



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# BEST IN ASIA PACIFIC 2019

## Margaret River & Southern WA Tops Lonely Planet's *Best in Asia Pacific 2019*

Global travel authority **Lonely Planet** has today named **Margaret River & Southern WA** as the number-one **Asian-Pacific** destination to visit in the year ahead.

Expanded this year to include Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, ***Best in Asia Pacific*** is **Lonely Planet's** fourth annual agenda-setting list of the region's 10 best destinations to visit in the next 12 months.

Announcing **Margaret River & Southern WA's** top-ranking, **Lonely Planet** enthuses: "Take one look at Meelup Beach and you'll wonder where it's been all your life: the West Australian bush parts to reveal ocean the hue of a Bombay Sapphire bottle, which is typical of the coastline stretching from Margaret River to the state's south. Beyond the sand, some of the country's slickest wineries, breweries and restaurants lie between tracts of tall-tree forest and kangaroo-dotted farmland."

**Lonely Planet** adds: "Locals have long felt their turf rivals the east coast travel trail; now, 17-hour direct flights from London to capital city Perth put it at Europe's fingertips. Adding to the argument are coveted food and culture-amped festivals, from Gourmet Escape to Truffle Kerfuffle and Taste Great Southern. There's also amazing surf, whales aplenty and DIY coastal hikes with paved sections, improving accessibility for all."

"**Asia Pacific** has it all," says **Lonely Planet's** Media Spokesperson for the region, **Chris Zeiher**. "Its food delights the senses, its forests and seas teem with life, and its cities fizz with culture and creativity. Our experts have explored this vast region's highlands, islands and everything in between to find the best places to visit this year."

"From primate-filled jungles to mirage-like lagoons," **Chris** says, "their recommendations reflect a part of the world increasingly determined to protect its most prized possessions at the same time as it charges whole-heartedly into the future."

***Lonely Planet's Best in Asia Pacific 2019*** is available online, with accompanying articles to each destination, at [lonelyplanet.com/best-in-asia-pacific](http://lonelyplanet.com/best-in-asia-pacific).

### ***Lonely Planet's Best in Asia Pacific 2019***

#### **1. Margaret River & Southern WA, Australia**

#### **2. Shikoku, Japan**

"This somewhat off-the-beaten-path haven is finally being discovered by non-Japanese visitors, with an increasing number of international flights winging into the main cities of Takamatsu and Matsuyama."

#### **3. Bay of Islands & Northland, New Zealand**

“**Northland** is the cradle of the country’s culture and history – both for the indigenous Māori people and for the European settlers who followed them. The two formally came together with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in the **Bay of Islands**, and 2020 sees the 180th anniversary of that key nation-building event.”

#### 4. Singapore

“**Singapore** was one of the brightest stars in the 2018 movie blockbuster *Crazy Rich Asians*, and the Lion City is hipper and hotter than ever. 2019 offers a chance to participate in the city’s bicentennial, but also to celebrate more than 700 years of **Singapore’s** rich, diverse history.”

#### 5. The Cook Islands

“A visit to the **Cook Islands**, 15 tiny islets, far-flung over a swathe of the deep-blue, breezy Pacific Ocean, is bound to rejuvenate even the most jaded. And locals on the main island, Rarotonga, are welcoming visitors off an increasing number of international flights to their Polynesian paradise.”

#### 6. Central Vietnam

“**Hue’s** vibrant cuisine showcases the city’s imperial legacy, while south in **Hoi An’s** storied laneways, local dishes include fragrant cao lầu noodles. Seafood stars in nearby **Danang**, and the city alongside the Han River is becoming one of Vietnam’s most exciting urban destinations.”

#### 7. Fiji

“From solar-powered resorts that serve locally harvested food to coral reef restoration projects and limited plastic usage, this vulnerable island nation has moved headlong into eco-tourism. October 10, 2020, will mark the island nation’s 50th year of independence, called ‘**Fiji Day**’

#### 8. Palawan, Philippines

“These are the heady days when new air routes and upgraded roads make it easier than ever to explore the dramatic seascapes and wildlife-laden jungles of the slender 400km-long main island (also called **Palawan**) before it inevitably becomes more developed.”

#### 9. Beijing, China

“**Beijing** is changing fast as the new decade approaches. In a bid to battle the smog, an eco-friendly bike-sharing scheme has launched, and the rapidly expanding subway is expected to reduce traffic congestion. High-speed links will soon race passengers to the extraordinary, Zaha Hadid-designed, starfish-shaped **Beijing** Daxing International, the world’s largest airport, which is slated to open later this year “

#### 10. Cambodia

“The skyline of **Phnom Penh** is on the up, bringing sky bars and designer dining; the **Southern Islands** are generating a beach buzz thanks to new boutique and luxury resorts; colonial-era vestiges are under restoration in **Battambang** and **Kampot**; and in remote areas like **Koh Kong** and **Monduliri**, wildlife spotting is drawing visitors off-the-beaten track. New airlines are making connections between **Siem Reap** and the **South Coast** smoother, with hydrofoils whisking people to the islands.”

To celebrate this year’s **Best in Asia Pacific**, **Lonely Planet** is giving visitors to [lonelyplanet.com/best-in-asia-pacific](https://lonelyplanet.com/best-in-asia-pacific) the chance to win a tour of their choice to explore the region with **G Adventures** – the small group adventure travel specialists. There are over 250 tours to choose from across Asia and Pacific, and the winner will receive a \$5,000 voucher from **G Adventures** to spend on their favourite, plus \$4,000 towards two return flights. To enter, simply tell us – in 25 words or less – where in Asia Pacific you’d like to go and why.

#### ABOUT LONELY PLANET:

**Lonely Planet** is a leading travel media company and the world’s number one travel guidebook brand, providing both inspiring and trustworthy information for every kind of traveller since 1973.

Over the past four decades, we've printed more than 148 million guidebooks and grown a dedicated, passionate global community of travellers. You'll also find our content on **lonelyplanet.com**, mobile, video, guidebooks in 14 languages and 11 international magazine editions, children's books, lifestyle books, ebooks, and more. Visit us at **lonelyplanet.com** or join our social community of over 14 million travellers. Find us on Facebook (**facebook.com/lonelyplanet**), Twitter (**@lonelyplanet**), Instagram (**instagram.com/lonelyplanet**) and Snapchat (**@lonely.planet**).

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- **Strictly embargoed until 01:01AM (AWST) / 03:01AM (AEST), Tuesday 2 July 2019**
- ***Lonely Planet's Best in Asia Pacific 2019*** is available online, with accompanying articles to each destination, at **lonelyplanet.com/best-in-asia-pacific**.
- **Lonely Planet** media spokespeople are available for interview in **Sydney (Chris Zeiher)** and **Perth (Fleur Bainger)** on request.
- Hi-res image gallery of ***Best in Asia Pacific 2019***'s Top 10 destinations are available for media use with permission.
- Twitter: **#BestinAsiaPacific**

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