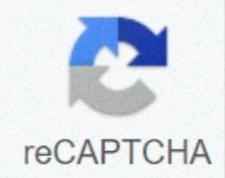




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The Victoria and Albert Museum, writes London correspondent Paul Lewis, has just opened a collection of new galleries specializing in medieval and Renaissance art, built at a cost of \$50 million over the past seven years. This Renaissance City, as the museum calls the new galleries, houses a master collection of about 1,800 storage rooms, most of which have never been seen before, at least not in recent decades. Many large stone works are difficult to display, including religious and secular statues, window frames, Gothic wells, Gothic altars, Renaissance Italian street lights (which burned sunken oil clouds), and huge chimney pieces. There are also Leonardo da Vinci notebooks filled with spider mirror handwriting. The most impressive exhibition is probably the 'Pig and Bear Chasing Fabric' woven in 15th century Flanders. You can check out the modern English poet Simon Armitage as he reads his translation of a catch of a 14th-century poem, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Or you can listen to period songs accompanied by viola de gamba. You can read up on exhibits in new computer screens located in a convenient place around galleries. These details show that it is difficult to see and provide a full account of the values of each object on the screen. Among the unusual exhibitions is a wine glass with a mill in the stem used in the drinking game. Sharp was down another drig of wine while the windmill was turning or pushing another round for those watching it to try. Admission is free. The underground station is South Kensington, and you can access the museum by underground passage. London is in the mood of a Paris imitator, writes correspondent Paul Lewis of the British capital. If you are coming after July 30, bring a cycling helmet (or archery hat). This is when Mayor Boris Johnson in Paris inspired by a plan to rent 6,000 new bikes on street shelves at 400 docking stations across the city to borrow. But it won't be cheap. After a registration fee of £3, plus £1 per day's access charge, borrowers get a 30 minute 'cycling time for free' but must pay £6 for the next two hours of sale or £50 for 24 hours. London is likely to be the overall loser. Since Paris launched its scheme in 2007, the French capital has stolen 8,000 bicycles and damaged 18,000 irreparable. London also plans to copy Paris' decision to build the Eiffel Tower as a temporary advertisement for the French steel industry to celebrate the 1900 Grand Exhibition. On the occasion of the 2012 Olympic site in East London near Stratford, the city and Indian steel pole Lakshmi Metal will finance the construction of 115 meters (about 345 feet) - an asymmetrical tower to look like a broken cylinder coast at a cost of 15 million dollars. Visitors will be able to scramble on the boardwalk or take an elevator up, where they are waiting for a observation deck and a restaurant. Unlike The Eifel, Originally only a temporary building, this steel monument is intended to last forever. Photo comments: Refer to Cheorio Hsul! Don't worry if the Queen refuses to invite you to tea you can still find out all about London's great attractions with this quiz. Personal are you more London or Paris? 5 min TRIVIA Ultimate London Eye Quiz 5 Min Trivia Travel World: UK Cities Trivia 6 Minute Sin 6 Minute Personal 6 Minute Contest That Must Live in the English City? 5 min personal 5 minute quiz which London tourist trap should you surely visit? 5 min trivia quiz can you match the 70s song of the artist? 7 min personal contest This royal quiz will reveal which queen you are! 5 minute 5-minute personal quiz is your brain more a fireman or a police officer? 6 minute personal 6 minute contest where in England should live? 5 min trivia quiz What is your London intelligence? 7 min 7-minute quiz How much do you know about dinosaurs? What is the octane classification? And how do you use a proper name? Luckily for you, HowStuffWorks is playing here to help. Our award-winning website offers reliable and easy-to-understand explanations of how the world works. From fun quizzes that bring joy to your day, to compelling photography and great menus, HowStuffWorks Play offers something for everyone. Sometimes we explain how things work, other times, we ask you, but we always explore in the name of pleasure! Because learning is fun, so stick with us! Play tests are free! We send trivia questions and personality tests every week to your inbox. By clicking on the registration you agree to our privacy policy and confirm that you are 13 years of age or older. Copyright © 2020 InfoSpace Holdings, LLC, a system1 company welcome to the second installment in our series highlighting useful destination specific applications for travelers. A list of apps that