personality, one hundreds of years old through an ancient bamboo forest and the other racing into the future and the heart of Hangzhou city.



Traditional meets trendy

A lovely place to start your day is in Qinghe Fang, particularly Hefang Street, one of the oldest streets in Hangzhou, dating back to the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279). Hundreds of quality antique and local crafts stores selling traditional goods such as chopsticks, fans and silk umbrellas line these bustling streets, as well as ancient pharmacies and teahouses. The trendy Nanshan Road is another excellent place when shopping for souvenirs, including teas and chopsticks, or visit Imperial Street for its historical and cultural merits.

To market

From Qinghefang Street, it's a reasonable stroll through the heart of Hangzhou to Silk City (253 Xinhua Road), a market with over 600 silk and embroidery vendors, making it the largest in the country. Si Ji Qing market (31-59 Hanghai Road) is also a great place to pick up traditional clothing and fabrics. Other markets worth a visit include the Gaoxin Computer Market (345 Wensan Road) and, if only for a look, the cacophony that is the Bird and Flower Market (by Wushan Square).

Big brands and even bigger malls

When you're ready to move back into the 21st century, head for Yan'an Road where large department stores sell everything from the latest fashion to technology to curios. You should also stop in at the Hangzhou Shifeng Tea Company Ltd (228 Yan'an Road) to buy top-quality white chrysanthemum and Longjing teas. For high-end international brands, you can't beat the stores along Hubin Road or the Hangzhou Mansion Shopping Mall (1 Wulin Square). Wulin Square is a shopping destination in itself and a favourite place for fashionable Hangzhou locals to meet up.

Night shop

To end your day, check out one of Hangzhou's many night markets. Wushan Night Market (between Renhe and Huixing Roads) is a hangout for hip youth and the offerings are suitably trendy and quirky. Haggling here is perfectly acceptable, even expected 🍷

STAY RCI AFFILIATED RESORT IN HANGZHOU:

FVC @ Jinma International Hotel Hangzhou

Located in a region known for its world class silk, the FVC @ Jinma International Hotel is around 14 kms from the ancient and scenic Hangzhou and about a 20 minute drive from Xiaoshan Airport. The area has been called a "Paradise on Earth" with its picturesque West Lake. The full service hotel is designed for your enjoyment, comfort and convenience. During your stay you can take a workout at the fitness centre, relax at the sparkling indoor pool or just relax in the sauna or steam room. The 28th floor restaurant offers a plentiful selection of dining choices including authentic Fujian and Hangzhou style dishes. Other local choices include the Chaoshan Seafood Restaurant, as well as Japanese and Italian restaurants. For those seeking unbeatable fashion bargains why not take a taxi ride to the Si Ji Qing Clothing Market, just 13 kms away from the hotel.

7 nights from \$190 Hotel Units

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com



AT A GLANCE
NEW THINGS IN OUR
FAVOURITE PLACES



Forster, NSW Australia

Situated in the mid north coast region of New South Wales, Australia, Forster is a large coastal town in the Great Lakes Council LGA, about 308km northeast of Sydney. It is immediately adjacent to its twin, Tuncurry, which is the smaller of the two towns.

Because of its close proximity to Sydney, just over four hours drive, Forster-Tuncurry is a popular summer family vacation destination. With its large lakes and white sandy beaches, visitors can enjoy dolphin cruises, fishing, sail boarding and scuba diving. Other notable nearby attractions include the Bicentennial Trail, Cape Hawke and Booti Booti National Park.

1996

The small Forster Surf Life Saving Club achieved national recognition when their under 18 beach sprint relay team won gold at the Australian Championships.



223 metres

To climb to the summit of Cape Hawke for spectacular views.

Beaches Galore...

The beaches around Foster are all fabulous, starting with Main Beach which is a protected beach, making it ideal for families. Nearby Pebbly Beach is also a good spot for families as is Burgess Beach. Other beaches not to miss include One Mile Beach and McBrides Beach, ideal to escape for a day. Seven Mile Beach stretches south from Cape Hawke down to Booti Hill and the Ruins, great for fishing and surfing.

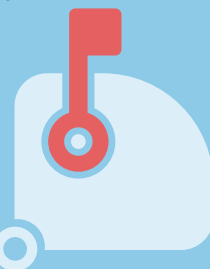


FORSTER

NAME GAME

The usual local pronunciation of the name is "Foster". The town got its name from William Forster, who was briefly Premier of New South Wales and who later served as Agent General in London.

1 OCTOBER 1872



The date the first post office opened in Forster, with John Wyllie Breckenridge as postmaster at a salary of £10 a year. (approx. SGD\$21)

STAY RCI affiliated resorts near Forster include:

Pacific Palms 1808

Just 20 minutes from Forster is the perfect spot for a relaxing vacation with beautiful beaches and numerous bird species to observe. The vast waterways, magnificent wildlife and crystal clear blue water provides for a very family friendly vacation. The resort offers extensive facilities, including a swimming pool, spa, sauna, gymnasium, barbecue and playground.

Seashells Beachfront Resort 3952

Seashells is ideally located next to the beach and surrounding Manning Valley attractions. Guests can enjoy the large swimming pool, sandy beaches with water sports, outdoor tennis and squash courts, miniature golf and a covered barbecue area. There's also a fully equipped gym and spa, resort playground, recreation room and spa for the perfect vacation experience.

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com

For information about tours and activities check out www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/forster-and-taree-area/forster



40

We searched
the world for the
most enticing, stunning
and inspiring stretches
of sand, surf and crystal
clear waters - from Boracay
to the Gold Coast. You'll find
the perfect spot for action,
indulgence and romance.
Just pick your beach
and get packing.

FAVORITE BEACHES

Asia

◆ Bo'ao Yudai Beach, Hainan, China

Locals on the island province of Hainan, nicknamed China's Hawaii, consider Yudai Beach the region's most precious gem. This crescent shaped sliver of white sand snaking between the Wanquan River and the South China Sea is said to be the world's narrowest and longest stretch of beach separating the sea from freshwater.

◆ White Beach, Boracay, The Philippines

Royal palm trees hang gracefully over the crystalline sands of White Beach, which is often included in the world's best lists. Visitors from Asia and beyond flock to its mythic shores and despite its far-flung location, they come for its glassy waters, snorkelling and boho-chic beach shacks.

◆ Patong Beach, Phuket, Thailand

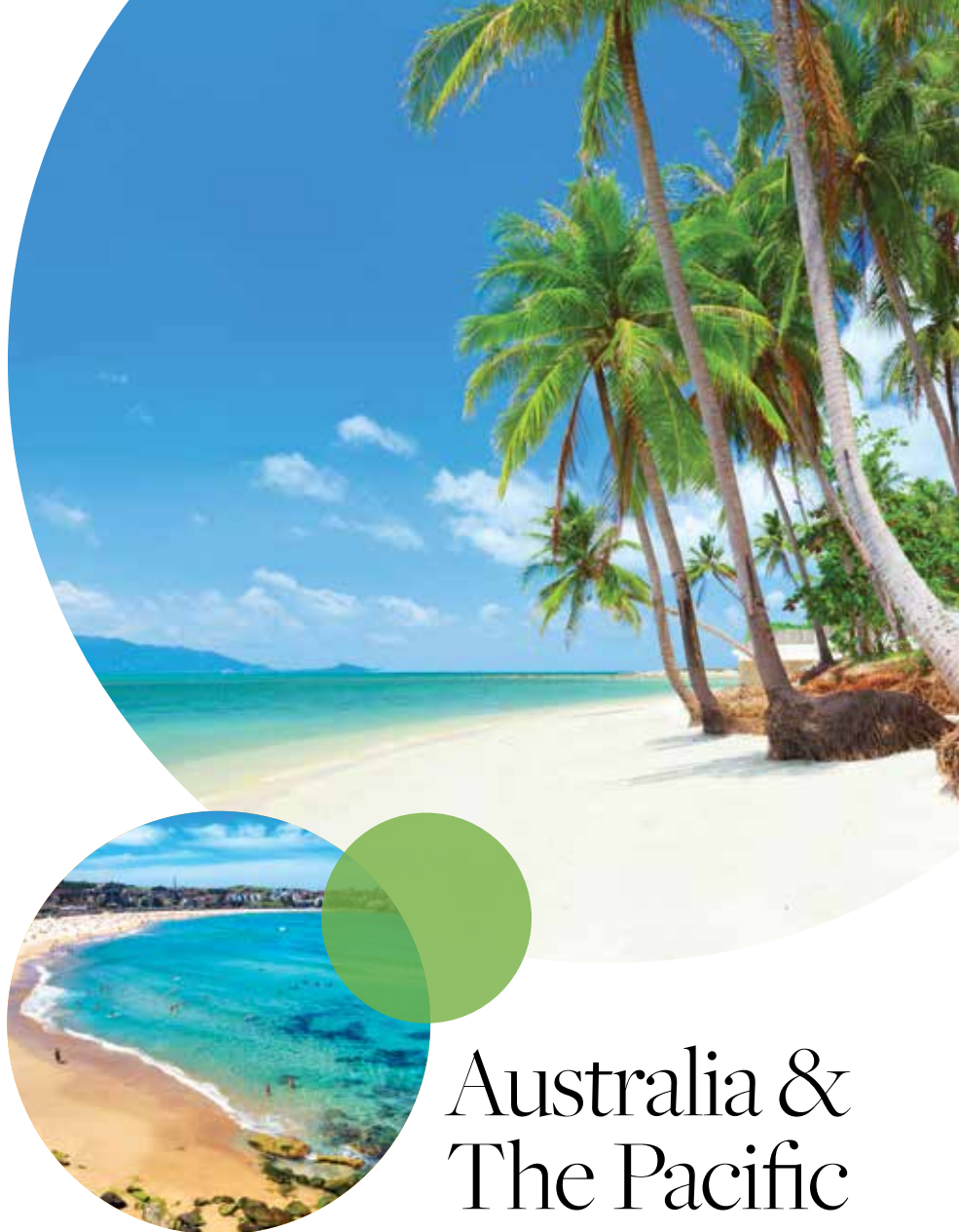
Patong's 2km strip of golden sand is one of the most popular beaches in Phuket. It's a place to watch the world go by. By day, Patong Beach is a hive of activity with parasail and Jet Ski operators, boat drivers, beach vendors and masseuses all vying for the attention of the many visitors relaxing on the beach chairs.

◆ Salang Beach, Tioman Island, Malaysia

The largest island on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Tioman is also by far the most famous of them all. The island's beauty has long attracted visitors to its shores and captivated the imagination of countless others. For those who love to party by the beach as the sun goes down, Salang Beach with its trendy nightspots is the place to dance the night away.

◆ Yalong Bay Beach, Sanya, China

Sanya in Hainan Island is the best choice for a southern China beach vacation after your trip on mainland China. Yalong Bay Beach is about 30 minutes driving from Sanya Airport and 20 minutes drive to downtown Sanya. The most popular beach for relaxing in Sanya, Yalong Bay Beach is a clean sandy beach with crystal clear waters away from the hustle and bustle.



◆ Datal Bay Beach, Langkawi, Malaysia

Langkawi on Malaysia's west coast is one of the country's premier vacation destinations. The island offers beautiful beaches of white sand, palm trees, sandy coves, clear waters and coral.

◆ Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui, Thailand

Chaweng is Koh Samui's busiest and biggest town, which is centred on the island's best beach. Chaweng Beach is the longest beach on the island and is the major centre for both entertainment and shopping. Chaweng is also nightlife central with its sophisticated cocktail bars and restaurants.

