



Brussels, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Since 2009, **European Best Destinations**, has been promoting culture and tourism in Europe to millions of travellers but also to tourism professionals and the media.

Thanks to a partnership with more than 300 tourism offices in Europe and the EDEN Network created by the European Commission, thanks to your trust and cooperation, European Best Destinations is, for the ninth year in a row, the most visited website dedicated to travel in Europe.

This **very special year** we asked travellers a simple question to which more than 600,000 travellers from 192 countries around the world answered.

## Where would you like to go on holiday in Europe as soon as it is safe to travel?

More than ever, this edition highlights destinations that travellers have put at the top of their wishlist. Places that they are eager to discover when the health situation allows.

We would like to thank all the participants, the directors of Tourist Offices, Community Managers, Communication Managers and Press Officers, as well as the media, bloggers, radio, television, influencers and the more than 6 million travellers who follow us.

Our competitions for the European Best Destinations of the year, European Best Christmas Markets, European Best Beaches, Most Romantic destinations, European Best Ski Resorts, Best Beaches,... have become the **most important tourism competitions in Europe**; they bring together millions of travellers who support and discover the most beautiful destinations in Europe.

They also have an impact in "real life" with **significant growth of tourists** for our rewarded destinations with + 17% in growth of tourism for Porto rewarded in 2017, + 13% for Bordeaux rewarded in 2015, + 25% for Zadar rewarded in 2016, +41% for Zagreb, European Best Christmas Market 2016-2017-2018, +18% for Budapest awarded the title of European Best Destination 2019 as well as tens of **millions of media coverage**.

Like every year the competition was fierce with only 21 days of online votes from 20<sup>th</sup> January to 10<sup>th</sup> February to determine the ranking of the trendiest destinations in Europe that will be **promoted throughout the year to millions of travellers** and will be able to display the title "European Best Destinations".



# HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT FIGURES:

- Despite the Covid-19 crisis, we have been collecting during the twelfth edition of this competition more than 600,000 of votes (612,609 votes) from 192 countries.
- 61% of votes are from Europe, 39% are from outside Europe.
- This is the largest proportion of votes outside Europe since the creation of this event. This year, **foreign travellers show a strong interest for a return to Europe**.
- The destination that comes in first place is the preferred destination of Spanish travellers.
- The sure values of tourism such as Rome, Paris and Florence are always at the top travelers' wishlists.
- This year's winner is a destination that collected 109,902 votes.
- The city which ranks first has won with 28,8% of votes from its own country and 71,2% of votes from the rest of the world.
- The first traveller of this 2021 edition voted at 00.00.09 sec for **Tahiti**, the last traveller voted this February 10 at noon for **Kefalonia Island**.
- 31.9% of voters came directly from social networks with a massive increase of votes from Instagram users as well as from Weibo users and Bilibili users. Social networks allow destinations that were still under the radar a few years ago to attract travellers seduced by pictures of destinations they saw on it.
- **The most voted destinations** will be promoted to millions of travellers as the trendiest destinations to visit in 2021; they will feature on European Best Destinations, the most visited website dedicated to tourism in Europe reaching an audience of more than 6 million travellers.
- Tourism growth in the promoted destinations is on average +15% (+13% for Bordeaux in 2015, +17% for Porto in 2017, +25% for Zadar in 2016, +27,35% for Dinant in 2019, up to +41% for Zagreb "European Best Christmas Market").

