

Lonely Planet tip Northern Ireland as a must-see

Northern Ireland has been tipped by Lonely Planet as one of the must-see countries to visit in 2007, in a new book published this month. *Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007* is packed full of ideas about new places to visit and interesting and unique experiences you can have when you're there.

Northern Ireland is featured in the 'Go List' section - a chapter dedicated to detailing the hot destinations for the coming year. The country is described as, "abuzz with life: the cities are pulsating, the economy is thriving and the people, the lifeblood that courses through the country, are in good spirits."

Belfast is also mentioned in another part of the book as one of the top ten 'Cities on the Rise'.

Lonely Planet Co-Founder Maureen Wheeler isn't surprised that Northern Ireland fares so well in the book. Maureen grew up in Belfast and is full of praise for her homeland; 'I love the city, its grittiness, its resilience and its beauty and I love how Belfast people turn every social interaction into an excuse for a party. The landscape of Northern Ireland is astonishingly beautiful, the people are warm and genuine, and yet it is still relatively undiscovered, which makes it the perfect destination.'

Alan Clarke, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board said, "Northern Ireland has firmly established itself as a must see destination and its unique selling points are captivating visitors from home and overseas. The endorsement by the highly acclaimed Lonely Planet travel guide is a further boost to the tourism industry in Northern Ireland and we can look forward with optimism to another successful year in 2007."

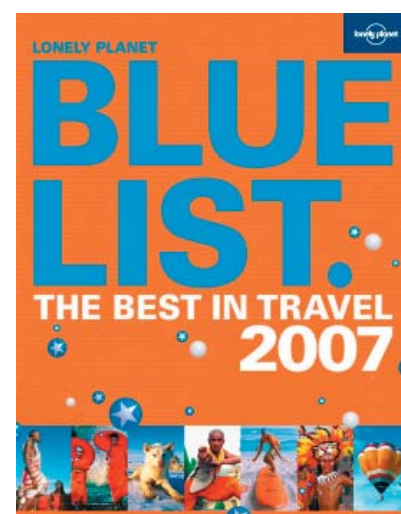
Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007 is the second edition of the annual title. It is split into five segments, with stunning images and an easy-to-read magazine style throughout. The book is designed to kick start your imagination and get you thinking differently about travel.

Tom Hall, Lonely Planet's Travel Information Manager, says: "*Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007* is all about seeing travel in a new light and exploring what makes the destinations you visit so special. It's for people who are passionate about travelling and seeing the world, and who want to have unique experiences.'

This year's Lonely Planet Bluelist incorporates the knowledge of our authors, staff and independent travellers. The book includes bluelists from our online travel community, submitted at www.lonelyplanet.com/bluelist which has become such a popular part of the site that its now a permanent feature. So far 4000 travellers have posted their Bluelists and rated and commented on other travellers' lists. The people who submitted the best bluelists last year won the chance to go on the road with a Lonely Planet author to Shanghai, and their winning lists are featured in this year's book.

Due to the popularity of last year's competition we will be offering this fantastic prize again this year, and sending one lucky aspiring travel writer on the road with an author to get an inside view on how one of the world's most desirable jobs is carried out. Their list will also be integrated into the next edition of Lonely Planet Bluelist.

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Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007

Various authors

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What does 'Bluelist' mean?

You know when someone says they're having trouble finding a good pizza place or a decent travel agent and you say 'oh you should see my guy, he's the best'? Well, you've just Bluelisted him. We created this term because there is no word to describe what we set out to do, which is to 'create an evolving selection of classic and current travel experiences and destinations selected by Lonely Planet staff, authors and travellers'. To Bluelist something is the travel equivalent of 'you should see my guy, he's the best'. It's the act of recommending a travel experience. Any travel experience.

Bluelist (blu list) v. to recommend a travel experience

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What's in Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007?

This year's edition moves from two parts to five parts and sees the integration of traveller voices alongside Lonely Planet authors.

Part A - Top 11

Part A profiles Lonely Planet readers' favourite 11 countries. This list is the result of the votes of 33,000 people from 170 countries, making this arguably the world's most authoritative independent travel survey. You may be familiar with some countries but we'll show you how to get off-the-beaten-track and discover a different side of the places you think you know.



Part 1 - Things to do

Part 1 consists of fun and inspiring lists revealing the world's best destinations and things to do in the year ahead, profiled under 40 categories covering the full breadth of travel experiences. In each category the top ten are profiled with travellers' lists from www.lonelyplanet.com/bluelist featured alongside. The lists range from the classic, such as *Best Value Destinations* and *Cities on the Rise* which appear in each annual edition, to the more quirky such as *Paranormal Travel*, *Eurovision Repeat offenders*, *Eccentric places to stay* and *the best oddball markets*.



Part 2 - Dark Tourism

This new section looks at a travel theme for the coming year based on a developing or interesting travel trend. *Bluelist 2007* will explore *Dark Tourism*. The chapter will take an in-depth look at travel to sites known for death and suffering and disaster tourism (visiting disaster scenes as a spectator). The chapter will show a more positive side to dark tourism with information on how such travel can be of benefit (eg visiting sites like The Killing Fields or Auschwitz can give personal insight and understanding of history or how volunteering can be incorporated into disaster tourism).



Part 3 -Go List

This is the definitive list of the 30 destinations Lonely Planet recommends for 2007. These countries, cities, or regions are chosen based on our expertise and regional knowledge and will be profiled on a double-page spread. The destinations are off-the-beaten-track places that are begging to be explored that most people wouldn't think about visiting. The top 30 includes Beirut, Xinjiang in China and Gabon.



Part 4 - Snapshots

Part 4 is made up of mini-reports about every country in the world, describing the state of tourism as it is now and what we forecast for travel in 2007. This will include regions which are gaining popularity, new discoveries, political issues that may effect tourists, hot spots, activities that are becoming associated with a region, and major sporting or cultural events (particularly those that aren't regular, eg Olympics, Scissors Paper Rock World Championships).

NOTE TO EDITORS

- Advance copies of *Lonely Planet Bluelist* are available.
- Lonely Planet's Travel Information Manager and *Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007* contributor Tom Hall is available for interview and to write tailored feature articles on *Lonely Planet Bluelist 2007* destinations.
- Extracts, free images and giveaways of *Lonely Planet Bluelist* are available upon request
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