



TIMM

THE WORLD'S GREATEST PLACES 2018

100 DESTINATIONS
TO EXPERIENCE RIGHT NOW

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST PLACES 2018

It's easy to find guides to famous attractions. But which new and newly relevant destinations are worth experiencing right now? To assemble our first annual list of the World's Greatest Places, TIME solicited nominations across a variety of categories—such as museums, parks, restaurants and hotels—from our editors and correspondents around the world as well as dozens of industry experts. Then we evaluated each one based on key factors, including quality, originality, innovation, sustainability and influence. The result is a list as diverse as the world it reflects, with 100 entries spanning six continents and 48 countries—highlighting everything from a Texas water park that empowers kids with disabilities to a Maldives resort that's building an undersea abode to a library in Tianjin, China, that's almost as wondrous as reading itself.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STUDIO MUTI FOR TIME





A KEYSTONE IN THE DESERT

KING ABDULAZIZ CENTER FOR WORLD CULTURE, DHAHRAN, SAUDI ARABIA

Its striking forms rise 295 ft. from the desert, but this is no mirage. The new King Abdulaziz Center, also known as Ithra, is a cultural hub that reflects “the changes sweeping Saudi Arabia,” says director Ali al-Mutairi. Designed by Norwegian firm Snohetta, the center houses an auditorium, exhibition halls and a library of some 200,000 books. —Casey Quackenbush



HELPING GUESTS CONNECT

COO BOUTIQUE HOSTEL & SOCIATEL, SINGAPORE

Once travelers book stays at this hostel, which offers beds for as little as \$20 a night, they can access COO Connect, an online platform that enables them to meet other guests based on mutual interests, such as food, photography and music. The goal, says founder Silas Lee, is to embody “the convivial spirit of an old-fashioned backpackers’ community.”

—Megan McCluskey



MAKING SUMMER FUN INCLUSIVE

MORGAN'S INSPIRATION ISLAND, SAN ANTONIO



While on a family vacation in 2006, Gordon Hartman took his daughter Morgan to a hotel swimming pool. Morgan, who was born with physical and cognitive disabilities, wanted to play with some kids nearby, but when she inched over to them, they scrambled out of the pool. “Her look of disappointment stuck with me,” says Hartman. “My wife and I asked each other: Where can Morgan go and really play?” Hartman, a successful home builder who retired at age 41, decided to

answer the question himself by building a theme park, Morgan’s Wonderland, which opened in 2010, and a companion water park, which opened in the spring of 2017. The words *ultra-accessible* guided the park’s design, from wheelchairs that are waterproof and powered by compressed air to water areas that are set to different temperatures, for those who can’t handle the cold. “Everybody can join together in play,” Hartman says, noting that many parkgoers don’t have special needs at all. —Kate Rockwood

HIGHWAY TO NEW HEIGHTS

SEOULLO 7017 SKYGARDEN, SEOUL



Snaking above Seoul’s thoroughfares is Seoulo 7017 Skygarden, a new pedestrian walkway reborn from a former highway overpass, much in the vein of New York City’s High Line. Its 17 sections feature family-friendly cafés, gardens and even stations for relaxing foot baths. But the structure, designed by Dutch firm MVRDV, is arguably more stunning at night, when illuminated pillars transform it into a glowing ribbon of purple. —Suyin Haynes

Lewanika is the only permanent camp in Zambia’s Liuwa Plain National Park ▶

A PIONEERING SAFARI LODGE

TIME + TIDE KING LEWANIKA LODGE, LIUWA PLAIN NATIONAL PARK, ZAMBIA



Some unique things you’ll find in the burnt gold fields of Liuwa Plain National Park: the Lozi people (the only community in the country allowed to reside in a national park), packs of wildebeests (the park sees one of the largest migrations in Africa) and this lodge, which opened in 2017. The resort is solar-powered, with recycled composite floors and grass roofs. And the six villas fit only 15 guests, ensuring tranquil exclusivity. —Kaitlin Menza