- **The growth in media coverage** for rewarded destinations is on average over 81% (estimated at 10 million euros of media coverage (Cision estimate).
- The 20 destinations in the competition were mentioned over three weeks in more than **500 press articles** (524 so far).
- For the 5th year in a row, **Two sustainable tourism destinations** (this year the amazing « Cavtat » Croatia and "Soca Valley in Slovenia), have been included in the competition in partnership with the **EDEN network** created by the European Commission to promote sustainable tourism. Their good rankings in this competition demonstrates that sustainable destinations can be among the most attractive ones in Europe.
- The favourite destinations for Russians are Paris, Cavtat, Rome. Kefalonia Island, Cappadocia.
- The favourite destinations for **American travellers** are Rome, Braga, Cavtat, Paris, Sibiu.
- The favourite destinations for Chinese travellers are Paris, Rome, Florence, Ghent, Kotor.
- The favourite destinations for **UK travellers** are Braga, Florence, Rome, Cavtat, Sibiu, Ghent.
- The favourite destinations for French travellers are Dordogne Valley, Tahiti, Kotor, Florence, Braga.
- The best European destinations for Brazilian travellers are Braga, Paris, Florence (on the top podium)
  followed by Canary Islands and Cappadocia.
- Almost **1 traveller on 10 voted for Cavtat**, a Croatian Sustainable Destination awarded by the European Commission that jumps on the podium.
- Even without the votes from its own country, the winning destination would still have won this competition.
- Sibiu is the Romanian destination with the most votes since the creation of this competition. It is on the podium of the favourite destinations of the Germans and Austrians.
- Kefalonia is the Greek Island that collected the highest number of votes since the creation of this competition.
- Like almost every year we received 1 vote from the Vatican, this year for Braga.

## TRAVELLER'S TESTIMONIALS:

This very special year, a form that appeared randomly once the vote was cast allowed us, for those who agreed, to collect travellers' impressions. We asked them where they were from and why they had voted for this destination.

These testimonies demonstrate a great deal of **hope and expectations** to **return to their favorite destinations** when possible and under **safe sanitary conditions**, safe for travellers and residents alike.

#### Cécile M. from France voted for Kefalonia

'We voted for Kefalonia. We agreed on the choice straight away. We have planned to go in July and will postpone if necessary. It's a destination that's good for kids and good for us. We are not so young anymore but not old yet, so we can do many activities, visit places or do nothing, rest, eat well and enjoy the outdoors; moreover, the destination is seen as safe for the Covid.'

#### Jarod D. from the USA voted for Sibiu

'Before voting, 1 vote for me, 1 for my wife, we took a look at the destinations we knew and the ones we knew less. I had already heard of Sibiu because I am part of an association that collects good environmental practices from cities around the world to inspire our local elected officials. On top of that the city looks very beautiful so we must encourage those who think about tourism development in a sustainable way, for and with the citizens.'

## Hervé L. from France voted for Braga

'We voted for Braga because we would like to visit this destination. We are thinking of going there in June with my wife. Our friends tell us that Braga is the best of Portugal, a concentration of the best and you get a warm welcome from the locals. This is important to us, we don't want to be seen as invaders or as money making machines, we want to see people's lives and share moments with them.'

#### **Enza C. from Italy voted for Paris**

'I vote Paris because I like this city very much. I went there this summer for my 20th birthday, a gift from my parents. The city is even more beautiful than I expected. There are still a lot of small independent shops and charming little alleys. I prefer Paris to other large and a bit colder capitals.'

#### **Eelke J. from The Netherlands voted for Cavtat**

'Cavtat is where we have spent our best holidays in Europe. We will try to do the same again. There are good restaurants and lots of outdoor activities. It is a destination that also has charm, there is sun and the sea but also authenticity, that makes a big difference. With the Covid on top of that, I prefer to go to destinations which have a large offer of tourist apartments with kitchen, villas or boutique hotels, not wanting to be stuck with 2,000 people in giant hotels in the event of contamination.'

#### Adrian V. from the US voted for Kefalonia

'It is one of the most beautiful islands in Europe and for me the most beautiful in Greece: beautiful landscapes, sun, gastronomy, lots of different great beaches, a mountain of activities for the whole family. It's our fondest memory in Europe. If it is possible we will go in September or October, everything is still unclear but we are ready.'

#### **Ewerton F. from Brazil, voted for Braga**

'Braga is part of our common roots, so now more than ever we want to go back, to eat well, go shopping, relax. This summer or a little later will be good to go, we'll see. The conditions must be good for everyone.'

#### **Emmy L. from England voted for Tahiti**

'I would have voted for Cornwall which I like very much but after a year of lockdown I think we would rather want a holiday in Tahiti.'

#### **Elizabeth M. from Wales voted for Braga**

'I voted twice, both times for Braga. Sameiro and Bom Jesus are unique places in the world. Anyone who has seen this once will remember it all their life. I'm sure it hasn't changed and I will go back once we get vaccinated. It's scheduled for March (the vaccination) for me and my husband.'

