

## 01 QUEENSTOWN NEW ZEALAND

If you're new to solo travel, visiting Australia's kiwi buddies across the pond can be a good start. In Queenstown there's no language barrier to contend with, and if you're an adrenaline junkie you can bungee jump and jet boat until your heart's content. Photographers will also be in heaven given the city's picturesque scenery. Head to Lake Esplanade to snap the Remarkables mountain range at sunset and walk through the peaceful Queenstown Gardens on the shore of Lake Wakatipu.

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## 02 UBUD BALI

If you're jetsetting alone to get away from it all, Bali has a plethora of spas and retreats to help you unwind and refocus. In Ubud you'll find silent meditation and yoga retreats with providers such as Blooming Lotus. Yoga, while many spas houses offer complete relaxation packages. Furthermore, culture buffs can browse the Mexa Art Museum, Agung Rai Museum of Art and Blanco Renaissance Museum, and snag a bargain at the daily art market opposite Ubud Palace.

## 03 NEW YORK USA

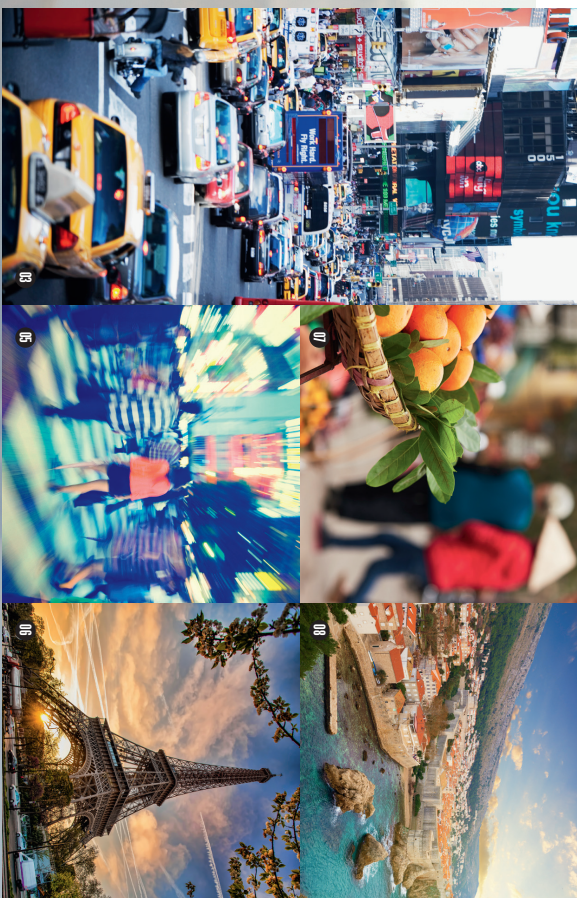
When it comes to solo travel you can't go past the Big Apple, where there's enough going on to keep you occupied for days. For instance, you can hire a bike and ride around Central Park, treat yourself to a Broadway show and blend in with the masses at Madison Square Garden for an ice hockey or basketball game. When it comes to meal times you can often dine at the bar in NYC, meaning you can strike up a conversation with the bartender and get insider tips on the best neighbourhood hotspots.

## 04 SAN FRANCISCO USA

On the other side of states, the "City by the Bay" is also a good pick for solo travellers, given its chill style and attractions. Take a boat trip from Pier 33 to the former Alcatraz prison, then head across to Fisherman's Wharf for a bread bowl filled with San Fran's famous clam chowder. You can work out with a walk or ride across the Golden Gate Bridge and relax with a concert by the San Francisco Symphony, which has performed in the city since 1911.

## 05 TOKYO JAPAN

In 2015, the Economist Intelligence Unit rated Tokyo the world's safest city - perfect if you're a bit skittish on your own. But with more than 37 million people to contend with, Tokyo's bustle can seem a little overwhelming, so focus on exploring a few neighbourhoods. For instance, in Asakusa you can visit the famous Buddhist temple Senso-ji, and in Ueno you can enjoy one of Tokyo's largest green spaces. Take a trip to Harajuku to admire



# FLYING SOLO

Solo travel is on the rise, so if you can't find a travel buddy or just need some "me" time, pack your bags and hit the road alone. **Emily McAuliffe** scopes ten cities fit for solo travellers.



Japan's most outlandish street fashion, then to really get lost in the crowd, tackle one of the world's busiest pedestrian crossings in Shibuya.

## 06 PARIS FRANCE

Paris may be the stereotypical lovers' city, but it's also incredibly solo friendly. Take solo dining for example - perhaps the most challenging aspect of travelling alone. Parisians remove the awkwardness by turning alfresco tables and chairs to the street, creating a people-watcher's paradise that's perfect for spotting French clichés like baguettes in bike baskets and poodles in handbags. There are also many galleries and museums to get lost in for hours, from the obvious suspects like the Louvre to the lesser-known fine art museum Petit Palais.

## 07 HANOI VIETNAM

Vietnam's capital provides a rich cultural experience with lively streets and overflowing markets. Wander the Phuong Hung Street market for fresh fruit and vegetables, Cho Hang Da for pottery and secondhand clothes, and the Old Quarter night market on weekends for traditional pho soup and Banh mi sandwiches - the atmosphere is worth it.

If you'd prefer to see Vietnam the active way, G Adventures offers a hike, bike and kayak tour from Ho Chi Minh City to Hanoi, including a cruise through Halong Bay and countryside trek.

## 08 DUBROVNIK CROATIA

Tourism's picking up in Eastern Europe, and given Croatia has one of the most advanced tourism economies, it's one of the easiest to navigate alone. In summer, the city pulses with activity as travellers come to enjoy the long, warm days by the sea and walk the walls of the UNESCO world heritage old town.

If you want to explore the crystal clear waters surrounding Croatia's many islands, companies like Sail Croatia offer tours from Dubrovnik to split suited to different age groups.

## 09 FLORENCE ITALY

Florence is one of those architectural stunners you can just wander for hours, which subsequently justifies consumption of a gelato (or two) from the many gelaterias scattered around the city. Climb to Piazzale Michelangelo for a magnificent view over the city, admire Renaissance art at the Uffizi Gallery, and then find a café surrounding the magnificent Duomo cathedral to watch the world go by.

## 10 GALWAY IRELAND

The Irish are a friendly bunch, so if you hang out in an Irish pub you're sure to find someone up for a chat.

The harbour city of Galway incidentally has plenty of pubs, but is also small enough to easily navigate on foot. It's the gateway to the towering Cliffs of Moher - one of Ireland's most popular natural attractions. **✚**



## 5 TIPS FOR SOLO TRAVEL

### Plan ahead

Research your destination in advance, book at least a few nights' accommodation before you leave home and try to arrive during daylight hours. Also download an offline map app (such as 'Here' maps) so you can find your way, independent of a Wi-Fi connection.

### Book a private room in a hostel

If you feel a bit long in the tooth for dorm rooms, a private room in a hostel provides both personal space and the opportunity to mingle in common areas if you want to.

### Find a Meetup

Meetup.com operates in many places around the world and is where you'll find groups of all shapes, sizes and interests to meet like-minded travellers and locals.

### Take a free walking tour

Many cities offer free daily walking tours, which are a great way to orient yourself and find other travellers.

### Be brave

Solo travellers takes courage but is incredibly rewarding if you put yourself out there. Strike up conversations with locals, join activities with fellow nomads, and most of all, have fun!