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Home » The top 8 destinations for travel in September 2023

Guides

The top 8 destinations for travel in September 2023

Written by Nicolai Haugsted

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You've decided you want to travel more this year (good on you), but you're struggling choose your next destination. Surely there's an easier way than trawling through endl travel mags and guidebooks for the answers, right? That's where our **ultimate month-**

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It's time to shine the spotlight on September. [European](#) summer is dwindling, South Africa safaris are in full swing, and stunning autumn colours start taking over US national parks. Whether you want to hike some of the US's most iconic trails, take your tastebuds on an Ita adventure or discover the Galapagos Islands' incredible wildlife, here's your guide on where to travel in September.

1. Galapagos Islands



It's fair to say there's nowhere quite like the [Galapagos](#). Where else might you see giant tortoises patrolling the beach, bump into a sea lion when you're swimming or sunbathe alongside sea turtles (but harmless) marine iguanas? September is the low season with the coolest temperatures of the year, though with average highs of 24°C (76°F) and water temperatures of 22°C (72°F), fairly warm. It's a particularly active month for wildlife, and thanks to fewer tourists, you'll likely experience more intimate animal encounters.

See pods of curious dolphins and humpbacks before they migrate to cooler climates. Gush over newborn sea lion pups hanging out – and being unbearably cute – on the sandy shores. Or witness penguin courting rituals that put human flirting techniques to shame.

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- ▾ [10-day Best of Galapagos](#)
- [8-day Galapagos Island Hopping](#)

2. Iceland



Nicknamed the Land of Fire and Ice, [Iceland](#) doesn't do natural beauty by halves. From gey glaciars, black sand beaches to volcanoes, it's one of the most unique places on the planet. September marks the start of autumn, and while the weather is more unpredictable, we t adds to the magic. You'll also miss the summer rush, so it's an ideal time to avoid big queu paying higher than usual prices. If you need one more reason, it's the Northern Lights, or A Borealis, which are given an extra boost around the autumnal equinox. Let's be honest, wh *doesn't* dream of seeing this natural spectacle light up the skies.

Delve into the ancient tales of Vikings, soak in the ethereal Blue Lagoon (and countless oth springs), and witness the mighty Skogafoss and Detifoss waterfalls in their full glory as you from Reykjavik to Snaefellsne. Or uncover the beauty of Iceland's Golden Circle as you walk Solheimajokull Glacier, relax in natural spas surrounded by a black lava field and listen to th hissing and bubbling sounds of Gunnuhver's mud pools and steam vents.

Top trips:

3. French Polynesia



Boasting unbelievably blue waters, dense tropical jungles and colourful coral gardens where it's totally normal to find yourself swimming with manta rays and turtles, the [French Polynesia islands](#) are 'pinch me' kinda places. Why visit in September you ask? Well, although the [weather is at its very best](#) between June and August, you'll miss the surge of peak season tourists that comes with it. September also happens to be slap bang in the middle of whale season, so you'll likely see humpbacks while cruising near the outer reefs.

Drop anchor in the sparkling Bora Bora Lagoon and immerse yourself in the jaw-dropping beauty of one of the world's dreamiest islands. Visit ancient temples and wind through a jungle flourishing with vanilla orchids, coconut trees and watermelon plantations in Huahine. Or enjoy the rhythmic beats and jingles of conch shells as you experience a sacred cultural dance in

Top trips:

- [8-day Tahiti & the Pearls of French Polynesia](#)
- [11-day Tahiti, Society and Tuamotu Islands](#)

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From the epic Grand [Canyon](#) where nothing can prepare you for the views to [Yosemite](#) with giant granite monoliths and sparkling lakes, it's fair to say the [United States](#) boasts some of the world's most impressive national parks. September is a great time to lace up your hiking boots if you want to enjoy less-trafficked trails. The cooler weather also makes longer and tougher hikes more bearable, and wildlife is easier to spot as it's breeding season. Oh, and did we mention the stunning autumn colours that arrive at the end of the month? Need we say more.

