

Mastercard **Top Hidden Treasures**

DISCOVER *amazing & affordable* PLACES ACROSS EUROPE



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ROADBOOK



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ASTURIAS & COVADONGA CONVENT | SPAIN

Asturias is located in the middle of Spain's north coast, near to the beautiful Bay of Biscay. There are not many places that can offer so much variety within very little space. Uncrowded and amazing beaches with crystal clear water, hiking for all levels in complete wilderness, bustling cities, delicious cuisine and cultural highlights. Approximately one third of the region is protected natural space and Unesco has recognized four biosphere reserves.

A must see is the **Covadonga** convent which is considered to be one of the most important historical locations in Spain. Covadonga is also one of the main entrances to the stunning Picos de Europa National Park.

Asturias is still relatively undiscovered by foreign tourists and remains affordable. Accommodation is around €25, and a meal out approx. €18.



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MDINA & ZEBBUG | MALTA

Despite being the 9th smallest country in the world, Malta is considered to be a Mediterranean jewel. It attracts travelers with breathtaking landscapes and a stunning coastline during most part of the year.

It also offers numerous outdoor activities ranging from golf to rock climbing or one can simply admire Malta's rich medieval heritage. Mdina offers grand palaces, cultural treasures, and baroque architecture.

The city of **Zebbug** has a fascinating Arabic influence and is famous for spectacular celebrations, a "festa" that can last 3 days or more with hundreds of people attending. Surprisingly, Malta still remains very affordable – eating out and accommodation in a guesthouse can be found each for approx. €25.



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SALZKAMMERGUT REGION | AUSTRIA

Lake **Hallstatt**, one of the most beautiful Alpine lakes in Austria, is hidden in the heart of the Salzkammergut region and is also called the Pearl of Austria.

With stunning views throughout the area, visitors will find many activities to enjoy, both during summer and winter months. A mountain railway connects Hallstatt to a historic salt mine, while the impressive Dachstein Giant Ice Caves and the Mammoth Cave in Obertraun can both be reached by cable car.

Delicious meals are typically priced around €25, and accommodation can be found for €35.



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THE AZORES | PORTUGAL

The Azores, an autonomous region of nine Islands located in the mid Atlantic, is an unspoiled paradise.

Breathtaking landscapes, volcanoes, crater lakes, fishing villages and waterfalls make them a unique gem to be discovered. In 2009, UNESCO listed the Azores a Biosphere Reserve.

Some islands are named after natural elements, like Pico the "Mountain Island," featuring a volcano, and Ponta do Pico, the highest mountain in Portugal. Prices are also very affordable, with meals at around €15, and accommodation at €25.



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PERAST | MONTENEGRO

If you're dreaming of going deluxe without overspending, Montenegro is the right place for you.

The quaint town of **Perast** on the coast is still waiting to be discovered by beach enthusiasts. Famous for its Venetian-heritage buildings, just a few hundred meters from the shore you'll also find two spectacular settings: the island of St. George, and the Adriatic's only artificial island, Our Lady of the Rocks.

Beauty at a bargain, you can buy a meal and find accommodation for under €15 each.



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LEDNICE-VALTICE | CZECH REPUBLIC

Did you know that the 200 km² **Lednice-Valtice** region is Europe's largest artificial geographical area? A major attraction is Lednice Castle, a palace built on a Renaissance chateau and Gothic fort.

Take a fairytale walk and enjoy the stunning views after climbing the 60-meter high minaret or relax on a boat trip down the river, where you may spot wading birds. Discover the beauty that makes this region such a travel gem.

Prices are very affordable, with meals around €10, and accommodation for approx. €20.



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Croatia is stunningly beautiful and often very busy with tourists. The **island of Pag** is certainly one of the most striking and unique spots on the Croatian Adriatic coast, and cannot be recommended more heartily.

Known for its moon-like landscapes and salt, lace and cheese production, a light sea breeze is cooling down the heat of hot summer days.

Croatians welcome guests with medium range prices – €13 for a meal, and accommodation for less than €30.



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SAAREMAA ISLAND | ESTONIA

Located in the Baltic Sea, **Saaremaa** is Estonia's largest island. Windmills and the famous local home-brewed beer are considered its symbols.

Its most attractive site is, no doubt, the Kaali craters – the result of several meteorites that impacted some 3,500 years ago – the largest forming the unique, green-colored Kaali Lake. Kuressaare is the island's only town and features a medieval and bishopric castle dating from the 13th century.

Eating out will cost €18, and accommodation approx. €23.



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VOLOS & PELION REGION | GREECE

Volos, located in Thessaly in the Pagasetic Gulf, is halfway between Athens and Thessaloniki. Its rich historical and architectural sites, tasty restaurants and vibrant nightlife, make it one of the most beautiful cities in Greece.

Bordered by beautiful beaches on one side, and by Mount Pelion on the other, the Pelion region is attractive during both summer and winter months. Remember the iconic movie *Mamma Mia*? It was filmed in Damouhari, the only natural harbor on the east Pelion coast.

