

Wanderlust

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Wanderlust Travel Awards 2012: WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Who did you vote in at the top spots this year? Which country won Gold? Which airlines and airports are you happiest with? Find out who-won-what here...

Back in November and December we asked you – the *Wanderlust* readers – to tell us about your year in travel. We wanted the highs and the lows. We wanted to know which destinations came top and which cities, countries and tour operators you think are unmissable. The results – as voted for by you – are set out below.

In many categories we asked you to list up to four entries (eg countries visited) and score each one on its merits. The final positions were based on an average score for the entry (converted to a percentage) – so the results are based on satisfaction rather than the number of votes. In categories where no percentage is shown (eg travel gear; TV shows) the results were simply based on number of votes cast.

Thanks to... ASUS for offering entrants the chance to win an Eee Pad Transformer. Thanks also to everyone who took the time to share their travel highs and lows with us, to give us a true picture of what travellers really think.

Top Country: Japan

Ranking %

1. **Japan** 97.27
2. **Bhutan** 96.67
3. **New Zealand** 96.61
4. Burma 94.88
5. Namibia 94.85
6. Laos 94.81
7. Madagascar 93.89
8. Argentina 93.77
9. Cambodia 92.91
10. Rwanda 92.50

One year on from the terrible earthquake and tsunami that devastated north-east **Japan** and the country is ready to welcome visitors back with open arms. In fact, *Wanderlust* readers are jumping at

the chance to see this country-of-contrasts without the accompanying crowds. Sample blooming cherry blossoms, ski on alternative slopes, visit ancient temples or tuck into Japan's world-famous cuisine – whatever you're after from a long-haul trip Japan sure satisfies your need to travel.

It's safe to say you are a well-travelled bunch. While trawling through the thousands of entries we had we noticed nominations and votes for countries far and wide, including Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq and Chad.

Top Emerging Destination: Sudan

1. **Sudan**
2. **Greenland**
3. **Mongolia**
4. Tajikistan
5. Pakistan
6. Cook Islands
7. Taiwan
8. Lebanon
9. Fiji
10. Iran

Sprawling **Sudan** makes up a whopping 8% of Africa yet it only attracts a teeny number of visitors. **Sudan** comprises vast, lonely deserts and pastureland littered with tribal communities and archeological relics – and according to your votes, now is the time to go.

Explore ancient, deserted ruins unlike any other, discover archaeological treasures in among the dunes and experience the rich, welcoming culture of the desert people.

Top City: Luang Prabang, Laos

1. Luang Prabang, **Laos** 97.27
2. Kyoto, **Japan** 97.04
3. Siena, **Italy** 93
3. Udaipur, **India** 93
5. Siem Reap, Cambodia 92.77
6. Granada, Spain 92.5
7. Cartagena, Colombia 92
8. Seville, Spain 91.58
9. Berlin, Germany 91.53
10. Venice, Italy 91.52

Your perennial fave gets the gong again. We love the fact that your top city isn't about bright lights and fast living. No, laid-back Laos city Luang Prabang likes to take things slow. Really slow. You can't get enough of its serene temples and jungle ecolodges. It takes the top spot for the third year running.

Over 1,000 cities were scored in this category – London was the most visited, followed by Paris, Cape Town and Barcelona.

Top Tour Operator: Audley

1. **Audley** 98.29
2. **Bamboo Travel** 96.88
3. Ramblers Worlwide 95.45
4. Mountain Kingdoms 95.42
5. Wild Frontiers 94.72

6. HF Holidays 94.10
7. Bales Worldwide 93.33
8. **Journey Latin America** 93.08
9. **Discover The World** 91.82
10. **Exodus** 90.60

Top Guidebook Series: Dorling Kindersley

1. Dorling Kindersley 79.59
2. Lonely Planet 79.28
3. Bradt 75.32
4. Rough Guides 74.71
5. Footprint 71.93
6. Time Out 70.25
7. Insight 70.17
8. AA 64.63
9. Blue 62.75
10. Cadogan 59.39

Top TV / radio programme: Frozen Planet / Excess Baggage

1. Frozen Planet (Top TV programme)
2. Excess Baggage (Top radio programme)
3. An Idiot Abroad
4. Coast
5. Route 66
5. Madagascar
7. Human Planet
8. Joanna Lumley's Nile
9. Joanna Lumley's Greek Odyssey
10. Globe Trekker

Top Airline: Singapore Airlines

1. Singapore Airlines 93.78
2. Oman Air 90.67
3. Air New Zealand 89.86
4. Emirates 87.9
5. Qatar Airways 86.13
6. Swiss 85.5
7. Asiana Airlines 84.44
8. Jet Airways 83.89
9. Norwegian 83.53
10. Air Asia 82.5

Top UK Airport: London City

1. London City 87.27
2. Southampton 83.75
3. Exeter 80.71
4. Birmingham 79.25
5. Inverness 77
6. Jersey 76.92
7. Edinburgh 76.89
8. Manchester 76.76
9. Robin Hood Doncaster Sheffield 76.25
10. Bristol 76.21

Top Worldwide Airport: Paro, Bhutan / Singapore Changi

1. Paro, Bhutan 92
1. Singapore Changi 92
3. Hong Kong International 86.63
4. Tokyo Narita 85.56
5. Keflavik, Reykjavik 85
5. Seoul Incheon 85
7. Auckland 83.03
8. Vancouver 82.19
9. Munich 81.95
10. Amsterdam Schipol 81.63

Top Equipment Brand: Rohan

1. Rohan
2. North Face
3. Craghoppers
4. Berghaus
5. Paramo
6. Karrimor
7. Regatta
8. Columbia
9. Kathmandu
10. Patagonia

Top Website: Mountain Kingdoms

1. Mountain Kingdoms 96.67
2. audleytravel.com 96.28
3. Man in Seat Sixty One 94.09
4. wildfrontiers.co.uk 94
5. HF Holidays 93.75

6. i-escape.com 93.33

6. Ramblers 92

8. fco.gov.uk 88.75

9. Wanderlust.co.uk 88.14

10. STA Travel