

40 holidays that offer guaranteed sunshine – and adventure



Need something more than just warmth? Try Matera Credit: Getty

[Sarah Baxter](#)

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From cycling through medieval towns to embarking on an epic trail of Indochina, Sarah Baxter has a sun-filled break to suit every taste

“O, Sunlight!” wrote poet Roman Payne. “The most precious gold to be found on Earth.” Indeed, what else do you really need to literally brighten your day? Even the most miserable scene is elevated by a blazing sky; the lowest mood lifted when the weather is cheery.

[Sunshine](#) can make you feel more energetic: compare your enthusiasm for a walk or cycle when it’s used-towel grey outside versus cloudless blue. To give an extreme example, setting off for a ramble at 11pm doesn’t seem half so off-putting when you’re at 66°N, bathed in the midnight sun.

So it makes sense to seek out the sunniest spots for our holidays; places with low rain, long days and clear skies. Top picks include the [USA](#) – officially the world’s sunniest country; the town of Yuma, Arizona, tops the polls, clocking up an average of 4,015 hours of sunshine per year. Other bright choices include Europe’s southern reaches, northern [Africa](#), the [Middle East](#) and the tropics in their dry seasons. Or consider dramatic deserts, equatorial isles and, come midsummer, the far, far north: in [Longyearbyen](#), capital of the Svalbard archipelago, it’s light non-stop from 20 April to 22 August.

But why stop at just sunshine? While it’s lovely to travel to where the skies are blue, it’s even better to travel somewhere where the blue sky comes with an array of other attractions. Where it’s easy to do more than simply flop on the sand; where you can combine soaking up serious rays with world-class historic sites, brilliant [cycling](#), hiking, kayaking or sailing, amazing [wildlife](#) encounters, dramatic natural landscapes or the chance to indulge in the quality food and wine that the locale’s fine weather has nurtured in the first place.

We've rounded up 40 trips that will give you a sunshine boost but also tickle your fancy. Whether you like biking, birding or beekeeping, ancient ruins or family-friendly adventures, drinking elephant-dung coffee or shooting quality tequila, we have a bright idea...



Spot wildlife in Svalbard Credit: Getty

33. Venture north, Svalbard

Sail to within 540 miles of the geographical North Pole in summer and sunshine isn't a problem. Nor is wildlife: cruise aboard a Polar Class 6 vessel for the highest levels of ice-breaking Arctic access, optimising chances of squeezing down remote channels and spotting walrus, polar bear, blue whales, reindeer and more. The 24-hour daylight means excellent opportunities for photography too.

An eight-day Kingdom of the Ice Bear trip with Swoop Arctic costs from £2,159pp including accommodation and meals. Excludes flights. May-June 2020 (0117 369 0296; swoop-arctic.com).