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The 'Top 10 Must-Visit Destinations In South America: When To Go, Where To Stay And What To Do



OVERVIEW

1. Machu Picchu, Peru
2. Buenos Aires, Argentina
3. Torres del Paine National Park, Chile
4. Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

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It's no secret that South America, with its stunning landscapes, vibrant cultures, and historical wonders draws millions of tourists per year. Some of the must-visit destinations in South America include the ancient ruins of

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10. Patagonia, Argentina/Chile

Traveling to South America can be a complex endeavor due to its vast geography and diverse attractions. There are so many destinations to choose from, but luckily – you can leave planning your trip down South to the experts at Kuoda, offering bespoke itineraries tailored to your interests and desires, providing expert guides, exclusive accommodations, and unique experiences that go beyond the typical tourist path. Looking for inspiration? Read on for some ideas on the most popular destinations in South America – when to go, where to stay and what to do there, and send us a message to start planning your trip.

1. Machu Picchu, Peru



Machu Picchu, an ancient Incan city set high in the Andes Mountains, is one of the most iconic archaeological sites in the world. Known for its breathtaking vistas and sophisticated dry-stone construction, it offers a glimpse into the rich history of the Inca civilization. The surrounding Sacred Valley and nearby town of Aguas Calientes add to the allure of this **UNESCO World Heritage site**.

When to Go: The best time to visit Machu Picchu is during the dry season, from April to October. This period offers the most reliable weather for hiking and exploring the

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...to the Inca Empire, a journey that leads through the Sacred Valley

Where to Stay: **Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel** – This luxurious eco-lodge is nestled in the cloud forest, offering elegant rooms and bungalows surrounded by lush gardens. The hotel provides a peaceful retreat with spa services, guided tours, and exceptional dining.

What to Do: Besides exploring the ruins, hike the Inca Trail or the shorter but scenic Sun Gate trail. Visit the Temple of the Sun and the Intihuatana stone. Take a guided tour to learn about the history and significance of the Inca civilization. Don't miss the Machu Picchu Museum in Aguas Calientes.

2. Buenos Aires, Argentina



Buenos Aires, Argentina's vibrant capital, is renowned for its European-style architecture, lively arts scene, and passionate tango culture. The city is a blend of old-world charm and modern vitality, with colorful neighborhoods like La Boca, the historic Recoleta Cemetery, and the chic Palermo district. It's a destination that combines history, culture, and nightlife.

When to Go: The best times to visit Buenos Aires are during the fall (March to May) and spring (September to

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explore the city, and enjoy the lively tango scene.

Where to Stay: Alvear Palace Hotel – This luxurious boutique hotel, located in the upscale Recoleta neighborhood, offers a blend of elegant French architecture and modern comforts. It features opulent rooms, a rooftop bar, a luxurious spa, and impeccable service, making it a perfect base for exploring Buenos Aires.

What to Do: Explore the colorful streets of La Boca, visit the historic Recoleta Cemetery, and enjoy the lively San Telmo district. Experience a tango show, stroll through the Palermo district's parks and boutiques, and visit the grand Teatro Colón. Don't forget to try Argentine steak and wine at a local parrilla.

3. Torres del Paine National Park, Chile



Torres del Paine National Park in Chilean Patagonia is celebrated for its dramatic landscapes, including jagged mountains, sparkling glaciers, and turquoise lakes. The park is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, offering world-class trekking routes like the W Trek, abundant wildlife, and awe-inspiring natural beauty at every turn.

When to Go: Visit Torres del Paine between October and April, which is the Patagonian summer. During this period,

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Towers of Paine, and take in the breathtaking landscapes at a leisurely pace.

Where to Stay: **Awasi Patagonia** – This luxury lodge offers private villas with stunning views of the Patagonian landscape. The lodge provides personalized excursions, gourmet dining, and a high level of comfort and privacy.

What to Do: Hike the W Trek to see the park's most famous landscapes, including the Base of the Towers, French Valley, and Grey Glacier. Take a boat tour to get up close to the glacier, go wildlife spotting for guanacos and condors, and enjoy scenic drives through the park's diverse terrains.

4. Galápagos Islands, Ecuador



The Galápagos Islands are an archipelago of volcanic islands famous for their unique and diverse wildlife, which inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Visitors can snorkel with sea lions, observe giant tortoises, and explore the pristine ecosystems of islands like Santa Cruz and Isabela. The Galápagos offers unparalleled opportunities for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts.

