

# TOP 10 ETHICAL DESTINATIONS IN THE WORLD



Suriname, South Africa or Poland - you might wonder what these very different countries have in common. It is "mindful travel" as some call it or ethical traveling, which is a way of preserving the wonders of the world for future generations. According to the recent report of the "Developing World's 10 Best Ethical Destinations" published by Ethical Traveler, the three countries made it to the list. So when looking for a travel destination where the host country is concerned about preserving its natural surroundings, promoting safe and responsible tourism opportunities, and protecting local communities, check the "Top 10 Ethical Destinations in the World" list brought to you by [Tourism-review.com](http://Tourism-review.com).

## Argentina

Argentina is a land of infinitely enchanting landscapes, from the Andes' snow-capped peaks to the dusty plains of Patagonia. Whether exploring the lush rainforest of Misiones, horse riding in the scorched red mountains of Salta, trekking the evergreen forests of the Lake District or playing the gaucho in the fertile Pampas, Argentina provides wonderful, boundless adventures.

At the heart of all this is the capital, Buenos Aires: a contemporary city that is bursting with energy. While the spirit of the tango thrives, and gaucho heritage is much-celebrated, modern Argentina is more cosmopolitan in its outlook than many South American countries.

The Argentines have a lust for life that is infectious; this passion shines through in the nation's three great loves: football, food and partying. Visitors to Argentina easily get into the swing of things, bringing back long-lasting memories of fine wines, enormous steaks, and extraordinary landscapes.

## Belize

For the outdoor enthusiast, Belize presents unlimited opportunities. It has one of the most extensive and easily accessible cave systems for amateur and experienced spelunkers alike, as well as a nearly endless supply of some of the world's best snorkeling and scuba-diving opportunities. Mayan temples tower above rainforest canopies while an incredible array of marine wildlife finds protection in Belize's barrier reef. This tiny Central American country has the longest continuous barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere; the largest known classic Mayan city, Caracol; and the highest concentration per square mile of the largest new-world cat, the jaguar. It is also a country of various cultural, language and ethnic groups. Due to racial harmony, religious tolerance and a relatively non-violent political culture, all the different groups have mixed and blended successfully, to give Belize a widespread reputation for its friendly peoples.

## Chile

The first thing that strikes potential visitors to Chile is the country's extraordinary, elongated shape, and this South American nation has a remarkable geography to match. It stretches thousands of miles from one end to the other, from arid, rain-starved desert in the north to the icy glaciers of the south. The beautiful Andes mountain range is rarely far from sight, defining the country's easterly

border. Such a rich natural setting provides Chile with a wealth of possibilities for fans of the great outdoors. From excellent skiing, through to trekking, horse riding and rafting adventure sport opportunities, the country is increasingly on the radar of adrenaline junkies. The country's capital Santiago is a vast, often smoggy sprawl set between the Andes and a coastal mountain range and it has several museums and attractions that are well worth visiting. Chile is now a politically stable nation, having emerged from Augusto Pinochet's 17-year dictatorship in 1990.

## **Ghana**

Ghana has a rich natural heritage. A narrow grassy plain stretches inland from the coast, widening in the east, while the south and west are covered by dense rainforests which are being developed into nature parks, such as the national park at Kakum, for ecologically-minded tourists. Although Ghana's national parks and game reserves are relatively small compared to other African countries, species of antelope, monkeys, lions and elephants can be seen here. Birds and butterflies are particularly numerous in Ghana's forests. Ghana's coastline is dotted with sandy palm-fringed beaches and lagoons where water sports can be practised. Ghana boasts 42 European forts and castles including Elmina and Cape Coast Castles which are all recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage Monuments as well as sites of wars between the British and the indigenous population. Colorful traditional festivals full of pomp and pageantry with chiefs and queen mothers riding on lushly gilded palanquins can still be seen throughout the country while traditional open markets provide the sounds and sights of the African bazaar.

## **Lithuania**

Lithuania is a land of castles, lakes and forests. Its landscape consists of vast plains parted by hills and sand dunes along the Baltic shore. Its capital, Vilnius, is one of Europe's most enchanting cities, owing especially to its Baroque old town. Lithuanian independence came soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The negotiations with Russia led to the withdrawal of the remaining Russian troops in Lithuania in August 1993. By 1995, the transition to a full market economy had been completed. It is the largest of the three Baltic states. Since gaining EU membership in 2004, the country has been placed on the global stage, encouraging more visitors than ever.

