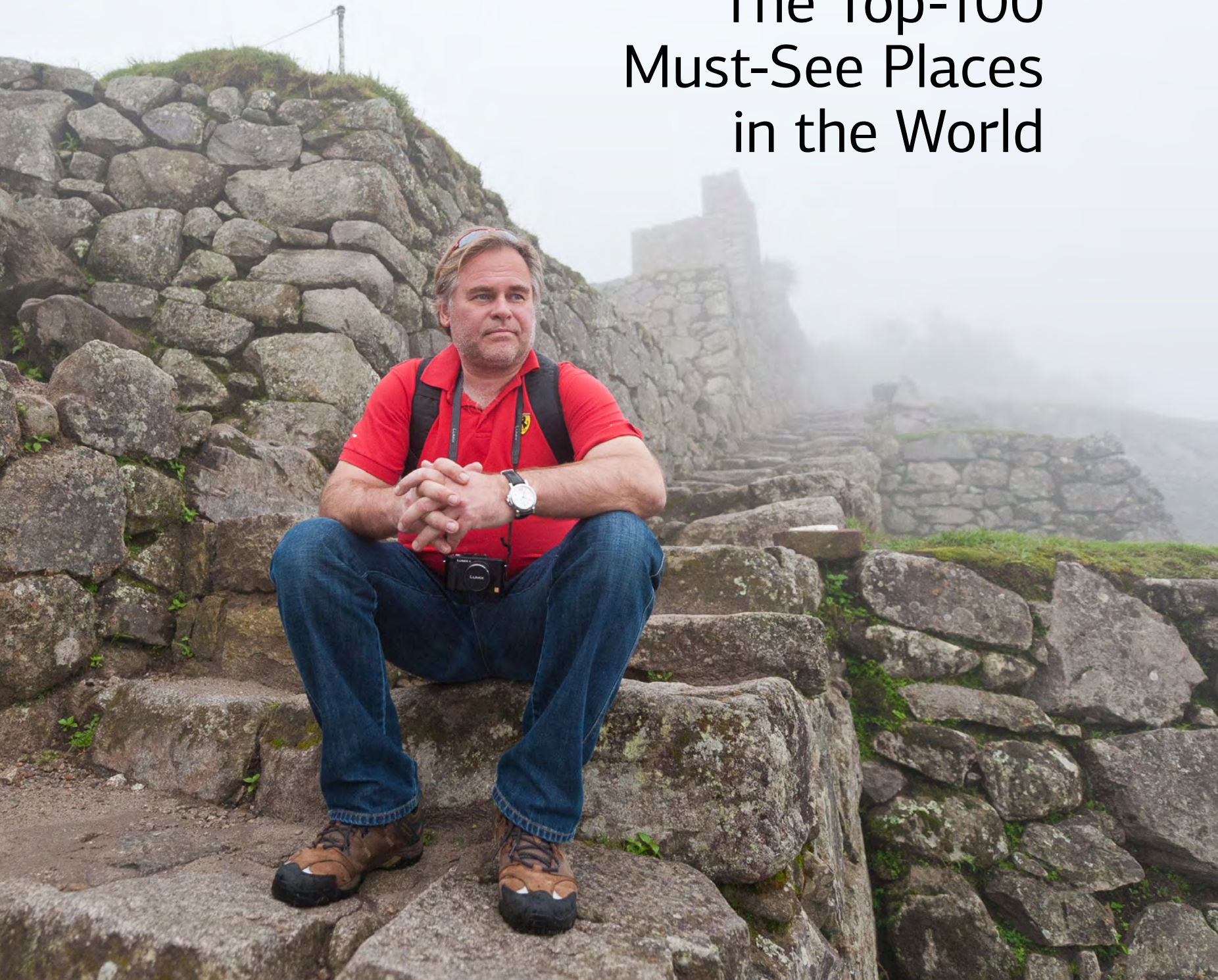


Eugene Kaspersky

The Top-100 Must-See Places in the World



Introduction

Hi all!

In recent years I've been totting up around a hundred flights per year. That's around four or five hundred hours in the sky. Then there are normally around 3000 kilometers behind the wheel of rented cars per year, numerous train rides, and quite a few trips on ships and ferries.