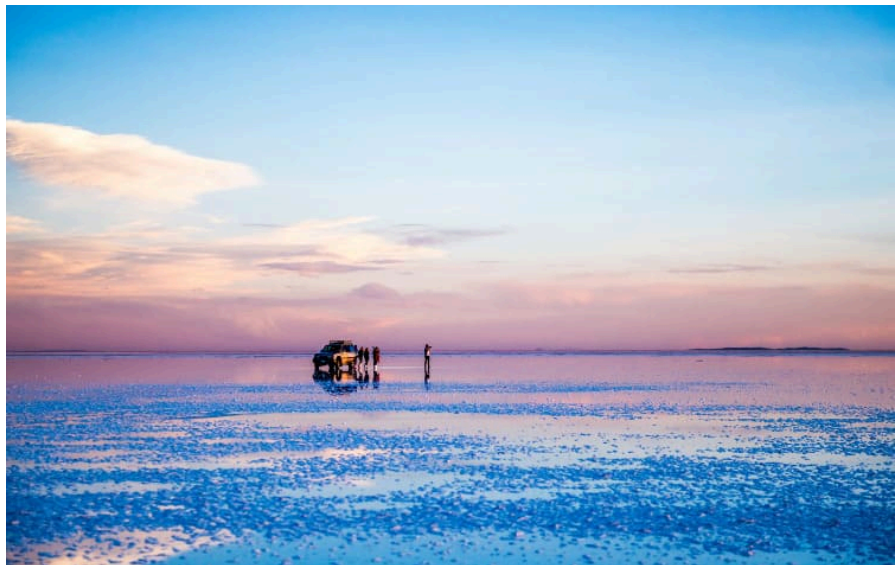
When to Go: The best time to visit the Galápagos Islands is from December to May when the weather is warm and

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Where to Stay: Pikaia Lodge – This eco-luxury lodge offers stunning views of the Galápagos landscape. It features spacious rooms, a spa, a pool, and guided excursions that provide a comfortable and immersive experience in the islands.

What to Do: Snorkel with sea lions and turtles, explore the volcanic landscapes, and visit the Charles Darwin Research Station. Take guided tours to different islands, such as Santa Cruz, Isabela, and Española, to see giant tortoises, marine iguanas, and blue-footed boobies. Enjoy kayaking, hiking, and observing the unique flora and fauna.

5. Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia



Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat, is a surreal and stunning landscape in southwestern Bolivia. The vast, white expanse creates a mirror-like surface during the rainy season, providing unique photo opportunities. Visitors can explore the salt flats, visit the train graveyard, and stay in hotels made entirely of salt.

When to Go: The dry season from May to October is the best time to visit Salar de Uyuni for clear skies and optimal travel conditions. The rainy season from

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Where to Stay: Palacio de Sal – A unique hotel built entirely of salt, offering comfortable accommodations and a one-of-a-kind experience. The hotel features salt block rooms, a restaurant, and stunning views of the salt flats.

What to Do: Take a guided tour of the salt flats to see the hexagonal salt formations, the train graveyard, and the salt processing plants. Visit Isla Incahuasi, a cactus-covered island in the middle of the flats. Experience the mirror effect during the rainy season, and stay overnight to witness the breathtaking sunset and starry night skies.

6. Iguazu Falls, Argentina



Iguazu Falls, one of the largest and most impressive waterfall systems in the world, straddles the border between Argentina and Brazil. The falls are a breathtaking natural wonder, with over 270 individual cascades surrounded by lush rainforest. The Devil's Throat, the most famous section, offers a powerful and mesmerizing display of nature's force.

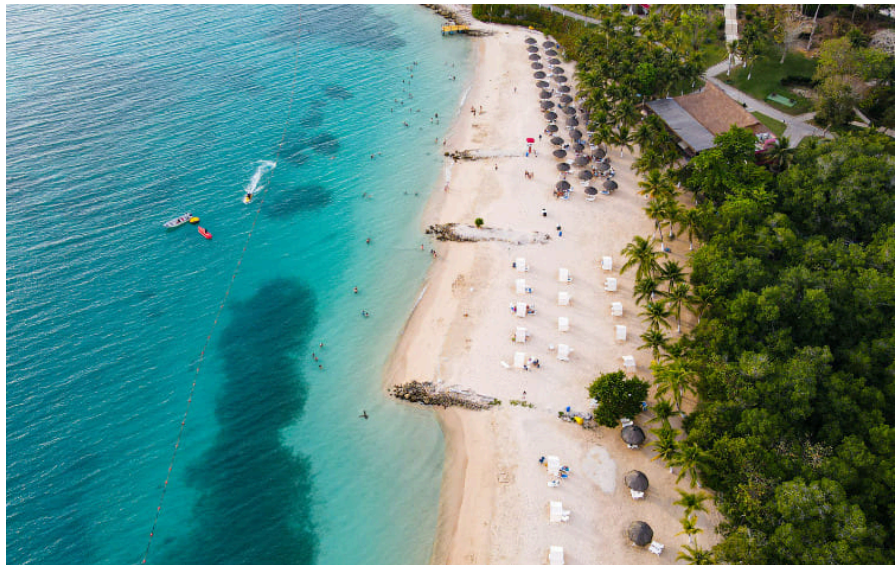
When to Go: The best time to visit Iguazu Falls is during the shoulder seasons of March to May and August to November when the weather is mild and the water flow is

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Where to Stay: Awasi Iguazú – A luxury lodge offering private villas and personalized experiences. The lodge provides guided excursions, fine dining, and a high level of comfort and service.