will help you get around, find things to do, and maybe save a few dollars. The time, I'll cover London. Now, since we're in London, there is a roaming charge issue when using a data link on your smartphone. If you plan to bring your phone abroad, you'll want to buy an international data package in advance instead of paying the service provider's outrageous roaming charges. You can also follow free Wi-Fi. A city like London must have many free Wi-Fi hotspots in cafes, hotels and public places. The Londoner has a great map of free Wi-Fi sites throughout the city, although the map has not been updated in a while. London Tube/Tube Map: As with most major cities, London's subway system is a bit daunting for the first time. But you won't look like the first timer with any of these applications. Both provide tube maps as well as service updates. The London Underground costs \$0.99 while Tube Map is free, but the London Underground is more comprehensive, with a road map and Google map showing your location and proximity to nearby metro stations. Radar Spoon: Spunited's radar app shows whether you're looking for music, theatre, comedy or other forms of entertainment, you're walking near your place of residence. The app tells you where, when and how much the event costs, and provides a brief description of what you'll find there. Best of all, the app is free! Time Out London: Time Out app is similar to Radar Sysappedit, in that it sets events and like this near wherever you are. But the Time Out app also includes restaurants and bars, as well as nightclubs and cinemas. It is also free London Taxi: this app calculates your taxi fare and helps you plan the route, which is extra useful for travellers and not family with the streets of London. The app says that it takes traffic congestion into account when calculating the fare, but it's probably a good idea to make sure you have a few extra pounds in your pocket. This app costs \$0.99. National Gallery: The Mini Tour app at the National Gallery includes interviews and videos that provide an additional layer of information about artworks in the museum's huge collection. You can even zoom in on a selected number of paintings to get a sense of detail and brush. \$2.99. We choose everything we recommend and select items through testing and reviews. Some products are sent to us for free with no incentive to offer a favorable review. We offer unbiased opinions and do not accept compensation for product review. All items in stock and prices are accurate at the time of publication. If you buy something through our links, we may earn a commission. Do you want more expert advice and holiday inspiration? Subscribe to our YouTube channel! December is a magical time for people around the world, and traveling through this most festive season gives you a truly global spin experience on holidays. In fact, Christmas travel not only allows you to take full advantage of closing schools and offices, but also gives you and your family the opportunity to take in the rich traditions of all over the world. The best meaningful, multicultural, inclusive Christmas holidays are full of warmth and cheer. Bypassing clear Christmas destinations like New York City and Paris, here are 10 of the best places in the world to go for Christmas, including those that are sacred to Christians - as well as those that are certainly not. Rome, Italy Stefano, Valeri/Shutterstock Vatican City, which is ensconced within Rome, is home to Catholicism, making it one of the best places in the world to go for Christmas. Many practicing Catholics are eager to see the Pope give a breathtaking Christmas mass at St. Peter's Church. Tickets for this epic annual event after the official are free, but you'll need to book you at least two months in advance. Instructions on how to do this here - note that you'll need to access a fax machine. If you can't get tickets to the Papal Mass, you can watch Pope Francis deliver urbi et orbi sermon live on the big screen of St. Peter's Square, a live shop Piazza Navona Christmas Market (or Christmas in the Spanish steps), check out one of the city's many detailed nativity scenes, go skating near Castel Sant'Angelo, visit the Hanukkah menorah in Piazza Barberini, or simply stroll to enjoy this glittering city all a doll of Natale. Quebec City, Canada AnjelikaGr/Shutterstock Quebec is a magical city at any time of the year, but winter makes it all. Old Quebec, with its European-style streets and old world charm, neatly transforms into a real Christmas village, exuding a very specific kind of warm, snow-covered charm. The entire city is entangled with beautiful lights, german-style Grand Marche Christmas market sells one-of-a-kind gifts, and many family-friendly shows, including the Quebec Light Aquarium Festival, No Asyl's Parade (Toy Parade), and the opportunity