Australia & The Pacific

◆ Gold Coast Queensland, Australia

The Gold Coast is a collection of nearly two dozen beaches and provides a very glamorous beach-going experience. The sea is clean, blue, and very warm in the summer. Main Beach and Surfer's Paradise are both world renowned for their excellent surfing. For a perfect family outing, BBQ's or stroll on the shore you could check out Broadbeach and Nobby Beach.

◆ Byron Bay New South Wales, Australia

For everything that Australia has to offer its residents and visitors, there is still one thing that draws visitors to Australia more than anything else and that is its beaches. The sparkling sands of Australia's most easterly point attracts visitors from all over the world.



GET BEACHED (clockwise from below left) Beaches don't get any more iconic than Bondi. Sun, sand and crystal clear water in Koh Samui, Thailand. Pure and perfect in Mt Maunganui, New Zealand. Another spectacular day dawns on Surfers Paradise. Even the tress relax and take it easy in Hainan, China.

◆ Bondi Beach New South Wales, Australia

If you're looking for a beach full of things to do, there is nowhere better to go than Sydney's Bondi Beach. One of the world's most famous beaches, Bondi Beach offers visitors everything from surf competitions to beachside coffee shops. With about 1km of the world's softest sand, Bondi Beach is definitely one stop that any visitor to Australia has to make.

◆ Whitehaven Beach Queensland, Australia

Located on Whitsunday Island in Queensland, Whitehaven Beach has been voted by many visitors as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Few who have walked on its baby powder white sand will argue against its magnificence.

◆ Cable Beach Western Australia, Australia

If you're looking for a beach that combines culture and a tropical resort atmosphere then Cable Beach in Western Australia is the ultimate destination. Cable Beach is known for its Chinese and Japanese pearl divers and great views of the sunset.

◆ Wineglass Bay Tasmania, Australia

Anyone looking for a bit of adventure will welcome the search for this isolated little beach. Located in Freycinet National Park, Wineglass Bay is shaped like a perfect smile.

◆ Hyams Beach New South Wales, Australia

If your desire is to catch a glimpse of some of Australia's wildlife, then Hyams Beach just three hours south of Sydney in Jervis Bay New South Wales is probably right up your alley.

◆ Bells Beach Victoria, Australia

If you're hungry for a little competition, then Bells Beach is definitely the Australian beach for you. Home of the longest running surf competition in the world, Bells Beach is world famous for one thing, surfing.

◆ Piha Beach West Auckland, New Zealand

The birthplace of Malibu board riding in New Zealand, Piha is the country's most famous

surfing beach. It's rugged cliffs frame the sea while the commanding Lion Rock stands guard and the lush bush of the Waitakere Ranges provide plenty of opportunity for exploration, walking and picnicking.

◆ Kaiteriteri Beach Nelson, New Zealand

A short drive from the Nelson Township, picturesque Kaiteriteri is decidedly the best beach in the South Island of New Zealand. Golden sand and the highest rate of sunshine hours in New Zealand mean Kaiteriteri Beach has all the prerequisites for an idyllic seaside experience.

◆ Ocean Beach Mount Maunganui, New Zealand

Mount Maunganui is something of an oddity in that it has both an ocean beach and a harbour beach, Pilot Bay. The placid harbour beach is good for swimming while Ocean Beach is more dramatic, and popular for surfing and bodysurfing. For good reason, Mount Maunganui is dubbed "Surf City."

◆ **Ninety Mile Beach** **Northland, New Zealand**

Whether you count in miles or kilometres, it's still a really long beach. While the name Ninety Mile Beach is actually a misnomer (it's really only 55 miles long, and New Zealanders use kilometres rather than miles), it is justly a top tourist destination for its staggering beauty.

◆ **Natadola Beach, Viti Levu, Fiji**

A turquoise sea, pure white sand and palm shade trees, Natadola Beach has it all. The beach has earned a reputation as the greatest treasure of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu. The reef forms a lagoon, providing a haven for swimming and at low tide you can walk all the way out to the reef.

United States & Canada

◆ **Polihi Beach** **Kauai, Hawaii**

Dunes frame this wild 27kms stretch which is not only the westernmost public beach on Kauai but also the longest sandy shoreline in Hawaii. Since Polihi is accessible only via an old 8kms farm road, few travellers venture here, so the isolated coastline, known for great shelling and blood red sunsets, is even more rewarding.

◆ **Venice Beach** **Los Angeles, California**

Sure, the water is nice, but Venice Beach's raison d'être is its scene. Here surfers and soccer players strut their stuff along the water's edge while street dancers, body builders and tattoo artists hang out near the city's 4kms promenade.

◆ **Padre Island National Seashore** **Padre Island, Texas**

Forget the party beach of South Padre Island. Right next door is the longest expanse of undeveloped barrier island in the world, the Padre Island National Seashore, which ambles along for an impressive 100kms. Empty beaches are almost guaranteed here. Many accessible only by boat or four wheel drive. And the coastline is home to dozens of endangered animals including the Kemp's Ridley sea turtle.

◆ **Footbridge Beach** **Ogunquit, Maine**

The Algonquian Indians called the stretch of powdery white sand Ogunquit, which means "beautiful place by the sea." Centuries later, just when Ogunquit Beach faced the threat of over development, the city declared it a public park and limited access to three entry points.

◆ **Head of the Meadow Beach** **Truro, Massachusetts**

For a quiet retreat along 65kms Cape Cod National Seashore, visit Head of the Meadow Beach. Its warm summer waters are great for swimming and wading and the ever changing sandbar makes for awesome bodysurfing. Keep an eye out for seals, dolphins and whales as you stroll the beach or bask in the sun.

◆ **Hither Hills Beach** **Montauk, New York**

After a morning spent exploring Hither Hills State Park's woodlands and the walking dunes of Napeague Harbor, spread a blanket on this wide stretch of sugary sand. Families return year after year for a prime front row seat at the edge of the Atlantic and water that's great for swimming, paddle boarding and fishing.

◆ **Oceanfront Beach** **Virginia Beach, Virginia**

At 89 blocks, the Oceanfront is the longest beach in the city. Its wide yellow sands are divided into two distinct sections. The North End, great for families, is quiet and fairly residential while the South End packs a punch with hotels, waterfront restaurants, music venues and a 4kms boardwalk lined with ice cream shops.

◆ **Nags Head Beach** **Outer Banks, North Carolina**

A 2011 beach replenishment reinforced the 18kms long Nags Head shore, protecting it against the wrath of Hurricanes Irene and Sandy, which would batter many of its fragile sister beaches. Settled more than 150 years ago it continues to attract vacationmakers with endless diversions, like snorkelling, sailing, sea kayaking and hang gliding.



Lifes a beach (from left) The people are as interesting as the sand and surf in California's Venice Beach. Brazil's Ipanema Beach is a truly exotic location. A more genteel option could be Nags Head in North Carolina or for a change of pace you could sample the crystal clear waters of Dona Ana Beach in Portugal.



Central & South America

◆ Playa Conchal Guanacasteh Costa Rica

The white sands here are made of millions of washed up conchas (shells) that have been crushed to fluffy granules over time. As you walk south, the beach grows wider and more spectacular and Playa Conchal's relatively calm, crystalline waters almost beg you to take a dip in them.

◆ Ipanema Beach Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This sexy city beach near the Dois Irmãos (Two Brothers) mountains may be one of the best places on Earth to people watch. Boardwalk stands sell beer and cachaça, a sugarcane spirit, to tanned, well built beachgoers.

◆ Atacamesh Province of Esmeraldas, Ecuador

Bounce up to any of the thatched roofed bars lining the wide beach of Atacames, order a fruity cocktail and let the reggaeton, cumbia and merengue rhythms move you. Locals come to Atacames mostly to party, especially on weekends and vacations and all throughout the dry season (June through September).

◆ Pinamar Beach Pinamar, Argentina

Pinamar Beach is where porteños on the hunt for warmth and sunshine go on vacation in the southern hemisphere's summer. High season peaks in January, though March generally offers better deals and more privacy.

◆ Playa Brava Punta del Este, Uruguay

The La Mano statue by artist Mario Irarrázabal has made this beach Punta del Este's most photogenic. The sculpture, which has massive concrete and plastic fingers is only part of what makes the playa stand out among Punta del Este's long peninsula of enviable shorelines.

◆ Playa Negra Concón, Chile

The rocky coastline in this seaside town, 25kms north of Valparaíso, is awash in fine black sands rich in volcanic mineral. That dark hue attracts heat, but don't let the beach fool you: The water stays cold in these parts, thanks to the Humboldt Current coming up the coast. Still, people enjoy swimming in the comparatively gentle waves.



Europe

◆ Inch Strand Dingle Peninsula, Ireland

If it's epic beauty you seek, visit this 5kms long stretch of golden sand and dunes in the southern foothills of the Slieve Mish mountains, where the 1970 classic *Ryan's Daughter* was filmed. A certified Blue Flag beach (a mark of high environmental and quality standards), it's popular for angling, surfing, windsurfing and sunbathing.

◆ Dona Ana Beach Lagos, Algarve, Portugal

Of all the magnificent beaches that define the Algarve coast, in southern Portugal, the scenic coves in Lagos may be the most beautiful, thanks to their dramatic limestone cliffs and clear turquoise waters.

◆ Las Salinas Beach Ibiza, Spain

This beach is a social place, whether you chat with your neighbours on the white lounge chairs or spend time at one of the many nightclubs, where young socialites mingle with Spanish footballers. Las Salinas is a fun time, but the sand and surf aren't too shabby.

◆ La Grande Plage Biarritz, France

La Grande Plage at France's ritziest Atlantic coast beach is a wide, sweeping arc backed by stately 19th century residences and bookended by rugged cliffs. The reliable waves draw surfers by the bus load and the supermodel types who cheer them on, all of which makes for great people watching during the busy summer months.

◆ Cala Mariolu Sardinia, Italy

It's hard to see the beach for the beachgoers during high season on Sardinia's congested Costa Smeralda beaches. So make a break for this hidden snorkelling cove on the Gulf of Orosei, where cliffs shelter a secret inlet and turquoise waters lap at smooth white stones. Hiking to the beach down the cliffs is tricky.

◆ Red Beach Santorini, Greece

Don't expect long white sand beaches when traveling to Santorini. Hidden inlets, many with red or charcoal hued sands are much more common here. Visitors to this island rarely skip Red Beach, which gets its name from its volcanic rock sands 🌊

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com



STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS NEAR SOME OF THE FEATURED BEACHES IN ASIA INCLUDE:



Patong Bay Garden C389
Patong Beach, Phuket
Exchange
Limited availability



Patong Tower Condominium 4341
Patong Beach, Phuket
Exchange
Limited avail. from June onwards



Pearl of the Pacific Beach Resort 6030
Malay, Aklan, Philippines
Exchange
Available for exchange, July onwards



HNA@Kangle Garden Hainan 8586
Hainan, China
Exchange and rental
Available April 2014 onwards
7 nights \$300 hotel



Laguna De Boracay Resort 3502
Boracay, The Philippines
Exchange and rental
Available April 2014 onwards
7 nights \$425 1 brm



Berjaya Tioman Resort 2864
Tioman Island, Malaysia
Exchange and rental
Available June 2014 onwards
7 nights \$400 hotel



Tioman Island Resort 4166
Tioman Island, Malaysia
Exchange and rental
Available April 2014 onwards
7 nights \$320 2 brm



Saboev Resort & Villas R844/45
Surat Thani, Thailand
Exchange and rental
Available May 2014 onwards
3 nights \$495 4 nights \$655



HNA@ International AP Convention Centre 8587
Langkawi, Malaysia
Exchange and rental
Available June 2014 onwards
7 nights \$400 Hotel



Aseania Resort 2860
Langkawi, Malaysia
Exchange and rental
Available August 2014 onwards
7 nights \$275 hotel

Perfect Piazzas

SEVEN AMAZING SQUARES YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF

BY GARY WALTHER

Venice's Piazza San Marco. Siena's Piazza del Campo. Piazza della Signoria in Florence. The iconic piazzas of Italy have played central roles in the country's history; that you even recognise their names underscores their significance. Centuries after these town squares were created, their gravitational pull is as strong as ever. The piazza is still the main stage for Italian city life, where locals and visitors stroll, flirt, shop, chat and sit back to watch the street theatre unfold. But not all of Italy's central squares are as famous as Rome's Campo de' Fiori. Here are seven lesser known piazzas that offer as much architectural and communal drama, without all the crowds.