The region isn't overcrowded, and prices are very reasonable; around €15 for a meal out, and just under €25 for accommodation.



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VELIKA PLANINA | SLOVENIA

It is hard to believe that the tiny territory of **Slovenia** has so many beautiful places to visit. Take the breathtaking Velika Planina uplands in the Kamnik Alps, just an hour from Ljubljana, or the wooden huts of the oldest preserved herdsmen settlement in Europe which will give you the illusion of time travel.

Slovenians love to party – there are numerous festivities and events, and the Kamnik Alps region hosts over 60 festivals in just one season!

Eating out is around €15, and accommodation costs up to €40.



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KASZUBY | POLAND

Small, traditional villages are typical for **Kaszuby**, a picturesque region in the North of Poland near Gdansk.

Lake Wdzydzkie is a paradise for kayakers and sailors. In Kaszuby you'll find stone circles called the 'Polish Stonehenge'. These places of worship and burial were also used as an ancient astronomical calendar. According to some, they even have the power to heal!

Eating out is very affordable at around €12, and accommodation can be found for just under €20.



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NAARDEN | THE NETHERLANDS

Fans of castles and fortresses may have heard of **Naarden**, located only 30 minutes from Amsterdam.

The town, shaped in the form of a star, has 16th century fortress architecture and is the only fortification in Europe with double walls and moats. Walk through the streets and admire charming historic buildings and magnificent churches. Spend a couple of days in Naarden and enjoy the unique atmosphere of the fort and the green scenery.

Expect to pay around €30 for a meal, and €60 for accommodation.