One day, reflecting on my excessive globetrotting, I was wondering how I could put all my traveling and seeing the world to further good use. And that's when I had a bit of a eureka moment... Maybe I should come up with a 'Top-100 Must-See Places in the World' – according to *moi*. Cities, historical sites, archeology, natural wonders... A personal list of what I consider the most unique places on the planet (and beyond) made up of both those I've already seen, and those which I've heard about and hope to one day see for myself.

So, here I give you my list, with a few brief comments on each place.

The list does have some order to it: First come the cities/towns, then everything else per region – the Americas, Europe, and so on. I've saved the tastiest morsels for the very end, under the incongruously plain 'other' category.

I've Wikified all the places' names and plenty of other things. And if I have more to share besides a brief description or comment, I'll insert the respective links:

- 'Blog': Links to – you guessed it – pages on my personal [blog](#) about a given place;
- 'Flickr': For the places I've been to, links to [my personal Flickr account](#) – if I had time to fit some snapping in.

Important!

This list was prepared by me personally and contains many of my personal opinions. It also may contain the odd error or two.

And so, the *Top-100 Must-See Places in the World* – my version.

E. Kaspersky

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr	
1	<u>Manhattan,</u> New York, USA	A bewildering place. There's such energy here – perhaps a leftover from the oodles of energy that were required to build up such a unique city! I really recommend a helicopter excursion over the borough. You won't regret it.	BLOG	FLICKR
2	<u>Dubai,</u> UAE	Dubai-hattan ☺. Getting to the top of <u>Burj Khalifa</u> is a must. I also suggest visiting the aquarium in the <u>Atlantis</u> hotel; the aqua-park there is really something too.	BLOG	FLICKR
3	<u>Tokyo,</u> Japan	It's another world – in all dimensions. Especially when the cherry trees are in blossom.	BLOG	FLICKR
4	<u>Hong Kong</u>	One more 'other world'. Wonderfully vibrant.		
5	<u>Singapore</u>	Yep, Southeast Asian cities feature prominently up at the top end of this list. Here, to me, the seafood restaurants and <u>The Long Beach</u> are the best of their kind in the world.	BLOG	FLICKR
6	<u>Rio de Janeiro,</u> Brazil	Surrounded by stupendously magical nature – mountains, beaches, ocean... But don't get deep into the city itself – you may get robbed.		
7	<u>Paris,</u> France	My three fave spots: <u>The Eiffel Tower</u> (surprise, surprise!), <u>Notre Dame</u> , and the <u>Pompidou Center</u> . Check the film <u>Before Sunset</u> to get a feel for the romance of the city before experiencing it ☺.	BLOG	FLICKR
8	<u>Barcelona,</u> Spain	<u>Gaudi</u> , <u>La Rambla</u> , a very sensible and convenient city layout, and that unmistakable care-free Catalanian atmosphere in the air. Nearby there's <u>Montserrat</u> , the <u>Dali museum</u> in Figueres, and holiday haven <u>Costa Brava</u> (renting a car or motorbike and whizzing along the coast road is highly recommended).	BLOG	FLICKR
9	<u>Rome,</u> Italy	The eternal city... Must-haves: good weather, sensible shoes, Band-Aids, city guide/map, and you're off!	BLOG	FLICKR
10	<u>Sydney,</u> Australia	Beautiful bay, the <u>Opera House</u> , the yachts, <u>Bondi Beach</u> , <u>flying foxes</u> ... Overall a most charming and pleasant city to visit (but I think for living – not just visiting – Melbourne has the edge). Also: the <u>Blue Mountains National Park</u> and multicolored musical tours in huge <u>caves</u> (of which there are several, so a good two or three days are needed).	BLOG	FLICKR

