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**Newfoundland and Labrador - JOURNEY TO THE EDGE OF THE EARTH!****TRAVEL****A LEGO GARDEN OF SCULPTURES**

The Royal Botanical Gardens, the largest attraction of its kind in Canada, has installed Lego sculptures of plants and animals throughout one of its parks.

The colourful works were created by New York artist Sean Kenney, whose Lego statues are touring across North America and are now also on show in Memphis, Tenn., and Houston, Texas.



ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Among the 14 sculptures scattered in Hendrie Park, there's a human-sized praying mantis made of 42,164 Lego bricks, a monarch butterfly with one-metre-long wings (60,549 bricks), and a bald eagle (42,198 bricks).

Kenney's Nature Connects series runs at the Burlington, Ont., attraction until Aug. 20.

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**SUN, SAND  
AND ... SHHH!**

Explore the best undiscovered beaches in the world





You'll see nobody else on the beaches of India's Andaman Islands, including North Bay Island, except the occasional elephant, says Black Tomato co-founder Tom Marchant. GETTY IMAGES

#### NIKKI EKSTEIN

A certain type of New Yorker has complaints about the beaches in Tulum, Mexico, Saint Barth's, or Mykonos in Greece. "Why escape New York," they ask, "just to be surrounded by New Yorkers?"

Do not hang out with these people.

But do heed their warning: If you want to go to a beach to get away from other humans, you'll have to try a lot harder than visiting those popular, luxurious, seaside spots. At the under-the-radar destinations listed here, you won't know a soul anywhere in a 150-kilometre radius — and the locals will make you feel like one of their own. Not just that: These untrammelled landscapes are postcard-perfect, free of photo-bombing tourists and full of secret coves just waiting to be discovered. As icing on the cake, they're all within proximity to places you already know and love.

Time's ticking, though. These spots won't stay secret much longer.

#### YOU'VE DONE MYKONOS ... NOW TRY ZAKYNTHOS

Tired of looking at Mykonos's beautiful windmills? Never. But maybe you're ready to swap out the thumping social scene for something more laid-back. Head to the Ionian island of Zakynthos, a little-explored paradise where secret, pearlescent coves are hidden from plain sight by towering limestone bluffs.

The western and northern sides of the island are the quietest and most beautiful — and the latter is where you'll find the stone-walled Porto Zante Villas and Spa, which Greece expert Mina Agnos, president of Travelive, says offers an unsurpassed experience. "Each villa has panoramic views, a private, heated swimming pool, and access to a private section of beach," she said. Other island draws: the neon-blue Shipwreck Beach (named for a destroyed vessel that still sits on the sand), endangered caretta caretta (loggerhead) sea turtles and plenty of yacht charters for a day of Ionian beach-hopping.

#### YOU'VE DONE SAINT BARTH'S ... NOW TRY SINT EUSTATIUS

Not every place that Christopher Columbus discovered was put on the global map. Case in point: Sint Eustatius, one of the most under-the-radar islands in the resort-rich Caribbean, which the famed explorer first documented in 1493. Little has been said about it since then. Its sole city, Oranjestad, is known as the "smallest capital in the world," and the entire island has a population of just 3,183.

But Statia, as it's known, is just a short puddle-hopper flight from Sint Maarten, and scuba diving expert Robert Becker of Pro-Travel considers it one of his all-time favourite places. "There's no mega-tourism, and most people don't even know it's there," he

said. "It's got great hiking and lots of gorgeous tropical foliage, plus very welcoming people who have a genuine desire to know that you're enjoying your stay." Bunk up at the Dutch colonial-style Old Gin House, where Becker says you'll feel like you're staying with family friends, and pack goggles: The island is ringed by a national marine park with impeccably protected coral reefs and tropical fish stocks.

#### YOU'VE DONE PUNTA DEL ESTE, URUGUAY ... NOW TRY MANCORA, PERU

"This beach is popular with locals, but few Western visitors have discovered it," said Ashish Sanghrajka, Latin America enthusiast and president of Big Five Tours. That's because most travellers to Peru head inland to the Sacred Valley, rather than up the coast. That's a big mistake.

Not only does Sanghrajka say that the beach town of Mancora — close to the border of Ecuador and a four-hour flight from Lima — has "some of the best banana board surfing in Latin America," it's also home to a stunning nine-room resort, Kichic. Nearby, at Tucume, you can still accomplish some of that requisite Peruvian ruin-spotting: the adobe complex is nearly a thousand years old. And soon enough, the country's luxury resort standard setter, Inkaterre, will open a beach retreat in the vicinity — in a fishing town that inspired Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

SEE BEACH ON DIO



The waters are a pristine neon blue at Shipwreck Beach on the Ionian island of Zakynthos. PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO



Peru's beach town of Mancora, a four-hour flight from Lima, is popular with locals, but nearly undiscovered by Western tourists.