## Helga V. from Austria voted for Tübingen

"I know Tübingen well and if I was younger I would have bought a pied-à-terre there because it's a nice place to live and touristically it's very attractive so it's a good investment. The city is culturally very rich and it is also young and dynamic. It is a very beautiful destination."

#### Victoria P. from Scotland voted for Ghent

'I did an Erasmus in Ghent 12 years ago and have fond memories of this city. It is the most beautiful city in Belgium. We will come back to it, this time with my companion for the Christmas market in December which is really magical. I have already booked with possible cancellation, we will see if it is maintained.'

#### Karen M. from the UK, voted for Paris

'It's one of the few cities where I can go for work or with my boyfriend or with my children, or alone and every time it's a pleasure. Each time, I discover something new, even more beautiful, even rarer. Paris is my second home and I will be returning as soon as possible.'

## **Hugo P. from Germany voted for Soca Valley**

'I voted for Soca Valley because I follow them on social media. I have been dreaming of going to Slovenia since I was a student. Slovenia is nature, sustainable tourism, good food, good wines and also sports outdoors, that's all I crave the most right now.'

#### **Léon M. from Germany voted for Florence**

'My vote goes to Florence. Florence represents culture and culture is all that I have been deprived of for months. In May or September, I will go back if possible. Either way, this is the first trip I want to take when this is all over. Replace the images of the news channels in my head with images of masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance.'

#### Nuria F. from Spain voted for Braga

'Almost every 2 years we go to Braga with the children. It feels good there, it's a bit like our second home. It's close to Asturias and then it's also totally different. The people are really nice and you feel safe; There is always something to see and do and always new hotels, new restaurants, it's alive.'

#### Benjamin A. from Austria voted for Cavtat

'Croatia has been our number 1 vacation spot for 20 years. We went to Istria at first and then once we got to Cavtat we didn't want to go anywhere else because that's really all we like. There are locals and traders who recognize us from year to year. It's very family friendly and for me it's the best destination in Europe.'

#### Laureen P. from England voted for Sibiu

'I voted based on the photos I saw and the activities described. Romania has always attracted me and Sibiu seems to be one of the prettiest cities in this country. We are waiting for the vaccine, we are on the list, not the first, not the last as we are in our sixties, but when that is done I think we can travel, I hope.'

#### Tao M. from China voted for Ghent

'I thought it was Bruges and that there was an error on your voting form. I didn't know there was another city like this in Belgium. I didn't know the name of the city, but the photos are very beautiful and make you want to go.'

#### Niels B. from The Netherlands voted for Soca Valley

'We went there for team building and we did hiking, biking and canoeing. Above all, we had a great time with both the guides and the locals. The accommodations were affordable and we always had great meals. If I can this summer, we will go by car with the family because I really don't want to take the plane and so we can bring some local products with us in the trunk on the return trip.'

#### Jonathan L. from Canada voted for Rome

'I haven't been there since I was 9 and I'm 48 so maybe it has changed a lot but I think Rome does not change.'

## Michelle M. from South Africa voted for Cappadocia

'If we can in the autumn we will go there for 10 days to do a complete circuit. This is our honeymoon trip so if we can get married in the summer we will go there in the autumn.'

### Andy G. from Germany Lofoten

'Since you can't really travel right now you want to treat yourself to a dream trip when possible and Lofoten has always made me dream. As the virus circulates more in winter we hope to be able to go there in summer, in July perhaps.'

## **Hayley D. from Germany voted for Canary Islands**

"I voted for the Canaries. I already know 4 islands well and I would like to discover La Palma and La Gomera during my next stay".

#### **Emma F. from Austria voted for Capri**

We made the mistake a few times of going for 3 weeks to places that were cheap but not great. This year if we can travel we will take 7-10 days in Capri because it looks really unique.'

#### Teresa N. from Poland voted for Kefalonia

'I saw Kefalonia on Instagram and I really want to see this once in my life, this summer or even 10 years from now but someday I will.'