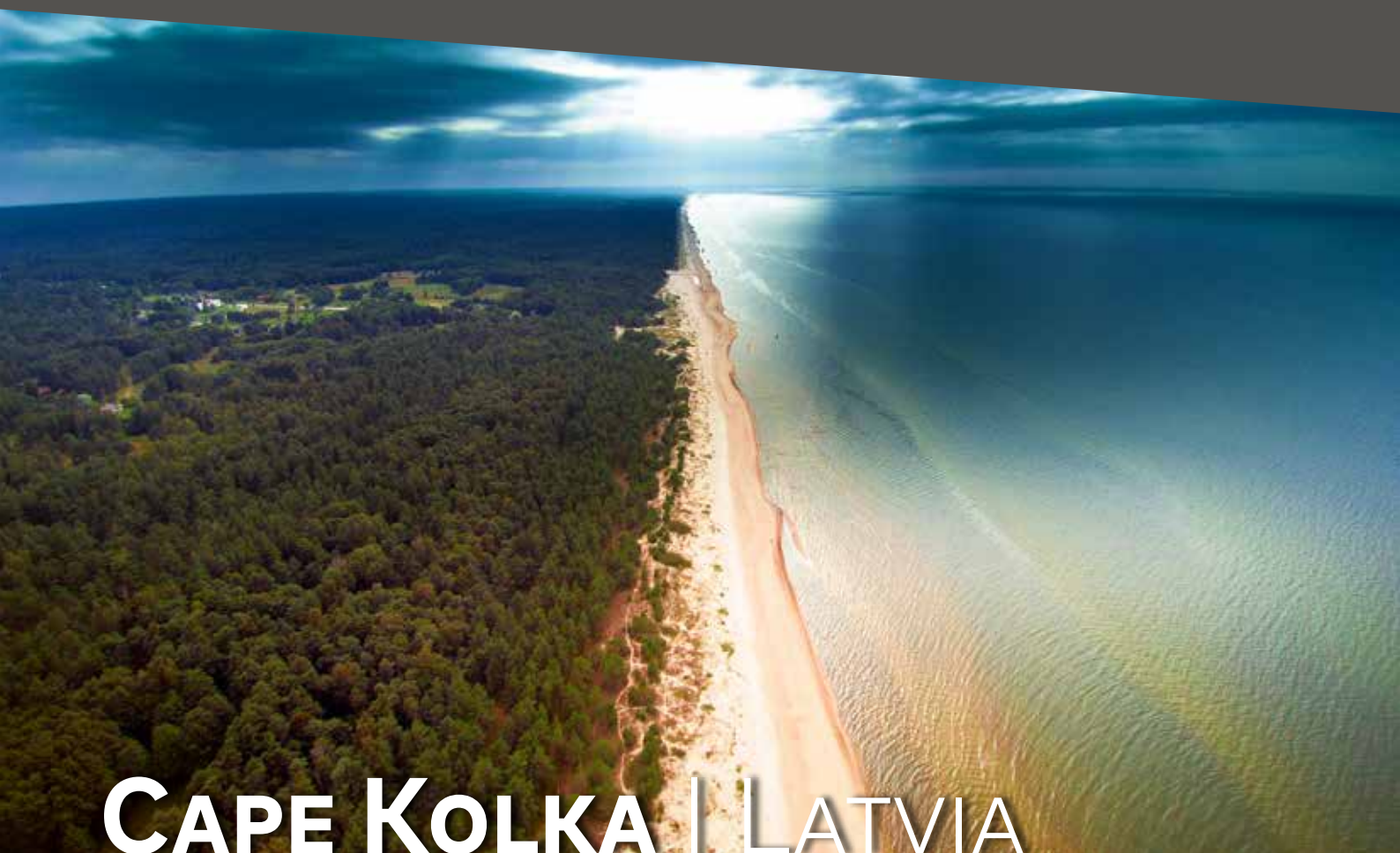


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CAPE KOLKA | LATVIA

Cape Kolka is located at the junction of the Gulf of Riga and the Baltic Sea. Following complete isolation as a military base during Soviet times, Cape Kolka is strikingly beautiful and still untouched by crowds of tourists. The two seas kissing each other is an unforgettable experience, and results in different colored waters swirling and merging.

Latvia still remains affordable. Meals can be found for around €14, and accommodation for just €20.



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DANUBE DELTA | ROMANIA

The Danube, Europe's second longest river, divides into countless sub-branches and channels, leading to reeds, sand dunes and forests that form the **Danube Delta**.

The area is home to some 1,200 species of plants, over 320 types of bird, and 45 varieties of freshwater fish. It became a national park in 1938, and the Romanian part of the Delta was included in UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites.

A wide range of accommodation, from authentic guesthouses to fully equipped spa hotels, can be found at very reasonable prices (€15), and eating out is just over €10.



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BALATON-UPLANDS | HUNGARY

Locals refer to **Lake Balaton** as the "Hungarian sea", and with good reason – it is Central Europe's largest freshwater lake.

To avoid crowds, travel a few kilometers to the North. The **Balaton-Uplands** are Hungary's version of Provence or Tuscany combining natural beauty and spectacular views of the lake, tiny villages with century-old whitewashed houses, and picturesque restaurants and guesthouses.

All at very reasonable prices – eating out is around €13, and accommodation is possible for under €20.



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GJIROKASTER | ALBANIA

A must-see on your checklist for Albania is the southern town of **Gjirokaster**, one of Albania's three UNESCO sites. Located in a valley between the River Drino and the Gjere mountains, it is referred to as the City of Stone due to its unique mixture of Greek and Ottoman architecture.

The Gjirokaster fortress, the largest remaining citadel in Albania is definitely worth a visit. Breathtaking views of the old town along with exciting exhibits, including a captured US warplane from the cold war, will give you a taste of the town's rich history.

The city of Gjirokaster offers great value for money – a complete meal is just under €8, and accommodation around €20.



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LAKE SEVAN | ARMENIA

Armenia was the first nation declared Christian in 301, no wonder that the country looks like a rather intriguing outdoor museum of monasteries.

The Sevanavank monastery is a must-visit, offering amazing views of the beautiful **Lake Sevan**, one of the largest high-altitude freshwater lakes in the world.

Despite its beauty, tourism in Armenia is not highly developed, and prices remain low. A meal out will cost approx. €10, and accommodation still remains under €20.

