

HOME / BLACK TRAVEL GUIDE

The Best Budget-Friendly Solo Travel Destinations For Black Women



BY JAMILLE HARRIS • JUNE 4, 2018

This article originally appeared in the June issue of ESSENCE magazine. Solo travel can be more than just an encounter with new people and places; it could present a chance for self-reflection. Entrepreneur Claire Soares experienced this firsthand when she visited Paris alone in 2015. As founder of *Up in the Air Life*, a luxury travel company, she says going on trips by yourself may forge a new worldview. "I went to coffee shops and sat there hearing French around me, people-watching and taking a mental break from everything in my life to be in that moment. It was amazing," she says. An unfamiliar setting might also help heal pain and trauma, as Emma Dutch, a legislative assistant who has visited 22 countries on her own, found out. "When you surround yourself with intrigue and new stimuli, your brain is constantly working. There's not a lot of room for living down." When we take a vacation alone and traverse uncharted territory, we typically end up discovering something new about ourselves. These affordable destinations provide the perfect opportunity to detach from every day and reconnect with your life.

01 For the Starter Soloist: Fort Lauderdale

After revamping its image from a prime spring break location for college students to a cosmopolitan beach setting for discerning folks, the South Florida city has emerged as a more economical and appealing option to its well-known neighbor, Miami. "Fort Lauderdale has great beaches, beautiful water, inexpensive hotels and a lot of stuff to do," says Soares, who rents a reasonably priced time-share apartment during her stays. Annual events like the Wilton Manors Stonewall Pride Parade & Festival make the city a popular spot for the LGBTQ+ community. Low-cost functions such as Destination Fridays at the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center honor the influence of communities of color. Stroll through the Swap Shop, a massive market and entertainment complex that has a drive-in movie theater and more than 2,000 vendors, or check out the city's vibrant arts and culture scene. *This is Love, Sober House*.

READ MORE.



CELEBRITY
Scottie Pippen's Firstborn Son Passes Away At 35



LIFESTYLE
Marrell Williams Launches South Beach Hotel



HEALTH & WELLNESS
7 Resources for New and Expecting Black Mothers



LOVE & SEX
Katie Palmer Doesn't Believe in Being a "Girlfriend," Says So...



ENTERTAINMENT
These Black Stars Won At The Academy Of Country Music Awards...

particular, an awesome shopping experience can be had by a more luxurious morning surfing lesson, courtesy of Island Water Sports, in nearby Deerfield Beach; tour the Everglades; or set sail on a riverboat cruise to see the waterways that have earned the area its nickname, Venice of America.



02 For The Starter Soloist: Fort Lauderdale

Victoria Mason, founder of the blog *She's Comed*, relaxes on a beach in Fort Lauderdale.



03 For the Nonplanner: New York City

Anyone who has reveled in the magic of the Big Apple—including the record 62.6 million tourists who went last year—can always find something to enjoy there. “It’s the best place I can think of for solo travelers because you don’t have to plan anything. All you’ve got to do is walk outside,” says Tomika Anderson, founder of Single Parents Who Travel, an online group of more than 3,000 members. Explore beyond Manhattan’s usual sites. Go window-shopping at the upscale retail stores in the Oculus, the transportation hub some call an architectural wonder; visit the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens, where admission is free on Fridays from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M.; or get tickets for the annual Afropunk Fest in Brooklyn (they start at \$50). Head to Harlem and indulge in soul food fusion and good music at Red Rooster, co-owned by celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson. Anderson suggests, intimidated by New York’s tough reputation? “In any city, you have to protect yourself and look where you’re going,” she advises. “Keep your eyes open, trust that the people who are talking to themselves are crazy, move along and enjoy yourself. That’s it.”



04 For The Nonplanner: New York City

Fun-loving music buffs will relish the carefree vibe of Brooklyn's Afropunk Fest in the summer.



05 For The First-Timer Abroad: London

05 For The First-Timer Abroad: London

Don't be put off by the U.K. capital's pricey rep: The city is walkable, and when it's not, an \$57 Travelcard for a week of getting around on buses and the subway—It's called the underground or the tube there—makes sightseeing easy and cost-effective. "London is a lovely city to travel to alone, and it has a vibrant African community, nightlife and art scene," says Atch. Stop by The Africa Centre and Black Cultural Archives, which houses large collections of information on Black Brits. Up your vacay's wow factor with a \$125 day trip to Windsor Castle, Bath, and Stonehenge, and take in the shopping at Portobello Road Market, where more than 1,000 vendors offering food, fashion and antiques line the street on weekends. And if you want some company, connect with a Black Londoner or an expat group like UK & USA Black Connections on Meetup.

Cladine Ikoni, Founder of Sisters in Media, enjoys high tea during a trip to London.



