

# How Do You Decide Where To Travel Next?

By Debra Asberry

With so many fantastic places to see and experience around the world, it can be hard to decide where to take your next trip even factoring in time and money constraints. Have you ever stopped and thought about what really influences your travel decisions? All of us are constantly “marketed to” by the media. Whether it’s the travel section of your local newspaper, a television show about travel, or a TV personality talking about their latest vacation, we receive input from a variety of sources. Even our friends and family are influencing us when they talk about places they’ve been to.

If you were to remove all of those outside influences, what decision process would you go through to decide where you want to travel? Here are a few of the things I think about when I’m trying to decide where my next trip will be:

## What are my main interests at this point in my life?

For me, it’s the outdoors. For you it might be historical sights, or maybe it’s an interest in culinary pursuits. Maybe you want to see more of nature’s beauty but don’t want to have to hike or do any physical exertion.

## Get Specific About What You Want to Experience.

My general interest is the outdoors but particularly anything having to do with water. I’m a rafter, a kayaker, a swimmer and a diver. I need to decide what I want to experience since these water activities are not generally accomplished in the same trip. Since I just did a rafting trip in the summer of 2007, my attention has now turned to a kayaking trip in 2008.

So, what about you? Do you want to give your culinary interests a kick by trying Mexican cuisine on location? If historical sights are your thing, what history would you like to learn more about? What you want to experience is key to a good travel experience—travel should always be about more than just checking off a list of famous sights.

## Where Do You Want to Have This Experience?

Of course, this is where the travel part of the equation comes in. How do you pick that next destination? Well, I recommend you start by knowing what your options are and doing a bit of research.

There are a number of books that have become popular in the last several years with titles like: *1000 Places to See Before You Die* and *1001 Natural Wonders* and many more. What I love about these books is they provide the opportunity to discover and learn about places I’ve never even heard of before! And, to learn more about places I have heard about.

Most of these books are what I call “eye candy.” They are filled with breathtaking photographs that make you want to book a flight that instant! Along with the pictures is descriptive text about the place, and what makes it special. What you will discover looking at these books is that the world, both natural and man-made, is a wondrous place! You will also find there are lots and lots of places where you can travel to and have the exact experience that you are looking for.

## Feed Your Travel Imagination.

Here are a few of my favorite books to expand your knowledge of the world, and of your own area. In addition to those I’ve listed (above right), there are dozens of titles that will give you a comprehensive look at the world-wide (and local) places that correspond to your particular interests. ❖

### SOME TRAVEL BOOKS TO FEED YOUR IMAGINATION

**The Traveler’s Atlas:  
A Global Guide to the Places You  
Must See in Your Lifetime**  
*by John Man and Chris Schuler*

**1001 Natural Wonders You Must  
See Before You Die**  
*by Michael Bright*

**1000 Places to See Before You  
Die**  
*by Patricia Schultz*

**1000 Places to See in the USA  
and Canada Before You Die**  
*by Patricia Schultz*