



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF ANNUAL READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Top Cities in the World to Visit Include:

*San Francisco (U.S.); Bangkok, Thailand (Asia); Cape Town (Africa/Middle East);
Buenos Aires (The Americas); Florence, Italy (Europe); and
Sydney (Australia/Pacific)*

Top Airlines: *Singapore Airlines (International Routes), Virgin America (U.S. Domestic Routes)*

Top Cruise Lines: *Crystal (Large Ships); Seabourn (Small Ships)*

New York (October 16, 2008) – *Condé Nast Traveler* today announced the results of its 2008 Readers' Choice Awards, ranking the best cities, cruise lines, airlines, hotels and resorts worldwide. The awards appear in the November issue (on newsstands October 21) and are derived from the *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers Choice Survey, the largest independent poll of consumers' preferences in the U.S. This year, 32,633 readers voted.

"These awards celebrate the destinations, lodgings, and modes of transportation that manage to exceed our expectations," said *Condé Nast Traveler* Editor in Chief **Klara Glowczewska**. "The Readers' Choice Awards, with over 32,000 readers voting, are a credit to the worldly expertise of our readers—passionate travelers for whom no island is too remote, no city too challenging, and no hotel too untested."

The full list of winners is on [cntraveler.com](http://www.cntraveler.com) at:
<http://www.concierge.com/cntraveler/articles/500074>

The 2008 Readers' Choice Awards reveal surprising moves in this year's results:

- **Charleston, South Carolina** bumped **New York City** out of the #2 spot for best U.S. city to visit. **San Francisco** remained #1 and **New York City** slid to #3.
- **San Francisco** takes the Best U.S. cities category for a whopping 16th year in a row, a feat never before accomplished by any destination or property. One reason: its worldwide high restaurant score.
- Newcomer **Virgin America** was named the best U.S. domestic airline, with **JetBlue Airways** at #2.
- **Singapore Airlines** is again the #1 International Route Airline, and has led this category for 20 of the past 21 years (Only Swissair, in 1994, has taken the top spot from Singapore Airlines).
- The growing number of resorts in the Middle East merit their own category for the first time, led by Dubai's **Burj Al Arab**.
- In Europe, **Prague** makes a splash, reappearing on the top 10 European cities list after a four-year absence.
- Two cruise lines each earn ratings above 90: **Crystal Cruises** (93.1) and **Regent Seven Seas** (90.2).
- High ratings for hotels not only went to classics such as the **Peninsula Hong Kong** and the **Ritz Paris**, but also to Shanghai's **Hyatt on the Bund**, which is just one year old.
- This year, more than 500 hotels reached scores above 72, including enough in Central America to generate its own category for the first time, led by Casa Santo Domingo in Antigua, Guatemala.
- With so many superb properties in Europe, *Condé Nast Traveler* divided the list into two categories: Southern Europe Hotels led by Italy's **Il Pellicano**, and Northern Europe, with a list of 50 led by Budapest's **Four Seasons Gresham Palace**.

- **Damascus, Syria** remains near the top of the list of best cities in Africa/Middle East after a surprising move up the charts last year.

Below are results for the top three winners in each category.

Top Cities- United States:

1. San Francisco
2. Charleston, SC
3. New York City

Top Cities- Europe:

1. Florence, Italy
2. Rome, Italy
3. Tie: Salzburg, Austria and Venice, Italy

Top Cities- Asia:

1. Bangkok, Thailand
2. Chiang Mai, Thailand
3. Hong Kong

Top Cities- Africa/Middle East:

1. Cape Town, South Africa
2. Jerusalem, Israel
3. Damascus, Syria

Top Cities- The Americas

1. Buenos Aires, Argentina
2. Vancouver, British Columbia
3. Tie: Victoria, British Columbia and Quebec City, Quebec

Top Cities- Australia/Pacific:

1. Sydney, Australia
2. Melbourne, Australia
3. Queenstown, New Zealand

Top Hotels- Southern Europe:

1. Il Pellicano, Tuscany, Italy
2. Four Season George V, Paris, France
3. Il San Pietro di Positano, Positano, Italy

Top Hotels- United States:

1. The Peninsula, Chicago, Illinois
2. Elizabeth Pointe Lodge, Amelia Island, Florida
3. Stephanie Inn, Cannon Beach, Oregon

Top Hotels- Canada:

1. Hotel Grand Pacific, Victoria
2. Auberge Saint-Antoine, Quebec City
3. Sooke Harbour House, Sooke, Vancouver Island

Top Hotels- Asia:

1. Oberoi Udaivilas, Rajasthan
2. Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra
3. The Peninsula, Hong Kong

Top Hotels- Africa:

1. Cape Grace, Cape Town
2. Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa, Cape Town
3. Table Bay Hotel, Cape Town

Top Hotels- Caribbean/Atlantic:

1. Hotel Saint-Barth Isle de France, St. Barts
2. Tie: Eden Rock, St. Barts and Le Toiny, St. Barts
4. The Caves, Jamaica

Top Hotels- Middle East:

1. David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem
2. Four Seasons, Doha
3. Four Seasons, Amman

Top Hotels- Northern Europe:

1. Four Seasons Gresham Palace, Budapest
2. Ritz-Carlton, Berlin
3. Brenner's Park-Hotel & Spa, Baden-Baden

Top Hotels- Mexico:

1. Casa Natalia, San Jose del Cabo
2. Hotel at Esperanza, Cabo San Lucas
3. Las Mananitas, Cuernavaca

Top Hotels- British Isles:

1. Milestone Hotel, London
2. Lower Slaughter Manor, Cotswolds
3. Chewton Glen, Hampshire

Top Hotels- Australia/Pacific:

1. Henry Jones Art Hotel, Hobart
2. Park Hyatt, Sydney
3. The Westin, Melbourne

Top Hotels- South America:

1. Hotel Monasterio, Cuzco
2. Four Seasons, Buenos Aires
3. Alvear Palace Hotel, Buenos Aires

Top Hotels- Central America

1. Casa Santo Domingo, Antigua
2. Lapa Rios Ecolodge, Osa Peninsular, Costa Rica
3. Porta Hotel Antigua, Guatemala

Top Islands- Caribbean/Atlantic:

1. Bermuda
2. St. John
3. St. Barts

Top Islands- Pacific:

1. Maui
2. Kauai
3. Bora Bora

Top Islands- Asia/Indian Ocean:

1. Maldives
2. Bali
3. Phuket

Top Islands- North America:

1. Vancouver Island

2. Kiawah, SC
3. Nantucket, MA

Top Islands- Europe:

1. Mykonos and the Cyclades
2. Capri
3. Sicily

Top Resorts- Asia:

1. Four Seasons Tented Camp Golden Triangle, Chiang Rai
2. Oberoi Vanyavilas, Rajasthan
3. Four Seasons Bali at Sayan

Top Resorts- Mexico:

1. Tie: One & Only Palmilla, Los Cabos and The Tides, Riviera Maya
3. JW Marriott Resort & Spa, Cancun
4. Maroma Resort & Spa, Riviera Maya

Top Resorts- Africa:

1. Mombo and Little Mombo Camps, Moremi
2. Grande Roche, Paarl
3. Jao Camp, Okavango Delta

Top Resorts- Europe:

1. Penha Longa Hotel, Spa & Golf Resort, Sintra
2. Ashford Castle, Co. Mayo
3. Tie: Convento do Espinheiro Hotel & Spa, Evora and The Grand Hotel Zermatterhof, Zermatt

Top Resorts- Hawaii:

1. Four Season Maui at Wailea
2. Four Season Hualalai, Big Island
3. Four Seasons Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele

Top Resorts- Atlantic Ocean:

1. One & Only Ocean Club, Bahamas
2. Pink Sands, Bahamas
3. The Reefs, Bermuda

Top Resorts- Middle East:

1. Burj Al Arab, Dubai
2. One & Only Royal Mirage, Dubai
3. Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai

Top Resorts- Australia/Pacific:

1. Hotel Bora Bora
2. Huka Lodge, Taupo, New Zealand
3. Le Meridien Bora Bora

Top Resorts- Mainland U.S.:

1. Kenwood Inn & Spa, Sonoma
2. Inn at Thorn Hill & Spa, Jackson, NH
3. Sanctuary at Kiawah Island

Top Resorts- Canada:

1. King Pacific Lodge, Princess Royal Island
2. Wickaninnish Inn, Tofino, Vancouver Island
3. Long Beach Lodge Resort, Tofino, Vancouver Island

Top Resorts- Caribbean:

1. Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman
2. Curtain Bluff, Antigua
3. Petit St. Vincent Resort, Grenadines

Top Resorts- Central/South America:

1. Hotel Punta Islita, Guanacaste
2. Hotel Salto Chico, Patagonia
3. Four Seasons Resort Carmelo, Uruguay

Top Cruise Lines- Large Ships:

1. Crystal
2. Regent Seven Seas
3. Disney

Top Cruise Lines- Small Ships:

1. Seabourn
2. Regent Seven Seas
3. SeaDream Yacht Club

Top Airlines- International Routes:

1. Singapore Airlines
2. Emirates
3. Virgin Atlantic

Top Airlines- Domestic Routes:

1. Virgin America
2. JetBlue Airways
3. Midwest Airlines

Top Airlines- Foreign-Only Routes:

1. SilkAir
2. Jet Airways
3. Air Iceland

Top Car Rental Agencies:

1. Hertz
2. Enterprise
3. Avis

The Readers Choice Awards gala took place on Wednesday, October 15th in New York City at the New York Public Library. Select photos and video from the event are available upon request.

Methodology

Every year since 1988, a select sample of *Condé Nast Traveler* readers have taken the Readers' Choice Survey. In 2008, the questionnaire was available to all readers through a secure Web site. The final tabulations of 32,633 responses were done by Mediamark Research, Inc., of New York City. Poll categories (Cities, Hotels, etc.), and the criteria for each appear at the bottom of the first page in every category. Questionnaires contained lists of candidates (individual cities, hotels, etc.), and write-ins were allowed. Only candidates that received a required minimum number of responses were deemed eligible for an award. Each candidate was rated, criterion by criterion, on a five-point scale: excellent, very good, good, fair, poor. Criterion scores, which represent the percentage of respondents rating a candidate excellent or very good, were averaged to determine the final score—e.g., in the category of Islands, Maui's 89.5 is the average of its scores for Activities, Atmosphere/Ambience, Beaches, Friendliness, Lodging, Restaurants, and Scenery.

About Condé Nast Traveler

Truth in Travel: Many travel publications accept free travel and accommodations. *Condé Nast Traveler* does not, and its correspondents, as far as possible, travel anonymously. They experience travel the way consumers

do, both the good and the bad, and report on it fairly and honestly. In 2008, *Condé Nast Traveler* was named one of the top 10 magazines in the U.S. by both Adweek and Advertising Age, one of only three magazines in the U.S. to be named to both lists. *Condé Nast Traveler* has an audience of 3.1 million and is published by Condé Nast Publications, Inc. The magazine's Website is cntraveler.com.

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