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THE BESTS

The Best Places to Travel in January

7 PHOTOS

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Now that gift-giving season has come and gone, it's time to treat yourself—and what better way to lift spirits in the gloom of January than with a trip? Whether you're a snow bunny keen to explore the Great Outdoors, or a sand fly who needs a dose of winter sun, we've got you covered. This gallery was originally published in 2016. It has been updated with new picks.

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Getty

Costa Rica

Detox in style with a trip to Costa Rica. The focus on holistic wellness will make keeping that New Year's resolution much easier, as will the pervasive, positive attitude: the nation was **No. 1** on the Happy Planet Index last year, which gauges countries' moods. Try New Age therapies like earthing, which involves touching the ground or sand with your bare feet or hands, and [forest bathing] (<https://www.cntraveler.com/story/how-forest-bathing-turned-a-skeptic-into-a-tree-hugger>) in the tropical landscapes and rain forests. (We're partial to the bird-filled Arenal Volcano National Park in the north, where you can later decompress with a massage or two at the new luxe resort **Las Catalinas** nearby.) Each January, there's also impressive **whale watching** at the other end of the country, in and around Bahía Ballena and Bahía Drake: the Pacific coast here is the only known location where both Northern and Southern hemisphere humpbacks mingle. Even better to keep stress levels low? A new Southwest direct flight connecting Fort Lauderdale with the capital, San Jose. So long, **layovers**.