

Where to go in December:

28 Best Destinations



December is permission to dream big. It's the month when long afternoons fall into early twilights, when city lights sharpen and beaches glow softer, when the globe itself seems split between snow-dusted peaks and sun-lit seas. If you're weighing, start by deciding the kind of memory you want to bring home: sun on your shoulders or powder under your skis; a barefoot island lunch or a candlelit dinner in a chalet; a jungle-framed surf break or a vineyard picnic with mountain views.

For travelers seeking hot weather in December, think [Caribbean](#), [Mexico](#), the Indian Ocean, Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia; for snow, the Alps, Hokkaido, Colorado and [Switzerland](#) come into their own.

[Haute Retreats](#)' portfolio spans island villas, architectural estates, modernist oceanfronts, and storied chalets across the Caribbean, Mexico, the Indian Ocean, Africa, Europe, the USA, and beyond—precisely the places you're most likely to ask Where to go in December and expect a seamless, tailored stay. Their on-the-ground concierges arrange everything from a chef's market run in St Barts to a private skipper off Turks & Caicos or first tracks in Courchevel.

Below, you'll find 28 hand-picked ideas—equal parts places to travel in December for sun and for snow—each written to help you feel the place before you arrive. Skim for inspiration or read closely, then ask Haute Retreats to hold your dates. Availability in December disappears fast.

Where to go in December: The Winter-Sun Icons

Maldives — mornings begin with a mirror-calm lagoon and end with constellations reflected in the sea. Between, there's snorkelling over flower-box reefs, castaway sandbanks, and dinners that unfold under a thousand lanterns. Book an overwater villa through Haute Retreats in Baa or Raa Atoll and you'll understand why this is one of the best places to visit in December for unfussy, effortless warmth. (Tip: sunrise paddleboarding is magic.)



Dubai, UAE — think blue-sky days at 26–28°C, long lunches by the beach, and after-dark rooftops sparkling like a jewelry case. A Haute Retreats villa in Palm Jumeirah or an understated desert-edge estate gives you privacy with city thrills minutes away—ideal if your places to

travel in December list mixes sunshine, spa time, and world-class dining.

Cape Town, South Africa — summer is in full swing here: Atlantic beaches, Winelands picnics, Table Mountain trails, gallery-hopping in Woodstock. Stay in a design-forward Haute Retreats villa in Camps Bay or Franschhoek and stitch together sea, city, and vineyard days. For many, Where to go in December simply means “**Cape Town**.”

Mauritius — sugar-soft beaches, astonishingly clear water, and Creole kitchens that turn lunch into an afternoon. A beachfront villa through Haute Retreats gives you kayaks at your door and palm-filtered shade for reading marathons. If hot weather in December is non-negotiable, Mauritius delivers.



Seychelles — think tangled granite headlands, slow coves, and tender snorkeling in water as warm as a bath. Villas perch above bird-green jungles with steps down to sand the colour of cream. Where to go in December when you want nature to feel private? Here.

Mozambique — a string of islands with luminous shallows and dhows ghosting by at sunset. Settle into a Haute Retreats hideaway and spend your days diving, island-hopping, or doing almost nothing at all—arguably the highest luxury in December.

Phuket, **Thailand** — this is the Andaman at its postcard best: calm seas, limestone towers, perfumed markets. Your villa—sleek, staffed, and secreted above a quiet beach—makes Phuket an easy tick for anyone searching best places to visit in December with family or friends.



Koh Samui, Thailand — coconut groves, bright mornings, and long swims. Haute Retreats' hillside estates here tend to come with cinematic pools and breakfast tables with sea-to-sky views. If Where to go in December means “warm, relaxed, and good for kids,” Samui is a strong, stylish yes.

Sri Lanka — south-coast surf and tea-country cool, leopards in Yala and sunset at Galle Fort. Base in a staffed villa near **Mirissa** or Tangalle for open-air living, lotus-tiled pools, and suppers that lean heavily on cinnamon and lime.