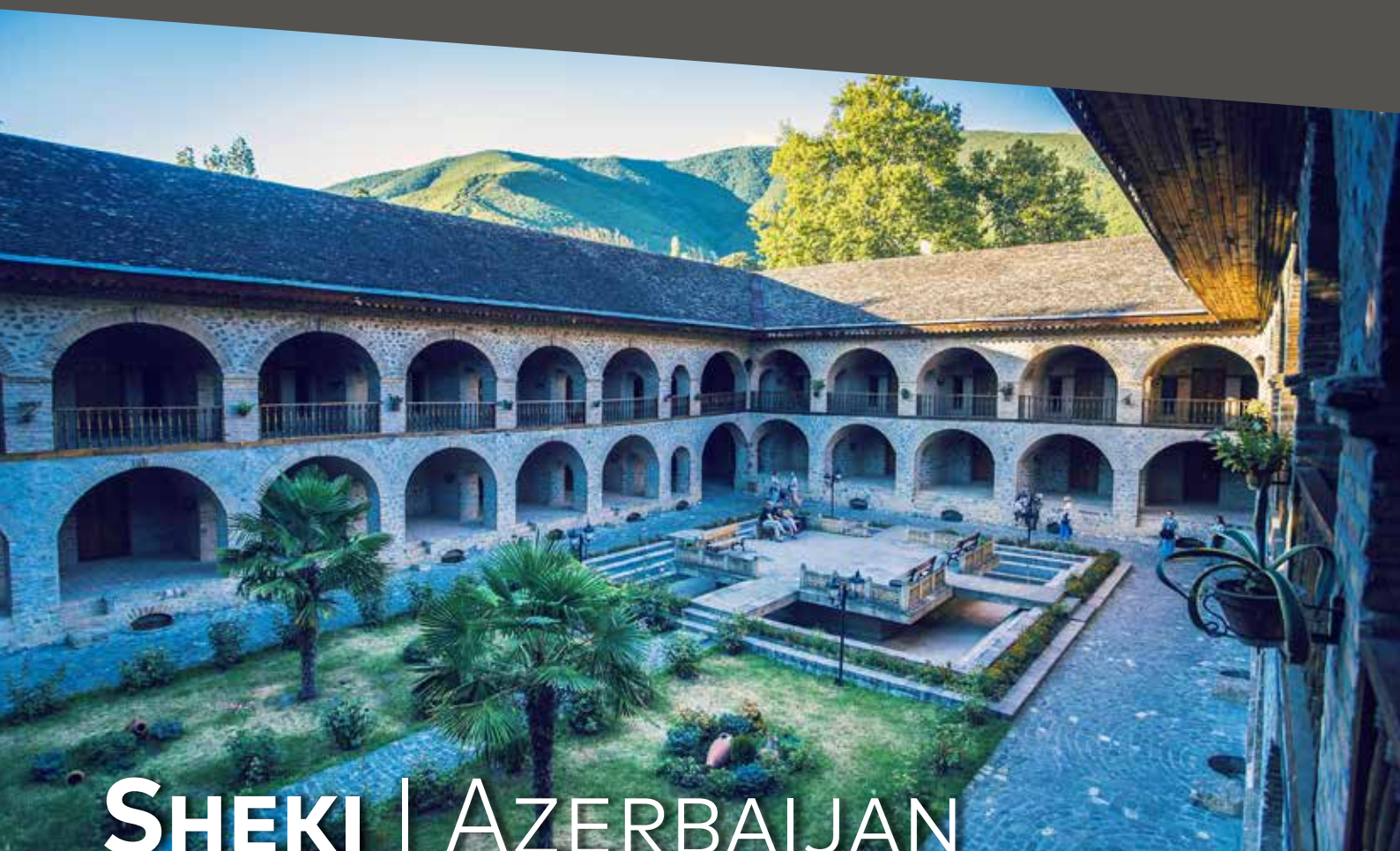


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SHEKI | AZERBAIJAN

The town of **Sheki**, truly worth the 300km, six-hour bus ride from Baku, is rich in Islamic architecture, Silk Road history and great food. Be sure to visit the Palace of the Sheki Khans (Khansarai). Those looking for outdoor activities can enjoy treks into unspoiled mountain landscapes.

Azerbaijan is becoming a popular destination, and budget airlines fly in several times a week. Book soon to see this country in its authentic, unspoiled form! Meals and accommodation can still be found at under €15.



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BREST | BELARUS

For an eye-opening historical experience, head to **Brest**. The city has been part of different countries over the years, and linked to various cultures.

Brest Fortress played an important role in both World Wars, and is situated on the central island formed by two rivers close to the Belarusian-Polish border. Make sure to visit the citadel with its eternal flame, various memorials and museums.

Accommodation is €18, a meal costs around €14, and despite visa restrictions for most Europeans, Belarus is worth a visit.

