

EXCITING TRIPS INSPIRED BY FAMOUS MOVIES



There is nothing like a trip to the movies to help you escape for a couple of hours. Step inside the cinema, and you can be vividly transported to another place, seeing sites and experiencing locations you may never otherwise get to see. In just one weekend at the Keswick Film Festival recently, you could visit the Philippines, Chile, the jungles of South America, the Tundra, India, and Kashmir.

And the same is true the other way around. There are countless places that you can visit where you can relive your favorite movies. From famous cities and landmarks to places you might not expect to have movie connections, there are many options for a cinema-inspired trip across the world. Here are ten of the best:

Rick's in Casablanca - ok, so the first destination is cheating a little, as Rick's Café American never actually existed. However, you can still visit Rick's in Casablanca, because it has been recreated by ex-US diplomat Kathy Kriger. It is not a replica, but it does have all the ambiance and atmosphere, including a welcome from the bow-tied owner herself, and naturally, it has an extensive gin bar.

Gloucester Cathedral - fans of the boy wizard often flock to the Harry Potter studio tour near London. Still, you can get an even more authentic experience for a fraction of the price at Gloucester Cathedral, where you can walk the very same cloisters as Harry, Ron and Hermione did at Hogwarts.

Empire State Building, New York - few cities feature in more movies than the popular tourist destination of New York, and few New York buildings feature more than the Empire State Building. From King Kong to Elf, An Affair to Remember to Sleepless in Seattle, the iconic structure has been a Hollywood staple for decades, making it a must-visit for movie fans.

Catskills - Mountain Lake Resort - want to take a dance class, carry a watermelon up the stairs, or even recreate that famous lift in the lake? You can stay at the actual resort used in Dirty Dancing and relive all the classic moments from the timeless hit musical at three themed weekends every year.

Highclere Castle, Hampshire - want to see first-hand how the other half lived, and still live? Take a trip to Highclere Castle in Hampshire, better known to most as Downton Abbey. While it is the private family home of the 8th Earl and Countess of Carnarvon, they do arrange regular Downton themed events throughout the year.

Sydney and Melbourne - despite the Land Down Under's troubled association with the internet (you can't even play online pokies in Australia, and the country is ranked 68th in the world in terms of online speed), the Aussieland has actually been home to several high-tech visions of the future. Visit Sydney, and you'll see many familiar sights from The Matrix, while Melbourne's suburbs feature strongly in the Mad Max movies.

Park Hyatt Hotel, Tokyo - for movie fans who prefer quieter films, the Park Hyatt Hotel in Tokyo has to be on the bucket list, as the setting for Sofia Coppola's indie hit, Lost in Translation. Enjoy a Suntory whiskey in the bar like Bill Murray, or take a late-night plunge in the pool like Scarlett Johansson, before heading off into the neon-lit Tokyo night.

Las Vegas Strip - from origin stories like Bugsy to heist movies like Ocean's Eleven, from comedies like The Hangover to gritty dramas like Casino, every inch of the Las Vegas strip has featured in a film at one time or another. See how many famous film locations you can spot in the city that never sleeps.

Middle Earth, New Zealand - if the glitz and glamour of Vegas is not for you, head down-under to New Zealand, where you can explore the many locations of Middle Earth from the Lord of the Rings series and the Hobbit movies. There are endless trips and tours that will show you the main shooting locations in this stunning countryside.

Maya Bay, Thailand - of course, movie tourism isn't always a good thing, as was seen at Maya Bay in Thailand. The setting for the famous Leonardo DiCaprio film became such a draw, attracting over 5,000 visitors per day, that authorities have had to close the beach until at least 2021 to allow the environment to recover. When it re-opens, it is likely to be highly restricted, so you must plan your visit carefully.

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