Piazza del Duomo, Siracusa.

Massa Marittima Piazza Garibaldi

This walled hill town is in “the other Tuscany,” the slice of the province along the Tyrrhenian Sea known as the Maremma. A slightly askew triangle, defined by the stairs and facade of the 13th century San Cerbone Cathedral, the piazza is the setting for *Lirica in Piazza*, a performing arts festival that has been hosted here for the past 28 years. For a few days each August, the small triangle becomes an opera stage, the perfect setting for this public space that is itself an aria.

Siracusa Piazza del Duomo

The Roman philosopher Cicero described the temple that stood on this spot 2,000 years ago as a beacon, its gilded doors reflecting the sunshine and helping sailors guide their ships. Over the millennia the house of worship was repurposed, destroyed, plundered, rebuilt and redecorated which resulting in a semi-oval public space whose surrounding buildings articulate the styles of nearly every century. Columns of the duomo were taken from the Doric temple of Athena, previously on this spot. The Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco represents the restrained symmetry of the 16th century. The facade of the cathedral, rebuilt after an earthquake in 1693, is entirely Sicilian Baroque with ornate wrought iron gates and elegant statues. Walk around this piazza and it's as if you were walking through time.



Piazza Maggiore, Bologna.

Bologna Piazza Maggiore

This may be the most underrated piazza in Italy. Here the stern Italian Gothic brick Basilica of San Petronio faces off against the grandly arched Palazzo del Podestà. The piazza's long ends are a study in architectural history, with the squinty eyed, pointed windows of the Palazzo d'Accursio and its late medieval sibling, the Palazzo dei Notai, staring down the arches and pilasters of the

Renaissance Palazzo dei Banchi. Stroll through this former seat of money changers and bankers today and you'll find yourself embraced not by the echoes of tinkling gold coins, but by the aromas emanating from a web of narrow streets housing some of the city's finest food markets.



Lucca Piazza dell'Anfiteatro.



Piazza degli Scacchi, Marostica.

40



San Cerbone Cathedral, Piazzzi Garibaldi, Massa Marittima.

Marostica Piazza degli Scacchi

The name means the Plaza of Chess, a reference to this medieval piazza's giant chessboard. On the second weekend of September in even numbered years (2014), it is the setting for a spectacle in which performers dressed in costumes of the Middle Ages enact a live chess game. The show is allegedly based on a match played in the 15th century to settle a romantic rivalry between aristocrats for the hand of Lionora Parisio, whose father was the lord of Marostica Castle. Even if it's not true, it makes for a fantastic backstory.

Lucca Piazza dell'Anfiteatro

Piazzas are often brilliant accumulations of history and this one is no exception. The elliptical shape reflects its Roman origin as a stadium for large-scale events and gladiatorial games. Over the centuries though, it has lived many lives as a prison, a storage place for salt, a communal vegetable garden and terraced housing, all of which nibbled away at the grand shape. Architect Lorenzo Nottolini restored the amphitheatre in the 19th century. It is now crisply outlined by plain-faced 19th century residential buildings but the remains of Emperor Claudius's earliest structures are just 2 metres below the pavement.

IT'S HIP TO BE SQUARE: (clockwise from left) Sicily's Piazza del Duomo dates from ancient Roman times. A temple to the goddess Athena was on the site of today's cathedral. Piazza Maggiore is the medieval heart of modern day bustling Bologna. Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, in Lucca, is the perfect piazza to experience true alfresco dining. The town of Marostica is famous for its giant chessboard; where every even year, in September, a game of chess using live pieces is played. The top of triangular Piazza Garibaldi in Tuscany, is formed by the San Cerbone Cathedral.



Piazza delle Erbe, Verona.



Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.

Rome Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere

In a city of operatic Baroque piazzas, this one stands out as a light, lilting piece. It takes its name from one of the oldest churches in Rome (erected circa A.D. 340), which dominates the space. The present structure is an accumulation of additions and subtractions, thankfully, the splendid mosaics inside have remained a constant since the 13th century. The rest of the square is reinforced with buildings built after the 16th century and the piazza remains the living room for residents, the very gentrified once working class quarter across the Tiber.

Verona Piazza delle Erbe

The Palazzo Maffei dominates this long slim triangle, but that's the piazza's only aristocratic touch. The sides are composed of a pleasing miscellany of residential buildings that look as though they were slotted in when a space became available. The effect is not dissimilar to that of a nicely worn in couch. Once you've been amply cradled in the piazza's comfort, spend some time at the Case Mazzanti, a stretch of residences frescoed with allegories of Ignorance, Prudence, Envy and Providence. Dozens of cafés set right in the piazza provide the perfect setting for contemplation ☺



STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN ITALY INCLUDE:

Rental Resorts

Carpediem Roma Golf Club 7 nights from \$1185 1Brm - May price

Just over 20kms from Rome, Carpediem Roma Golf Club is good base for exploring the villages and countryside near Rome. A city overflowing with history, culture and nightlife Rome is a must see for visitors. See the famous sites including the Roman Forum, the Coliseum, Piazza di Spagna (the Spanish Steps) and the Vatican which is the heart of the Catholic Church and home to priceless art treasures. Stop by one of the elegant shops on the via Condotti or visit the Trastevere Area with vibrant nightlife and inexpensive restaurants.

Carpediem Assisi Living Club 7 nights from \$995 1Brm May price

The Carpediem Assisi Living Club has an excellent location and beautiful views of the countryside. There is an outdoor pool, tennis, sauna and exercise equipment. With many medieval towns in the vicinity car rental is readily available for excursions beyond the mountain. Horseback riding is also available one and a half kilometres from the resort.

Residence Letojanni 7 nights from \$1350 - August price

The village residence is situated in a panoramic position overlooking Taormina on the Calabrian coast. On site there is a bar, snack bar children's play room and swimming pool. The stunning views, quiet location and nightly entertainment all make for a great relaxing vacation.

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com



DINING IN
RECIPES FOR
RESORT MADE MEALS

Keep it simple, Italian style

**IT'S HARD TO THINK OF A MORE ITALIAN
INGREDIENT THAN THE HUMBLE TOMATO**

ADAPTED FROM "THE TUSCAN SUN COOKBOOK,"
BY FRANCES MAYES AND EDWARD MAYES



TOMATO TOWN: Every Italian region has amazing cuisine but it is hard to go past Tuscany with its sun ripened tomatoes and breathtaking scenery.

When we think of Italian cuisine we often think of pizza and pasta. Let's start by saying that Italian cuisine simply doesn't exist as there is no single Italian cuisine. Italy has 20 regions and each region or often each province or even each area, has its own culinary tradition. From the north to the south you will find the German style foods in South Tyrol, the African like couscous dishes in Sicily, Tuscany's rustic foods and spicy Calabrian courses.

Most authentic Italian pasta recipes are very simple with few ingredients such as pasta col sugo (pasta with fresh tomato sauce and parmigiano) or pasta col pesto.

So, if you really want to savour and appreciate authentic Italian cuisine – I'll be waiting for you in Italy! In the mean time here is a classic Italian recipe pulled from one of the top selling Italian cookbooks of 2013. The Tuscan Sun Cookbook 🍅

ROASTED TOMATO BRUSCHETTE

60 or so cherry tomatoes, halved,
stem ends trimmed
Half cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary
3 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
3 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves
5 garlic cloves, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste
Bruschetta or crostini
(grilled or toasted baguette slices)
Preheat oven to 200 degrees

Arrange tomatoes cut side up on a parchment-lined 12 x 16 sheet pan. Drizzle the olive oil over them, scatter the herbs and garlic, and season with salt and pepper. Bake for two hours, turning the tomatoes once.

Coarsely chop the tomatoes for bruschetta or simply press a tomato onto each crostino.

Leftover tomatoes can be packed into jars, topped with olive oil, and stored in the fridge for a week.

COOK'S NOTE: You may substitute 25 medium tomatoes, quartered or three, large cans of plum tomatoes, drained and quartered for the cherry tomatoes. If you must substitute with dried herbs cut the amount in half.



FAR NORTH

from the madding crowds

BY SHAWN LOW

Far North Queensland (FNQ) is perhaps the best example of the diversity in Australia's landscape. This 273,000-plus sq. km swathe of land nestled in the northeast corner of the continent is home to rural mining towns, sugarcane and banana plantations, dense patches of tropical rainforest, dusty former gold-mining towns, more than 70 national parks, the vast barren outback and a coastline that plays host to the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef.



The world's largest coral reef system, The Great Barrier Reef.



One of the best ways to exploring the Barrier Reef



Cairns Esplanade



The public swimming lagoon in Cairns.

A ROAD TRIP IS THE PERFECT WAY TO EXPLORE FNQ. JUMP IN YOUR CAR OR 4WD AND BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY IN BUZZY CAIRNS.

CAIRNS

The Far North's largest city is also a popular transport hub: domestic and international visitors fly into this laidback provincial city to pick up a car, book tours to the Great Barrier Reef and party hard before heading out to the rest of the region.

Cairns is a great place to bookend your FNQ trip. Take a dip in the stunning man-made foreshore lagoon and soak in some sun. Towel off and wander to the nearby *Salt House* (Marina Pt, 6/2 Pier Point Rd) for an afternoon pint or a sundowner. This sleek contemporary restaurant-bar serves up great food and killer cocktails in a picturesque setting beside the yacht club.

The arty set should check out the *Cairns Regional Gallery* (40 Abbott St) and the *Centre of Contemporary Arts* (96 Abbott St). The former, set in a 1936 heritage building, hosts high quality visiting exhibitions such as Goya's etchings. The latter plays host to edgy contemporary art and has a superb gift shop

stocking reasonably priced prints, crafts and jewellery produced by Aussies.

For those seeking adventure, dive shops dot the city and you can easily pick up your PADI scuba diving license in a couple of days. In fact, the Great Barrier Reef is probably one of the most scenic places in the world to tickle your diving fancy and makes for good bragging rights. Check out *Deep Sea Divers Den* (319 Draper St) or *Pro-Dive* (cnr Shield and Grafton St).

The obvious highlight of a visit to Cairns is a trip to the stunning Great Barrier Reef. Countless tour operators run a multitude of tours. If you're pressed for time you can visit the reef on a day tour, which generally includes transport, lunch and snorkelling gear. Each operator has a different stomping ground: you could visit Paradise Reef, Green Island, Lizard Island, Moore Reef... the list goes on. A rule of thumb: the outer reefs take longer to get to but are less damaged and unspoiled.