Bali, Indonesia — monsoon brings lushness and a slower rhythm: temple smoke curling into banyans, rice terraces made neon by rain, beach clubs softened by soft skies. A private estate in Uluwatu or Canggu keeps the salt air close; Ubud villas trade surf for serenity. If you're wondering Where to go in December for culture plus beach, Bali is endlessly forgiving (and photogenic).

Rajasthan, India — cool desert evenings and palaces the colour of marigolds. Choose a Jaipur or Udaipur villa and move between markets, forts, and courtyards strung with fairy lights. One of the best

places to visit in December if history, textiles, and thali make your heart race.

Bora Bora, French Polynesia — water so clear it looks lit from beneath, mountaintops like shark fins, and a lagoon that turns every swim into ballet. A private villa over the water or tucked in lush gardens gives you the fantasy, minus the crowds.

Pamalican Island, Philippines — a dot in the Sulu Sea where time moves like the tide. This is barefoot luxury at its most elemental: sail, snorkel, nap, repeat. If hot weather in December and complete calm is what you're after, put Pamalican high on the list.

Costa Rica (Guanacaste & Papagayo) — the Pacific dry season begins. Mornings mean warm surf and howler monkeys; afternoons drift into golden-hour sails. Book a hillside villa with Haute Retreats and watch the bay shift from emerald to silver as you plan tomorrow's zip-lines or spa time.



Riviera Maya, Mexico (Tulum, Soliman Bay, Playa del Carmen) — cenotes like hidden cathedrals, beaches edged with jungle, and long, candle-bright dinners. Whether you choose a toes-in-the-sand retreat in Tulum or a family-perfect home in Playa, this stretch remains one of the best places to visit in December — warm, easy, and wildly beautiful. (Cancun itself is among the world's reliably warm spots now.)

Where to go in December: **Los Cabos**, Mexico — desert meets sea at the bottom of the Baja; whales breach offshore, and the light is pure and clean. A contemporary compound in Palmilla or Puerto Los Cabos gives you privacy and a front-row seat to winter's most charismatic wildlife.

Turks & Caicos (Providenciales) — the turquoise here has its own fan club. Grace Bay is a ribbon of quiet surf and silky sand; inland, salt pans mirror the sky. Book a beach-path villa to make every day a flip-flop day.



St Barts — French-Caribbean chic dialled all the way up: beach lunches that become dance-by-sunset, glam little boutiques, and hilly roads that open to shock-blue views. Haute Retreats' St Barts villas feel like private mini-resorts—perfect for festive-season gatherings.

Barbados — rum-shop charm meets fine-sand beaches and a culinary scene with swagger. West Coast villas come with glassy pools and terraces set for golden sunsets. For many travelers who crave hot weather in December, Barbados is a forever favorite.

Dominican Republic (Punta Cana, Casa de Campo) — golf greens rolling toward the sea, long strand walks, and tropical trade winds. A staffed estate simplifies family travel—tennis in the morning, boat days in the afternoon, and a chef who remembers how you like your ceviche.

Jamaica — coconut palms, reggae basslines, river-raft days, and jerk grills perfuming the evening air. Villas along the north coast are built for lounging—verandas, lawns, and that hypnotic metallic glint where the Caribbean meets the sky.

Anguilla — shoelace beaches, see-through shallows, and an island that believes in taking its time. A low-slung modern villa or a classic beachfront home gives you a third option beyond “do” or “don’t”: dawdle.



St Martin / Sint Maarten — two cultures, one island, endless viewpoints. Spend mornings on calm beaches and afternoons chasing patisseries or barbecue smoke. This is an easy, lively answer to Where to go in December when your group wants variety.

Virgin Gorda, BVI — granite boulders pooling the sea into hidden baths, sailboats pinwheeling across the sound, and villas with porches that feel like private observatories. A place to read more, sleep deeper, and talk longer.

Where to go in December: Grand Cayman — Seven Mile Beach is perfectly named, the water impossibly clear, and the food scene deliciously global. A Haute Retreats villa here turns the island into a playground—morning snorkels, afternoon naps, night swims under a high, bright moon.