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
11	<u>Las Vegas, Nevada, USA</u> It's not just the casinos and gaudiness and modern-day neon here in Sin City. This place is a fascinating non-stop show, seething with the life and outlandish oddness. <u>Around and about</u> there's a lot of natural beauty to be seen too.		
12	<u>Jerusalem, Israel</u> The <u>Old City</u> – oh yes. Was there just <u>recently</u> , and will never tire of returning.	BLOG	FLICKR
13	<u>London, UK</u> “When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.” How right <u>Dr. Johnson</u> was.	BLOG	FLICKR
14	<u>San Francisco, California, USA</u> A handsome hilly city. Beauteous bridges, twee trams, <u>Dirty Harry</u> , Alcatraz, a red <u>bridge</u> of merit... Don't miss it!	BLOG	FLICKR
15	<u>St. Petersburg, Russia</u> <u>White Nights</u> , bridges, <u>Dostoyevsky</u> , <u>sympathy</u> .		
16	<u>Venice, Italy</u> Haven't experienced <u>Murano</u> , but <i>oh</i> how I want to.		
17	<u>Kyoto, Japan</u> The former capital of Japan, full of ancient temples and gardens. Don't miss the Samurai Village where you can get dressed up in full warrior/geisha garb – surprisingly unforgettable fun!		
18	<u>Grand Canyon, Arizona, USA</u> These, er, grand canyons hardly need any introduction... If ever you're in nearby Vegas, a good idea is to get here by helicopter. After landing make sure to take in the <u>Skywalk</u> . Vertigo-inducing!	BLOG	FLICKR
19	<u>Sequoia National Park, Sierra Nevada, California, USA</u> A gigantic forest. There's also the nearby <u>Yosemite National Park</u> , which I visited just recently. It was back in 1997 when I was in Sequoia last, but just how it blew the mind I remember as clear as crystal, especially looking at the tiny baby trees only just beginning their long lives next to their parents towering above...	BLOG	FLICKR
20	<u>Alaska, USA</u> Formerly Russian, this place is reminiscent of my all-time fave place Kamchatka – just across the Bering Sea (see place No. 52, below), which is still Russian, as Sarah Palin confirmed ☺.	BLOG	FLICKR

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
21	<u>Niagara River</u> , USA and Canada	I only got to see this water-wonder from a plane, but really it needs to be viewed from the ground too, and from both sides (Canadian and US).	
22	<u>Yellowstone National Park</u> , Wyoming, USA	Geysers and other volcanism. Perfect!	
23	<u>Arizona</u> , USA	There's more to Arizona than the Grand Canyon. <u>Monument Valley</u> , <u>Antelope Canyon</u> and <u>Paria Canyon</u> , <u>The Wave</u> – red columns, cliffs and caves. There's also <u>Sedona</u> and <u>Red Rock Country</u> .	BLOG BLOG BLOG FLICKR
24	<u>Bonneville Salt Flats</u> , Utah, USA	A gigantic salt pan near the aptly titled Salt Lake City. Downhill skiing nearby too.	
25	<u>Chichen Itza</u> , Yucatán, Mexico	Mayan pyramids. It's best to get here as early in the day as possible – before the hordes of (other!) tourists turn up!	BLOG FLICKR
26	<u>Teotihuacan</u> , Mexico	Pyramids in an ancient Aztec city. Must-see of this must-see: a sunset (or sunrise) at the <u>Pyramid of the Sun</u> .	FLICKR
27	<u>Cenote near Cancún</u>	Especially Rio Secreto. Underground rivers and lakes. Preeminently picturesque doesn't quite describe this place.	FLICKR
28	<u>Cuba</u>	Still quaintly (to non-Cubans, perhaps) Communist, with the Castros still running the place. Classic motor show on the streets of Havana, Cuba Libre, sweet mojitos, and the white beaches of Veradero. Factor 50 needed - minimum!	
29	<u>Machu Picchu</u> , Peru	The forgotten city of the Incas. I was there not long ago. Check out my travelogue & picture book – here!	BLOG FLICKR
30	<u>Iguaçu Falls</u> , Brazil/ Argentina	You need to see these wonderful waterfalls twice really – in low water season and high water season, as they're so different from each other. They say you need to observe them from both sides too – from Brazil (as I did) and from Argentina (still to do). You can actually go under the waterfalls in a motorboat, and it's the best shower in the world! Surrounding environs also have plenty of interesting sights worth checking out...	