TO THE TIP: CAPE YORK PENINSULA

The drive to Australia's northernmost tip is strictly 4WD-only and then only passable outside of the wet season. The 925 km journey from Cairns takes you up the peninsula to Cape York and is arguably one of Australia's most iconic road trips.

The journey requires careful planning (or a tour) and takes you through cattle stations, old homesteads, Aboriginal communities, the mining town of Weipa and Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park before finishing at the tip of Cape York. The intriguing Torres Strait Islands lie beyond. To begin your adventure, pick up Ron and Viv Moon's *Cape York - An Adventurer's Guide*.



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◆ THE TABLELANDS LOOP

Embark on a counter-clockwise loop of this hilly region, passing through picture-postcard towns and agricultural farmland in an ambling fashion.

Start your journey at the chilled-out town of Kuranda, best accessed via the historical Kuranda Scenic Railway, which commenced operations in 1891. This 34 km rail journey wends its way from Cairns through 15 tunnels and jaw-dropping vistas. After fossicking for handicrafts and local produce at the local markets, head back down via the *Skyrail Rainforest Cableway*. The Skyrail is one of the world's longest gondola cableways and a modern counterpoint to the Kuranda train. If you take the Skyrail, you'll need to book a transfer back to Cairns as it terminates at Smithfield, 15 minutes from the city.

Continue south, passing through Mareeba, the administrative heart of the agricultural region. Here, the town's main street evokes mid-west America and makes for a perfect setting for an R. M. Williams commercial. Stop by the *Mt Uncle Distillery* (1819 Chewko Rd, Walkamin) for a tasting of its superb whisky rum and honey vodka and a wood-fired pizza or two.

Push on back south past Mareeba to Atherton, a good in-between stop for visiting nearby Herberton and Yungaburra. Route 52 takes you to charming Herberton, where pretty jacaranda trees line the streets with its backdrop of historical buildings. A must-see here is the *Herberton Historic Village* (6 Broadway St). The site houses a private collection of 50 painstakingly restored buildings – each packed with historical objects – dating back to 1870. Stop for a surprisingly good fish burger at the *Jacaranda Coffee Lounge* (52 Grace St) before heading on to the ceric Mt Hypipamee Crater. From the car park, go past Dinner Falls – a series of waterfalls – to this 128 m water-filled crater: certainly not for those who suffer from vertigo!

Return to Highway 1 and loop northeast to Yungaburra. Cairns locals retreat to delightful Yungaburra for a spa retreat and a touch of top-quality country dining.

The Yungaburra Markets, held every fourth Saturday of the month, offers visitors a chance to mingle with the locals and stock up on craft and produce. Get directions from the tourist information centre to the platypus-viewing platforms and stake out for a sight of these cute

monotremes paddling along the stream. Finish your visit with a meal at *Flynn's* (17 Eacham Rd). Chef and owner Liam Flynn serves up an ever-changing mix of award-winning European and Mediterranean-inspired dishes made from local produce.

From Yungaburra, make a slight detour south towards Malanda. Join a guided rainforest walk and you might spot a tree kangaroo. The animal parade continues at Malanda Falls – look out for saw-shelled turtles and pademelons.

Heading a further 20 minutes south from Malanda will lead you to Falls Circuit near Millaa Millaa. Sate your appetite for waterfalls by doing a loop of the four falls along this 16 km route: Millaa Millaa, Zillie, Ellinjaa and Mungalli Falls. Reward your hard work with delicious homemade ice cream and yoghurt at *Mungalli Creek Dairy* (251 Brooks Rd).

On the route back to Cairns, drop by Lake Barrine in the Crater Lakes National Park. This popular, croc-free waterhole is perfect for a dip during the summer. If the water's too cold, go for a walk along a 5 km track through thick rainforest ringing the lake. *The Lake Barrine Rainforest Teahouse* (Gillies Hwy) overlooks the lake and offers Devonshire tea in addition to 45-minute lake cruises. Nearby Lake Eacham, is another idyllic spot with crystal-clear waters – jump off the swimming pontoon and keep your eyes out for turtles!



A Fan palm tree canopy found in the Daintree Rainforest

40

ON THE ROAD

If you're hiring a car, note that you're not allowed to take 2WDs along unsealed roads. If you're planning a road trip up north through the Cape York Peninsula via Cape Tribulation and the Bloomfield Track or heading west along the Savannah Way, you'll need to hire or drive your own 4WD.

Note that mobile phone reception is patchy and you should always ensure your vehicle has spares. Carry ample drinking water in the event of a breakdown. Note also that the region is impassable during The Wet (November–April). If you're game for adventure, look up 'Cape York River Crossing' on YouTube for some hairy 4WD action.

Most of the unsealed roads become corrugated towards the end of tourist season, making for a bumpy ride. When the road narrows down to a single lane, take care and give way to oncoming road trains... yes, they have (unofficial) right of way.

If you're taking alcohol into the region, you'll need to respect restrictions put in place around 'dry' Aboriginal communities. The restrictions either ban or limit the amount and type of alcohol you can carry into a community.



● PORT DOUGLAS AND AROUND

Sandwiched between Daintree National Park and the Great Barrier Reef's Lizard Island, flashy Port Douglas makes for a perfect launching pad for further exploration of the region. The town is a great place to splash out on some of the best food in the region.

Book a meal at *Harrisons* (22 Wharf St); here, chef-owner Spencer Patrick uses his Marco Pierre White training to whip out reasonably priced degustation menus. On Sunday mornings, tip back a perfect espresso at *Origin Espresso* (cnr Grant and Warner St) before a spot of craft shopping at the *Port Douglas Markets* (Anzac Park, end of Macrossan St).

From Port, strike north towards the Daintree region. Mossman Gorge, has a superb 2.4 km walk around the idyllic gorge and surrounding rainforest or you can sign up for one of the Kuku-Yalanji Dreamtime Walks at the visitors' centre. For a bite to eat, *Mojo's* (41 Front St) serves delish fusion Aussie-French fare.

Continue on 24 km north towards Cape Tribulation – cross the Daintree River cable ferry for lush, rainforest-covered hills that tumble coastward. There's plenty to see and do in this region: sign up for kayak fishing tours via Cape Tribulation Paddle Trek and spot dugong along the way.

The *Daintree Discovery Centre* (Tulip Oak Rd) has a fantastic aerial walkway that gives visitors a bird's eye view of the rainforest and its animal species. On the topic of animals, keep your eyes peeled for elusive cassowaries while touring the region. This large prehistoric-looking flightless bird is endangered and a rare sight.

The stretch of road has abundant turn-offs into creeks and stretches of pristine beaches: just take a chance on one and be surprised. Another surprise is the *Daintree Ice Cream Company* (Lot 100, Cape Tribulation Rd), which serves up ice cream made with fruit and produce from its orchard.

This stretch of coastline is part of the Great Barrier Reef and much less visited than the islands off Cairns and The Whitsundays. A gem (pun intended) in the region is Jewell Reef. This pristine reef is popular for sport fishing and well worth the trouble and cost to access. Try a tour through Nomad Sportfishing Adventures.

If you're driving a 4WD, you can push on to historical Cooktown via the Bloomfield Track (otherwise you'll have to go the long way round inland via the Peninsula and Cooktown Developmental roads). Stop by the impressive Bloomfield Falls (aka Wujal Wujal Falls) and book a tour run by the Walker family. You can also book some well-regarded tours on the site. The tours, run by indigenous elder Willie Gordon from Cooktown, take in Aboriginal rock art, history and Dreamtime stories.

Cooktown is famous for being the site of Australia's first non-indigenous settlement. In 1770, then-Lieutenant James Cook struck a reef offshore and had to set up camp at Cooktown to make repairs. The crew was on the ground for 48 days and pre-dated the First Fleet by eight years! The town today is popular with anglers looking to hook barramundi and trevally. Visit the *James Cook Museum* (50 Helen St) for an in-depth history of Cooktown. ●



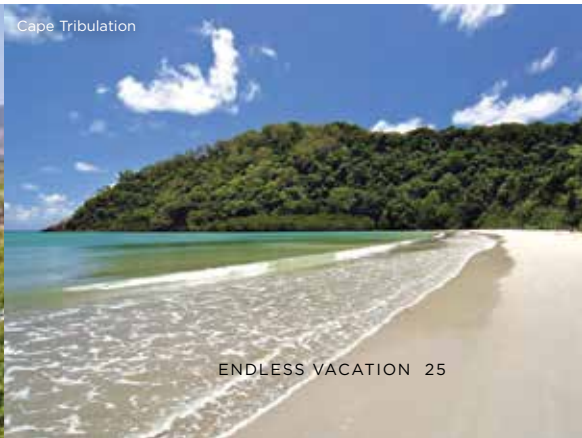
Bloomfield Falls



Cassowary



Port Douglas overview



Cape Tribulation



Mossman River Daintree National Park.



Sunrise at Palm Cove



STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND INCLUDE:



Mantra in the Village Port Douglas

Featuring a large Roman-inspired pool and spa with mosaic tiling, cascading waterfalls and fountains set amongst tropical landscaped gardens, Mantra in the Village provides boutique style accommodation in the heart of Port Douglas. The rooms at Mantra in the Village have been designed to enhance the airy Tropical North Queensland climate, with all-weather verandas, slide back louvres and timber shutters all prominent features.

7 nights from
\$935 1 brm



Mantra Trilogy

Located on the Cairns Esplanade, Mantra Trilogy is within walking distance to some of Cairns best restaurants, the Reef Casino, Cairns Central Shopping Mall and the newly developed Cairns Lagoon. All of the rooms are comfortably furnished with spacious balconies and some with ocean views. Onsite guests can laze on the sun deck by the pool overlooking the ocean. Just a short walk from the hotel you can take advantage of the location by catching a charter boat out to the reef which departs daily from the Cairns Marina.

7 nights from
\$865 1 brm



Half Moon Bay Resort

Half Moon Bay Resort is situated at Yorkeys Knob, a delightful tranquil location on the northern beaches of Cairns. Located just 10 minutes north of Cairns Airport and 15 minutes from the city centre, the resort features a freeform salt water pool with spa pool attached and BBQ area. It is within easy walking distance of local restaurants, the local yacht club and marina and the Yorkeys Knob shopping centre.

7 nights from
\$880 1 brm



Marlin Cove Resort

Nestled near the beautiful Trinity Beach, Marlin Cove Resort is a mere stone's throw away from an afternoon swim, a shopping spree in fabulous boutiques and a romantic alfresco dinner. With the accommodation set among a picturesque rainforest corridor you have the opportunity to frolic with native animals and birds as well as spend long restful hours at the spa or sandy saltwater lagoon pool. More than your average Cairns beach resort, Marlin Cove Resort is a refreshing departure from your humdrum vacation.

7 nights from
\$1020 1 brm



Mantra Amphora

Mantra Amphora has a stunning location on the Esplanade in Palm Cove, just metres from the beach. The resort features a spectacular central swimming lagoon with many coves and nooks shaded by massive palm trees. Palm Cove is fast becoming the Riviera of tropical North Queensland and Mantra Amphora provides the ideal base to explore the surrounding area. A mere thirty minutes drive north from the bustle of central Cairns, Palm Cove is for those seeking luxury amidst palm fringed tranquillity. The Cove is ideally situated between Port Douglas and Cairns, giving easy access to the multitude of day trips available.