to meet Santa Fe's Fairmont Le Château Frontenac and other locations throughout the city. You can also attend Christmas parties, taste signature desserts, and stay until New Year's Eve to experience the midnight fireworks on The Grand Alli of Quebec City, along with the party-loving locals. Israel Dan Josephson / Shutterstock How better to spend Christmas by pilgrimage to the Holy Land? It is difficult to beat Bethlehem as one of the best Christmas destinations in the world. The Church of the Nativity in the Old Town is where Jesus was born, and the annual celebrations there are meaningful and memorable. There are shows in Manger Square, inclusive Christmas fans with audiences from all over the world, glittering lights and ornaments, processions and other processions, Christmas markets and trees. In nearby Jerusalem, there are ample biblical places, including Via Dolorosa, where Jesus marched, as well as the Church of the Ascension, where Christians believe Jesus ascended to heaven. Jerusalem also has one of the most impressive Christmas markets in the Middle East. Jews visiting Jerusalem during this time of year will be deeply accused of seeing the lighthouse lit up at the Western Wall every night of Hanukkah. In northern Israel, Nazareth, the birthplace of Jesus in Galilee, hosts Christmas celebrations worth suffering. On Christmas Eve, a colorful procession makes its way through the city, with a procession ending in the Church of the Annunciation with fireworks as well as Christmas mass. Surrounding the event are outdoor Christmas and Hanukkah markets, Santa, religious services, and festive lights. Arctic, Alaska Kate Leung/Shutterstock Yes, Virginia, there really is a town called the North Pole. And if there ever is a whole Christmas town, that is it. Santa is always available for visits at Santa Claus House where 400,000 messages a year are addressed to Santa Claus, Arctic Earth. Streets have names like Christmas Drive and Bubble Lane. Ice sculptures from all over the world are attracted to showcase their amazing talents. The Arctic is just 13 miles southeast of Verbans, but if you want to stay overnight in this final (if only a little kitschy) Christmas holiday destination, there are many comfortable hotels, as well as RV hookups and camps. Southern California Legoland California is the best Christmas vacations for families in Southern California. The snow-free parky mix with the weather with a mile after the coast - not to mention the decorated progressive park after the progressive park is decorated - and you've got yourselves a Christmas holiday remember. At Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, there's snow beyond fireworks every night, a 60-foot Christmas tree, holiday-themed parades, ornamental explosions, multicultural seasonal music, and holiday overlays for many beloved games, including a small world and a haunted mansion. Disneyland makes a heartfelt effort to include traditions besides those that celebrate Christmas - the klezmer band and Jewish food tip hat for Hanukkah, soul food is served to Kwanzaa, and latin favorites are served to Navidad. Over at Buena Park, Notberry Farm turns into a Merry Knott farm, with Christmas themed shows, a Christmas craft village, and night snow in the ghost town. At Studio City, Universal Studios hosts Christmas in the wizarding world of Harry Potter, including an impressive show centered around Hogwarts Castle, plus Grinchmas, with a huge tree and a caroling of who is. Down in Carlsbad, LEGOLAND has the largest Lego Christmas tree in the world, limited edition holiday treats, live holiday shows - and yes, Santa Lego. Continue heading south to the jungle bells of San Diego Park, where the famous attraction turns into a light-filled wonderland. When you have enough theme parks, head to Malibu or La Jolla for a relaxing December afternoon on one of the best beaches of the Pacific Coast. Or head to the heart of Los Angeles for some culture. Los Angeles is a particularly wonderful place to celebrate Kwanzaa. Pasadena hosted a remarkable Kwanzaa celebration for 30 years now, led by Thanyane Karina, daughter of the creator of Kwanza Malaria Karina. South Los Angeles puts on the annual Kwanza heritage festival, parade and candlelight ceremony. The Canary Islands, Spain RossHelen / Shutterstock Although Barcelona Dia de los Reyes Magus, or three kings today, is one of the most famous festivals in Spain, certain types of travelers may prefer for Christmas trips to take them to the Canary Islands in Spain instead - which are actually not on the European continent, but off the northwest coast of Africa. Imagine this for your December holiday: 900 miles of drenched sunshine coast, nativity scenes carved from the sea sands, Christmas markets selling traditional pastries called truchas, Christmas feasts in local