



Press Release: EMBARGOED TO 00:01HRS (BST) TUESDAY 22 May 2018

**Lonely Planet announces Best in Europe 2018:
Italian food hotspot of Emilia-Romagna named number one in list of
most exciting destinations to beat the crowds**

Travellers looking to leave the crowds behind this summer should head to Italy's foodie heartland, seek spectacular wild landscapes in the north of Spain, or go Dutch for arts and culture, according to world-leading travel media company Lonely Planet, which today reveals its pick of the most exciting European destinations to visit this year.

As Lonely Planet's expert writers have crossed the continent in search of the latest travel information and updates, they've also been seeking out Europe's most exciting and previously underrated destinations. Giving travellers the inside scoop on the best places to discover beyond Europe's most popular destinations, this year's list features lesser-visited regions in popular countries, hidden gems across the continent, and alternative city breaks for culture seekers.

Lonely Planet's [Best in Europe 2018](#):

1. Emilia-Romagna, Italy
2. Cantabria, Spain
3. Friesland, the Netherlands
4. Kosovo
5. Provence, France
6. Dundee, Scotland
7. Small Cyclades, Greece
8. Vilnius, Lithuania
9. Vipava Valley, Slovenia
10. Tirana, Albania

Emilia-Romagna in Italy takes the top spot as Europe's number one destination this year. The Italian region is often overlooked in favour of more popular regions like Tuscany, Campania and The Veneto, but is increasingly carving out its reputation as the nation's number one destination for food lovers. The birthplace of ragù, prosciutto di Parma, balsamic vinegar and Parmesan cheese, its foodie legacy can be explored at Bologna's newly opened FICO, the world's largest culinary theme park, while new cultural openings in Ferrara and Rimini (which can now be reached by direct flight from the UK) provide even more for visitors to get their teeth into.



Also making this year's Best in Europe 2018 list are: the Spanish region of Cantabria, a land of wild, sandy beaches, mist-shrouded mountains and enchanting villages;

Dundee, a city reinvigorated by new cultural openings including the newest branch of the V&A; and Friesland in the Netherlands, a region of beguiling landscapes and lively capital Leeuwarden is this year's European Capital of Culture.

Lonely Planet's spokesperson and Editorial Director, Tom Hall, said: *"For those looking to beat the crowds in Europe this summer, Lonely Planet's Best in Europe reveals our hotlist of destinations that provide a great alternative to traditional favourites. Our travel experts have crossed the continent to discover Europe's most outstanding, underrated and overlooked places that are worth exploring right now."*

"Emilia-Romagna is a great example. While Tuscany and Campania might draw in the crowds, this region has previously flown under-the-radar of many travellers, but has plenty to offer for those seeking an authentic Italian experience. Discover dazzling artwork in Ravenna, coastal cool in Rimini, or head to Bologna and sample the best that this foodie capital has to offer."

Lonely Planet's writers have explored the globe for over 45 years in search of hidden gems and amazing new travel experiences. [Best in Europe 2018](#) is the sixth iteration of the agenda-setting list, which picks out Europe's hottest up-and-coming countries, regions and cities. To help travellers see more of Europe, Lonely Planet has teamed up with Eurail.com to offer travellers the chance to win one of ten monthly rail passes to explore the continent this summer.

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Notes to Editors:

- **Lonely Planet's Best in Europe 2018** is available at lonelyplanet.com/best-in-europe (available from 00:01hrs BST, Tuesday 22 May). Find out more about why we've selected this year's ten destinations, and view video content showcasing these places and the number one pick, Emilia-Romagna.
- Image gallery of **Best in Europe 2018's** ten destinations available for media use.
- Video of the top ten list and number one destination available for media use.
- Lonely Planet spokespeople available for broadcast, phone and email interviews.
- Additional travel information available on each destination as requested.

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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 over 145 million guidebooks and grown a dedicated,



passionate global community of travellers. You'll also find our content on lonelyplanet.com, mobile, video and in 14 languages, nine international magazines, children's, armchair and 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](https://twitter.com/lonelyplanet) and #lp), Instagram (instagram.com/lonelyplanet) and Snapchat (@lonely.planet).