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
31	Panama Canal Haven't been. The Tailor of Panama – a pre-visit primer.		
32	Angel Falls, Venezuela Still on my 'to-do' list.		
33	Ecuadorian volcanoes Haven't been.		
34	Galápagos Islands, Ecuador Haven't been.		
35	Easter Island, Chile The Moai . Mesmerizing monuments. Haven't been.		
36	Patagonia, Argentina & Chile Haven't been.		
37	Sicily, Italy Archeology island. Calatafimi-Segesta , Agrigento , Syracuse , Villa Romana del Casale – all musts.	BLOG	FLICKR
38	Neapolitan islands, Italy Paestum and Pompeii , Capri (yachting thereto and around advised), Vesuvius , a remarkable coast. Naples itself?... no need to bother.		
39	Crete, Greece Such a magical island – nature, archeological history, the Greek spirit. Take a car and crisscross the whole island. Every bit of it really is worth seeing.		
40	Santorini, Greece Mediterranean volcanic mind-mash. I've been four times now, the last time just recently. Many friends have been here based on my recommendation. None regrets taking my advice ☺.	BLOG	FLICKR
41	Iceland Volcanism and related superlative scenery. Iceland's inclusion in this – <i>my!</i> – list was a dead cert!		
42	Greenland If possible, climb up the glaciers.		
43	Normandy beaches, France They say they're somberly striking in a macabre way.		
44	Scottish Highlands and Islands A distillery tour's a great idea if you like your single malts. Of the islands, Skye is the most other-worldly outstanding – and (formerly) volcanic; however, it has just one distillery , albeit a very special one ☺.		

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
45	<u>Norwegian fjords</u> Haven't been; folks who have tend to rave about them.		
46	<u>Sardinia, Italy</u> Haven't been. Ditto.		
47	<u>Red Square, the Kremlin, St. Basil's, Moscow, Russia</u> The three most famous Russian landmarks all happen to be in one place. There's <u>GUM</u> here too, plus the <u>Tomb of the Unknown Soldier</u> . Many of our guests from overseas say it's the most beautiful spot in Europe. Can't say I can argue.		
48	<u>Solovetsky Islands, White Sea, Russia</u> Kuzov (been), Solovki (haven't been), and the rest... An archipelago oft-licked by glaciers. Bleakly serene.		
49	<u>Altai, Siberia, Russia</u> The Russian <u>Shambala</u> . Everything here is somehow brighter and more alive than in other places. The water is tastier, the mountains – more contrasting, the sky – bluer, the grass – greener.		
50	<u>Lena Pillars, Yakutia, Russia</u> Just been. Perplexing pillars in the permafrost province of extreme temperature extremes.	BLOG	FLICKR
51	<u>Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia</u> Haven't been here either, though I must have flown over it hundreds of times! The world's largest lake, easily visible from outer space.		
52	<u>Kamchatka and the Kuril Isles, Russia</u> I haven't been to the Kurils yet, but I have been to the <u>Kamchatka Peninsula</u> plenty of times. Kamchatka to me is the most unusual, beautiful and mind-blowing place on the planet. The Kluchevskaya group of volcanoes; the Northern <i>Prorif</i> (Fissure); the Valley of the Geysers; and the Mutnovka, Ksudach and Gorely volcanoes – that's straight away <i>five (!)</i> candidates for a +1 to the wonders of the world! On the plains and in the forests – friendly (sated!) bears, in the rivers loads of fish, in the ocean – killer whales and submarines. Only two minuses: the weather and the price of getting there – ridiculous rubles.	BLOG	FLICKR
53	<u>Dead Sea</u> No other place like this one. The water's so salty you float on it, and if you lick just a drop off your fingers you need at least a bottle or two of cold beer to rehydrate [sic!].		

