

# Plenty of top destinations to visit throughout 2016

NOW Christmas is over, here's some holiday hotspots for you to try this year...

## **Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire**

Even after several centuries, Shakespeare's plays continue to impress and entertain audiences worldwide with his works translated into more than 75 languages. This year though, attention will be firmly focused on his birthplace Stratford-upon-Avon, marking the 400th anniversary of his death on April 23, with a series of openings and special exhibitions.

Learn about Shakespeare's personal life through artefacts on display at a re-imagining of his former family home, New Place, where he lived for the last 19 years of his life and wrote 26 major works. The new attraction has been billed

as the single most significant project to commemorate the playwright's legacy.

Then delve further into his past by visiting Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall at King

Edward VI School, where the Bard honed his writing skills. Following a major restoration, the 15th-century building is open to the public for the first time.

The Royal Shakespeare Company will be staging productions throughout the year, along with a new discovery tour, Page To Stage, giving a behind-the-scenes look at the famous playhouse and an opportunity to look inside the firm's store of

30,000 costumes.

Visit [shakespeares-england.co.uk/shakespeare-2016](http://shakespeares-england.co.uk/shakespeare-2016)

## **Botswana**

Excellent wildlife sightings, a commitment to conservation and a good range of luxury accommodation make Botswana a top safari destination.

On September 30, the country will celebrate 50 years of independence, prompting Lonely Planet to declare it the number one 2016 destination to visit in 2016.

Discover the Okavango Delta, a Unesco World Heritage Site, from the comfort of the newly renovated 12-tent Belmond Eagle Island Lodge, where activities include game drives

and boat trips through the ever-changing waterways.

The Okavango's unusual topography has resulted in various animal adaptations, such as swimming lions.

Stay at private concession Dubea Plains, where filmmakers Dereck and Beverly Joubert famously documented the resident pride who hunt buffalo in broad daylight.

Botswana also has one of the highest populations of endangered wild dog and Belmond's Khwai River Lodge, on the border of the Moremi Wildlife Reserve, is currently a good place to track them.

## **Peru**

Peru has always been a best-seller in South America, and bookings are set to further soar when British Airways launches a flight from Gatwick to Lima on May 4, from £561 return.

Capital city Lima has a lively gourmet scene and boasts some of the continent's top

restaurants; experiment with flavours at award-winning Central ([centralrestaurant.com.pe/en/](http://centralrestaurant.com.pe/en/)), where the menu is based on ingredients foraged from Peru's different altitudes, or try national dish ceviche (raw fish in citrus juice) at lunch-only restaurant Chez Wong ([facebook.com/ChezJavierWong](http://facebook.com/ChezJavierWong)).

Inca citadel Machu Picchu is undoubtedly one of Peru's highlights, with passes for the popular Inca Trail selling out months in advance. Tourists now have more comfortable options for a stay in the Sacred Valley, allowing them time to acclimatise to higher altitudes and enjoy the scenery. Last year, [Inkaterra](http://Inkaterra) opened the Hacienda Urubamba and in August Explora will launch new property Valle Sagrado on the site of an ancient corn plantation. Both can be reached by road from Cusco.

## **India**

The cinema release of Disney's *The Jungle Book* in April will put the spotlight on India and its most famous animal resident – the Bengal tiger. These highly endangered creatures are notoriously difficult to spot, but Exodus ([exodus.co.uk](http://exodus.co.uk)) will be giving it their best shot on a 16-day escorted Land of the Tiger tour exploring classic Kipling country, with various departures between October and April.

Bengal tiger safaris are a key focus of the trip, with considerable time spent in three of the key national parks – Pench, Kanha and Bandhavgarh. The trip costs from £2,429pp (two sharing), including accommodation, most meals, guides, 15 game drives and flights

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#### **Utah, USA**

This year, America's National Park service celebrates its 100th anniversary, providing a good excuse to visit some of the country's most pristine and protected areas. The state of Utah is home to "Mighty 5" parks, and with Delta's new daily direct flight from Heathrow to Salt Lake City operating from May 2 (from £754 return), it's even easier to reach.

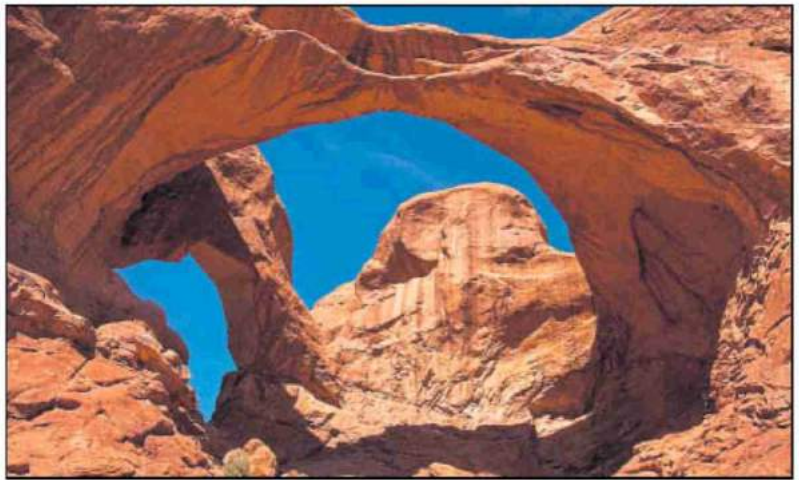
Marvel at the wind-sculpted sandstone structures in Arches National Park, explore the towering hoodoos in Bryce Canyon, or discover a 100-mile warp in the Earth's crust at Capitol Reef.

After dark, the sightseeing continues at several designated International Dark Sky Parks. Photograph the Milky Way above the famous Mesa Arch landform in Canyonlands, or wander through ancient Puebloan ruins at the Natural Bridges National Monument.

During the winter, Utah is a favourite destination for skiers and snowboarders. The recently opened Cherry Peak Resort, near Logan in northern Utah, features three triple chairlifts and a 1.25-mile run.

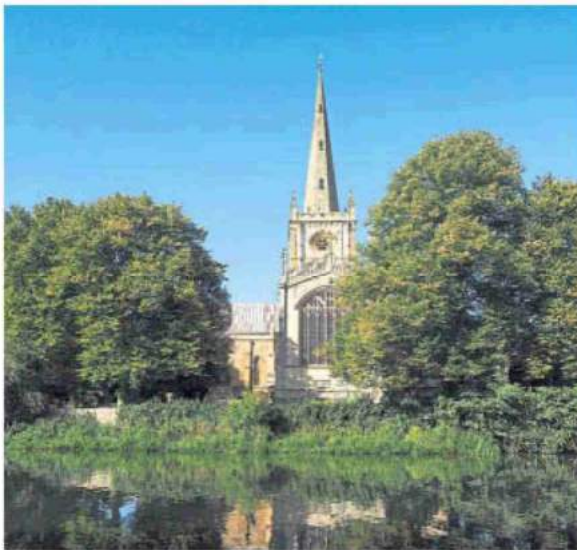
#### **San Sebastian, Spain**

As the European Capital of Culture 2016, this city in northern Spain will host a series of talks, exhibitions and events throughout the year (see [dss2016.eu/en/](http://dss2016.eu/en/)). But the main draw continues to be the fantastic range of restaurants and bars available, many of which regularly appear in The World's Best 50 Restaurants list. Sample some of the 200 pinxto bars in the Old Town or try the Basque version of tapas.





**ICONIC:** Machu Picchu, Peru



**HISTORY:** Holy Trinity Church in Stratford upon Avon  
**BELOW:** Arches in Utah