

Ocean to Sky

Follow your desire to travel

TRAVEL

5 Obscure Places The Family Will Enjoy

BILBAO

Everything You Need To Know About This Town In Spain

FLYING

Six Airplane Tips That Will Making Flying Much Easier



Where to go

5 Obscure Places to Travel

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5 Obscure Places to Travel

Everyone knows about London, New York and Paris... but what about the places that are even more beautiful?

When I learned that my family would be travelling to Europe, I couldn't process the massive implication this had on my life. My family had always been big travelers. We drove to and from California when I was eight in our little ford fusion, trekking along across the desert. I was used to travelling (Tahquamenon Falls and Detroit being two of my personal favorites) and I had a desire to leave the borders of the United States and go to Europe.

The itinerary was sketched out over the next three months. We were definitely seeing my great aunt in Coburg, Germany, but the rest of the trip was up to use. My first thought was France and then London. These places are publicized in movies, books and advertisements, making it sound like the place to be. Before leaving, those were the places I was most excited for.

That all changed after the trip.

On a warm summer evening, my mother, father, sister and I boarded a plane headed to Frankfurt, Germany. From there, we drove to the small town of Coburg. We stayed with my great aunt for a few days before heading off to Fussen, Germany - the city known for its Disneyland castle.

When we arrived, the tourism smacked me in the face. The stores all contained cheesy merchandise and there were people everywhere. I loved seeing

Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau, but the city was too much for me.

Off to France we went, but to get there, we drove through Austria, Liechtenstein (a very small country in Europe) and Switzerland. We stopped briefly in each country, but Switzerland captured my attention.

We took a gondola ride up the side of the Swiss Alps in a small town called Chur. It was breathtaking seeing the cliffs on one side and the town on the other. And the stories are true... Swiss chocolate is the best.

Once we arrived in Paris, we settled into our hotel. We could see the Eiffel Tower from our window. I thought my breath had been taken away by the view, but that quickly changed when we went to Giverny.

The gardens went on forever, colors splashing my view every direction I turned. I did not believe so much beauty could be captured in one place. No wonder impressionist painter Claude Monet loved this place.

London was our last and final stop before heading home. It was a relief to hear people speak English again. The city was bustling with tourists, especially the places we went. Nothing matched the wonder I felt in Coburg, Chur and Giverny. I came back to the United States with a new view on the world and a better idea of future places to visit.

Giverny

Tahquamenon Falls

Chur

Detroit

Coburg





Coburg, Germany. The Veste Coburg perches high on a hill overlooking the little town of Coburg. It stares down at its people as if protecting it from any outside forces. This image is associated with Coburg, which is fitting since I noticed it right away. The fortress has been turned into a museum and a place to live. There are apartments within its walls, which would be one of the coolest place to live, minus the walk up the massive hill.

The town has shops and bakeries fanning out from the town square. The smell of Bavarian pretzels and Coburger sausages waft through the air. Paired with the sounds of people chattering and church bells ringing, it is a perfect little town to spend time in. If you are curious to see what Coburg is up to right now, they have a camera recording the town square 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Tahquamenon Falls, Michigan. The waterfalls are like none other in the United States... but I may be biased. I have always been fond of Michigan's upper peninsula. My family travels up north every summer. However, there are times when we make the trek up to our favorite hiking spots in the winter. The falls have been frozen over in these photos, but the sound of the water can be heard from miles around. There are 4 miles of hiking trails in between the upper and lower falls. It may sound daunting, but there is a bus that brings visitors to and from the upper and lower falls. I have hiked the trail between the falls, and it is almost as beautiful as the falls themselves. It is wooded and full of creatures scampering throughout the forest. If you are a fan of winter activities, the trails can be used to snow shoeing or cross-country skiing. By going in the winter, there are less people and it offers a new view of the falls.



Chur, Switzerland. Before going to Switzerland, I only associated the country with the Swiss Alps and chocolate. However, the city of Chur offered so much more. We pulled up to a small building with wires coming out the back. It looked peculiar, but I was open to anything. My parents surprised my sister and I with a gondola ride up the Swiss Alps. We were accompanied by a group of chattering Brits and a few mountain bikers. Once we stepped out, we enjoyed the view before starting on the long journey down the mountain. Once we got back to Chur, we stopped at multiple candy stores drooling over the delicious chocolates. Eventually we bought some and it took every ounce of strength not to eat it all. The town was historic, filled with buildings angled with the incline of the hills. My favorite part was drinking from a giant fountain in the town square (it was made for drinking, don't worry!).

Detroit, Michigan. The saddest thing about Detroit is that everyone is told to be scared of it. Crime is one of the easiest filler material during a slow news day, so people hear about the crime rather than the good things going on in the city. My family and I started going to Detroit four years ago and we have spent at least one day a month in the city since then. There is always something to do from walking the river walk or seeing a sports game at Ford Field, Little Caesar's Arena or Tigers Stadium. Campus Martius is a relaxing place to hang out. In the summer, they have a make-shift beach and in the winter, they have an ice skating rink. On New Year's Eve, the ball is dropped in Campus Martius. And we can't forget about Eastern Market! Vendors from across the state bring food, clothes and everything imaginable to the market in Detroit. My last recommendation is to stop at Detroit Water Ice on your way out Enjoy!



