

# The 8 best destinations to visit in February

(Courtesy of Jordi Lippe-McGraw, The Points Guy)



*Editor's note: This is a recurring post, regularly updated with new information and offers.*

As February rolls around, thoughts turn to love and romance, and what better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than by whisking your loved one away to a romantic getaway? February is about more than just hearts and flowers, though. It's also a time when many people can take a break from work and school thanks to the Presidents Day holiday. So, family travel is also an option this month.

**Where should you go? Here are TPG's eight best places to visit in February.**

Note: As the COVID-19 pandemic and other illnesses such as respiratory syncytial virus (known as RSV) and the flu continue to be a concern, it is crucial to stay informed and follow the latest recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This may include getting the new vaccine booster for added protection.

## Phoenix



Phoenix. MATT MAWSON/GETTY IMAGES

For several reasons, February is a fantastic time to visit Phoenix. First, the city is hosting Super Bowl LVII on Feb. 12, and football fans will want to take advantage of the chance to see their favorite team compete in this iconic event. State Farm Stadium, where the Super Bowl will be held, is a modern facility with a retractable roof, ensuring that the game will go on no matter the weather. In addition to the Super Bowl, Phoenix is hosting the WM Phoenix Open golf tournament from Feb. 6 to 12. Golf enthusiasts will appreciate watching top players compete at this prestigious event. Finally, the weather in Phoenix in February is also ideal, with average high temperatures in the mid-70s and low humidity. So, you'll be comfortable while exploring the city and all it has to offer.

TPG tip: For NFL lovers, The Wigwam — available from around 35,000 Chase Ultimate Rewards points and \$476 per night — is 15 minutes from State Farm Stadium.

## Maui, Hawaii



Two people standing on a black-sand beach at Waianapanapa State Park in Hana, Maui. LASZLO PODOR/GETTY IMAGES

As the whales return to the majestic waters surrounding Maui, February is the perfect time to visit. The Pacific Whale Foundation — dedicated to research, education and conservation of the ocean — invites visitors to join in celebrating the arrival of these gentle giants at the annual Maui Whale Festival. Through various activities, including the Race for Whales and educational sessions, guests can participate in the foundation's efforts to protect whales and dolphins. For couples seeking a romantic Valentine's Day outing, PacWhale Eco-Adventures offers sunset cocktail cruises and dinner cruises through the picturesque harbors of Lahaina and Maalaea. Then, as the sun dips below the horizon, you can sip on signature cocktails or savor a four-course meal with the one you love.

TPG tip: Book a room at the nearby Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa (available for around 25,000 World of Hyatt points or \$783 per night) to easily access all the whale events. You can keep your animal adventure going with Maui's feathered friends once you join a wildlife tour and meet the property's parrots, flamingos and penguins.

## Dominican Republic



A resort in the Dominican Republic. DANNY LEHMAN/GETTY IMAGES

February is a beautiful time to visit the Dominican Republic. Nowhere is this more apparent than on the north coast, where the region's natural beauty is on full display. Surrounded by the lush Cordillera Septentrional and the vast expanse of the Atlantic, this lesser-known side of the island offers a unique and serene escape from the crowds. During this month, the annual migration of humpback whales reaches its peak, providing visitors with the opportunity to witness these amazing creatures in all their glory. The Samana Peninsula, located just beyond the north coast, is known as one of the best places in the world to watch whales. Those lucky enough to visit will be treated to a spectacular display of full-grown humpbacks, newborn calves and male whales seeking mates.

TPG tip: If you want to enjoy a remote escape the entire time, stay at Amanera (from \$2,550 per night), which is perched on stunning cliffs overlooking Playa Grande — right where jungle and ocean meet. To be a bit closer to the action, consider Eden Roc Cap Cana (available for around 60,000 Chase Ultimate Rewards points or \$1,150 per night), located minutes from Punta Cana.

