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The 10 best places to visit in February

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This is a recurring post, regularly updated with new information and offers.

Welcome to February, the month where 29 days (yes, it's a leap year) pack in more punch than you'd expect. It's a time for love, adventure and a dash of winter magic, but where should you spend this extra-special month?

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Imagine yourself basking on a sun-drenched beach where the winter chill is just a distant memory or frolicking in the last snowflakes in a winter wonderland. Culture vultures fear not — we've included cities where arts and festivals are as abundant as the February frost.

Each of our chosen spots has its unique charm and reasons to visit, from balmy climates for the winter-weary to cozy nooks for those who relish the chill. We've even thrown in some off-the-beaten-path locales for those who think they've seen it all.

So, mark your calendars and get ready for some serious wanderlust. These are the 10 best places to visit in February.

Dana Point, California



HEATHER PAUL/GETTY IMAGES

Halfway between Los Angeles and San Diego, Dana Point — the "dolphin and whale watching capital of the World" and the first Whale Heritage Site in the Americas — is a coastal escape perfect for February travel.

With endless opportunities for marine life sightings and seaside adventures year-round, Dana

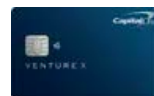
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Point is known for its pristine beaches, cliffside eateries, renowned whale watching and world-class boating.

The cooler season brings prime opportunities to spot whales and dolphins from the shores and with local outfitters. Several marine species use Dana Point as a landmark during migrations; from December through April, gray whales, Pacific white-sided dolphins and orcas can be seen as they make their way 12,000 miles from the Arctic to Mexico.

While in town, travelers can look forward to oceanside accommodations ranging from budget-friendly to high-end options. There are myriad other activities on offer, such as kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, surfing, cliffside golfing and hiking, yoga in the park overlooking the harbor and sunset wine cruises.

Where to stay: Book a stay at Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa for \$244 per night or 45,000 Marriott Bonvoy points.



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Placencia, Belize

LOESKIBOOM/GETTY IMAGES

Escape to the southeast coast of the tropical country of Belize, and more specifically to the town of Placencia, the traditional Kriol (Creole) fishing village known locally as "Barefoot Perfect." The Placencia Sidewalk Art Festival in February turns this quaint village into a buzzing hub of culture and creativity, attracting artists and visitors from across the globe.

This festival is a testament to Belize's rich cultural heritage and provides a unique opportunity to interact with local artisans and understand their crafts. Plus, February's mild climate, with comfortable temperatures and less rainfall,

enhances the experience of exploring the vibrant streets filled with art, music and local cuisine.

Bonus: Belize is the only English-speaking country in the region, and it has many nonstop flights from major U.S. cities. Not to mention, the U.S. dollar is at a favorable exchange of \$1 to \$2 Belize dollars. So, this country should be on the radar of any traveler looking for an extraordinary adventure to kick-start the new year.

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Where to stay: Rates at The Placencia start at \$207 a night.

Jackson County, North Carolina

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Green Knob Lookout Tower near Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina in winter. EIFEL KREUTZ/GETTY IMAGES

During January and February, visitors can enjoy the quieter side of popular attractions like Whiteside Mountain and the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway. This period offers shorter wait times at local eateries and unique experiences such as hiking to frozen waterfalls and shopping in the quaint towns of Cashiers, Sylva and Dillsboro.

A highlight of this season is the Outhouse Races at Sapphire Valley Resort, held every President's Day weekend. In this unusual event, teams race homemade outhouses on skis down a snowy 120-foot course, showcasing creativity and humor in their designs and names, like "The Royal Flush." This quirky tradition is a testament to the region's community spirit and unique culture.

Where to stay: Rooms at the Hampton Inn & Suites Cashiers-Sapphire Valley start at \$123 or 35,000 Hilton Honors points.

Charleston, South Carolina

EDWIN REMSBERG/GETTY IMAGES

Charleston hosts two significant events in February 2024: the Lowcountry Oyster Festival on Feb. 4 and the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition from Feb. 16-18.

Also, since Valentine's Day falls during this month, why not live out one of the greatest romances of all? The HarbourView Inn offers a unique "Allie & Noah's Timeless Romance" package, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of "The Notebook," providing a romantic backdrop for visitors.

Plus, there is no better way to commemorate Black History Month than to explore the recently opened International African American Museum. It's the only museum in the world dedicated to telling a complete story of the international African diaspora, and it sits on the sacred soil where the majority of Africans entered the U.S.

Where to stay: Book the Hyatt House Charleston/Historic District for \$176 per night or 12,000 World of Hyatt points.

Montgomery, Alabama

Montgomery Alabama Riverfront Park skyline. KRUCK20/GETTY IMAGES

Purposeful travelers can celebrate Black History Month each February by embarking on a transformative trip to Montgomery, Alabama, nationally acclaimed as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement.

Known for its pivotal role in modern and historical American social justice movements, Montgomery's core messages of unity and solidarity are echoed every day at sites throughout the city. Sites include the Civil Rights Memorial Center; the Rosa Parks Museum positioned on the very site where Rosa changed the world with her courageous act of defiance; Dexter Avenue King Baptist Memorial Church, where Dr. Martin Luther King first spoke his messages of brotherhood; the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum; and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

Related: 10 destinations where you can learn about Black history in the US

Montgomery also boasts a delectable culinary scene highlighting Southern traditions, historical and modern cultural influences, sustainable practices and local Alabama flavors. Culinary heritage and the movement's legacy combine at

Black-owned classics like Martha's Place and Brenda's Bar-B-Que Pit.

