

WHERE TO GO WHEN: AUTUMN SEASON



Lush views
Canyon valley in Australia's Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, New South Wales.

October



CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Though most of the big festivals in Europe will wrap up by late summer, the city of Cape Town is in full festival mode. The Cape Town Fringe Festival (capetownfringe.co.za) runs until October 4 and showcases a number of genres, from comedy to music. Also on is the Daisies Music and Lifestyle Festival, a one-hour drive from the city, from October 1 to 4. Visitors will find a variety of international musical acts performing. The Cape Town Philharmonic will also kick off its Spring Symphony Season on October 22. The performance will include the world premiere of the *Three Orchestra Songs on Poems* by Ingrid Jonker (cpo.org.za). If you intend to explore the city — and it's recommended as the weather is particularly pleasant this time of year — consider booking with Cape Town Day Tours (capetowndaytours.net). The City, Table Mountain & Robben Island tour takes in many of the city's most famous attractions in nine hours.

The City, Table Mountain & Robben Island tour starts from 3,310 rand (Dh950), per person, based on a two-person group, including taxes. Return direct flights on Emirates, from Dubai start from Dh5,535, per person, including taxes (emirates.com)



NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

If there's one thing synonymous with the city of New Orleans — charmingly nicknamed The Big Easy or Nola — it's music. From October 30 to November 1, The Voodoo Music Experience will be running and will include acts like Florence & The Machine, Deadmau5 and Jane's Addiction. For the sport enthusiasts out there, autumn also marks the start of the American football season. Watch the city's beloved New Orleans Saints play one of their home games (neworleanssaints.com). Prices start from \$72 (Dh265) per ticket. You'll also want to explore the city by foot as October gives way to cooler and more enjoyable climes. Bespoke Experiences offers tailor-made, private tours for those who want a more personalised experience. And while they're available year round, ask any New Orleans native and they'll insist you try the city's bedrock sandwich, the po'boy. Pick one up at Mahony's, a favourite among residents (mahonyspoboy.com).

A four-hour private tour of New Orleans with Bespoke Experiences starts from \$575 (Dh2,110) for a group of four, including private chauffeur (bespokeprivatetours.com). Return flights on Emirates and Etihad, via New York, start from Dh5,945, per person, including taxes



GOA, INDIA

As the monsoon season winds down across India, October marks a quieter time in Goa before the crowds come rushing in by November. Hotels and resorts remain relatively cheap during this month — a night at the Park Hyatt in October starts from 15,750 rupees (Dh887), per night, compared with 17,100 rupees in November (hyatt.com). Goa makes for a quick and easy getaway while the summer lingers here in the UAE — a mere three-hour flight from the Emirates. While Goa remains a destination of partying and hours spent lounging on the beach, yoga lovers will find this October also marks the Anahata Yoga Festival. The event, starting October 21, features classes and courses at the Devaaya Ayurveda Retreat at Goa (anahata.in). Indian Holiday tour company also offers its four-day Delightful Goa Vacation package. Visitors will explore the Menezes Braganza house, the Mangeshi Temple and Baga Beach.

The Delightful Goa package starts from US\$330 (Dh1,212), per person, based on a two-person stay, including accommodation and taxes (indianholiday.com). Return direct flights from Dubai on Air India start from Dh1,535, per person, including taxes

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November



TAIPEI, TAIWAN

November is typically one of the best times to head off to East Asia, and Taipei is no exception. Temperatures rarely reach above 25°C this time of year in the Taiwanese capital, making it ideal weather for exploring the city. Those with a bit more time can book in the seven day, Classic Taiwan tour with Remote Lands. Visitors will explore Taipei, Sun Moon Lake and Toroko Gorge. Art lovers are in luck as there is plenty to choose from this month. The 2015 Ximen Backstreet festival will be ongoing throughout the month of November (cinemapark.org.tw). Art Taipei, the longest-standing art fair in Asia, is also on until November 2. The exhibition will showcase art from around the region by established and emerging galleries (art-taipei.com). Visitors can now book into the Amba Taipei Zhongshan hotel. Located in the central shopping district and a five-minute walk from the metro, prices start from 3,150 Taiwan dollars (Dh360), per night, including taxes (amba-hotels.com).

The Classic Taiwan tour starts from \$470 (Dh1,725), per person, per day, including accommodation and taxes (remotelands.com). Return flights on Emirates from Dubai start from Dh3,275, per person, including taxes



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Sun and sand aren't the only reasons to visit Sydney this November. For the sailing enthusiasts, the 37th annual Sydney Short Ocean Racing Championship will kick off on November 28. The Art Gallery of New South Wales will also receive what is being dubbed "the most important collection of European old master paintings ever to be seen in Australia" from the National Galleries of Scotland. Artists include Cézanne, El Greco, Raphael and Monet (artgallery.nsw.gov.au). Outdoor lovers will want to take advantage of close proximity of the Blue Mountains to the city. Blue Diamond Tours offer a one day itinerary of the region, visiting the Scenic Skyway, Echo Point and the Featherdale Wildlife Park. The new Tank Stream Hotel is also taking bookings. Located a five- to 10-minute walk from the Sydney Opera House, The Rocks and Circular Quay, prices start from A\$405 (Dh1,090), per night, taxes included (tankstreamhotel.com).

The Blue Mountains Day Tour package is priced at A\$185 (Dh490), per person, including breakfast, lunch and taxes (bluediamondtours.net). Return direct flights on Etihad from Abu Dhabi start from Dh6,325, per person, including taxes



BANGKOK, THAILAND

November in Thailand marks the start of the dry season, and with it brings pleasant temperatures, ideal for exploring the metropolis of Bangkok. Serious runners will have the chance to hit the pavement and join thousands for the Standard Chartered Bangkok Marathon on November 16 (bkkmarathon.com). Loy Krathong — celebrated throughout the country — falls on November 25. Celebrants gather beside rivers and lakes to launch tiny floats containing flowers, candles and incense, an act symbolising forgiveness of past misdeeds. Visitors can celebrate at various hotels along the Chao Phraya River including the Shangri-La Bangkok and Mandarin Oriental Bangkok. Visitors who wish to experience what the city has to offer can do so with Tourism Thailand. The tour company puts a foodie twist on the one day tour, offering a class that teaches travellers how to cook five different Thai dishes. The tour also includes the Jim Thompson House and the Siam Niramit Show.

The Thai Culture Explorer package starts from \$177 (Dh650), per person, including taxes (tourismthailand.org). Etihad and Emirates fly direct from the UAE. Return flights from Dh2,355, per person, including taxes