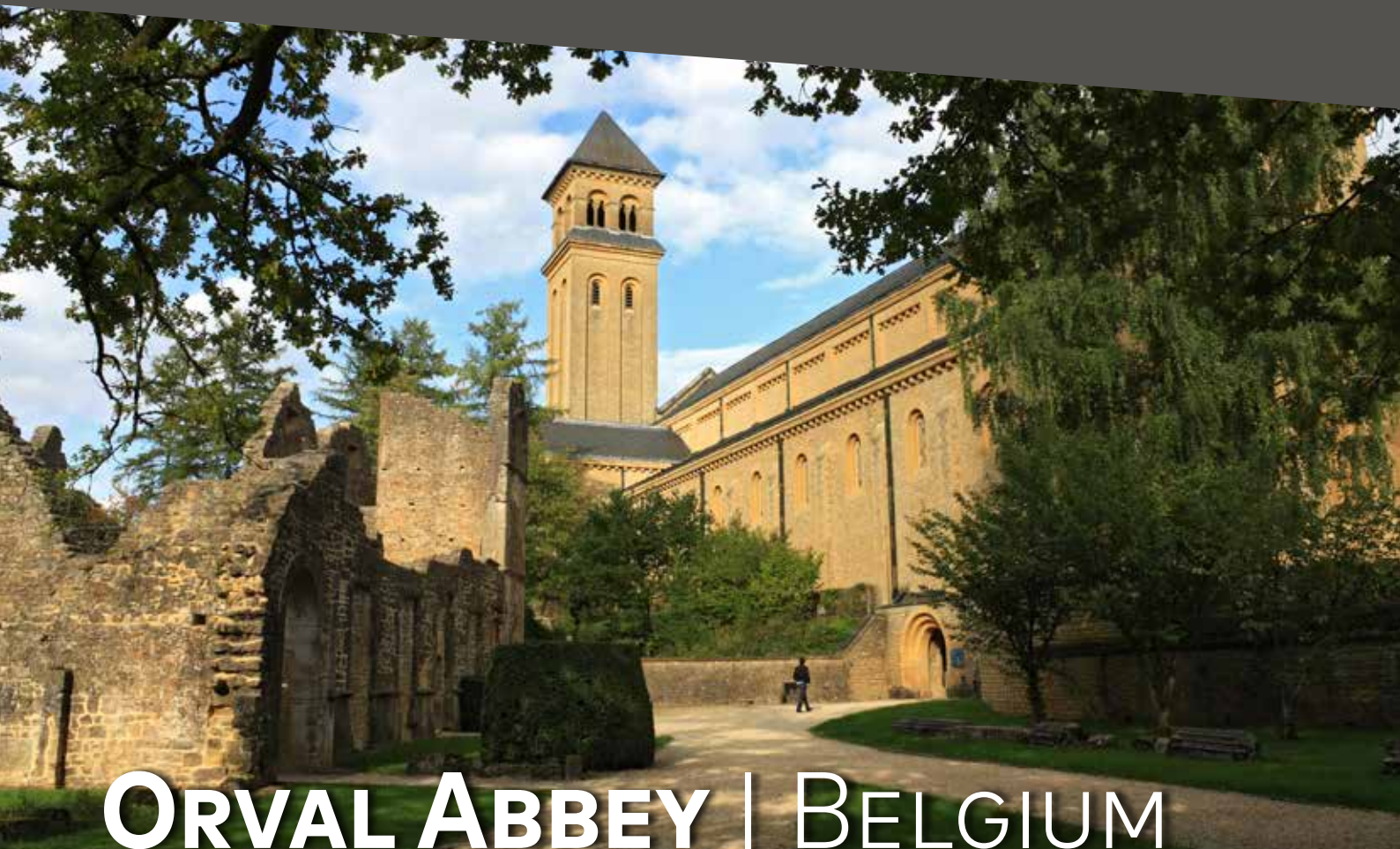


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ORVAL ABBEY | BELGIUM

Are you looking for a holiday combining history, nature and gastronomy? Wallonia, the French-speaking Southern region of Belgium, will be the right place for you.

Orval (Valley of Gold) is located on the ancient Roman road between Reims and Trier. The town of Villers-devant-Orval might sound familiar because of its world-famous Orval beer, or perhaps because of its special cheese. Orval Abbey, founded in 1132, is really worth a visit! A meal out will cost approx. €30, and accommodation around €50.



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JAJCE & THE PLIVA LAKES | BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia's most beautiful waterfall can be found in the center of **Jajce**, a 14th century town. Originally 30 meters high until the area was flooded during an earthquake, it now stands at 20 meters and its turquoise shades are breathtaking.

We highly recommend staying at least one day at the nearby Pliva Lakes – known for its tiny watermills and numerous outdoor activities like hiking, swimming, kayaking and fishing. Bosnia still offers moderate prices. A meal costs approx. €8, and accommodation is under €25.



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PLOVDIV | BULGARIA

Built on the banks of the Maritsa River, **Plovdiv** is the country's second largest city and one of the oldest settlements in the world.

Still largely unknown to tourists, the old town features the Balkan architectural style of the 18th and 19th centuries. Have a walk through the twisty, cobblestoned streets or visit the impressive 300-seat Roman theatre.

The modern downtown is full of shops, cafés and hotels. The average price of a meal is €10, and accommodation can be found for approx. €15.



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FANO | DENMARK

Fano is an amazing travel destination for families and nature enthusiasts alike. It is part of the Wadden Sea National Park on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and a true paradise for those who love nature at its untouched best. Hire a bike to discover the beautiful villages and you will be amazed by all the birds, seals, deer, and other wildlife.

Denmark is one of the most expensive countries in Europe, so expect to pay €40 for a meal out, and €90 for a place to stay.



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TURKU | FINLAND

Founded during the 13th century, **Turku** is Finland's 2nd largest, and oldest, city. You can easily spend a few days discovering its vast cultural heritage, including the old town and its castles, museums and medieval cathedral.

Children will love spending time at Moomin World, where they can admire Finland's iconic, hippopotamus-shaped trolls.

Expect to pay around €30 for a meal out, and almost €80 for accommodation.



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TARN CANYON | FRANCE

One of the more hidden French canyons is by no doubt the **Tarn canyon**.

You can enjoy a spectacular scenery, visit lovely small towns by bicycle, rent kayaks and canoes, go on rafting trips, or take a boat trip without bumping into hordes of tourists.

If you like climbing, you will be impressed by the gorges' steep rock faces. Culture lovers can take a tour of historic vestiges, châteaux and fortresses.

Count approx. €23 for a meal, accommodation is around €42.



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MTSKHETA-MTIANETI REGION | GEORGIA

Mtskheta is one of Georgia's oldest cities and since 1994 a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Svetitskhoveli is one of the most sacred places and, along with the Jvari Monastery, a must-see during a trip to Mtskheta.