7 nights from
\$790 1 brm

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2

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1

You made a commitment to your family and a lifetime of vacation memories when you bought a timeshare!

(We could stop right there, but let's keep going!)



40

3

La Residence
Shanghai, China



Spacious and near to food outlets this centrally located hotel is about 6 minutes by car to the shopping district of Nanjing West Road and Waihai Road. The Jinan temple subway station is 20 minutes away and it is only 25 minutes by car to Hong Qiao domestic airport. The apartments offer a full kitchen, television, refrigerator, microwave and telephone.

3 nights from **\$305** 2 brm

4 nights from **\$405** 2 brm



4

Metropark Hotel Kowloon Hong Kong

Situated in the heart of Kowloon, the Metropark Hotel is close to the bustling shopping and commercial areas and main transportation network. The hotel provides regular shuttle bus services to and from the Hong Kong International Airport. Rooms are spacious and feature a full range of modern amenities including free unlimited internet access.

3 nights from **\$510** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$680** 1 brm



5

Golden Palm Tree Iconic Selangor, Malaysia

This five star over-the-water resort has luxuriously appointed sea villas that are shaped like a palm tree. It stretches a kilometre from the Sepang coast into the sheltered waters of the Straits of Malacca. The resort features a swimming pool, fitness center, library and a variety of dining options and bars. Aug-Sept Availability

3 nights from **\$390** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$525** 1 brm



6

Bayview Hotel Singapore

Ideally situated, the City Bayview Hotel is nestled between the financial business district and the famed Orchard Road Shopping Centre. It is a few minutes walk from the cultural precinct which includes the Art Museum and National Museum. A 24 hour food court is located just next door.

3 nights from **\$625** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$830** 1 brm



7

Days Hotel Singapore at Zhongshan Park Singapore

Just a 5 minute free bus ride away from Novena train station. Facilities include an all day dining restaurant, 24 hour gym, free WIFI and a modern restaurant serving Mediterranean and South East Asian cuisine.

3 nights from **\$510** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$680** 1 brm



8

Ramada Singapore at Zhongshan Park Singapore

The Ramada Singapore at Zhongshan Park is the only four star international hotel in Novena and boasts a lobby bar, heritage lounge, swimming pool, gym and business center.

3 nights from **\$630** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$840** 1 brm



9

Park Taipei Hotel Taiwan

This high class metropolitan business hotel is situated in the centre of Taipei's financial, cultural and commercial districts and is only minutes away from the Taipei Metro Da'an Station and a short walk from major department stores.

3 nights from **\$565** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$755** 1 brm



10

Saboev Resort and Villas Surat Thani, Thailand

Saboev is a beautiful, secluded resort on the island of Koh Samui. Rooms are designed to maximise serenity and privacy. The resort is conveniently located close to the airport and tourist centre.

3 nights from **\$495** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$655** 1 brm



11

The Palms Resort Phuket, Thailand

The Palms Resort is a modern family resort situated only 30 metres from the beautiful white sands of Kamala Beach. It is right in middle of the shopping and dining precinct.

3 nights from **\$555** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$740** 1 brm



12

Ramada Hotel and Suites Bangkok Bangkok Thailand

A tropical oasis in the heart of Bangkok where travelers from around the world enjoy trademark Thai hospitality and resort style amenities.

3 nights from **\$330** 1 brm
4 nights from **\$440** 1 brm

13



Azamara Club Cruises, Azamara Journey

10 NIGHT Alcazar, Dali & Gaudi Mediterranean
Voyage from Lisbon to Barcelona

Ports of call: Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Valencia,
Mahon Minorca, Port Vendres, Palamos, Barcelona

Selected departure in Sept 2014
Oceanview (08) Twin Share

Was from: \$6,170pp

Now from: US \$3,015pp Twin Share



**SAVE
\$6310**
per couple

14



APT, MS AmaDagio/ AmaLegro

14 NIGHT Romantic Journey
Rhône and Seine River
Cruise from Arles to Paris.

Selected departure in Oct 2014
Panoramic Balcony Twin Share

Was from: \$8,450pp

Now from: US \$8,035pp Twin Share

**SAVE
\$830**
per couple



15

Norwegian Cruise Line, Pride of America

7 NIGHT Hawaii Cruise
round trip Honolulu

*Selected departures from Nov 2014 to
Jun 2015* Balcony (BF) Twin Share

Was from: \$2,478pp

Now from: US \$2,060pp Twin Share



16

Princess Cruises, Diamond Princess

9 NIGHT Japan Cruise

*Selected departure
in Sep 2014*
Balcony (BF) Twin Share

Was from: \$1,980pp

Now from: US \$1,530pp Twin Share



17

P&O Cruises, Pacific Pearl

16 NIGHT Bounty
Adventure South
Pacific Cruise

Selected departure in Oct 2015
Balcony (BA) Twin Share

Was from: \$3,870pp

Now from: US \$3,400pp Twin Share





18

Celebrity Millennium

SINGAPORE TO HONG KONG
VIA LAEM CHABANG BANGKOK
(OVERNIGHT)

14 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 7 DEC 2014

Ports of call: - Ho Chi Minh/Saigon, Hue,
Halong Bay/Hanoi, Hong Kong

Now from: US \$2000 per person in
Balcony stateroom with Exchange

SAVE
US\$750
per cabin



19

Costa Luminosa

MIAMI ROUND TRIP TO NASSAU,
BAHAMAS AND GRAND
TURK CAICOS ISLANDS

10 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 7 MAR 2015

Ports of call: - Ochos Rios Jamaica,
Georgetown GCM, Roatan Cayman Islands,
Cozumel Mexico

Now from: US \$1165 per person in
Balcony Premium with Exchange

SAVE
US\$1000
per cabin



20

Norwegian Star

MIAMI TO LOS ANGELES VIA
CARTAGENA COLOMBIA

13 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 17 NOV 2014

Ports of call: - Puntarenas Costa Rica,
Huatulco, Acapulco, Cabo, San Lucas Mexico

Now from: US \$2000 per person in Mini
Suite with Balcony with Exchange

SAVE
US\$850
per cabin



21

Princess Cruises Diamond Princess

YOKOHAMA TO SINGAPORE
VIA OSAKA

13 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 15 OCT 2014

Ports of call: - Okinawa, Keelung, Hong Kong,
Da Nang, Chan May, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh,
Phu My, Singapore

Now from: US \$2,375 per person in
Ocean View stateroom... Best Buy.



22

Holland America Cruise Line VOLENDAM

SINGAPORE TO HONG KONG
VIA KOH SAMUI

14 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 16 FEB 2015

Ports of call: - Laem Chabang, Bangkok,
Sihanoukville, Phu My, Nha Trang, Da Nang,
Halong Bay, Hong Kong

Now from: US \$2,218 per person in
Ocean View stateroom... Best Buy.



23

Holland America Cruise Line VOLENDAM

HONG KONG TO KOBE VIA SHANGHAI

14 NIGHTS
DEPARTS 13 APRIL 2015

Ports of call: - Xingang, Beijing, Jeju City,
Busan, Nagasaki, Kobe

Now from: US \$2,318 per person in
Ocean View stateroom... Best Buy.

For all booking enquiries call the RCI member services

#cabin type/subject to availability at the time of booking. Cruise exchange Tp14 + exchange fee payable. Taxes & gratuities may be additional. Price shown is current at the time of print.

YOU TRY NEW THINGS

*Technology
inspires
your
vacation
dreams!*

Check out these innovative tools on RCI.com. These will make planning and booking your RCI® vacations easier!

24

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RCI.com to find
an exclusive offer!**

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Go check it out!

**RCI.COM
EXCLUSIVE**

Coming soon @ RCI.com

Planning and booking your vacation on RCI.com is about to get faster and easier. You'll discover these and many more enhancements on the site in the near future.



25

With your new account homepage, you'll have faster access to key account information in a clean summary. As soon as you sign in to RCI.com, you'll see your RCI® subscribing member ID, account balances, confirmed and held vacations, current ongoing searches and your personalized alerts and recommendations, all conveniently in one place. ●

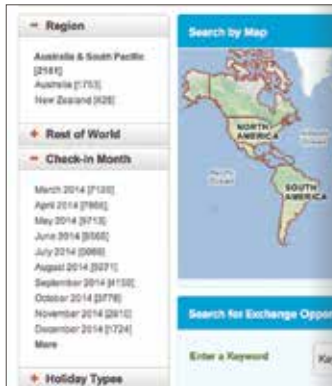
26

Discover the new Vacation Ideas section and travel anywhere - from Manhattan to Mazatlán to Mykonos via articles, resort reviews, pictures, blog posts, member stories and more. Explore great content for detailed information on every destination, from favorite tourist attractions to trendy restaurants, great places to relax, the best spots to take the kids, even off the beaten path beaches and hiking trails. ●

27

When you're ready to book your next vacation, you'll find that searching on RCI.com is faster than ever. Apply filters to quickly narrow your search results and you're on your way to booking your next vacation in record time!

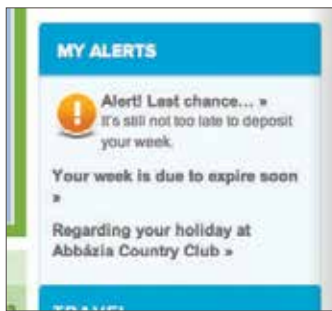
Searching is easier than ever!



28

Vacation Inspiration Through Search Filters

We recommend that you start with the Vacation Types filter and narrow your search from there. The more filters you add, the more your results narrow. ●



29

Personalised Account Alerts

RCI Alerts Tool makes vacationing easy by helping you keep track of your deposits, vacation opportunities and membership. To check out your alerts, login to RCI.com and look on the left hand side of the page. The information is personalised just for you! ●



30

Let Technology Match Your Vacation Dreams

RCI's new online Recommendation Tool provides you with the right vacation choices. This innovative tool reviews your travel history, membership type and combines this information with current availability to match the most relevant vacation options. ●

*Your vacations
mean everything to you,
& that means*
the world to us.

We're honoured to have spent the past 40 years helping millions of RCI subscribing members create extraordinary vacation memories - and we can't wait to be part of all the countless vacations still to come.

A legacy of vacations that define a lifetime.



RCI
40

Because your vacation means the world to us®

31

YOU'RE ALREADY
LOOKING FORWARD TO
YOUR NEXT VACATION!