#### **Emmy R. from England voted for Kotor**

'I want sun for my holiday, my husband wants restaurants because we don't want to cook on holiday. We were in Kotor 8 years ago but maybe we will go back next year for our 30th wedding anniversary or we will give it as a honeymoon gift for our daughter and son-in-law. It's very very beautiful.'

#### Kiara E. from Ireland voted for Tahiti

'I've never been to Tahiti but the photos are just superb. Go snorkelling, eat fresh fish, go for walks or just rest. I'll take a one-way ticket to Tahiti.'

#### Jannis. M from England voted for Tübingen

"I've never been there but Tübingen looks really beautiful. I would not have thought of Germany in the first place for a holiday but in fact I think it is this kind of destination that makes me want to go there now. It looks nice, clean, secure and friendly, simple and pleasant things can be done such as shopping, going to good restaurants, and walking around".

## William L. From England voted for Dordogne Valley

"Outdoor sports and gastronomy in unspoiled nature. That's why I voted for the Dordogne Valley. I have been there before but we have seen 10% of what there is to see so we will be happy to go back if we can next autumn."

## **Amy H. from England voted for Canary Islands**

« After more than a year of lockdown I dream of something else than #staycation. I want sun, beaches, palm trees, diving, I want a real holiday ».



Discover the 15 trendiest destinations in Europe selected by travellers. They will be **promoted throughout the** year to millions of travellers on all our networks.





+610,000 votes +118,000 shares



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Help to place our Sofa valley as high as possible on the list of most descrable destinations. @

Soča valley represents the hearties of Slovenia on the lat of European Sest Dectinations in 2021 which must be visited by every traveler, as The selection of the best destination takes place by voting on the official vieticite of Best Destinations in Europe &

Voting takes place from January 20th to February 10th 2021. Vo., See More



Visit Greece @VisitGreeceux - 26 janv. The Island of Ketalonia has been nominated for "European Best Destination" 🛡 #VisitGreece #ttilit #ttevel 💘 Cast your vote here: vote ebdest in

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> Turismo Roma - official page Non Housey Wat 2000 - 3

Vote for your European Best Destinations. Rome is selected among the 20 trendest places to visit in 2021. Until 10th February 2021. worldwide travellers media and tourism professionals will discover the 20 destinations selected and will vote for their favourite destinations. (Tvote per week per IP address). Make your vote count and for now. stay safe, travel online and discover some inspiration for your next holiday in Europe.

♦ http://vote.ebdect.in #EuropeanGertDestriati... See More



















# **15. GHENT, BELGIUM**

On the 15th position, with 16503 votes, Ghent was voted among the 15 best destinations to visit in Europe!



On the 14th position, with 18,420 votes, Capri was voted among the 15 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# 13. TAHITI, FRENCH POLYNESIA

On the 13th position, with 22,356 votes, Tahiti was voted among the 15 best destinations to visit in Europe!



On the 12th position, with 24,427 votes, Dordogne Valley was voted among the 15 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# 11. TUBINGEN, GERMANY

On the 11th position, with 25,586 votes, Tubingen was voted among the 15 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# **10. CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN**

On the 10th position, with 26,432 votes, Canary Islands was voted among the 10 best destinations to visit in Europe!



## 9. SOCA VALLEY, SLOVENIA

On the 9th position, with 30,088 votes, Soca Valley was voted among the 10 best destinations to visit in Europe!