What to Do: Walk along the extensive network of trails and viewing platforms to see the falls from different angles. Take a boat ride to the base of the falls for an exhilarating experience, visit the Devil's Throat, and explore the surrounding rainforest to see a variety of wildlife. Enjoy a guided tour to learn about the falls' history and significance.

7. Cartagena, Colombia



Cartagena, a historic coastal city on Colombia's Caribbean coast, is known for its well-preserved colonial architecture, vibrant culture, and picturesque streets. The walled city (Ciudad Amurallada) and the imposing Castillo San Felipe de Barajas provide a rich historical backdrop, while the nearby Rosario Islands offer beautiful beaches and clear waters.

When to Go: The best time to visit Cartagena is from December to April when the weather is dry and temperatures are comfortable. This period is ideal for

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Where to Stay: Casa San Agustin – A boutique luxury hotel in the heart of Cartagena’s historic center. It offers beautifully decorated rooms, a rooftop pool, and an intimate atmosphere.

What to Do: Wander through the cobbled streets of the walled city, visit the imposing Castillo San Felipe de Barajas, and explore the colorful Getsemani neighborhood. Take a boat trip to the Rosario Islands for a day of snorkeling and relaxation on pristine beaches. Enjoy the lively nightlife and sample local cuisine at the city’s many restaurants and cafes.

8. Amazon Rainforest, Peru/Ecuador/Colombia



The Amazon Rainforest, the world’s largest tropical rainforest, spans several South American countries including Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. This vast and biodiverse region offers visitors the chance to explore lush jungle landscapes, encounter exotic wildlife, and experience the way of life of indigenous communities. Activities include river cruises, jungle hikes, and canopy tours.

When to Go: The best time to visit the Amazon Rainforest is during the dry season from May to October when river levels are lower, making it easier to explore the jungle

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Where to Stay: Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica – A luxury eco-lodge in the Peruvian Amazon offering comfortable accommodations, guided excursions, and a deep connection with the natural environment.

What to Do: Take river cruises to spot wildlife such as pink river dolphins, caimans, and various bird species. Go on jungle hikes to see exotic plants and animals, visit indigenous communities to learn about their traditions and way of life, and explore canopy walkways for a different perspective of the rainforest. Enjoy night safaris to observe nocturnal creatures and take part in piranha fishing.

9. Atacama Desert, Chile



The Atacama Desert in northern Chile is the driest non-polar desert in the world, known for its otherworldly landscapes and clear night skies. Highlights include the Valle de la Luna, El Tatio geysers, and salt flats. The region is also a premier destination for stargazing, offering some of the clearest views of the night sky.

When to Go: The best times to visit the Atacama Desert are during the shoulder seasons of March to May and September to November when temperatures are mild and

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Where to Stay: Awasi Atacama – A luxury lodge offering personalized service and private excursions. The lodge features comfortable rooms, a pool, and gourmet dining, providing a high level of comfort in the desert setting.

What to Do: Explore Valle de la Luna and its otherworldly landscapes, visit the El Tatio geysers at sunrise, and take a tour of the salt flats and high-altitude lagoons. Enjoy stargazing under some of the clearest skies in the world, visit ancient petroglyphs, and take a dip in the natural hot springs. Don't miss the opportunity to visit the small town of San Pedro de Atacama and its historic church.

10. Patagonia, Argentina/Chile



Patagonia, spanning southern Argentina and Chile, is a region of stunning natural beauty characterized by rugged mountains, expansive glaciers, and serene lakes. Key attractions include the Perito Moreno Glacier, Mount Fitz Roy, and Torres del Paine National Park. Patagonia is a paradise for adventurers and nature lovers, offering activities like hiking, kayaking, and wildlife spotting.

When to Go: The best time to visit Patagonia is during the summer months of November to March when the weather is warmer and more suitable for outdoor activities. This

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Where to Stay: Explora Patagonia – A luxury lodge located in Torres del Paine National Park, offering all-inclusive packages with guided excursions, gourmet dining, and breathtaking views of the park's landscapes.

What to Do: Visit the Perito Moreno Glacier and take a boat tour to see it up close. Hike to Mount Fitz Roy for stunning views, explore Torres del Paine National Park's iconic landscapes, and take a scenic drive through the Patagonian steppe. Enjoy horseback riding, kayaking, and wildlife spotting, including guanacos, pumas, and condors. Don't miss the opportunity to explore the fjords and glaciers by boat, and take in the dramatic scenery of this remote region.

South America is a treasure trove of extraordinary experiences, offering everything from ancient ruins and vibrant cities to breathtaking natural wonders and unique wildlife. Whether you're trekking through the majestic landscapes of Patagonia, exploring the lush depths of the Amazon Rainforest, or soaking in the rich culture of Buenos Aires and Cartagena, each destination promises unforgettable memories. Traveling with Kuoda Travel enhances these experiences with their commitment to luxury, personalization, and meticulous attention to detail. By choosing Kuoda, you ensure that your journey through South America will be seamless, enriching, and perfectly tailored to your desires. Let Kuoda Travel craft the adventure of a lifetime, allowing you to explore the wonders of South America in comfort and style. Send us a message today to get started planning.

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