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Top 10 Valentine's Day Getaways

By <u>Steve Winston (http://www.worldpropertychannel.com/author/steve-winston/)</u> | February 3, 2014 10:13 AM ET



Valentine's Day, over the years, has become a truly international celebration of romance. And you can certainly find great places to celebrate it all over the globe.

Here are my top ten "getaway" places in which to celebrate Valentine's Day...

10) VENICE - Venice seems to rise up out of a mirage, its churches and piazzas and canals shrouded in the ages. And it's all enhanced by the romantic gondola rides around the city...particularly at sunset. Take a bottle of champagne with you, along with a box of chocolates. Party with the crowds in St. Mark's Square. Or head out for a private picnic lunch to Guidecca Island, where you'll have a view across the water toward the Doge's Palace.



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- **9) HONG KONG -** Even in this frenetic, electric, glittering city jammed between the mountains and the sea, there are some quiet places for couples. The rooftop of the IFC Four Seasons Hotel is one of them. Here you can soak in an infinity pool, receive a special couples treatment in the world-class spa, and then sample a cocktail in one of the swank eateries. Or get on board the legendary Star Ferry, operating since 1888 between Hong Kong and Kowloon, for some spectacular nighttime views of the city.
- 8) BALI, INDONESIA; Maya Ubud Resort & Spa Bounded by rice paddies on one side and the Petanu River on the other, the Maya Ubud Resort & Spa is a tranquil retreat for those who'd rather avoid the hubbub elsewhere on the island. Couples can find their own special places while biking in Monkey Forest Road or walking through the Botanic Gardens. The resort's rooms are furnished in traditional Balinese style (with a private pool and/or hot tub in some of the villas). And there are three excellent restaurants on-site.

7) NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, **USA -** When you think of romance, Nashville - "Country Music Capital of the World" doesn't usually come to mind. But maybe it should. Because there's a lot more to this cosmopolitan city than just country music. For one thing, Nashville is now home to a wide variety of music and musicians, from rock to reggae. For another, downtown's now filled with a vibrant energy. There are tons of wonderful restaurants with eclectic, innovative cuisine, and very romantic ambience. At the



You can have a foot-stompin' Valentine's Day on Nashville's

Broadway. (Photo courtesy Steve Winston)
(http://www.worldpropertychannel.com/news-assets
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Schermerhorn Symphony Center, there are romantic operas, musical performances, and a theater. There are plenty of places with great live jazz and "midnight" music, where the lighting is soft and the mood is romantic. And, OK...if your idea of a romantic Valentine's night is foot-stompin' bluegrass or country, a lot of laughter, and good times with your favorite squeeze, head for the colorful honky-tonks along Broadway.

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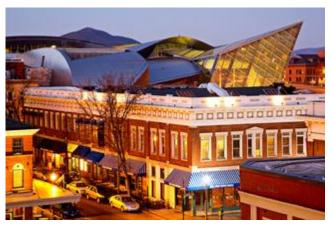
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6) SHANGHAI, **CHINA**, **PuLi Hotel & Spa -** As part of its "Valentine's Day Off" package, the PuLi Hotel & spa is offering couples treatments at the Anantara Spa (with an infinity lap pool overlooking a serene park), shared bites from its distinctive Jing'An restaurant, and champagne with which you can toast your good fortune in being here. This Valentine's Day, your timing will be especially fortuitous - because Shanghai will be cloaked in thousands of paper lanterns marking the last day of the lunar New Year celebration.

5) ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, USA Historic Grandin Village is located just outside downtown Roanoke, a surprising city with a booming restaurant and cultural scene, and the surrounding beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Grandin Village is anchored by a restored 1930's cinema, The Grandin Theatre, a true old-time movie palace that locals claim has the best popcorn in the Blue Ridge. Pop's Ice Cream and Soda Bar may bring you and your date/spouse back to the old "soda shop" days of



Roanoke glows with a special warmth on Valentine's Day.

(Courtesy Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau)

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Hollywood movies. You can get a taste of local vineyards at Rockfish Food & Wine. There are several locally-owned shops with interesting gifts for your loved one, wonderful dessert liquors at CUPS Coffee & Tea, and desserts at Viva la Cupcake! Bed down for the evening at the wonderful old Tudor-style castle called the Hotel Roanoke, serving classic Southern hospitality - and romantic ambience - since 1882.

4) THE AMALFI COAST, ITALY - The Amalfi Coast is 43 miles of stunning coastlines, dotted with picturesque old villages. Many of these villages overlook the sea from steep cliffs, offering wonderful views. The coast is filled with luxury hotels...and who does romantic weekends better? From Positano, you can take day-trips to explore Naples or Pompeii, or hop a boat to (as Frank Sinatra sang) "The Isle of Capri."

