TRAVEL+ LEISURE

The 15 Best Places to Travel in May

Spring kicks into high gear this month, and travelers are ready to go the distance.

The tail-end of spring promises warm, travel-friendly weather, beautiful flower blooms, top-down road trips and famous sporting events like the Kentucky Derby. Basically, it's the perfect time to shake off any lingering winter frost and get out of town.

While many travelers are interested in seeing what spring looks like in a different part of the United States — say, the rolling plains of Montana, for example or a firefly-filled forest in South Carolina — others are itching for a long-haul getaway.

From jungle triathlons to a three-week light and music festival in Australia, some of the most memorable trips you can take this month can be found halfway around the world. Just don't forget to pack a comfy pair of walking shoes: this is no time to hide indoors.

Indeed, the best places to travel in May are heavy on action, with a backdrop of breezy coastal drives and contemplative forest retreats. Meanwhile, if it's a new city you're looking to discover, consider a long weekend in Shanghai, which marks the season with extravagant new hotels and unexpected daytrips.

Whether you're a nature lover or a culture junkie, May is a time for pushing new boundaries. To figure out where you should head this month, read on.

Steve Proehl/Getty Images

Newport, Rhode Island

Halfway between New York City and Boston, Newport has been a favorite coastal stopoff for decades. Now, the town of Gilded Age mansions and craveworthy clam chowder is suddenly on the map, and curious travelers are planning a trip to see what all the fuss is about. This month, Newport's iconic harbor comes alive during the Volvo Ocean Race (May 8 to 20), a world renowned sailing event. Considering they chose Newport as the only North American date for the entire 10-month offshore race (other stops include Cape Town, Melbourne, and Hong Kong), it's sure to be an exciting time in the Ocean State's prettiest town.