restaurants, outdoor Christmas concerts, and New Year's Eve fireworks on the beach. Best Christmas Holiday? Iceland Vickie81/Shutterstock for true winter lovers, southern Iceland is among the best places in the world to travel for Christmas. Faced all day at night, this remote island knows how to rejoice things through this dark, freezing time of year with lots and lots of glittering lights. Visitors take part in arctic adventures in abundant snow and ice, including dog skating, snow caves, frozen lake skating, sampling Christmas buffets in restaurants, and strolling through Iceland's charming Christmas markets. Southern Iceland offers some of the world's best views of northern lights - it's a great place to check out the Northern Lights from your bucket list. The hotels here allow travelers to experience Iceland's Christmas traditions from getting a visit by one of the country's best elves. San Juan, Puerto Rico Sean Pavon / Shutterstock Christmas Eve -Noche Buena- In San Juan, locals enjoy a huge, traditional dinner of pork, rice, and beans. But more importantly, they drink coquito, creamy, like an egg rum cocktail that denotes the occasion. After the feast, wander the cobble old streets of San Juan and join (or just watch) parrandas, which are Puerto Rican carolers, and during groups that gather in front of late-night houses with traditional instruments to sing live songs from Navidad. In short, the events that take place here on 24 December each year make Puerto Rico one of the best places in the world to go for Christmas. Stay on the island for New Year's Eve and beyond, especially if you overnight at the famous Caribbean Hilton Hotel, just as Liz Taylor and Sophia Loren did. The property is renowned for creating a piña colada, as well as hosting epic New Year's eve parties. This year's concert will be bigger than ever, thanks to the last \$150 million hotel renovation. If your schedule is allowed, stay in Puerto Rico until at least January 6, since Dia de los Reyes Magos, or three kings today, is the largest annual celebration on the island. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Donatas Dabrowskas / Shutterstock Another of the best places in the world to visit for Christmas is Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and not only because the famous city of Christ the Redeemer statue gets wonderfully illuminated with the works of great artists. On December 1st each year, Rio first introduced To Lagoa, the world's largest floating Christmas tree - more than 170 feet away for fireworks and noise on Copacabana Beach. The impressive tree remains lit and floats on the water until early January. Rio is in the southern hemisphere, so the weather during Christmas is generally very warm. There are Christmas parties on Copacabana Beach, holiday pastries called panettone and rabanadas in the city's bakeries, and plenty of restaurants that offer traditional Brazilian Christmas dinners. On Christmas Eve, parties start late, with holidays usually starting at 11pm.m and the celebration escalates at midnight. Stay through New Year's Eve for unforgettable fireworks over Copacabana and Company some of the most enthusiastic players in the world. At sea Igor_Koptilin/Shutterstock if it's just the idea of all the effort that goes to celebrate Christmas at home - shopping, decorating, wrapping, cooking, hosting works for you in a cold sweat, call your relatives, and tell them you're going on a Christmas trip instead. Sailing holidays make for the best Christmas holidays for families and can be a great choice for cheap Christmas holidays. Many affordable holiday trips and go to beautiful destinations around the world, from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean to the Christmas markets along the European rivers - the Rhone, the Seine, the Rhine, and the Danube. On board, there are plenty of holiday guidance that you can afford: ugly jacket contests, elaborate holiday offers, huge Christmas trees, Santa appearances, carolers on deck, huge gingerbread houses, mistletoe and wreaths, midnight mass, hanukkah lighting menorah, and traditional Christmas dinner. Check out the performances of The Caribbean Royal, Carnival (featuring Grinch!), and Norwegian, as well as Disney's Very Merrytime Tours. The best part? You'll be able to kick back and enjoy the festivities while others do the job - kind of like being a kid again. More from SmarterTravel: Follow Avital Andrews on Twitter @avitalb or on Facebook. We choose everything we recommend and select items through testing and reviews. Some products are sent to us for free with no incentive to offer a favorable review. We offer unbiased opinions and do not accept compensation for product review. All items in stock and prices are accurate at the time of publication. 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