3) MONTREAL, QUEBEC,

A beautiful view of Montreal from the top of Mount Royal. (©



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CANADA - Montreal is a fascinating mix of "New World" and "Old France" - especially on Valentine's Day. If weather permits, you might take a romantic ride in a horse-drawn carriage (the cozy blankets are complimentary!). You might take in the sunset from Mount Royal, after which Montreal is named, with spectacular views of the city and the St. Lawrence. Pick up a one-of-a-kind gift for your sweetheart at the Marche



Tourisme Montréal, Stéphan Poulin) (http://www.worldpropertychannel.com/news-assets /A-beautiful-view-of-Montreal-from-the-top-of-Mount-Royal.jpg)

Bonsecours, an 18th-Century landmark now filled with artists' studios and wonderful boutiques. And then head for dinner to the cobblestoned streets of Old Montreal, with cozy bistros and fashionable shops and gas-lit streetlamps.

2) PARIS! - When you think of romantic cities, Paris always comes up near the top. Take a Valentine's Day cruise on the Bateaux Mouche down the River Seine as the lights sprinkle on. Cross one of the medieval bridges toward the Left Bank, and wander the bistros there. Have a romantic candlelight dinner in one of the cellar cafes on the Ile D'Orleans. Head to the top of the Eiffel Tower (bundle up first!) for a nighttime view of "The City of Light" in all its glory. And don't forget to load up at one of the exquisite chocolate shops!

And now, my top Valentine's Day getaway in the world...

1) LANDS CREEK CABINS, **BRYSON CITY, NORTH** CAROLINA, USA - If you've ever tried to picture an American

Lands Creek Log Cabins is a mountain-top Shangri-La. (Courtesy Lands Creek Log Cabins) (http://www.worldpropertychannel.com/news-assets/Lands-Creek-Log-Cabins-is-a-mountain-top-Shangri-La.jpg)

Shangri-La, this is probably what you saw. After a twenty-minute drive up the mountain from the town of Bryson City, past white fences and horses, and "hollers" (little valleys) filled with wooden houses with chimneys, you'll come to Lands Creek Log Cabins. The 18 beautifully-furnished cabins are built on stilts over Lands Creek. And what could be more romantic, on Valentine's Day, than falling asleep to the



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sounds of the water rushing beneath you? The cabins are furnished with crafts and handmade furniture by local artisans, and most have fireplaces, in front of which you can toast your loved one with champagne. Or you could bundle up and have your champagne outside on your deck, with a million stars winking at you from a black-velvet sky. And, because it's



off-season, Lands Creek has special discount packages available.

Those are my Top 10 picks for Valentine's Day. Let the debate begin!

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Bobbi Hoffman · Top Commenter · Works at Virginia Tech

Stephen, I can't believe you said that. How long has it been since you've lived in Roanoke?

Reply • 4 • Like • Follow Post • 18 hours ago



Stephen Body · Top Commenter · Beer, wine, and spirits reviewer as "The Pour Fool"; internet beverage retailer at Self-Employed

Many years...and yet nowhere near enough.

Reply · Like · 16 hours ago



Tamee Gunn · Works at Kevin Hurley Photography

This is great! I think it's important to remember that the author isn't comparing Roanoke to more exotic destinations, he's simply stating that he enjoys what each of those places has to offer. And, honestly, if he hadn't included more humble destinations like Roanoke, Nashville, and Bryson City, I wouldn't have taken him seriously. How many of us can pop on over to Paris for Valentine's Day? I live in and love Roanoke, and love that our city is getting more and more of this attention lately!

Reply · 2 · Like · Follow Post · 16 hours ago



Doug Chittum · Top Commenter · Roanoke, Virginia I'll take you to Paris.

Reply · 1 · Like · 16 hours ago



Stephen Body · Top Commenter · Beer, wine, and spirits reviewer as "The Pour Fool"; internet beverage retailer at Self-Employed

By the inclusion of Roanoke in this list, he creates the impression that there is some legitimate comparison with the other destinations mentioned. And a lot of people will wind up there and be stunningly disappointed. That's why questioning it here matters. If one person reads these comments and says "Well, maybe there's another side to the Roanoke thing", it was worth my time to write this.

Reply · Like · 15 hours ago



Jim 'Seamus Wynde' Baldwin · Member and Band Manager at Second Wynde
Stephen Body Again, sure glad you left! We do better with those like you!

Reply · 1 · Like · 13 hours ago

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Brian Wimmer · Top Commenter · Roanoke, Virginia

Thanks for the write up on Roanoke. It is a fantastic city with much to offer. I

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Christine Gries · Follow · Instructional Designer/LMS Administrator/Adjunct Professor at National College Roanoke Virginia

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