## **Namibia**

Although not as well known as some of its African neighbors, Namibia is a gem for those in search of wildlife and wilderness. Essentially a desert country, Namibia offers contrasting landscapes. The Namib Desert is a vast swathe of high dunes and desolate plains with an awe-inspiring sense of space. The thorn bush savannah and rugged mountains of the central plateau give way to the majestic Fish River Canyon in the south. In the north, landscapes range from the dense bush and open plains to woodland savannah and lush vegetation. Etosha National Park, the third largest in Africa, owes its unique landscape to the Etosha Pan, a vast shallow depression edged by waterholes to the south which guarantee rewarding game viewing. Namibia is peaceful and more prosperous than many nearby countries because of its productive mining, farming, fishing and tourism industries.

## **Poland**

One of Europe's most underrated countries, Poland offers a huge amount for travelers of all stripes - from the wild scenery of its mountainous south, with its great skiing and hiking, to the stunning old towns of Krakow, Zamosc and Gdansk and the wilderness of the Bialowieza National Park and the

Great Malsurian Lakes in the country's north. Modernizing and changing fast, the Polish capital Warsaw was almost totally destroyed during WWII, when it was home to Europe's most notorious ghetto. Today the city is a combination of Soviet and contemporary, progressive population. Yet most tourists head straight for the country's biggest draw, Krakow, the country's royal capital and a stunningly preserved architectural marvel that has somehow managed to survive the many wars that have used Poland as a battle ground. Poland's scenic beauty is as varied as it is extraordinary. The Baltic coast has some excellent sandy beaches, as well as the Slowinski National Park with its ethereal forests, bogs and sand dunes. In the country's northeast are the Great Malsurian Lakes, a playground for boat enthusiasts of all kinds with its hundreds of pristine lakes broken up by dense forest. The Krakow-Wielun Upland with its limestone areas, caves and medieval castles is another highlight, while perhaps most beautiful area of all is around the Carpathian Mountains in the far south.

## **Seychelles**

An isolated island paradise of daydream material, the Seychelles offer fine beaches, turquoise seas and deliciously warm weather. Rare plant life thrives on this Indian Ocean archipelago: no less than 81 species are unique survivors from the luxuriant tropical forests that covered the islands until humanity's belated arrival two centuries ago; outstanding amongst these is the coco-de-mer (sea coconut), native to Praslin, which grows in the Vallée de Mai. The Seychelles are also a major attraction for birdwatchers. Up to two million sooty terns nest on Bird Island, and the world's largest colonies of other tropical birds can be found on Aride. For 150 years, in which the Seychelles were isolated from the rest of the world and all but ignored by the major European powers, they developed their own colorful traditions, language and culture.

## **South Africa**

South Africa is a visually breathtaking land of vast plains, rolling mountains, golden beaches and barren deserts. The rich game viewing is as spectacular and diverse as South African scenery, with everything from plodding elephants to splashing penguins. South Africa's cities are also enormously varied, with hustling Johannesburg at its heart, and cosmopolitan Cape Town - an enclave of European chic at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. In between one can find safari lands and quaint towns breaking up the Karoo wilderness, while the seaside fun of Durban and scatterings of coastal resorts line the pretty southern Garden Route. Much diversity is also found in South Africa's people, with 11 national languages drawn from its indigenous African population, and a colonialist legacy that brought Afrikaners, English and Indians. South Africa's major draws are the plentiful wildlife, accompanying luxurious safari lodges and last but not least the world-famous Kruger National Park that offers uniquely African sights and memories.

## **Suriname**

An often overlooked country, Suriname is nonetheless filled with beautiful tropical wilderness, rare wildlife and a fascinating culture. The 17th-century capital, Paramaribo, with its attractive colonial architecture, is a good starting point for any visitor. However, Suriname's main attraction is its tropical rainforest, which covers nearly 80% of the country and is home to a huge variety of wildlife. Suriname is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, the Marowijne River, French Guiana and Brazil. By the time the Spanish arrived in the late 15th century, the Surinen (the original inhabitants of Suriname) had been driven out by other Amerindian groups. Fierce resistance to colonization deterred most would-be occupiers from Europe, although the territory formally changed hands many times. In 1954, Suriname, with the Netherlands Antilles, became an autonomous region within the Kingdom of The

Netherlands. Full independence was achieved in 1975.

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