## Excelsior Springs, Missouri



### CHRIS SANCHEZ/THE ELMS HOTEL AND SPA

Although this destination might not be on your travel list, it should be for February. Why? First, the city is hosting the 17th annual Chocolate Tour on Feb. 4, a perfect event for chocolate lovers. Additionally, the Mardi Gras Murder Mystery event takes place from Feb. 19 to 20, offering a fun and interactive experience for those interested in mystery and theater. Finally, for those seeking to unwind with a glass of wine, the Van Till Family Farm Winery will be open every Friday and Saturday of the month, offering wood-fired pizzas and a selection of fine vintages.

TPG tip: The Elms Hotel & Spa — available from 12,000 World of Hyatt points or \$138 per night — was recently renovated and offers the perfect Midwest escape with two on-site restaurants and a state-of-the-art spa.

## Kenya



A group of Masai warriors in central Kenya, with Mount Kilimanjaro in the background.

HADYNYAH/GETTY IMAGES

February is an optimal time to visit Kenya due to the comfortable temperatures and dry season. The weather during this month is generally pleasant, with daytime highs reaching the mid-70s and evening lows dropping to the mid-50s. This allows travelers to enjoy their time in Kenya without worrying about excessively hot or humid conditions. Additionally, February is an ideal time for nature enthusiasts to observe Kenya's abundant and diverse wildlife, as it is the peak season for bird watching and game viewing. Plus, you can participate in Kenya's cultural experiences by learning about the Masai people, visiting ancient ruins or trying local foods.

TPG tip: Book your adventure at Fairmont Mara Safari Club for around \$471 per night and get 10% off the rate if you're part of the Accor Live Limitless loyalty program.

## Los Cabos, Mexico



Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. GRANDRIVER/GETTY IMAGES

As the winter winds howl across some parts of the U.S., Los Cabos beckons in Mexico. The destination invites travelers to escape the cold and immerse themselves in the wonders of the natural world. February, in particular, is a great time to make the trip due to the spectacular sight of whales swimming from the cold north to the warm waters along the Baja California peninsula. This phenomenon occurs from December to March. It offers visitors the opportunity to witness these majestic creatures as they swim to the warm waters to have babies and then return with their newborns in tow. However, Los Cabos is more than just a place to see whales — it is also a place of sun-drenched beaches, vibrant nightlife and delectable cuisine.

TPG tip: At Las Ventanas al Paraiso (from \$1,345 per night), guests receive alerts that one of nature's wonders — the annual migration of whales — is passing right by the resort. The resort staff scans the water continuously in search of a huge body or tail breaking the horizon, and when staff members spot the whales, they blow a wind instrument to notify guests.

## New Orleans



The Andrew Jackson statue and St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square, New Orleans. CAVAN IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

February marks the arrival of Mardi Gras, a time of lavish celebration in the city of New Orleans. A French term meaning "Fat Tuesday," Mardi Gras is a carnival season culminating on the eve of Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The world-renowned festivities include elaborate parades, vibrant music, delectable food and parties. Visitors flock from near and far to participate in the revelry. However, February in New Orleans offers more than just Mardi Gras. The weather is pleasantly mild, with temperatures ranging from the mid-50s to the low 70s, inviting one to explore the city's rich history and savor its culinary delights. The atmosphere is electric with excitement as the city comes alive with many events and activities. Overall, it is the ideal time to visit and experience the magic of New Orleans.

TPG tip: Stay at the Canopy by Hilton New Orleans Downtown from 44,000 Hilton Honors points or \$143 per night. For a new option, opt for the Four Seasons Hotel New Orleans, which has rates from 30,000 Chase Ultimate Rewards points or \$380 per night.

## Jamaica



WESTEND61/GETTY IMAGES

Every February, Jamaica celebrates Reggae Month in honor of Bob Marley's birthday on Feb. 6. All month long, there are contests, concerts and exhibitions — many of which take place at the Bob Marley Museum — that honor the legendary artist's legacy and impact on the global music scene. For fans of reggae music, there's no better time to visit. Plus, it's an ideal escape from the chill of winter. Visitors can warm up in the island's sunshine while enjoying the beach, dining on jerk chicken, hiking in the Blue Mountains, taking a Jamaican bobsled ride, river rafting along the Martha Brae or swimming in a crystal blue waterfall.