

Top Summer Adventure Travel Spots

Shivani Vora, 05.15.07, 12:01 AM ET



In Pictures: Top Summer Adventure Travel Spots

"There will be sleeping enough in the grave."

So said Benjamin Franklin. Seems like he was on to something. If the thought of spending your summer snoozing on the beach strikes you as uninspired, you're right--it is.

How about [surfing off Costa Rica](#) instead, [hiking Chili's Atacama Desert](#) or [scuba diving in the Red Sea](#)?

Such vacations are on the rise, according to travel agents and companies that specialize in active travel.

In Pictures: Top Summer Adventure Travel Spots

"People want travel experiences that are out of their comfort zone," says Rebecca Falkenberg, an adventure travel specialist at the Florida-based Hill's Travel. "Having a more active trip lasts a long time in their memories. It's more lasting than your typical trip to the beach."

Much of the new interest in adventure vacations comes from families.

They "want new ways to connect, and doing a specific kind of adventure together, such as whitewater rafting, is a very bonding experience," says Timothy Gordon, founder of Gordon's Guide, a California company that provides information on more than 10,000 adventure trips on its [Web site](#).

Plentiful Perks

Gone, however, are the days of GORP and packed campsites. Today, travelers seeking an adventure-packed vacation don't have to forgo glitz to get action.

"Adventure travel as a whole has become more upscale. You do your activity during the day and come back to a five-star hotel with great meals," says Martha Gaughen, an agent at Atlanta-based Sterling Travel who has more than 20 years of experience in planning adventure trips. "Years ago, you would have been backpacking and sleeping in a tent."

Special Advertising

Also In Lifestyle

[Best SUVs 2007](#)

[World's Most Expensive Homes 2007](#)

[How To Avoid A Heart Attack](#)

[Chic Boutique Hotels](#)

[Men's Guide To Power Dressing](#)

Popular Videos

[Rags To Riches Celebrities](#)

[Lara Croft Sizzles In Tomb Raider](#)

[Johnny Depp's Pirate Booty](#)

[Most Expensive Homes In America](#)

[Three ETFs To Own](#)

Most Popular Stories

[Outsourcing Vs Immigration](#)
[Buy The Coming Dip](#)
[E-Payment Popularity Lifts MasterCard](#)
[Government To Google Google?](#)
[Fed Workers Still In The Dark](#)

But luxe living doesn't come cheap and these vacations can easily run into the thousands of dollars. The more uncommon the adventure and the more remote the location, the higher the price. At many luxury properties, an a la carte menu of activities means the more adventure seekers tack on, the higher the trip's price tag.

Related Stories
[Sensational Villa Vacations](#)

[Under-The-Radar Trips](#)

Still, adventure travel doesn't have to translate into nonstop action. It is a vacation, after all. Most high-end hotels are flexible, and the amount of activity can easily be adjusted.

Water-Logged Vacations

That's the case at [The Tu Tu Tun Lodge](#) in Gold Beach, Ore. It welcomes both serious and casual kayakers alike. Book a stay and you can take rigorous half-day trips down the Rogue River on one of the lodge's 12 sea kayaks or stick to a leisurely half-hour ride. Either way, you'll likely see beaver dens and families of otters. The owners pack box lunches for kayakers taking the longer trips, which can be enjoyed on one of the many sandy beaches on the river.

Refuel at the end of the day with a four-course dinner in lodge's dining room, and retire in one of the 20 guest rooms, most of which have outdoor tubs.

If hanging out underneath the water is more appealing to you than exploring what's above it, try scuba diving in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt--a mainstay destination for diving enthusiasts who come here to explore the teeming life of the Red Sea. There are unspoiled reefs and an abundant marine life including huge schools of fish, turtles and manta rays.

Divers will also stumble upon dramatic wrecks. The Four Seasons in Sharm El Sheik arranges diving trips for the sporty who want to return to luxurious accommodations. The 136 rooms, the smallest of which measures 650 square feet, all have terraces and sea views.

Land Lubbers' Luxury

Prefer a more rigorous sport? Head to the [Westin Resort & Spa](#) in Whistler, Canada, for off-road biking. This area is famous for hundreds of trails that snake through the mountains and forest. Some are easy, for beginners. Others, more hard-core, are in the Whistler Mountain Bike Park and can be reached by a tramway adjacent to the resort. A concierge helps with all arrangements.

[Click here for more luxury travel features.](#)

Of course even the most hard-core biker needs to chill out at the end of the day. Piece of cake here. The Westin's 419 rooms are all suites, complete with kitchenettes that have Sub-Zero fridges. The spa has more than 75 treatments such as the algae immune-boosting wrap and a Thai massage.

Is this the summer to thrill, not chill? Whether mingling with otters in Oregon or exploring a submerged wreck in the Red Sea, adventure doesn't have to be austere.

In Pictures: Top Summer Adventure Travel Spots

More On This Topic

E-Mail Newsletters: [Sign Up Now To Stay Informed On A Range Of Topics](#)

Attaché: [Customize Forbes.com Now To Track This Author And Industry](#)

Article Controls

[E-Mail](#) | [Print](#) | [Comments](#) | [Request Reprints](#) | [E-Mail Newsletters](#)

 [del.icio.us](#) |  [Digg It!](#) |  [My Yahoo!](#) |  [RSS](#)

Related Sections