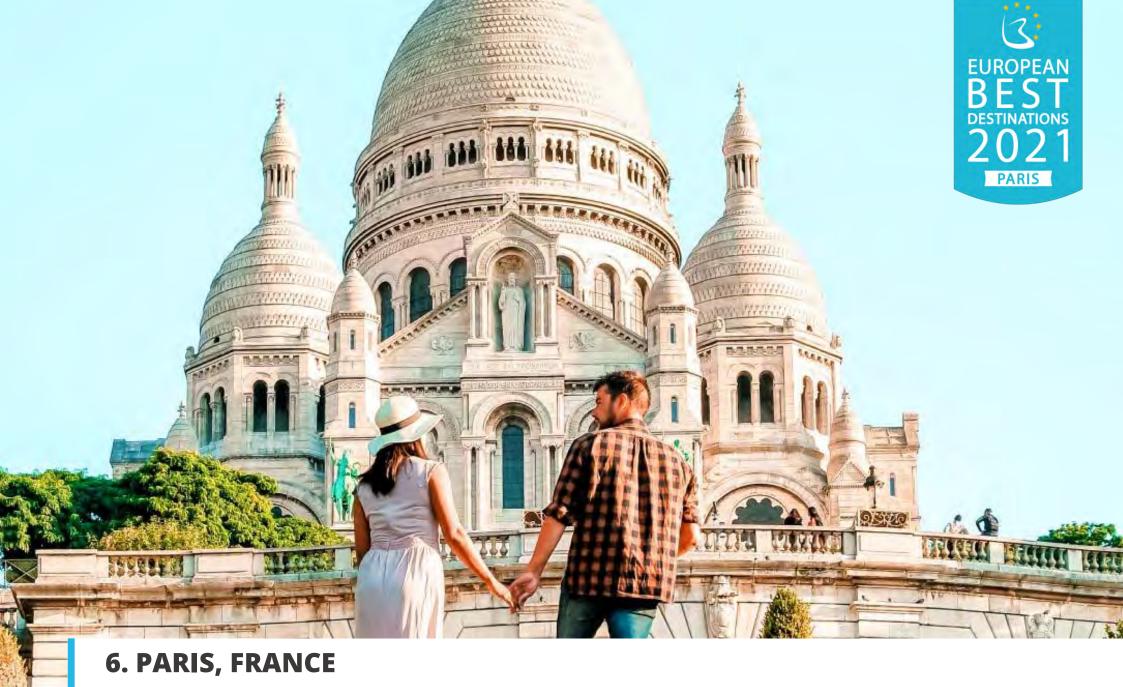


destinations to visit in Europe!



## 7. KEFALONIA, GREECE

On the 7th position, with 36,551 votes, Kefalonia was voted among the 10 best destinations to visit in Europe!



On the 6th position, with 39,584 votes, Paris was voted among the 10 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# **5. SIBIU, ROMANIA**

On the 5th position, with 45,699 votes, Sibiu was voted among the 5 best destinations to visit in Europe!



best destinations to visit in Europe!



# 3. CAVTAT, CROATIA

On the 3rd position, with 50,025 votes, Cavtat was voted among the 3 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# 2. ROME, ITALY

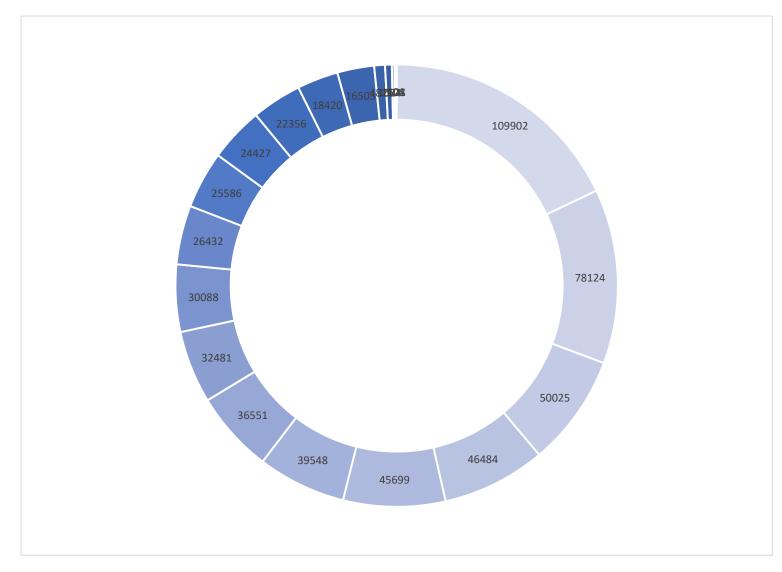
On the 2nd position, with 78,124 votes, Rome was voted among the 2 best destinations to visit in Europe!



# 1. BRAGA, PORTUGAL

On the 1st position, with 109,902 votes, Braga elected European Best Destination 2021! CONGRATULATIONS!

