

# QUOTE

"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. In 2014, Inkaterra opened the Hacienda Urubamba"

# Must-see venues for 2016



It's time to plan new adventures. **Sarah Marshall** suggests some of the very best holiday hotspots for the year ahead

## BEST FOR CULTURE

*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 new openings

and special exhibitions.

Learn about Shakespeare's personal life through artefacts on display at a reimagining of his former family home, New Place, where he lived for the last 19 years of his life and wrote 26 major works.

Then delve further into his past by visiting Shakespeare's Schoolroom and Guildhall at King Edward VI

School, where the Bard honed his writing skills.

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) 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 RSC's store of 30,000 costumes.

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



information.

**BEST FOR SAFARI**

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

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.

Stay at private concession Duma Plains, where film-makers 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 a good place to track them.

Africa specialist, The Ultimate Travel Company ([www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk](http://www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk); 020 3051 8098) tailor-make a one-week luxury safari from £7,515pp, with three nights

at Duma Plains, followed by two at Khwai River Lodge and two more at Eagle Island River Lodge.

**BEST FOR ADVENTURE**

*Peru*

Peru has always been a bestseller in South America and bookings are set to soar further when British Airways launch a new direct flight from Gatwick to Lima on May 4 from £561 return.

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 opened the

**“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**

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.

The Ultimate Travel Company ([www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk](http://www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk); 020 3051 8098) offers a 10-day private Highlights Of Peru tour visiting Lima, Cusco and the Sacred Valley from £3,125pp – saving £1,540 per couple if booked by February 29. Includes direct BA flights from London.

**BEST FOR WILDLIFE**

*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 ([www.exodus.co.uk](http://www.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.

Rudyard Kipling set his classic novel in the region now known as Madhya Pradesh and Village Ways ([villageways.com](http://villageways.com)) offer a 10-night trip through the area, following in the footsteps on 19th Century travel pioneer James Forsyth.

The trip costs from £1,352pp (two sharing), including full board accommodation and activities. Flights extra.

**BEST FOR SCENERY**

*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 a “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. Visit [www.visitutah.com](http://www.visitutah.com) for more information.

**BEST FOR FOODIES**

*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.

However, the main draw continues to be the fantastic range of restaurants and bars available, many of which regularly appear in The World's 50 Best Restaurants list.

Pura Aventura ([pura-aventura.com](http://pura-aventura.com)) is running a new 10-night Basque Foodie Adventure, visiting producers and sampling products.

Prices start from £1,995pp (two sharing) including several meals, guides and excursions.



Clockwise from left:  
stargazing in Utah; a  
street scene in San  
Sebastian, Spain; a  
Bengal tiger; a Lion  
from the Dube Plains  
pride in Botswana  
and Stratford-upon-  
Avon, Shakespeare's  
birthplace.

Pictures: PA.