Giverny, France. I am a very talkative person. My mother says noise follows me everywhere, but when I arrived at Giverny, I was speechless. I have been obsessed with Claude Monet and his art work since I was a little girl. I would watch Lydia in Monet's Garden on repeat. I had a book of photos and his paintings that I would flip through. But none of the Impressionist museums in France prepared me for actually being in his gardens. I could see him sitting at an easel painting the little green bridge at different times of the year or sketching the archway filled with flowers. In his home were paintings of his that were only shown at his house. They were beautiful. The most incredible part was seeing THE water lilies in person. Monet was famous for his water lilies and they have easily become my favorite flower.

Bilbao

A wonder of Spain that is typically forgotten

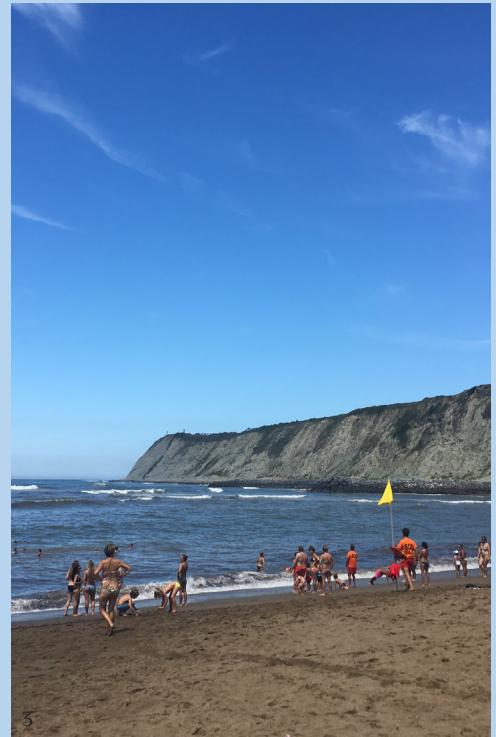




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2



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Spain has been on my bucket list for ages. The culture and the language have always fascinated me so I was thrilled when my mom suggested study abroad to me. At Michigan State University, they have a program called Freshmen Seminar Abroad where you travel to a country for two weeks with your fellow freshmen. The trip gives students the chance to gain a few credits in a different country and meet friends before starting college. I chose to travel to Spain to study Popular Youth Culture. We were going to Barcelona and Bilbao. I had heard of Barcelona before and was familiar with the city, but Bilbao was new to me. I had no idea what to expect until we arrived in the city.

Bilbao is interesting because the city is almost on an island. It is surrounded by a river so there are multiple, unique bridges reaching into the city. There is one skyscraper, but the main icon in Bilbao is the metal ship-like building sitting on the river. This building is called the Guggenheim. It is a famous modern art museum and is what Bilbao is known for.

The art exhibits inside change every few months, but the art outside pretty much stays the same. There is a section of the bridge near the museum that releases fog over the river and it creates an eerie effect. There are large metallic roses that face another nearby bridge (see image 1). My personal favorite is the flowered puppy, which is pronounced poopy (see image 2). Not only does Bilbao have a fascinating modern art museum, there are many shops and restaurants in the city. I got lost easily, but I used the skyscraper



4

and the many bridges to help me find my way. They were great landmarks to rely on.

One day, my friend Hadley and I decided to go exploring and we found all sorts of little treasures. The architecture was beautiful, with older buildings with a twist of modern ones. An interesting display we found were the umbrella-like statues clustered together (see photo 4). As we were trying to find our way back, we stumbled upon a miniature zoo. There were peacocks, ducks, swans and many other animals. Families were enjoying the zoo and children were running all over. It was yet another treasure that Bilbao holds

deep in its heart.

Just a short subway ride away is a beach within a cove. It is glorious! I spent hours basking in the sun and enjoying the clear water (shown in image 3). From the town, a little way up an incline, it was almost impossible to see the beach inside the cove. It was peaceful listening to the waves slosh and children laughing and playing.

The day time was amazing, but the night life was fun too. Restaurants served tapas, which are similar to hors d'oeuvres. There were many types of wine, but the main choice was Sangria mixed with fresh fruits from the region. Places stayed open later and it was interesting seeing people out and about. It was a much different crowd than the family-oriented one in the daytime. Spain's culture is focused heavily on family. Mothers typically stay at home and raise the children and the children usually stay at home until their twenties. When we got gelato (it was delicious, definitely recommend), we noticed that middle aged adults were serving us, not teenagers. In the United States, teens are encouraged to get jobs as early as 16, but in Bilbao, in particular, teens were hanging out with each other or at home. It was an interesting observation we made and opened my eyes to one of the many differences in culture.

The food, the culture, the art and the experiences all made Bilbao a place I would go back to in a heartbeat. In an ideal world, I would love to spend a year living in the city, taking in the culture, enjoying the many sites and temporarily becoming a Bilbaoian.

Airplane Tips

Travelling in an airplane is difficult or uncomfortable for many people. Follow these airplane tips to have a more relaxed time flying

1 Bring a sweatshirt, even if it's the middle of summer. Planes gets really cold.

2 Wear shoes that are easy to slip on and off, but not flip flops. There could be a lot of walking involved from terminal to terminal.

The background of the image is a photograph taken from an airplane window, showing a landscape of green fields, clusters of houses, and a winding highway at sunset. The sky is a warm orange and yellow.

3

It's difficult to sleep, so try bringing an eye mask and a neck pillow.

4

If it's a long flight, bring makeup wipes and a toothbrush that are easily accessible. You can wash your face and brush your teeth.

5

Don't forget comfort foods! They'll make you feel a lot better.

6

If you're not afraid of heights, look out the window. Look around and get excited because you're going on a trip of a lifetime!

Next Issue

The best cities to travel to in the U.S.



Chicago, Illinois