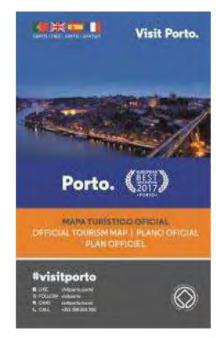
## **RESULTS**



- 1. Braga
- 2. Rome
- 3. Cavtat
- 4. Florence
- 5. Sibiu
- 6. Paris
- 7. Kefalonia
- 8. Kotor
- 9. Soca Valley
- 10. Canary Island
- 11. Tubingen
- 12. Dordogne Valley
- 13. Tahiti
- 14. Capri
- 15. Ghent
- 16. Cappadocia
- 17. Calpe
- 18. Vienna
- 19. Cornwall
- 20. Lofoten Islands

# DOWNLOAD THE OFFICIAL LOGOS AND SPREAD THE WORD!







Porto, Bordeaux, Budapest,.. (European Best Destination winners) Tallinn, Zagreb (European Best Christmas Markets 2013-2019 winners), Alpe d'Huez & Val Thorens (European Best Ski Resorts 2013-2019 winners) have integrated the logo into their website, videos, paper communications (city maps, brochures, flags...) and communicated it to tourism professionals (hotels, airport, airlines) who all proudly feature the logo on their websites.

As an awarded destination of this top 15 you can already download your logo on:



## https://www.europeanbestdestinations.com/about-1/download/#destination

















# THEY ARE TALKING **ABOUT US**



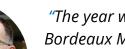
## Mr Filipe Ortigao Guimaraes - Director Porto & Norte Tourism

"European Best Destinations contest is an incredible way to boost the tourist inflow in cities. We have data to assert that European Best Destinations is one of the main reasons for the growth of popularity of Porto among travellers from all other the world. The number of travellers has nearly doubled, from 6.9 M to 12M!"

## Mrs Darja Jurbazic, Zagreb Tourism Board:



"The promotion of Zagreb with EBD team has given us a great opportunity to increase appeal of Zagreb as Croatia's capital and foster its visibility. The emphasis which EBD puts on city marketing and promotion is very valuable to us".



#### Nicolas Martin, Executive Director Bordeaux Tourism:

"The year was exceptional in terms of tourism growth with an <u>increase of 10.7% in international arrivals</u> in Bordeaux Merignac Airport (source GDS / Forward Keys) or of 12.26% in hotels progression of Revenue per room (RevPar) for all categories (source MKG). Most nationalities are increasing, especially this year European travellers (British, Spanish, German, Swiss, Belgian, Italian ...). It is undeniable that the fact of being elected European Best Destination 2015 has contributed to this result, press fallouts after winning this title have been global and massive."



"We are very grateful for the very positive dynamic in which European Best Destinations has put our beautiful city.

With an increase of almost **30% in tourist attendance** and the diversification of nationalities, I have no doubt that this operation has greatly contributed to a new tourist boost for Dinant."



## Mr Xavier Lechien - President EDEN - European Commission - Sustainable Tourism

"For 7 years we have been in partnership with EBD which has enabled us to increase the visibility of sustainable tourism destinations by + 540%. EDEN destinations awarded by the European Commissions are promoted on the first site dedicated to tourism in Europe. EBD is our main partner."



#### Mr Ante Galic - Zadar Tourist Board:

"The year we worked with EBD **we have had a record growth of +13% in overnight stays**, when our yearly growth for many decades was of 6%. During this special year we reached a new administrative record of 447,925 arrivals and 1,721,928 overnight stays".

# SUBSTANTIAL MEDIA COVERAGE

The election of the European Best destinations receives substantial coverage right across all the various media in Europe. The main national newspapers, specialist press, blogs, specialized sites, television and social networks etc... ensure that the winning city and the other selected destinations are fully covered (1,120 press articles for the competition "European Best Destination 2020" and + 80 million media coverage for our members destinations since 2009). See our media coverage:

https://www.europeanbestdestinations.com/about-1/press/

This election generates a great deal of interest for various reasons. First of all it gives European travellers a voice by casting their vote. Secondly, it is organized by an independent organization.































IG TO AN INDEPENDENT STUDY OF THE MULTINATIONAL "CISION" (IN TERMS OF MEDIA COVERAGE).