VACATIONS 2014

SINGAPORE	DATE	DAY
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	31-Jan	Friday
2nd day of Chinese Lunar New Year	1-Feb	Saturday
Good Friday	18-Apr	Friday
Labour Day	1-May	Thursday
Vesak Day	13-May	Tuesday
Hari Raya Puasa	28-Jul	Monday
National Day	9-Aug	Saturday
Hari Raya Haji	5-Oct	Sunday
Deepavali	23-Oct	Thursday

China	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
Chinese New Year	31-Jan	Friday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	1-Feb	Saturday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	2-Feb	Sunday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	3-Feb	Monday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	4-Feb	Tuesday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	5-Feb	Wednesday
Spring Festival Golden Week holiday	6-Feb	Thursday
Qing Ming Jie	5-Apr	Saturday
Qing Ming Jie holiday	6-Apr	Sunday
Qing Ming Jie holiday	7-Apr	Monday
Labour Day	1-May	Thursday
Labour Day Holiday	2-May	Friday
Labour Day Holiday	3-May	Saturday
Dragon Boat Festival holiday	31-May	Saturday
Dragon Boat Festival holiday	1-Jun	Sunday
Dragon Boat Festival	2-Jun	Monday
Mid-Autumn Festival holiday	6-Sep	Saturday
Mid-Autumn Festival holiday	7-Sep	Sunday
Mid-Autumn Festival	8-Sep	Monday
National Day	1-Oct	Wednesday
National Day Golden Week holiday	2-Oct	Thursday
National Day Golden Week holiday	3-Oct	Friday
National Day Golden Week holiday	4-Oct	Saturday
National Day Golden Week holiday	5-Oct	Sunday
National Day Golden Week holiday	6-Oct	Monday
National Day Golden Week holiday	7-Oct	Tuesday

VACATIONS 2014

Vietnam	Date	Day
International New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
Tet holiday	28-Jan	Tuesday
Tet holiday	29-Jan	Wednesday
Vietnamese New Year's Eve	30-Jan	Thursday
Vietnamese New Year	31-Jan	Friday
Tet holiday	1-Feb	Saturday
Tet holiday	2-Feb	Sunday
Tet holiday	3-Feb	Monday
Tet holiday	4-Feb	Tuesday
Tet holiday	5-Feb	Wednesday
Vietnamese Kings' Commemoration Day	9-Apr	Wednesday
Liberation Day/Reunification Day	30-Apr	Wednesday
International Labor Day	1-May	Thursday
Independence Day	2-Sep	Tuesday

Malaysia	Date	Day
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	14-Jan	Tuesday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	31-Jan	Friday
Second day of Chinese Lunar New Year	1-Feb	Saturday
Labour Day	1-May	Thursday
Wesak Day	13-May	Tuesday
The Yang di-Pertuan Agong's Birthday	7-Jun	Saturday
Hari Raya Puasa Day 1	28-Jul	Monday
Hari Raya Puasa Day 2	29-Jul	Tuesday
Malaysia's National Day	31-Aug	Sunday
Malaysia's National Day observed	1-Sep	Monday
Malaysia Day	16-Sep	Tuesday
Hari Raya Haji	5-Oct	Sunday
Hari Raya Haji holiday	6-Oct	Monday
Diwali/Deepavali	23-Oct	Thursday
Muharram/New Year	25-Oct	Saturday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Thursday

Philippines	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	31-Jan	Friday
The Day of Valor	9-Apr	Wednesday
Maundy Thursday	17-Apr	Thursday
Good Friday	18-Apr	Friday
Labor Day	1-May	Thursday
Independence Day	12-Jun	Thursday
National Heroes Day	24-Aug	Sunday
National Heroes Day holiday	25-Aug	Monday
Bonifacio Day	30-Nov	Sunday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Thursday
Rizal Day	30-Dec	Tuesday

VACATIONS 2014

Thailand	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
Makha Bucha	14-Feb	Friday
Chakri Day	6-Apr	Sunday
Chakri Day observed	7-Apr	Monday
Songkran	13-Apr	Sunday
Songkran	14-Apr	Monday
Songkran	15-Apr	Tuesday
Songkran observed	16-Apr	Wednesday
Labour Day	1-May	Thursday
Coronation Day	5-May	Monday
Visakha Bucha	13-May	Tuesday
Asalha Bucha	11-Jul	Friday
The Queen's Birthday	12-Aug	Tuesday
Mother's Day	12-Aug	Tuesday
Chulalongkorn Day	23-Oct	Thursday
The King's Birthday	5-Dec	Friday
Father's Day	5-Dec	Friday
Constitution Day	10-Dec	Wednesday
New Year's Eve	31-Dec	Wednesday

Indonesia	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Wednesday
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	14-Jan	Tuesday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	31-Jan	Friday
Bali's Day of Silence and Hindu New Year	31-Mar	Monday
Good Friday	18-Apr	Friday
International Labor Day	1-May	Thursday
Waisak Day (Buddha's Anniversary)	15-May	Thursday
Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad	27-May	Tuesday
Ascension Day of Jesus Christ	29-May	Thursday
Idul Fitri Day 1	28-Jul	Monday
Idul Fitri Day 2	29-Jul	Tuesday
Indonesian Independence Day	17-Aug	Sunday
Muslim Day of Sacrifice (Idul Adha)	5-Oct	Sunday
Muharram/Islamic New Year	25-Oct	Saturday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Thursday

USE THESE PLANNING
CALENDARS FOR 2014
AND 2015 TO HELP YOU
GET STARTED.

VACATIONS	2015
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SINGAPORE	DATE	DAY
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	19-Feb	Thursday
Second Day of Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	20-Feb	Friday
Good Friday	3-Apr	Friday
Labour Day	1-May	Friday
Vesak Day	1-Jun	Monday
Hari Raya Puasa	18-Jul	Saturday
National Day	9-Aug	Sunday
National Day observed	10-Aug	Monday
Hari Raya Haji	24-Sep	Thursday
Deepavali	11-Nov	Wednesday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Friday

China	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	19-Feb	Thursday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	20-Feb	Friday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	21-Feb	Saturday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	22-Feb	Sunday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	23-Feb	Monday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	24-Jan	Thursday
Spring Festival Golden Week Holiday	25-Jan	Wednesday
Labour Day	1-May	Friday
Labour Day Holiday	2-May	Saturday
Labour Day Holiday	3-May	Sunday
Qing Ming Jie	22-May	Friday
Qing Ming Jie Holiday	23-May	Saturday
Qing Ming Jie Holiday	24-May	Sunday
Dragon Boat Festival	20-Jun	Saturday
Dragon Boat Holiday	21-Jun	Sunday
Dragon Boat Holiday	22-Jun	Monday
Mid-Autumn Festival	27-Sep	Sunday
National Day	1-Oct	Thursday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	2-Oct	Friday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	3-Oct	Saturday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	4-Oct	Sunday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	5-Oct	Monday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	6-Oct	Tuesday
National Day Golden Week Holiday	7-Oct	Wednesday

VACATIONS	2015
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International New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Vietnamese New Year's Eve	18-Feb	Wednesday
Vietnamese New Year	19-Feb	Thursday
Tet Holiday	20-Feb	Friday
Tet Holiday	21-Feb	Saturday
Tet Holiday	22-Feb	Sunday
Tet Holiday	23-Feb	Monday
Tet Holiday	24-Feb	Tuesday
Vietnamese Kings' Commemoration Day	28-Apr	Tuesday
Liberation Day/Reunification Day	30-Apr	Thursday
International Labour Day	1-May	Friday
Independence Day	2-Sep	Wednesday
Liberation Day/Reunification Day	30-Apr	Wednesday
International Labor Day	1-May	Thursday
Independence Day	2-Sep	Tuesday

Malaysia	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	3-Jan	Saturday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	19-Feb	Thursday
2nd Day of Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	20-Feb	Friday
Labour Day	1-May	Friday
Wesak Day	1-Jun	Monday
The Yangdi-Pertuan Agong's Birthday	6-Jun	Saturday
Hari Raya Puasa Day 1	18-Jul	Saturday
Hari Raya Puasa Day 2	19-Jul	Sunday
Malaysia's National Day	31-Aug	Monday
Malaysia Day	16-Sep	Wednesday
Hari Raya Haji	24-Sep	Thursday
Muharram/New Year	15-Oct	Thursday
Deepavali	11-Nov	Wednesday
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	24-Dec	Thursday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Friday

Philippines	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	19-Feb	Thursday
Maundy Thursday	2-Apr	Thursday
Good Friday	3-Apr	Friday
The Day of Valor	9-Apr	Thursday
Labor Day	1-May	Friday
Independence Day	12-Jun	Friday
National Heroes Day	30-Aug	Sunday
National Heroes Day Holiday	31-Aug	Monday
Bonifacio Day	30-Nov	Monday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Friday
Rizal Day	30-Dec	Wednesday

VACATIONS	2015
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Thailand	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Makha Bucha Day	4-Mar	Wednesday
Chakri Day	6-Apr	Monday
Songkran	13-Apr	Monday
Songkran	14-Apr	Tuesday
Songkran	15-Apr	Wednesday
Labor Day	1-May	Friday
Coronation Day	5-May	Tuesday
Visakha Bucha	1-Jun	Monday
Asarnha Bucha Day	30-Jul	Thursday
Budhist Lent Day	31-Jul	Friday
His Majesty The Queen's Birthday	12-Aug	Wednesday
Chulalongkorn Day	23-Oct	Friday
His Majesty The King's Birthday	5-Dec	Saturday
His Majesty The king's Birthday (Substitute)	7-Dec	Monday
Constitution Day	10-Dec	Thursday
New Year's Eve	31-Dec	Thursday

Indonesia	Date	Day
New Year's Day	1-Jan	Thursday
Chinese Lunar New Year's Day	19-Feb	Thursday
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	3-Jan	Saturday
Good Friday	3-Apr	Friday
Labor Day	1-May	Friday
Waisak Day	3-May	Sunday
Ascension Day of Jesus Christ	14-May	Thursday
Ascension of the Prophet	15-May	Friday
Eid al-Fitr	18-Jul	Saturday
Independence Day	17-Aug	Monday
Eid-al-Adha	24-Sep	Thursday
Muharram	15-Oct	Thursday
The Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	24-Dec	Thursday
Christmas Day	25-Dec	Friday

For more vacation inspiration and planning tools, log on to RCI.com today.

* Some affiliated resorts use their own calendars, which may differ from above. Please verify dates with your home resort before you book.

YOU LOVE A GOOD VACATION DEAL



32

MALAYSIA

Leisure Cove Penang
2 Bedroom From \$190



33

PHILIPPINES

Sunrise Holiday
Mansion Tagaytay
Studio From \$275



34

CHINA

FVC at Lijiang Nan Yuan
E Jia Yunnan
Hotel From \$200



35

CHINA

FVC at Jinma International
Hotel Hangzhou Zhejiang
Hotel From \$190

Take advantage of these anniversary deals!

Extra Vacations are excess accommodation offered as cash vacations. This means you can enjoy an additional week without using your deposit!

**YOU
ALWAYS
GIVE
a warm
WELCOME**

More For Your
RCI® Membership

In 2013 RCI added 175 new properties to its global exchange network including resorts in North America, South America, Europe, India and Asia.



36

CHINA **HNA RESORT YUNQI HANGZHOU D522**

Offers another vacation option in China to our members. The hotel is conveniently located in the Hangzhou Zhijiang National Tourist and Holiday Resort Area and is just a short drive from the city center. It has a beautiful outdoor pool, tennis courts, fitness center and games room. There are also several restaurants specializing in Chinese and Western cuisine. The hotel is conveniently located close to several local landmarks including Nine Creeks by Misty Trees (Jiuxi Yanshu), which features waterfalls and bridges and is a wonderful place to enjoy a nature walk.



37

40

PHILIPPINES **VILLA ANNA PARADISE RESORT AND FARM D519**

Sprawling across eight hectares of Oriental Mindoro, Villa Anna Paradise Resort and Farm offers a range of accommodation to meet the needs of couples and families. Each accommodation combines a taste of the Filipino culture with modern furnishings. Guests can enjoy a wide array of the amenities including swimming pools, a poolside bar, Zen Japanese spa, gym and restaurants serving a variety of Japanese, Asian and European cuisine. The resort's other onsite activities and attractions include a mini zoo, horseback riding, hanging bridge and indoor games.

