



EID ESCAPES

Too much work, not enough play? A weekend break is the perfect remedy and with Eid Al-Fitr this month it's just the right time to get away somewhere new



Baku, Azerbaijan

Go for the glamour. Fuelled by oil-wealth, the coastal city is famed for its glitzy lifestyle, shiny sports cars, luxury stores and glistening skyscrapers – at night the iconic Flame Towers glow red and gold. For luxury boutiques stay close to the city centre and explore the area around 28th May Street and Neftchilar Avenue.

But don't miss the romance. Couples stroll hand-in-hand along Baku's long waterfront promenade and park, stopping once in a while to admire the views across the Caspian. While others soak in the historic walled Old City, home to the twelfth-century Maiden Tower – the origin of its name surrounded in myth – and the Palace of the Shirvanshahs.

Eat at Sumakh. This stylish restaurant offers traditional Azeri food in a luxurious setting. [facebook.com/sumakh](https://www.facebook.com/sumakh)

Do try caviar. The Caspian Sea produces around 90 percent of the world's supply.

Stay at Jumeirah Bilgah Beach Hotel. With more than a touch of luxury, the resort is 35 kilometres from the city centre and boasts panoramic views across the Caspian Sea. It makes waking up for



BAKU IS KNOWN FOR HAVING THE MOST DELICIOUS POMEGRANATES

CURRENCY: AZN (US\$1 = AZN1.05)

TEMPERATURE IN JULY: 26°C

sunrise well worth the early start. From US\$202.83 a night. jumeirah.com

Fly in three hours. Flydubai flies three times a week from Dubai International to Baku Heydar Aliyev International Airport. azal.az



CURRENCY: SCR (US\$1 = SCR13.28)

TEMPERATURE IN JULY: 27°C

SEYCHELLES IS THE ONLY PLACE TO FIND THE COCO DE MER NUT – THE WORLD'S BIGGEST!



Seychelles

Go for the beaches. Turquoise waters underfoot and palm trees swaying above, it's no surprise the archipelago has long attracted loved-up couples looking for a romantic getaway. Beau Vallon and Petite Anse on Mahé are some of the world's most beautiful beaches and exploring

the island's coral reefs makes an ideal sunbathing break.

But don't miss the wildlife. The islands are home to wonderful nature reserves and some fantastic hiking trails. Morne Seychellois National Park boasts the Seychelle's highest peak, while Vallee de Mai on Praslin – a Unesco World Heritage Site – is where the prized Coco de Mer plant and the native Seychelles Black Parrot can be found.

Eat at La Scala. Overlooking Beau Vallon

Bay, the Italian restaurant is known for its delicious seafood. christophvollmer.de/lascalas

Do island hop. Praslin and Le Digue are easily reached. La Digue is a peaceful car-free island and a great snorkeling spot.

Stay at the Four Seasons Seychelles. With beach views, each villa has its own infinity pool and guests can discover the reefs with the on-site snorkeling guide. From US\$991 a night. fourseasons.com/seychelles

Fly in four and a half hours. Emirates runs twice daily direct flights to Seychelles International Airport (on Mahé island) from Dubai International. emirates.com

JOIN 500,000 PEOPLE IN AUGUST FOR THE HUGE BELGRADE BEER FESTIVAL

CURRENCY: RSD (US\$1 = RSD107)

TEMPERATURE IN JULY: 23°C



Belgrade, Serbia

Go for the history. Centuries of invasions – from the Romans to the Soviets – has shaped the capital, its gritty past clearly seen in its architecture. On the bank of the Sava River, Savamala is one of the city’s oldest districts – now the city’s creative hub – and is a good spot to wander and soak up its history. One of the world’s largest

Orthodox churches, the imposing Cathedral of Saint Sava is a tourist hotspot.

But don’t miss the café culture. The Serbs take coffee seriously so follow the locals’ example and, with a rich black coffee in hand, while away a couple of hours at a local kafana – best described as a café-meets-pub – just watching the world go by.

Eat burek. Head to any small bakery first thing in the morning and there’ll be a queue of people waiting for one of these delicious pastries filled, traditionally, with either meat or cheese.

Do the ‘splavs’. During the summer months, these floating bars and restaurants on the banks for the Sava and Danube rivers are the best spot to spend an evening.

Stay at Square Nine Hotel Belgrade. Up the road from the historic Kalemegdan park, this elegant hotel prides itself on its polished design and sizeable pool and spa. From US\$212.42 a night. squarenine.rs

Fly in five and a quarter hours. Flydubai runs flights three times a week to Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport from Dubai International. flydubai.com