**Forbes** 

Billionaires

Innovation

Leadership

## The 20 Best European Destinations To Visit In 2020 Revealed



Cecilia Rodriguez Senior Contributor ()



Colmar, France: New European Best Destination 2020 SURCEEN SESTIMATIONS

The city of Colmar, in France's northern region of Alsace, has been voted the #1 European destination for 2020, chosen from 20 'must-see' locations that made the finalists' list of contenders for the coveted title organized by European Best Destinations (EBD).

For its 11th edition, the competition collected a record of more than 600,000 votes for the trendiest destinations in Europe, a list that will be promoted throughout the year to millions of travelers — and will







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Come value et la experimenta delicada a a comencia nunción que de salda el 18 comes, per de con el todos en capares que que estre sem sen la Escalaria degre los discinsión des Comillerenas, felharen las prisones de la Ses diciencia que sem edicado presenta que el del los grapados en las des prisones pudad generales de Sesti Discipion de 2001. Como de con el comisgolida que se de Sesti Discipion de 2001. Como de comissión de sema Budalesta, su nuemera la estida filo se con del de pasago que se sema revisión en en El 2009 de por casa de de Parada que acesta de se parada de transi acomismo del en el colombio de sistema de 16 mador de Europe's en comissión de consecuencia.



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Travel news Portugal's happlest city is in...

SANDRA HENRIQUES

# Portugal's happiest city is in the running for European Best Destination 2019

Listed in 2016 as the number one city in Portugal with the best quality of life (the third one in Europe), Braga is the only Portuguese city on the run to become European Best Destination 2019, Public voting ends on  $\delta$  February and should Braga win, it would join previous Portuguese winners Lisbon (2010) and Porto (2012, 2014, and 2017).





Rue Do Souter treatment i pedestrian aborging street in the São João do Soute dialnot of Brags, image by Differen.

## VOGU





# OUR ACTIONS

European Best Destinations is a travel website based in Brussels and developed to promote culture and tourism in Europe. In partnership with the participating tourism offices and the EDEN Network created by the European Commission we promote a better understanding of the wealth, diversity and quality of European destinations.



Thanks to an excellent communication with an audience of e-citizens, European Best Destinations plays an important role in promoting Europe as the number one destination in the world. It has become the meeting place for tourism offices and world travellers, a main gateway to the discovery of Europe.

Since 2009 EBD has been working with major tourism offices in Europe to reward and highlight the most visited destinations via its website and social networks (+6 million visitors and thousands of followers on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and 80,000,000 euros of media coverage).

We carry out the main tourism competitions in Europe and have been working with the European Commission for the promotion of sustainable tourism for 7 years. 90 EDEN-labelled destinations are promoted on the EBD website.





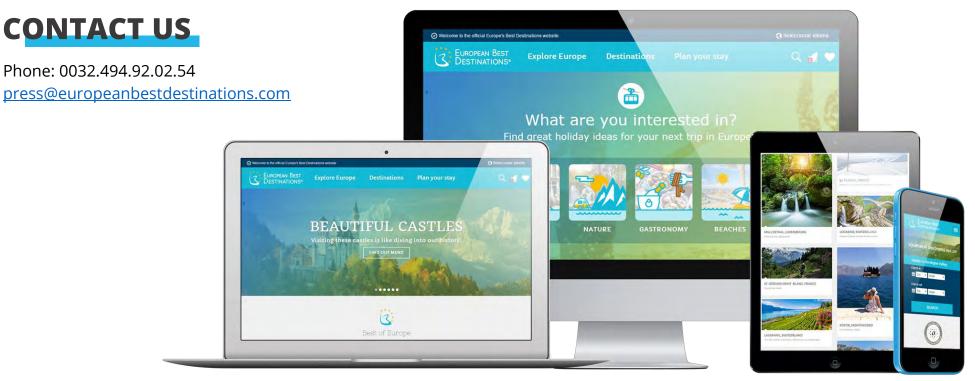




## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Our warmest congratulations to the winner and all the participating destinations that will be promoted throughout the year to millions of travellers on all our networks.

We thank you for your hard work throughout the year to make your destination one of the Best Destinations For now, stay safe and travel online.



www.europeanbestdestinations.com