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• [HOME](#)

• [TOP 10](#)

• [HOTELS](#)

• [FLIGHTS](#)

• [DESTINATIONS](#)

• [TIPS](#)

• [CONTESTS](#)

• [NEWS](#)

• [BLOG](#)

• [ABOUT](#)

- [Review: seaplane transfer to Cheval Blanc Randheli Maldives](#)
- [Top 10 most expensive hotel rooms in the world](#)
- [Travel news: this month \(June 2024\) in luxury travel](#)
- [Review: Cheval Blanc Randheli Maldives](#)
- [Top 10 best luxury resorts in the Maldives](#)

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Top 10 most beautiful islands in the world

[June 17, 2024](#) [10](#)

Monday [newsletters](#) always feature [top 10 travel lists](#) to inspire.

Today: Top 10 most beautiful islands in the world

The world's most beautiful islands top the bucket list of many discerning travelers. Islands are generally pretty gorgeous. They are islands after all. But not all islands are created the same. The ones that made it into my top 10 list are just incredibly beautiful. Featuring breathtaking topography, spectacular beaches and/or fascinating cultures, these islands offer something for everyone, whether you are dreaming of a relaxing beach holiday or plotting an active adventure. From Canada's rain-drenched coastal areas to the sunny reefs of the Maldives, here's my selection of the world's 10 most stunningly beautiful islands.

There is more information (with YouTube videos) below my slide show (including a selection of luxury hotels). What's your favorite island? Leave a **comment**.



5. BORA BORA

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10. LA REUNION

La Reunion offers one of the Indian Ocean's last great island adventures. With dramatic natural scenery, a French identity and a rich melting pot of cultures, the beautiful island is quite unlike its beach paradise neighbor Mauritius. La Reunion feels like an epic real-life version of the Jurassic Park movies, with emerald forests, tumbling waterfalls, awesome mountainscapes, and soul-stirring panoramas. The formidable Piton de la Fournaise, one of the world's most accessible active volcanoes, adds to the thrill. I recommend combining Reunion and Mauritius in the same travel itinerary, as a relaxing stay at one of [Mauritius' luxurious beach resorts](#) perfectly complements the sightseeing, activities and more modest accommodations on offer in La Reunion, which is just a short flight away.

- **My selection of hotels:** [LUX* Saint Gilles](#)



9. TASMANIA (AUSTRALIA)

Separated from the Australian mainland during the last Ice Age, for nearly 10,000 years Tasmania has evolved in splendid isolation, creating a living museum of some of the world's oldest and rarest plants and animals. Nearly a third of the island is protected by national parks and more than 20% of Tasmania has been declared a World Heritage Area, a pristine yet accessible wilderness of dramatic coastlines, thick forests and snow-capped mountains. The untamed beauty of Tasmania is so precious it meets more World Heritage criteria than anywhere else on the planet. Here, you can find countless world-class nature and adventure experiences, be captivated by the Aboriginal heritage and Australia's early convict and settler history, and stay at some of the [world's most exclusive wilderness lodges](#).

- **My selection of hotels:** [Saffire Freycinet](#) and [Cradle Mountain Lodge](#)



8. BALI (INDONESIA)

The most famous island in Indonesia, Bali is called the famed island of the Gods. With its varied landscape of sandy beaches, hills and mountains, rugged coastlines and cliffs, gorgeous waterfalls, as well as lush rice terraces and barren volcanic hillsides, some people claim that Bali is earth's ultimate paradise. In addition to that, Bali is also home to some of the most luxurious resorts in the world. But Bali also has a colorful and deeply spiritual culture, which is why it is known as the "island of a thousand temples". There are sea temples, directional temples and so many others so that 1,000 is an understatement. It is true that the island is partly overrun with tourists, hence explaining while neighboring Lombok may offer a more authentic experience.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best luxury resorts in Bali.



7. VANCOUVER ISLAND (CANADA)

The exposed top of a submerged mountain range, Vancouver Island – located on the Canadian west coast – stretches for 460 km (285 mi) from charmingly sophisticated Victoria in the southwest to Cape Scott’s windswept beaches and rugged headlands at its northern tip. And it’s an outdoor lover’s paradise. You can paddle through serene coastal waters, backpack in majestic wilderness parks, or marvel at the [furred, feathered and finned wildlife](#) on land and out to sea. You can also gaze at distant snow-capped mountains while striding barefoot along softly curving beaches, bomb down mountain bike trails, surf the big waves and all that while inhaling crisp, clean ocean breezes and the mossy fragrance of old-growth rainforests.