Several impressive properties were also added from existing affiliation agreements. These include a new resort through **Hilton Grand Vacations Club** at the *Trump International Hotel* in Las Vegas; 12 properties by **Club Mahindra** in India; and three new itineraries from **TradeWinds Cruise Club** in St. Maarten, the British Virgin Islands and Guadeloupe.

For additional resort listings visit **RCI.com**



40

RCI *members memoirs*

38 Girdwood Alaska a Lifetime Memory

Our RCI arranged tour which was amazing took us to Girdwood, Alaska. At the local airstrip following a safety briefing and dressing up like the Michelin Man, we boarded a helicopter for a short flight to Punchbowl Glacier (so called because it is shaped like one).

After alighting we entered into a world of pure white ice, snow and low cloud. While it is breathtaking it is also bitterly cold. It is a scene that automatically springs to mind when we think of Alaska. Soon 60 sled dogs break into a cacophony of howls and barks. We are off sledding with an Iditarod Race musher. The dogs are begging to be chosen for harnessing and it is obvious they love their job.

So the scene is set and majestic peaks and low thick white cloud soon surround us. Within the hour it begins to snow, not much but enough to make this a special highlight of our trip. We are off on a 45-minute ride of a lifetime. We fly across the snow pulled by the power of 16 dogs with my partner Robert taking the reins and me holding on for dear life and loving every second of it.

When we return we swap the chance of unharnessing the dogs for the guest tent which is blissfully warm. Not long after Mike the musher brings in the cutest puppy for us to cuddle, which was just delightful. We board the mosquito sized helicopter for the trip back to Girdwood having enjoyed a memory of a lifetime.

- RONITA AND ROBERT



Turnaround Arm, Alaska

39

Walt Disney World a Dream Come True

My family has been Timeshare owners for over 20 years and I have tried on four separate occasions during that time to get a timeshare exchange at Walt Disney World with RCI.

Last year we finally hit the jackpot, not once but twice!!! I couldn't believe my ears when I received the call that two weeks had come through, one at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge Villas and one at Disney's Wilderness Lodge Villas.

So in 2013 my husband and I took our three children to Florida for our big Disney Vacation. The two timeshare resorts were just spectacular and Disney really does know how to cater to their guests. Sitting on the balcony watching the giraffes, zebras, kudu and gazelle grazing below at Animal Kingdom Lodge was just amazing and my kids absolutely loved it, particularly my seven year old.

The hotel rooms were large and the facilities were brilliant but the best thing for us was the Samawati Springs kid's water play area where my 18 month old son could play safely in this purpose built area. We could have spent all day every day just at the pool.

There were fantastic activities for the kids and the marshmallow roast as the sun went down was a fantastic way to finish each day.

Wilderness Lodge Villas were a different experience again but equally as impressive and we loved the evening outdoor movies by Bay Lake. Disney World is an awesome holiday destination and we would love to go back one day, even just to stay at these amazing Disney Hotels. Thanks RCI.

- SUE





40

“ We love RCI for making it possible for us to have ongoing adventures with the ones we love. ”

THIS PAGE COULD BE YOURS!

Share your story (250 words) and a photo of your amazing RCI vacation to: marketingsupport@rci.com

Canal Boat a Unique Holiday Experience

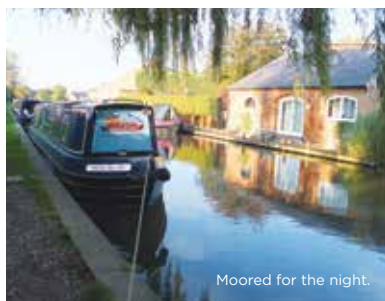
Our RCI holiday on a Canal Boat in Sawley, U.K. was a refreshing holiday experience. Our accommodation for the week was a Narrowboat. It had a Queen size bed and cupboards at the rear, an ensuite bathroom, a cozy kitchen and a sitting and dining area.

After a comprehensive land tuition learning how to open and close the Locks we had a lesson on steering and turning the boat. Then we set off for our week on the water. We travelled leisurely along the Trent Mersey Canal enjoying the peaceful serenity of the beautiful countryside.

Even falling into the canal was something we could laugh about and it taught me to pay attention when pushing the boat out from the bank. Lucky there were heaters to dry my clothes and a hot shower to warm me up.

Fellow travellers along the way waved cheerily and provided advice and help at the Locks. We could pull up for the night wherever we liked, stop for a pub lunch or dinner and enjoy the cozy comfort of our home on the canal. When it looked like rain at the end of the week we headed back to the marina, which was well equipped with a restaurant, laundry and shops. Overall it was a wonderful holiday experience.

- JOHN & ELEANOR GREENER



A German Piece of Heaven

My husband and I had a wonderful week at the Mondi Ferienclub Oberstaufen resort in July 2013. The town of Oberstaufen is on Lake Constance in Germany. It borders Austria and is a very beautiful area. You can take a short drive to the town of Lindau which has lots of restaurants around the foreshore and wonderful boutique shops.

Our one bedroom room was very spacious and had wonderful views of the mountains.. The staff were extremely helpful and looked terrific in their German outfits. It was great to have numerous choices with day tours one to Zurich another to St. Moritz on the alpine railway and another to Italy which also was a

train journey. We took the Zurich option and it was great to give my husband a rest from driving. We were able to just sit back and relax and take in the scenery.

I think the bus driver summed it best when we returned from our trip to Zurich.

“Welcome back to my little piece of heaven”.

- CHERYL



More

RCI MEMBER STORIES



Historic Virginia

Thanks to RCI we were able to book one of the most amazing holidays we have ever been lucky enough to go on last year. My husband and I have always wanted to see more of the USA and last July, we got to visit a place called Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. It was the oldest and historic capital of the United States when it was first colonised by the English in the 18th century.

It is a historical area with the original 18th Century buildings preserved with great care by the US government and houses people who work and live there dressed in 18th century garb. There are real life working blacksmiths, wheelwrights, gunsmiths and carriage makers who still make and construct items with the same techniques and instruments and materials they used in the 18th century.

They get commissions to make these original reproductions for historical parades and history museums all over the USA. There are some great tours and reenactments of famous events and it was truly an eye opener. We were fortunate enough to book and stay there just before the 4th July celebrations.

I highly recommend a visit to Colonial Williamsburg and Washington DC as it was fun, educational and absolutely amazing. For history buffs it is a must see. If you take your children, I also recommend going to Busch Gardens which is an enormous theme park.

It is not far from Williamsburg and thrilled the kids enormously.

It was one of the best holidays we have ever had.

Thank you RCI.

- SELINA



Magical Malta

We spent a few days in Malta and what a wonderful place it is to visit. The sunrises and sunsets were unbelievable and the crystal clear waters of the blue lagoon were absolutely breathtaking. The caves by the sea were spectacular and this was the place where the Count of Monte Cristo was filmed.

The friendly English speaking locals, the great timeshare resort and the cruise boat to the blue lagoon all made for a fun vacation in the sun. How can you ask for any more than that?

- NELLA SPANO



Stunning Italy

My husband and I arrived at our timeshare in Italy in June 2013. The weather was hot and the sun shining on the snow capped mountains was breathtaking. We felt like we were on top of the world.

We had a two bedroom apartment which was big enough for 4. We had a lovely balcony looking over the nearby town of Calvase which was great. Each morning and evening the cows would walk down to the paddock near our apartment with their bells ringing.

The towns near here are lovely especially Bolzano which was a very beautiful place very much like Innsbruck. We also visited Lake Garda which was a lovely day trip.

The restaurant at the resort was great and very reasonable priced. The massage at the health club which was just lovely and I would love to return to this timeshare as the area was stunning.

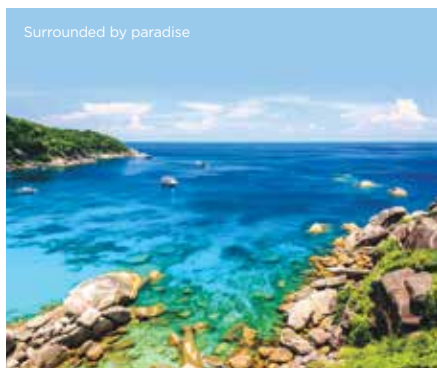
- JENNY

weekenders

Phuket... Thailand's Ultimate Paradise



Surrounded by paradise



Fantasea Festival



YOU HAVE PROBABLY HEARD ABOUT THE WONDERS OF PHUKET FROM COUNTLESS FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHO'VE TRAVELLED TO THIS ISLAND PARADISE. WHY NOT FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS AND EMBARK UPON A VACATION YOU KNOW IS GOING TO BE ABSOLUTELY AMAZING?

Located in the southeast of Thailand, the island of Phuket is known for its distinctive beauty - from blue lagoons to orange robed monks, from island hopping to sea canoeing and delicious seafood.

<< PHUKET, THAILAND

SINGAPORE >>

When you get there you'll find vast white, sandy beaches, endless crystal clear ocean, swaying palm trees and an unbeatable island lifestyle, just for starters. Then there's the world famous hospitality of the Thai people and plenty of activities to keep you as busy as long as you want. With tropical monsoon weather all year round, most beaches are perfect for swimming, except when the red flag is flying!

The most iconic destination in Phuket is Patong Beach, which is renowned for its party atmosphere, pristine beach and wide range of restaurants, bars and nightclubs. It also offers a variety of markets and stalls but can get quite crowded during peak tourist season due to its popularity.

Phromthep Cape, the southernmost tip of Phuket, is a perfect place to see the sun setting on the Andaman Sea. This popular lookout point offers breathtaking views of several major beaches.

Take time out to explore other famous swimming beaches such as Bangtao, Kata and Karon, which are great spots for snorkelling and checking out the colourful marine fish.

Karon Beach is not as intense as Patong but still enjoys a lively atmosphere with an excellent selection of shopping, dining and entertainment options.

Surin Beach is very relaxed with fewer crowds making it ideal for families, couples and honeymooners wanting to enjoy some quiet time. While the beach could likely fill your entire vacation, remember to leave some time for a calming spa

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treatment or massage and get ready to hit the local markets to see what kind of trinkets and treats you can find.

Snorkelling can be enjoyed in sheltered bays all around Phuket particularly at easily accessible reefs at Patong, Karon and Kata beaches. Snorkelling equipment can be rented on a daily basis from shops all over the island.

Phuket also has some wonderful dive sites and most of these are off nearby islands and there are dozens of dive shops to cater to your needs. Snuba diving is a hybrid between snorkeling and scuba diving and is the safest and easiest way to try diving in Phuket. It requires no certification and is a great way to learn to dive. It's just like scuba diving except easier and there's no heavy equipment to wear.

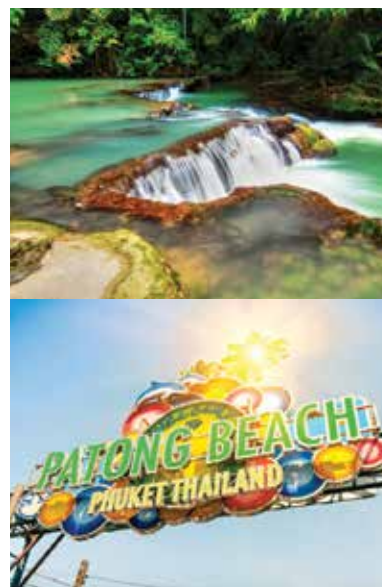
Riding on the back of a motorbike taxi is the most inexpensive of the transportation options. Be sure to request a helmet before

getting on a motorbike. Tuk Tuks (three wheeled, open aired taxis), buses and car rentals are readily available.

