

RUNNING OUT OF TIME

With glaciers retreating and tides encroaching many great travel destinations are in danger of ten you should visit soon before climate change takes them.



1 Swiss Alps
The ski fields of Switzerland's alpine region are under close watch as shifting snow and rainfall patterns change the face of one of the world's best-known ski destinations.

A study published last year in the *Theoretical and Applied Climatology* journal states that in Switzerland, continuous snow cover can only be expected on elevations of 2,000m above sea level by the end of the twenty-first century, and at low elevations there could be as little as two snow days per year, averaging an overall snow reduction of 30%, so while the beloved snow Alps are unlikely to entirely disappear any time soon, the days of carving up the slopes at low-altitude ski resorts may be limited.



2 Bolivian Andes

The Bolivian Andes provide an example of climate change damage already done. The world's former highest ski resort, with a summit higher than Everest base camp, closed after 70 years of operation when the glacier completely melted in 2009. The resort now sits desolate with visitors drawn to the area for the views rather than the powder.

Now other tropical glaciers in Bolivia such as Tuni and Condoriri are expected to



follow suit, with researchers predicting their demise by 2025 and 2045 respectively.

3 Kiribati

Climate change has many Pacific nations on edge, and the picturesque islands of Kiribati are no exception. Straddling the equator between Australia and Hawaii, Kiribati faces increased flooding and coastal erosion as sea levels rise. Sections of farmland have already washed out to sea in previous weather events and saltwater is threatening to infiltrate fresh water stores.

The risk of climate change is so

great to its 100,000-strong population that the government has drafted a relocation strategy to assist citizens in migrating to more stable ground.

For now, however, Kiribati is an untouched paradise offering private island escapes, scuba diving, bird watching and world-class fishing.

4 Great Barrier Reef

On home soil, our World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef is taking a punch, with more than 90% of the individual reefs affected in some capacity by bleaching, according to a report released by the Climate Council earlier this year.

The report claims bleaching events will become more frequent and severe as

ocean temperatures rise further, making it more difficult for the vibrant underwater playground to rebound.

5 France's wine regions

Rising mercury has altered the maturation patterns of grapes in France's wine regions such as Burgundy and Champagne, with fruit ripening at a faster rate in recent decades. A study published this year in the *Journal Nature Climate Change* found that between 1981 and 2007, harvest dates in France's winegrowing regions shifted forward by an average of ten days.

Early harvests typically produce higher-quality wine in cooler areas like France, so this isn't all bad news, but it's unclear what impact rising temperatures will have on the country's wine region as the trend continues.

6 Venice

A city built on water has good reason to be nervous about climate change, and Venice suffers a double whammy with the Italian city's infrastructure reportedly sinking in tandem with rising ocean levels.

To prepare for imposing tidal movements, the city has installed a mobile gate system across three inlets, designed to reduce the impact of high water levels and associated flooding. While there is debate about whether the system will be enough to protect the city into the future, it's likely to sustain the Venetian romance for a while at least.

7 Mumbai

Mumbai, India's frantic financial and entertainment capital is no stranger to extreme weather events. Last year

heavy monsoonal rains swept through the city, disrupting transport networks and halting daily life, just a month after a heat wave killed over 2,000 people. These events followed the devastating floods that ravaged the city in 2005, touted as "the day Mumbai washed away".

A climate change vulnerability index released in 2013 put Mumbai up there with the worst affected when it comes to increases in rainfall, heat, humidity and rising sea levels, and without proper mitigation strategies, the results won't be pretty.



8 Maldives

The Republic of Maldives is the world's lowest-lying country, with many of its islands sitting less than a metre above

9 Miami Beach

Miami Beach in the USA is best known for its sun and sand, but its reputation as a flood zone isn't far behind, jutting out from Florida's east coast, high tides regularly sweep through the low-lying metropolis, but the concern is if flooding becomes more regular and extreme, the local infrastructure may not cope, particularly given the resort city is built on porous limestone foundations – not an ideal water barrier.

Mitigation activity is taking place, such as road elevation and pump installation, but if the prediction that sea level extremes will become more frequent proves accurate, Miami Beach could face a waterlogged future.

10 Greenland

With news that the ice covering 80% of Greenland is fast disappearing, a surge of travellers are capitalising on Greenland's 'climate change tourism', fearing the end of the picturesque frozen landscape. Greenland made headlines in 2015 when it was reported the Jakobshavn Glacier had shed the largest chunk of ice ever recorded. While calving is a natural process, this whopper spurred serious debates about climate change and the future of the world's biggest non-continental island. **▶**