- **My selection of hotels:** [Clayoquot Wilderness Resort](#), [Long Beach Lodge](#), and [Wickaninnish Inn](#)



6. SICILY (ITALY)

Known as the hiding place of the Corleone family, Sicily is a delightfully verdant island, the largest in the Mediterranean Sea, and covered in olives and lemon groves, vineyards and citrus fruit. The famous coastline of the island varies from sandy beaches and gulfs opening onto peaceful crystal clear bays, to steep cliffs, and crags. Sicily is also a world-class cultural destination, with impressive witnesses from ancient times encountered at every turn. From the beautiful shore line, to the top of the still active volcano Mt Etna, from the well-preserved Greek ruins, to the world-class shopping in Taormina and, of course, the [picturesque villages](#) and incredible cuisine, Sicily remains one of Europe's gems.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best luxury hotels in Sicily.



5. BORA BORA (FRENCH POLYNESIA)

Under a one hour flight from the South Pacific island of Tahiti or Moorea, the island of Bora Bora, with a lagoon resembling an artist's palette of blues and greens, is love at first sight. Romantics from around the world have laid claim to this island where the castle-like Mount Otemanu pierces the sky. Lush tropical slopes and valleys blossom with hibiscus, while palm-covered motu circle the illuminated lagoon like a delicate necklace. Perfect white-sand beaches give way to emerald waters where colored fish animate the coral gardens as they greet the giant manta rays. Luxurious over-water bungalows nestled over the world's most beautiful lagoon with a tropical backdrop makes Bora Bora a top destination for honeymooners.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best resorts in French Polynesia.

4. SANTORINI (GREECE)

Arguably Greece's most beautiful island, Santorini is a mix of towering black cliffs, inky waters and whitewashed villages. Santorini inspires every visitor because of its spectacular landscapes of white washed houses and blue domed churches perched on volcanic cliffs, all set against the backdrop of the beautiful shimmering Aegean waters. Unfortunately, thanks to its epic beauty, Santorini endures another plague – plenty of visitors during summer – when roads are blocked, restaurants are full and prices soar. While spring is a lovely time to visit, particularly for the wild flowers, the sea has yet to warm up enough for all but the bravest. This is why October is best – there are no crowds, the water is warm and there's wine to be tasted.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best hotels in [Santorini](#)

3. MALDIVES

Undeniably the most luxurious destination on the globe, the Maldives has become a synonym for paradise whether it is for honeymooners, sun worshipers, scuba divers or celebrities. Located on the equator towards the south of India

and stretching over 800 km/500 miles, the islands are the visible coral tips of an oceanic volcanic mountain range whose outer edge at some points plunge to depths of over 3 km/1,8 miles. The Maldives are blessed with exquisite ribbons of powdery-soft white sand, crystal clear blue lagoons, incredible underwater wildlife, and unrivalled luxury resorts that take up their own private island. The Maldives is also home to my two favorite hotels in the world, [Soneva Fushi](#) and [Soneva Jani](#), which both offer the world's largest overwater villas (with slides and retractable roofs).

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best hotels in the Maldives.
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2. SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles are an archipelago of legendary beauty in the Indian Ocean, just south of the Equator and east of Kenya. Its 115 coral and granite islands, which are the peaks of a massive underwater plateau, star in countless tropical island fantasies and represent one of the world's very last frontiers. Once your aircraft descends into the Seychelles International Airport, you know that you have arrived at a place of awe-inspiring scenery, with granitic mountain ranges clad in virgin jungle cascading down to hauntingly beautiful, palm fringed, with sand beaches. The Seychelles beckon discerning travelers to their shores, by offering adventure, romance and luxury resorts in pristine surrounds still untouched by man.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best hotels in the Seychelles.
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1. KAUAI (HAWAII, USA)

Towards the end of the Hawaiian archipelago lies a small, rainy island called Kauai. Known as the Garden Island, Kauai is home to wildly verdant landscapes, breathtaking beaches and utter serenity. It is on the northwest shore of Kauai that you will discover the famous Napali Coast – a 16 km/10 mi stretch of 1000-meter/3,000-foot high verdant mountain cliffs that seem to rise endlessly from the depths of the ocean floor. Other spectacular places on the island include the awesome Waimea Canyon, frequently referred to as the “Grand Canyon of the Pacific”, and the mystical Mount Wai ‘ale ‘ale – an extinct 5,000-year old volcano renowned for its mist-covered peaks and some of the world's most spectacular waterfalls.

- **My selection of hotels:** click [here](#) for my top 10 list of the best hotels in Hawaii.
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