Grenada — spices in the markets, waterfalls in the interior, bays that look painted in watercolor. Villas open to the breeze, kitchens perfumed with nutmeg. Grenada is where December feels both festive and slow.

Where to go in December: The Grenadines — sails and sand, turtles and trade winds. From Bequia to Canouan, you're chasing that stripped-back, sea-first simplicity. If your definition of the best places to visit in December is "small islands, big horizons," this is your chain.

Morocco (Marrakech & Agafay) — cool mornings, crisp light, rose-coloured walls. Choose a riad-style villa or an Agafay-desert estate for pool days and souk wandering, then spa rituals that cheat time. When you ask Where to go in December but still want culture, design, and sunshine, Marrakech answers in a whisper.



Where to go in December: For Snow, Firelight, and First Tracks

Courchevel & Les 3 Vallées, France — the scale here is operatic: more pistes than you'll ski in a season, chairlifts threading through clouds, and villages that glow at dusk. Haute Retreats' chalets—fully staffed, fire-warmed, and steps from the slopes—make the week feel effortless.

Val d'Isère, France — high altitude, strong early-season snow, and a village with real spirit. If your places to travel in December must include guaranteed piste time and a proper après scene, start here.

Verbier & the Swiss Alps — long, scenic runs, great guides, and chalets with saunas, hot tubs, and views that still the room. This is the classic

answer to Where to go in December when you prize elegance and reliability.

Niseko, Japan (Hokkaido) — the powder is legend: light, plentiful, and refilled by nightly storms. Ski all day, soak in an onsen at dusk, then return to a chalet that keeps you close to the lifts. For skiers, this is one of the best places to visit in December on earth.

Aspen & Vail, Colorado — fireside cocoa, galleries, and deep winter glam. Book a Haute Retreats home to be slope-side (or steps from shops and supper clubs), then settle into the rhythm: ski, spa, repeat.



How to choose (and why December books early)

If you're hunting strictly for hot weather in December, your shortlist is easy: Cancun and the Riviera Maya, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, and Cape Town are textbook-warm now; the Maldives is at its dreamiest; the Canaries are mild and reliable for Europeans. Tropical trade winds keep humidity comfortable, seas calm, and sunsets cinematic.

If your answer to Where to go in December includes snow, remember that high-altitude French and Swiss resorts and Japan's Hokkaido usually turn on early. Chalet calendars, like beachfront villas, are in peak

demand. Book sooner than you think you need to—especially for Christmas and New Year’s weeks.

Why book with Haute Retreats for December

- Exact-fit stays: From Caribbean beachfronts to Indian Ocean overwaters and Alps chalets, the collection is already curated; your shortlist starts ready-made.
- Service that travels with you: Private chefs, butlers, skippers, drivers, ski guides—arranged and confirmed before you arrive.
- Local fluency: Concierges who know when to book that boat day, that Winelands table, that secret snorkel spot.

When you’re deciding where to go in December, that level of detail is the difference between “great trip” and “best ever.”

[Click here to plan your holiday](#)

Ready to plan?

Still wondering where to go in December? Tell Haute Retreats how you like to travel—quiet beaches or buzzy beach clubs, mellow surf or glassy lagoons, high-alpine drama or cozy small-village charm—and they’ll handpick villas and chalets to match. If you’ve bookmarked places to travel in December that feel wildly different, that’s the fun: you can pair Cape Town with Winelands, or Tulum with a private-island hop, or Val d’Isère with a Paris stopover. The only wrong move is waiting too long.

For warm-weather obsessives, the headline remains simple: Where to go in December for sun is the Caribbean, Mexico, the Indian Ocean, Southern Africa, and parts of Southeast Asia; for snow, the Alps and Hokkaido. The rest is personal—and that’s where Haute Retreats excels.

A final word

There’s more than one right answer to Where to go in December. Choose the mood first—salt, spice, or snow—then the island, coast, or mountain that matches your style. We’ve sketched the best places to visit in December and the most easy-breezy places to travel in December; now it’s your turn to make it yours. Reserve the villa, gather

your people, and let December do what it does best: turn the year's last page into a trip you'll talk about all next year.