06 For the History Aficionado: Belfast

This Northern Ireland capital city is small enough to allow visitors to tour on foot as they absorb its past and delight in its present, from the Ulster Museum to the Titanic Belfast. Inexpensive meals at iconic taverns are a good respite for pub-crawling. What makes it an especially great place for Black women to travel solo, according to Aidi, is the area's unexpected but evident reverence for people of African descent. "When I announced that I was American, I had people kissing my hand and giving me the extra Irish pour on my alcohol. My taxi driver didn't charge me and thanked me for our struggle. It was so moving," particularly, she admits because she had braced herself to encounter stereotypical racism. The good vibes extend to Black taxi drivers, which

explores hundreds of political murals depicting global movements including those led by freedom fighters like Nelson Mandela



07 For the Beach Enthusiast: Phuket

07 For the Beach Enthusiast: Phuket

Located in southwest Thailand, this haven is chock-full of enriching activities. Big Buddha, a world-famous attraction, is visible from most venues on the island, and Thalang Road is filled with authentic shopping, food, and architecture. Luxury retreats like The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa and Katafani Phuket Beach Resort might be high-end, but prices can start at less than \$10 per night in mid-June on travel booking sites like TripAdvisor. If you crave the beach, Hat Bang Thao is a nearly five-mile stretch of flatland between white sand and aquamarine water. The full-service restaurants and massage spots make traveling on your own peaceful without any feelings of isolation. The nightlife along Bangla Road is a buffet of live music, dancing, and parties, and in this friendly town you can go it alone or find a partner. "If you did a week in Phuket, you would have a pretty jam-packed itinerary," says Source, who lists the city as a solo travel favorite because of its accessibility and safety.

Amber Blackmon, Founder of the Travel Blog The Dreamer's Lane, embraces a sunny day in Phuket.



08 For the Cool, Sophisticated Mannequin

VO for the Soul-Searcher: Marrakech

The urban jewel of central Morocco is as much of an adventure as an out-of-towner wants it to be. This metropolis is home to bathhouses, called hammams, and luxury spas like the five-star La Mamounia. Visitors can relish quiet, even visceral, moments at the historic palaces around the city or on a day trip to Ouzoud Falls. For culture seekers, Jemma el-Fna, the outdoor epicenter of local shopping, is bustling with food markets, henna artists, even snake charmers. "It overloads the senses in the best possible way," says Anderson. To save on airfare, she added Marrakech to her travel schedule in 2012 after visiting Spain. One downside for Anderson was occasional catcalling, but on the whole her trip was wonderful. Whether you're there to relax or have some fun, taking a hot-air balloon ride at sunrise is a must, she says. "It's incredible, even mystical," Anderson continues. "You'll feel like you're on top of the world, and the best news is, the tour companies take care of almost everything. All you do is show up."

Blogger Ivy Coco has a magical moment in Marrakech.



10552 12-01-2015 10:10

Sponsored Stories

Advertisement: BullBrainHQ

Want to invest in cryptocurrencies but don't know how? Learn how now.

[Invest in Cryptocurrency](#)

Obama's Mansion Amazes Everyone

[President Obama](#)

Here's The Smartwatch Every Man in Philippines Has Been Waiting For.

[Smartwatch](#)

Philippines: Work-from-home Jobs In The US May Pay You More Than You Think

[Read More About It](#) [Join Us](#) [Share It](#)

[Pics] This Is Why We Don't See Jessica Alba In Movies Anymore

[Read More](#)



Invest now \$ 250 In Companies Like Amazon and get a monthly income...

[Read More About It](#)

Discover the Most Extravagant Homes in Los Angeles

[Read More About It](#)



22 Cool Gadgets That Are Going To Sell Out In Bimangonan

[Read More About It](#)



Search For Best Midsize Luxury SUV 2020. The Price May Surprise You

[Read More About It](#)



Province Of Rizal New Wifi Booster Stops Expensive Internet

[Read More](#)

HOME / LIFESTYLE

9 Photos Of Celebrity Kids Being Adorable This Week

PLENTY OF CHILDREN OF CELEBRITIES BROUGHT MOMENTS OF BRIGHTNESS TO AN EXHAUSTING WEEK, WHETHER THEY WERE DRESSED UP FOR PRINCESS PARTIES OR SIMPLY ENJOYING A BUBBLE BATH.



READ MORE.



ENTERTAINMENT
Dany Ma Is Disrupting Her Negative Reputation and Recreating...



BEAUTY
Jennifer Hudson On The One Moisturizer She Can't Live Without



LIFESTYLE
Michaela Oryenware's Grandmother Went Viral For Being A Whore...



HEALTH & WELLNESS
These Lawmakers Are Putting Black Maternal Health Jennifer Hudson On The One Moisturizer She Can't Live Without



LIFESTYLE
Michaela Oryenware's Grandmother Went Viral For Being A Whore...



HEALTH & WELLNESS
These Lawmakers Are Putting Black Maternal Health First and ...