The surrounding region is an outdoor paradise. The Gudarui resort, for example, offers numerous hiking and skiing possibilities, as well as paragliding. Prices are reasonable, with meals around €10, and accommodation at approx. €14.



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SAXON SWITZERLAND | GERMANY

Less known to tourists, the Eastern part of Germany is definitely worth a visit. With its amazing landscapes, rich history, and numerous outdoor activities, **Saxon Switzerland** is a true jewel.

One of its most popular sites is the Bastei Bridge, which provides a spectacular view of the Elbe River and the sandstone highlands. This part of Germany is slightly more affordable than the rest of the country.

Eating out will cost around €23, and you can find accommodation for just under €30.



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GRUNDARFJÖRÐUR | ICELAND

Grundarfjörður is not the most known town in Iceland, but the nearby spectacular Kirkjuffel Mountain is a much-loved landmark for photographers and filmmakers.

The area offers breathtaking waterfalls, great hiking trails, and exciting wildlife. During the long summer days, you can go deep-sea fishing, look for puffins and, if you're lucky, you might even spot whales.

You won't regret visiting, but be prepared to pay approx. €50 for eating out, and nearly €80 for accommodation.



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BETHLEHEM OF GALILEE | ISRAEL

Beit Lechem HaGalilit, or in English, **Bethlehem of Galilee**, is located between the cities of Haifa and Nazareth.

Not to be confused with Bethlehem near Jerusalem, this beautiful village offers visitors a picturesque setting and beautiful architecture, with quaint stone buildings dating to its time as a Templar colony.

A restaurant meal is just under €30, however accommodation in a modest guesthouse may be over €100.



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CALABRIA | ITALY

Ask an Italian where the best beaches are, and they will probably point to **Calabria**. Surprisingly, this is not one of Italy's top tourist destinations. Calabria is often considered to be the Caribbean of Europe due to its amazing beaches, colorful coastline, picturesque villages and amazing food and wine.

Prices are reasonable and lower than those in Rome, Venice, or Tuscany. A restaurant meal will cost approx. €25, and accommodation can be found for under €30.



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TRANS-ILI ALATAU | KAZAKHSTAN

The stunning **Trans-Ili Alatau** mountains are located in the southeast of Kazakhstan. At 16,335 feet, Pik Talgar is the highest mountain peak and can easily be reached from the former capital Almaty. Very popular amongst hikers and mountaineers, it attracts a lot of locals but is still undiscovered by tourists. Nature lovers can take a boat from Almaty and visit the National Park.

During winter time, skiers and snowboarders can enjoy the ski resort Shymbulak. Prices in Kazakhstan still remain affordable – a meal costs around €15, and accommodation is under €20.



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AUKŠTAITIJA NATIONAL PARK | LITHUANIA

Mysterious burial sites, castle ruins, watermills, hot air balloons, dunes and dolphins – this is only a snapshot of what you can find at the **Aukštaitija National Park**, which is just a two-hour drive from Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

Small villages in the park serve as open-air museums and are often used as film locations. Prices are moderate, a meal out is approx. €15, and accommodation can be found for just under €25.



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MAVROVO NATIONAL PARK | MACEDONIA

Are you a fan of national parks with unique flora and fauna? Macedonia's largest national park is just 1.5 hours drive from Skopje.

During summer you can hike and visit charming villages high up in the mountains. **Lake Mavrovo** the country's largest artificial lake with the halfway sunk St. Nicholas Church is one of the main attractions of the Park. The newly renovated ski resort of Mavrovo attracts ski lovers all throughout the winter. Local prices add to the value – eating out costs under €7, and accommodation is €10.



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CHISINĂU | MOLDOVA

Moldova's capital features a number of cultural highlights which can be easily visited by foot. Why not try Pushkin House, or the **Mileștii Mici** wine cellar, where over 2 million bottles of wine are stored in a labyrinth of cellars?

In 2005 it was registered by the Guinness World Records as the largest wine collection in the world. Adventure-seeking travelers can enjoy kayaking, mountain biking and hiking. With a meal out costing just €6, and accommodation under €20, this is a holiday that combines culture with superb outdoor activities.



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TROMSØ | NORWAY

In **Tromsø** you'll be amazed by the numerous outdoor activities both during summer and winter– enjoy hiking, fishing, kayaking, cross-country and downhill skiing, or go whale watching and dog sleighing.

If you are looking for cultural fun, attend the Tromsø International Film Festival and the Northern Light Festival, or visit the Northern Norway Art Museum featuring art and crafts from the 1800s to modern day. Costs are typical for Norway – meals are approx. €44, and accommodation around €50.



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INISHOWEN | REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

The Republic of Ireland's **Inishowen** is a peninsula in County Donegal.

Despite its wonderful 100-mile hiking trails, it somehow remained undiscovered. It offers unspoiled scenery, unique wildlife, and travellers often spend their time kayaking, hiking, surfing or golfing.