Where to stay: The region's multicultural history and creative spirit are also celebrated at the city's first luxury boutique hotel, The Trilogy Autograph Collection. Rates average \$156 a night or 20,000 Marriott Bonvoy points.

Las Vegas, Nevada

Las Vegas in February this year is a must. Why? Well, you've got the Super Bowl on the 11th at Allegiant Stadium. This year, the opening ceremony on Feb. 5 marks a special occasion as it's open to the general public for the first time. Mandalay Bay will also host the fan-centric Big Game Experience throughout the week, featuring autograph sessions, interactive exhibits and much more.

Beyond the Super Bowl, there's lots of other entertainment this month. Imagine seeing Adele live at Caesars Palace! She's just one of many big names, alongside Kelly Clarkson and the Black Crowes. Fancy some nostalgia? The Venetian Theater is hosting Styx and Chicago, and New Edition is kicking off its residency at Wynn's Encore Theater on the 28.

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And there's a special treat at The Mob Museum on Feb 14 – free entry to mark its 12th anniversary and the historic St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

TPG tip: The Cosmopolitan is actually part of the Autograph Collection. So, you can use your

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Marriott Bonvoy points here. It will set you back about 71,500 points or \$305 per night.

Jamaica

The island of Ocho Rios, Jamaica in the Caribbean. RUTH PETERKIN/GETTY IMAGES

Jamaica celebrates Reggae Month and Bob Marley's Feb. 6 birthday with vibrant events every February. The month-long celebration includes contests, concerts, and exhibitions, especially at the Bob Marley Museum, showcasing his global impact.

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But this year is extra special as "Bob Marley: One Love," a biopic exploring Marley's legacy, is being released on Feb. 14. So, it's a prime time for reggae fans to explore Marley's Kingston home, Trench Town, Strawberry Hill, and more. Of course, there's always the stunning beaches and warm weather to lure you as well.

TPG tip: [Iberostar Rose Hall Beach](#) rates start at \$588 per night or 60,000 IHG points.

Tanzania

After the short rains in previous months, Tanzania is awash in vibrant greens, and the temps are comfortable in February.

The scenery? Absolutely breathtaking. And talk about perfect photo ops – with the most sunshine hours of the year, every snapshot could be a postcard. Now, if you're a wildlife buff, get ready for the wildebeest migration. It's nature's own blockbuster show, and you've got front-row seats.

As for the adventurers, Kilimanjaro awaits. February's the golden ticket: warm days, clear sunny skies and those views from the top are worth the trek. Then there's Zanzibar. You can lay on the stunning beaches and cool off in one of the gorgeous blue lagoons. Plus, you can wander through the historic alleys of Stone Town or get a whiff of history at the spice farms.

Related: [Plan the ultimate African safari with these 12 bush-to-beach destinations](#)

TPG tip: After going on safari, venture over to the [Park Hyatt Zanzibar](#) where you can stay along the beach for around 20,000 World of Hyatt points or \$511 per night.

Napa Valley, California

J.E. KNUBIS. KNUBIS PHOTOIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

Another California spot this month is Napa Valley's picturesque Mustard Season. The valley transforms with vibrant yellow mustard flowers blanketing vineyard rows, reaching their peak mid-month.

Celebrations start on Feb. 4, 2024, with the Atlas Peak Mustard event; it features special tastings and food pairings at local wineries and art studios like William Hill Winery and Gordon Huether Studio. Iconic photo spots, including Newell Open Space Preserve and Laird Family Estate, offer stunning views of the blooms.

Related: [These are the best points hotels in Napa and Sonoma, California](#)

This season, also known as "Cabernet Season," is a prime time for wine enthusiasts to savor new varietals. Additionally, visitors can enjoy lower hotel rates and easier access to renowned restaurants and Michelin-starred establishments, making February an ideal time to explore Napa Valley's scenic beauty and culinary delights.

Where to stay: Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa rates start at \$464 per night or 100,000 Marriott Bonvoy points.

Scotland

CELTIC CONNECTIONS/FACEBOOK

In the heart of winter, Scotland transforms into a captivating wonderland of music and light. Glasgow's Celtic Connections, running from Jan. 18 to Feb. 4, is a global musical extravaganza featuring more than 2,100 musicians from across the globe. This festival vibrates with folk, roots and world music rhythms, intertwined with lively ceilidhs (traditional Scottish gatherings), enriching workshops and mesmerizing art exhibitions.

Simultaneously, Aberdeen's Spectra Festival of Light, from Feb 8 to 11, casts a magical glow over the city. The Granite City becomes a canvas for internationally acclaimed artists' extraordinary light and sound installations. These festivals showcase Scotland's rich cultural tapestry and create an immersive, enchanting experience, making February an unmissable time to discover Scotland's unique charm and artistic flair.

Where to stay: Rates at the Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh — The Caledonian start at \$220 or 59,000 Hilton Honors points per night.

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