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
54	<p><u>Pamukkale</u>, Turkey</p> <p>A cascade of wondrous waterfalls plus limestone pools and piping hot springs. Alas, it's been badly spoiled by both the local population and the crowds of tourists that visit here, so maybe I shouldn't be mentioning it... Still, this list would be incomplete without it, as it's just so impressive.</p>		
55	<p><u>Cappadocia</u>, Turkey</p> <p>Volcanic stone columns in Anatolia.</p>		
56	<p><u>Petra</u>, Jordan</p> <p>I've heard so much about this place, and of course seen it in <u>Death on the Nile</u>. Have to get there soon...</p>		
57	<p><u>Baalbek</u> and <u>Byblos</u>, Lebanon</p> <p>The stone blocks of the foundations of Baalbeck – can't wait to take in their size myself. Byblos – more awesome ancient antiquity.</p>		
58	<p><u>Egyptian</u> <u>Pyramids and</u> <u>the Valley of</u> <u>the Kings</u></p> <p>Technical Egypt. Enigmatic Egypt. Extraordinary Egypt.</p>		
59	<p><u>Isfahan</u>, Iran</p> <p>Iran's third-largest city; brimming with ancient palaces, mosques, covered bridges, boulevards and city squares.</p>		
60	<p><u>Taj Mahal</u>, India</p> <p>A magical place, especially how it contrasts with the somewhat bleak surroundings. Take an individual tour with a guide in a minivan to avoid getting overly-jolted about on a tourist bus.</p>		
61	<p><u>Nepal and the</u> <u>Himalayas</u></p> <p>Haven't been.</p>		
62	<p><u>Bagan and</u> <u>Mandalay</u>, Myanmar</p> <p>Thousands of temples and pagodas in a palace complex covering a vast Burmese territory. Only in my dreams so far...</p>		
63	<p><u>Mount Fuji</u>, Japan</p> <p>A cult location. I was at the top in early May – low season. I recommend this time of year as in high season the line of those wanting to get to the top gets exceedingly long. The surrounding area offers plenty of other interesting things to see too, like <u>Hakone</u>, lava caves, and very strange forests...</p>		

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
64 <u>Great Wall of China</u>	They say that at one time, long, long ago, folks could walk for several days along the wall. Alas, these days only a relatively short section is open to the public; all the same it's still totally worth checking out for its uniqueness.		
65 <u>Beijing, China</u>	The <u>Forbidden City</u> and <u>Tiananmen Square</u> . Mandatory must-sees. Sadly there's not a great deal more to see in Beijing besides.		
66 <u>Terracotta Army, China</u>	Haven't been.		
67 <u>Wulingyuan, China</u>	Impressive stone columns. <u>Avatar's</u> Pandora!		
68 <u>Danxia landform, China</u>	Red sandstone formations in the southeast and southwest of China.		
69 <u>Huanglong, China</u>	Brightly colored chalky pools in Sichuan giving Turkey's <u>Pamukkale</u> (see place No. 54, above) a run for its money. It's best to see this place in October; at other times the weather's never quite right.		
70 <u>Li River and Guilin, China</u>	<u>Karst</u> mountains and caves. Haven't been.		
71 <u>Stone Forest, China</u>	Haven't been.		
72 <u>Lhasa, Tibet</u>	Haven't been.		
73 <u>Mount Kailash, Tibet</u>	Everest's little brother.		
74 <u>Ha Long Bay</u>	Avatar on water.		
75 Caves I don't know the names of, Vietnam	Will someone at least please tell me what they're called? ☺		