The world's second largest fish, the basking shark, is a regular visitor to this coastline. Eating out costs around €30, and accommodation can be found for under €55.



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KAZAN | RUSSIA

The capital of the Republic of Tatarstan is located on the east bank of the Volga and Kazanka River and is a 1.5-hour flight from Moscow. **Kazan** is known for the old Kazan Kremlin, built at the behest of Ivan the Terrible. A cultural highlight not to be missed is the orthodox Cathedral of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Make sure to see the Museum of Illusions where you can stand on a rope stretched between two houses or sit on a rock in the middle of the sea.

Prices are very affordable – you can eat out for just €17, and accommodation is around €20.



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UVAC CANYON | SERBIA

Uvac Canyon is Serbia's hidden treasure. In 2008 it was named one of the seven Serbian wonders of nature. It is renowned for the meandering curves of the Uvac River which flows through the valley canyon. In some places the walls rise up to 100 meters. The natural park is home to 104 bird species, with the most popular attraction being the griffon vulture, a rare species of vulture eagle.

Prices in Serbia are very attractive. Eating out is possible for under €10, accommodation is around €16.



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SLOVAK PARADISE NATIONAL PARK | SLOVAKIA

Slovak Paradise National Park truly lives up to its name – you can enjoy the beautiful forest, underground caves and numerous canyons and gorges that slice through the woodland.

Chains, ropes and ladders assist hikers on the various picturesque trails. It is definitely worth trying the restaurants that serve simple, but tasty, local food and Slovak beer.

Prices are very reasonable, with eating out around €10, and accommodation at approx. €30.



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GOTLAND & VISBY | SWEDEN

Undiscovered by global tourism, **Gotland** is Sweden's largest island. It has a relaxed atmosphere, beautiful seaside scenery and the medieval city of Visby is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Surrounded by a majestic stonewall, a walk around Visby is a trip back in time. Don't miss the Gotland Museum, or Visby Cathedral with its impressive 3rd century architecture.

Gotland can be reached by ferry or budget airlines. Eating out costs around €30, and expect to pay at least €80 for accommodation.



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RUINAULTA | SWITZERLAND

Ruinaulta, a canyon in Eastern Switzerland, is known for its magnificent landscapes. It offers numerous outdoor activities such as hiking, rafting and paragliding. Incredible vantage points accessible by car or bike offer stunning views.

Deep in the forest, discover Lake Crestasee with its beautiful turquoise waters that will make you think you've found a beach in the Alps.

Ruinaulta is a secret treasure, but has its price. Eating out is around €50, and accommodation approx. €75.



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Çanakkale, a city located in the Marmara region of northwestern Turkey, is still relatively undiscovered and will surprise with its fine beaches and amazing restaurants and bars.

Located not far from the site of ancient Troy, fans of Brad Pitt can admire the "wooden horse" from the 2004 movie, based on Homer's great epic.

The Archaeological Museum is also worth a visit, and friendly prices add to Çanakkale's attractiveness. A meal out costs just under €10 and accommodation below €20.