Remember when travelling to Phuket, pack light and leave lots of room in your bags to bring home those tourist delights 🛍️



Kao Rang Temple



Phuket has something for all tastes, the serenity of a tropical hinterland right through to the manic energy of Patong Beach.

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EAT

3rd Street Café Restaurant T: +66 76 284 510. 100/3-4 Kata Road, Karon Muang. This stylish café is conveniently located in the Kata Night Bazaar at Kata Beach. The modern East meets West menu includes dishes that will delight your appetite. The restaurant offers great music, friendly staff and authentic Thai food. www.3rdstreetcafe.com

Silk Restaurant & Bar T: +66 76 338 777. 15 Moo 6, Kamala Beach, Kathu. Located at Andara Resort & Villas in Kamala, Silk offers sumptuous Thai cuisine in a contemporary setting, with infinite views of the Andaman Sea. Try the tropical cocktails, served in hollowed out coconuts.

Sea Hag T: +66 76 341 111. 78/5 Permpong Soi III, Soi Wattana Clinic Road, Patong Beach. SAbout fifty meters from Patong Beach, this fine restaurant specialises in sea food and an expertly presented traditional Thai recipes. Painted in warm tones and decorated with Thai carvings, the Sea Hag has a warm friendly atmosphere and is open 7 days a week from 12noon - 4pm and 6pm to midnight. www.kenyaphuket.com

RELAX

Phuket Thai Cookery School T: +66 76 252 354. 39/4 Thepatan Road, Rasada, Muang Phuket. Nestled on Siray Beach, the school offers a comprehensive one day Thai cooking course. Your day starts with the introduction to Thai ingredients, a market tour and then cooking a wide selection of Thai main popular dishes. All courses are completely hands on. Courses run 8am - 3pm. www.phuketthaicookery.com

Sukko Cultural Spa & Wellness T: +66 76 263 222 1805. 5/10 Moo 3 Chaofa Road, Muang, Phuket. Experience Thai culture and rejuvenate your body and mind at Sukko Spa Resort. It offers stylish air conditioned rooms with a spa bath. Enjoy daily yoga and aqua exercise classes as well as Thai cooking classes, traditional massage and Thai boxing. www.sukkospa.com

EXPLORE

River Rovers T: +66 76 280 420. 1/16 Moo 9, Soi Ao Chalong, Chalong Bay. Hop on board the river cruiser "Pitta" and discover the ecosystem of Phang Nga Bay with the chance to see limestone monoliths and rare species of birds, tropical plants and animals. See crab eating macaque monkeys and giant monitor lizards. www.riverrovers.com

Simba Sea Trips T: +66 81 787 7702. 1320 Ventnor Road, Summerlands. Simba Sea Trips offers group tours and private charters to the Phi Phi Islands, Phang Nga Bay and Krabi. The number of guests on the boat is limited to a maximum of 15. Visitors can have a friendly and relaxed day out on the beautiful waters of the Andaman Sea. Pick up and drop off from hotel. Royal Phuket Marina. www.simbaseatrips.com



Patong Bay Garden

STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN PHUKET INCLUDE:

Patong Bay Garden C389
4 nights LHC Phuket Resort - 2015 starts
3 nights LHC Phuket Resort - 2015 starts
Minimal availability

Hotel Royal Crown 2861
Located on Patong Hill, where you can enjoy the view of the Andaman Sea or beautiful sunsets. Available for exchange and rental 7 nights from \$600 hotel unit
Available May onwards

Patong Tower Condominium 4341
Located on prime location, right in the heart of the golden Patong Beach, banks, restaurants, entertainment, and shopping areas are all nearby.
minimal availability - 2015 starts

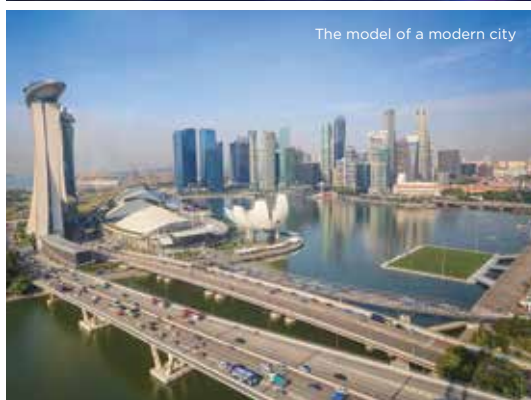
Royal Lighthouse Villa 4923
Situated on the east coast of Phuket this resort is a tranquil resort set in one of Thailand's beautiful marinas. Along the boardwalk, there are varied choices of cafes, restaurants, boating trips, car hires, tours, etc. available.
minimal availability - 2015 starts

The Palms Resort
2 brm 3 nights from \$555
2 brm 4 nights from \$740
This modern apartment is situated only 30 metres from the long stretch of unspoiled white sands of the fabulous Kamala Beach in the middle of all the shopping and dining.
Available May onwards

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com



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Singapore... Not Just any other City

FROM CUTTING EDGE MODERN STYLE LIVING TO MULTICULTURAL CHARM, THERE IS SO MUCH TO DISCOVER IN THE BUSTLING CITY OF SINGAPORE. SET AGAINST A LUSH GREEN LANDSCAPE, VISITORS CAN IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN A CULTURE WHERE HERITAGE MEETS THE WESTERN WORLD IN A CONVERGENCE OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

A lively place where people from many different cultures live together, The Republic of Singapore makes a fascinating holiday destination with the tiny city-state attracting visitors from all over the world.

An independent nation in Southeast Asia, Singapore is located at the tip of the Malay Peninsula, separated from the mainland by the narrow Strait of Johor. With over 4.2 million people, Singapore enjoys one of the highest standards of living in Asia. Its resident population is comprised of mostly Chinese and Malays with English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil being the common languages spoken.

While Singapore has a hot tropical climate, don't be put off as everywhere you go you will find air conditioning. From grand views and fine dining to street markets and food stalls, Singapore offers a diverse and seemingly endless variety of attractions. With a world class public transportation system, visitors can pack in some of the best shopping, dining and cultural experiences in Asia.

Whether it's the 24 hour shopping, late night dining or having fun with your family, it is easy to explore attractions and experiences within minutes of each other in Singapore. You'll find historic sites like the Thian Hock Keng Temple, giant shopping malls and numerous

beaches. Other than the Singapore Dollar, the US and Australian Dollars, Yen and British Pound are also accepted in most major shopping centres and big department stores.

As well as being a bustling metropolis, Singapore is also one of the cleanest and safest cities of its size in the world. Just make sure you heed the local laws. Visitors should always be on their best behaviour as seemingly minor offences such as spitting, jaywalking or eating on the subway can carry fines.

While Singapore may have a westernized facade with its modern skyscrapers and bustling business district, lurking below is a city of beauty and history. With its diverse multicultural population, Singapore is home to Little India, Chinatown and an Arab Quarter. At the centre lies the Colonial District, a remnant of the not too distant past, when Singapore was a British colony. The mix of cultures is evident everywhere, even in the unofficial spoken language of "Singlish," which combines English, Chinese grammar, Malay expressions and Hokkien slang.

In Chinatown you will be fascinated by Thian Hock Keng, a temple built without the use of nails.

While traditional Chinese businesses like medicinal halls, tea merchants and vendors selling antique wares continue to thrive, the historic district has also welcomed boutique spas and quirky new home decor stores.

Singapore is also home to a number of nature reserves where you can escape in the dense tropical foliage. You can begin your tour of the island with a visit to the Carlsberg Sky Tower for panoramic views across Singapore, Sentosa and the Southern Islands.

You can get up close and personal with the fauna at MacRitchie Reservoir. The HSBC Tree Top Walk, a freestanding suspension bridge, connects the two highest points of MacRitchie and offers an excellent vantage point for the diverse community of plants and animals that live in the forest canopy.

While in Singapore take time out to visit the Asian Civilisations Museum. After exiting Raffles Place head over Singapore's oldest bridge, the 142-year-old Cavanagh Bridge to the museum. It is the first in



Southeast Asia to present a broad but integrated perspective of pan Asian cultures and civilisations.

Trace the cultural roots of Singapore's diverse population through the museum's interactive displays. Virtual hosts greet you at each of the themed exhibits and there is a steady rotation of special exhibitions. Exhibit highlights include a ninth century Buddha and a Chinese snuff box. Outside the museum is Raffles' Landing Site, the location where Singapore's founding father, Sir Stamford Raffles, first set foot in 1819.

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EAT

Flutes Restaurant & Bar

@ Singapore National Museum

T: +65 6338 8770. 93 Stamford Road.

Serving modern European cuisine this elegant, colonial restaurant provides excellent food, service and fine wines. www.flutes.com.sg

Keyaki Restaurant, Pan Pacific Singapore

T: +65 6826 8240. 7 Raffles Blvd.

Renowned for the use of its fresh, seasonal imports from Japan, Keyaki provides authentically prepared Japanese cuisine. Signature dishes include sashimi, teppanyaki and sukiyaki. Situated on level 4 of the hotel the restaurant is surrounded by a beautifully sculpted Japanese garden and koi pond. Open for lunch 11:30am - 2:30pm, dinner 6:30pm to 10:30pm daily. www.panpacific.com

RELAX

Singapore Botanic Gardens

T: +65 6471 7361. 1 Cluny Road.

Ranked No.1 in Singapore's must see attractions; these sprawling gardens provide great respite from the hustle and bustle of the city. Here you'll find the National Orchid Garden, featuring the world's largest orchid display with over 60,000 plants and orchids. There's also the Jacob Ballas Garden where children can play, discover and learn about the intricacies of plant life. Open daily 5am - 12 midnight. www.sbg.org.sg

Jurong Bird Park

T: +65 6265 0022. 2 Jurong Hill, Jurong.

Home to 5,000 feathered friends across 400 bird species, Jurong Bird Park houses one of the largest collection of birds in the world. Must see attractions include the Bird Discovery Centre, African Waterfall Aviary, Lory Loft Aviary and the award winning African Wetlands. Open 8.30am - 6pm.

www.birdpark.com.sg

EXPLORE

Asian Civilisations Museum

T: +65 6332 2982. 1 Empress Place.

The Asian Civilisations Museum aims to promote a better appreciation of the rich cultures that make up Singapore's multiethnic society. Focusing on the material cultures of the different groups originating from China, Southeast Asia, South Asia and West Asia. Colourful and interactive exhibits are suitable for seven year olds to grandparents. Open 10am - 7.00pm.

www.acm.org.sg

Sungei Buloh Wetlands

T: +65 6794 1401. 301 Neo Tiew Crescent.

The 87 hectare wetlands are a "must do" if you have a good half day to spare. You will be able to see some of the world's rarest mangroves and wetland wildlife indigenous to this part of the world. The mangrove boardwalks offer walks from 30 minutes to 2 hours. Open 7:30am - 7pm. www.sbw.org



STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN SINGAPORE INCLUDE:

Ramada Singapore at Zhongshan Park

3 nights from \$630 hotel room

4 nights from \$840 hotel room

The Ramada Singapore at Zhongshan Park hotel is just a 5 minute drive from the Novena MRT station and a 15 minute drive to Orchard Road, Marina Bay and the Central Business District. The hotel restaurant offers authentic Chinese cuisine along with international and western menus. Other facilities include a swimming pool, a gym and business center. The hotel also adjoins a two level retail mall consisting of eateries, shops and a supermarket.

For additional resort listings visit RCI.com

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