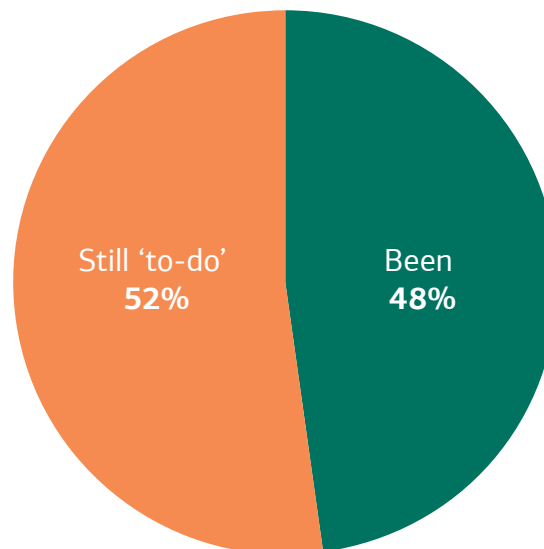
Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
76	<u>Ayutthaya, Thailand</u> Ancient ruins, Buddhist temples.		
77	<u>Angkor Wat, Cambodia</u> More ancient temple ruins. The largest religious monument in the world.		
78	<u>Borobudur, Indonesia</u> Another temple – also Buddhist.		
79	<u>Papua New Guinea</u> Haven't been.		
80	<u>Sahara, Northern Africa</u> Salty lakes, oases and a fair amount of sand. The world's largest desert, it blows the brain – especially at dusk (I slept through the dawn). Experienced it in Tunisia.		
81	<u>Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe & Zambia</u> Like the <u>Iguazu Falls</u> , these need to be viewed both from up top (I did this) and down below (didn't manage it). I recommend a helicopter excursion for optimal viewing, and to fly also along the <u>Zambezi</u> river (reminiscent of Luke Skywalker's flight along the Death Star in Star Wars).		
82	<u>Cape Town, South Africa</u> Particular must-sees of this must-see: <u>Table Mountain</u> and the <u>Cape of Good Hope</u> .		
83	<u>Djenné and Timbuktu, Mali</u> Haven't been. Must go. Just so I'll be able to say, at last, that I've literally been 'from here to Timbuktu' ☺.		
84	<u>Kilimanjaro, Tanzania</u> Get to the top, if you can.		
85	<u>Kenya</u> Savannah and safari (<u>Maasai Mara</u> , <u>Serengeti</u> , etc.).		
86	<u>Namib Desert, Angola</u> I'm told this coastal desert is unbelievably beautiful.		
87	<u>Madagascar</u> They say the countryside here is very unusual. I really want see it <u>in the flesh</u> – especially the <u>baobab</u> – but they say it's very dangerous there now.		

Nº	Commentary	Blog	Flickr
88	<u>Ayers Rock</u> , Northern Territory, Australia The large red sandstone rock in central Oz. In actual fact there are three hills there in a line that need checking, the other two being <u>Kata Tjuta</u> (20km away), and <u>Mount Connor</u> (80km away); each one unique in its own special way.		
89	<u>Surfers Paradise</u> , Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia The name says it all. Ocean, beaches, national park, all sorts of attractions... Paradise!). A fascinating place in so many ways. I've been more than once, and I'll be back!	BLOG BLOG	FLICKR
90	<u>Great Barrier Reef</u> I got close – to <u>Hamilton Island</u> .		
91	<u>Fraser Island</u> , Queensland, Australia Haven't been.		
92	<u>Great Ocean Road</u> , Victoria, Australia This road is a pleasure to drive along. The highlights are the <u>12 Apostles</u> – limestone doing its stuff again. Magnificent stone monuments.	BLOG	FLICKR
93	<u>Tasmania</u> Not to be confused with Tanzania (see place No. 84, above)! Haven't been. How the Tasmanian devil I want to...		
94	<u>New Zealand</u> Was there the first 17 days of 2013. Volcanism, lakes, glaciers, fiords, waterfalls, hobbits... Sensational!	BLOG	FLICKR
95	<u>Hawaii</u> Been. Liked. What's not to like? ☺	BLOG	FLICKR
96	<u>Tahiti</u> Want to go here just because it's in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.		
97	<u>North Pole</u> Haven't been. Fancy a New Year's Eve/Day there, for symmetry's sake.		
98	<u>South Pole</u> <u>Saw in 2010</u> at this busy thoroughfare ☺.		
99	<u>Antarctic coast</u> Glaciers and Penguins.		FLICKR
100	<u>Outer space</u> Got my ticket already booked! Can't wait ☺.	BLOG	FLICKR

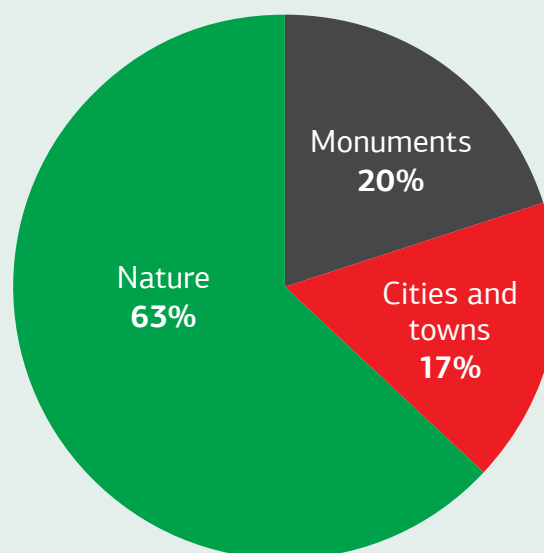
To conclude, a few stats about my Top-100:

1. Top-100: Past and future

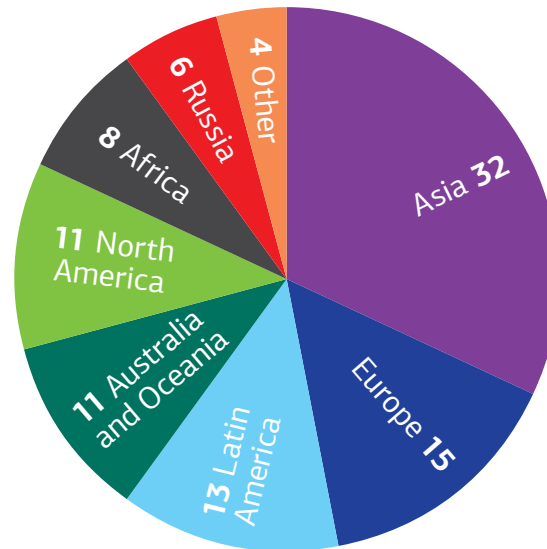
Dreams fulfilled and dreams still to come true
Beens and dreams: where I've been and where I want to go



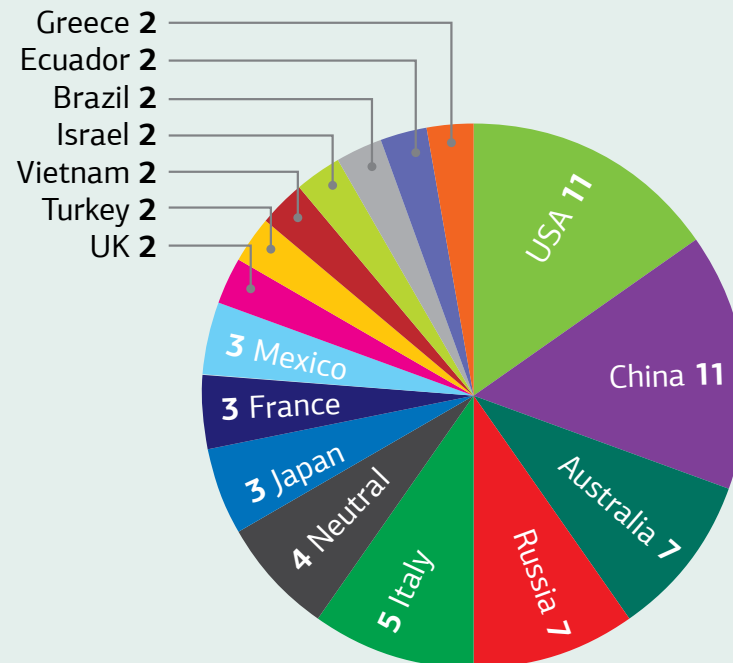
2. Top-100 places per type



3. Top-100 places per region



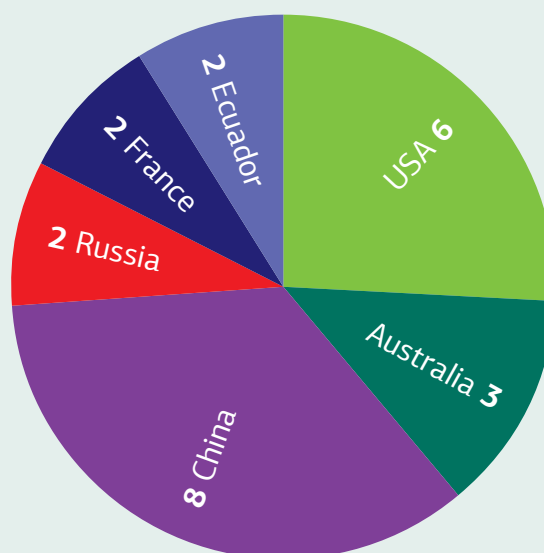
4. Top-100: The most popular countries



5. Top-100: Most visited countries



6. Top-100: most desired destination-countries



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