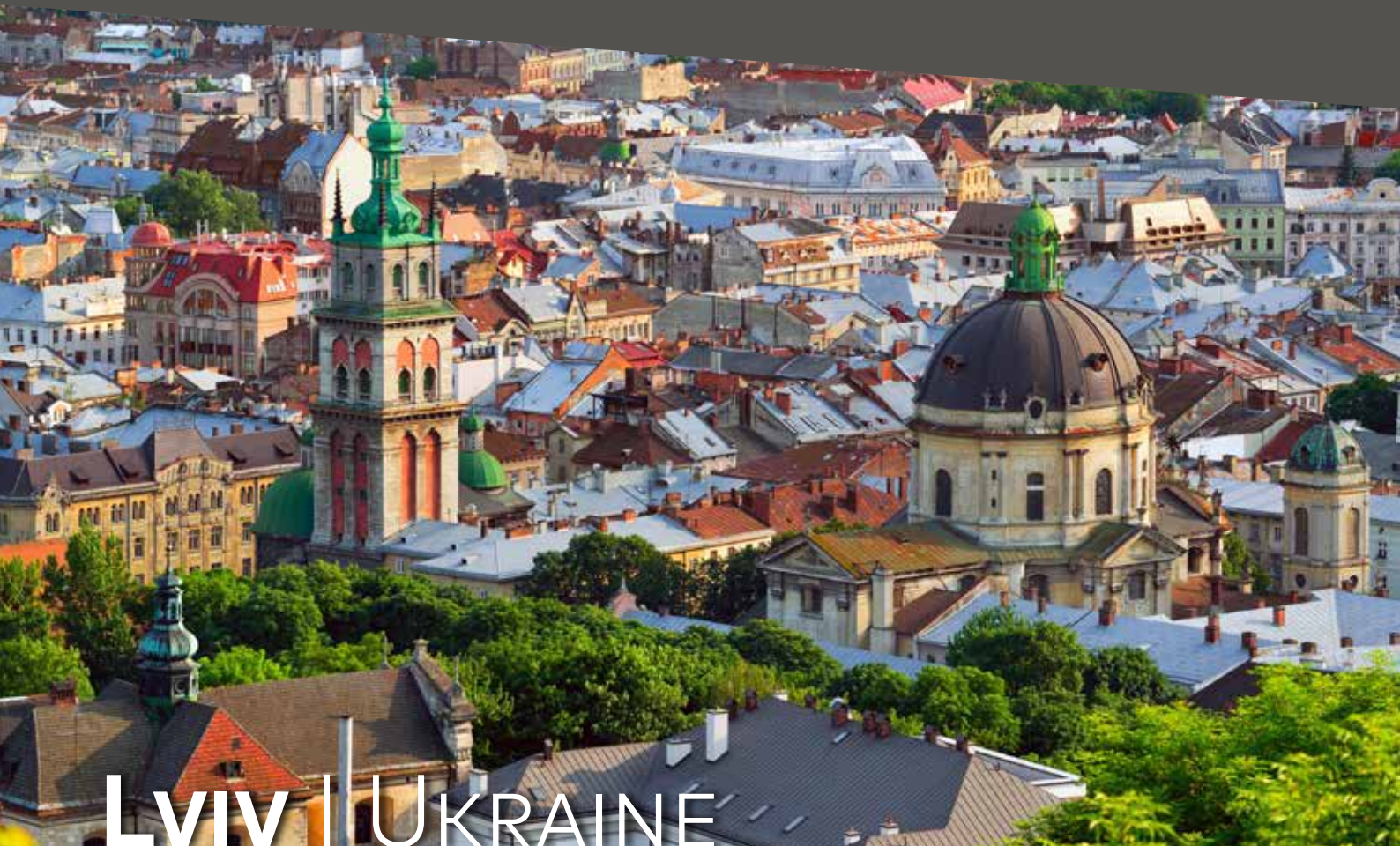


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Ukraine has seen recent turmoil, but the country's west remains safe for travelers and offers incredible places to visit. Take the city of **Lviv**, located 80km from the Polish border. Rich in history, the city center is a well-preserved World Heritage Site including its old marketplace (Rynok), representing several architectural styles, from Renaissance to Modernism.

The quality of the food and service is excellent, and beer-lovers could spend days tasting the offerings of the local breweries.

Prices are very attractive. A meal out is just €7, and accommodation around €15.



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ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT | UNITED KINGDOM

Many are familiar with **Mont-Saint-Michel** in France, but don't know that it has a smaller counterpart in Cornwall, England. This magical place is just a stone's throw from the town of Marazion.

St Michael's Mount is one of 43 unbridged tidal islands that you can walk to from mainland Britain. It is worth timing your visit to enjoy an impressive sunset with the monastic buildings overlooking the sea.

Eating out costs approx. €30 and accommodation a little over €50.



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#	Country	Destination
1	Spain	Asturias & Covadonga convent
2	Malta	Mdina & Zebbug
3	Austria	Salzkammergut region
4	Portugal	The Azores
5	Montenegro	Perast
6	Czech Republic	Lednice-Valtice
7	Croatia	Pag Island
8	Estonia	Saaremaa Island
9	Greece	Volos & Pelion region
10	Slovenia	Velika Planina
11	Poland	Kaszuby
12	Th Netherlands	Naarden
13	Latvia	Cape Kolka
14	Romania	Danube Delta
15	Hungary	Balaton-Uplands
	Albania	Gjirokaster
	Armenia	Lake Sevan
	Azerbaijan	Sheki
	Belarus	Brest
	Belgium	Orval Abbey
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Jajce & The Pliva Lakes
	Bulgaria	Plovdiv
	Denmark	Fano
	Finland	Turku
	France	Tarn canyon
	Georgia	Mtskheta-Mtianeti region
	Germany	Saxon Switzerland
	Iceland	Grundarfjörður
	Israel	Betlehem of Galilee
	Italy	Calabria
	Kazakhstan	Trans-ili Alatau
	Lithuania	Aukštaitija National Park
	Macedonia	Mavrovo National Park
	Moldova	Chisinau
	Norway	Tromso
	Republic of Ireland	Inishowen
	Russia	Kazan
	Serbia	Uvac canyon
	Slovakia	Slovak Paradise National Park
	Sweden	Gotland & Visby
	Switzerland	Ruinaulta
	Turkey	Çanakkale
	Ukraine	Lviv
	United Kingdom	St. Michael's Mount

*Price indications on eating out refer to an average meal in a mid range restaurant per person.

**Accommodation prices indicate the estimated price of double room in a 3-star hotel or guesthouse per night for one person.

*** All data and information is based on on field research, shopping trials as well as various online resources. While every effort has been made to ensure the information in this document is accurate, Mastercard accepts no liability whatsoever for any errors, inaccuracies or omissions and shall not be bound in any manner by any information contained in this document.




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