Discover vast deserts, fascinating rock formations and towering slot canyons in Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon and Monument Valley. Feel humbled by the presence of the world's tallest trees as you walk through Yosemite's Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias. Fill your lungs with fresh air and tackle the awe-inspiring peaks of Colorado's Rocky Mountains. Or go on a safari – A la style – to look for grizzlies, moose and wolves in [Denali National Park](#).

Top trips:

- [5-day Western USA National Parks Loop](#)
- [6-day Hiking in Denali National Park](#)
- [6-day Hiking in Yosemite National Park](#)
- [5-day Hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Home to endless grasslands, sweeping golden beaches, vibrant cities and national parks teeming with game, there's no denying the diversity of [South Africa](#). Where else can you enjoy wild sightings and world-class wine in equal measure? There's something extra special about South Africa in spring. Maybe it's the whales returning to local waters in Hermanus and thirsty whales coming out to find watering holes. Or kaleidoscopic carpets of wildflowers along the Cape Coast.

Explore the epic Kruger National Park as you look for the Big Five: lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino. Hike the epic Drakensburg – South Africa's highest mountain range. Or visit the charming coastal town of Cintsa to meet a local Xhosa community and learn about their traditions and customs.

Top trips:

- [8-day Premium Southern Africa](#)
- [8-day Kruger to Vic Falls](#)
- [14-day Garden Route Adventure](#)

6. Italy

Ah, [Italy](#). A country that continues to cast its spell on travellers. We featured Italy in our [May](#) but we couldn't resist adding it to this one. Why? Because September is jam-packed with and festivals. The Venice Film Festival, the *Regata Storica* and the ViniMilo wine festival on beautiful island of Sicily are but a few. Not to mention the countless harvest celebrations d around the Tuscan countryside. All the more reason to plan a trip!

Perfect your wine tasting skills in Italy's oldest wine-growing region. Sip on negroni while watching award-winning films at Venice Film Festival – and maybe catch a glimpse of a fa actor or two. Or experience the elaborate water pageants and lively festivities along Venice canals at the Regata. Travelling to Italy in September will give you an even bigger taste of *vita*.

Top trips:

- [14-day Best of Italy](#)
- [8-day Italy Real Food Adventure](#)

7. Indonesia

From tropical rainforests and epic volcanic peaks to yoga sanctuaries and beach-side bars, [Indonesia](#) has it all. It's totally possible to go on a multi-day trek through the jungle in search of orangutans followed by a few days on the beach drinking cocktails. September is the end of the high season and popular islands like [Bali](#) are much quieter, making it a great time to enjoy the serenity of this magical island.

Hike through the thickets of the jungle in Gunung Leuser National Park, foraging for edible plants and stopping at local villages along the way. Tackle the slopes of Mt Batur followed by a relaxing soak in mineral-rich hot springs. Or join a local family in their home for a coffee to learn about Balinese culture.

Top trips:

- [9-day Beautiful Bali](#)
- [9-day Sumatra Adventure](#)
- [15-day Bali & Lombok Adventure](#)

8. Germany

You might assume otherwise given the name, but Oktoberfest actually kicks off in September and finishes the first weekend in October. The festival started in 1810 to celebrate the marriage of Bavaria's Crown Prince Ludwig to Princess Therese of Sachsen-Hildburghausen. It's now the world's largest beer and folk festival with festivities all over [Germany](#) and beyond. If you've wanted to eat, drink and be merry in a *dirndl* or *lederhosen*, now's your chance. *Prost!*

Berlin is a city that likes to party, so it's no surprise that it's one of the best places to celebrate Oktoberfest. Enjoy delicious beer in a huge, traditionally decorated tent in Kurt-Schumacher-Damm. Listen to live music in the lively open-air beer garden at Alexanderplatz. Or tuck in authentic Bavarian food such as *brathendl* (roast chicken), *schweinehaxen* (slow-roasted pork knuckle) and *weisswürste* (white sausages made from veal and bacon).

Top trips:

- [15-day Berlin to Venice](#)
- [22-day Berlin to Rome](#)

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