

Best food cities in the world

Eating is now a reason to travel, and whether it's a city with a long food history or a more recent culinary hotspot, there are now several food meccas on the planet. These are destinations that offer a variety of flavors for all budgets, sharing their passion for food with globe-trotting travelers searching for great restaurants, markets, and Michelin stars.

Here are the world's ten premier food cities:

1 | NEW YORK

New York is a city of superlatives and that obviously also applies to its food scene. It has over 10,000 restaurants where you find every kind of cuisine imaginable — and for every budget. It's the world's true food mecca allowing you to go on a gastronomic trip around the world without leaving the city. Our favorite experiences, however, are browsing gourmet groceries like Dean & DeLuca, Balducci's, and Zabar's (the best food store in the world?) — and we're not ashamed to admit that we still love stepping into the Whole Foods chain every time.

2 | TOKYO

The Tsukiji Fish Market alone would be enough to make Tokyo a foodie destination. That's where 5 million pounds of fish is sold every day, mostly to be served as sushi. But this is also the city with the most Michelin stars in the world and with some of the best casual dining.

3 | LYON

You could say that Lyon is where France originally elevated food into an art form and chef Paul Bocuse was the pioneer. The city still caters to gourmards of all budgets, although it's the haute cuisine that clearly stand out. It focuses on local traditions and produce, and the "bouchons" (the more traditional restaurants) are among the best spots to enjoy the more rustic cuisine washed down by the best French wines.

4 | BARCELONA

Barcelona became the world-class city it is in large part due to its innovative contemporary Catalan cuisine. It offers a wealth of fine restaurants where food is science and chefs like Ferran Adrià are also artists and scientists, while for the more conservative there are superb classic establishments serving the more traditional dishes. On top of that there's one of the world's best food markets, the Boqueria, not to mention the impressive Mercat de Santa Caterina.

5 | SAN SEBASTIAN

There is an extraordinary culinary movement in San Sebastian that goes beyond its impressive trio of 3-Michelin-star restaurants. This is a city that takes food very seriously and a place where a meal can be turned into an event. The best experience is visiting the La Brecha market in the morning and ending the day at any restaurant serving Basque-style tapas accompanied by local wines.

6 | PARIS

Paris stands out for the plethora of fine dining restaurants but there's nothing better than the Parisian patisserie. After enjoying the creativity of some of the world's greatest chefs (Alain Ducasse, Joël Robuchon, Alain Passard), the real Paris food experience is giving in to temptation and having the mouth-watering pastries. And forget its dining scene's reputation as self-centered and pretentious — Paris has embraced global cuisine in a big way.

7 | LONDON

London currently has a thriving restaurant culture and that's not just because of celebrity chefs like Gordon Ramsay or Jamie Oliver. Its food markets like Borough remain memorable experiences, and even smaller spots like Neal's Yard remain lively and irresistible. Add the extraordinary culinary diversity of its multi-ethnic restaurants and you have one of the world's dining capitals.

8 | COPENHAGEN

You could argue that the Danish capital became a food capital thanks to just one restaurant — Noma, often

praised as the world's best. But that assessment would not be fair. Noma exists because Copenhagen is a city that has refined its taste buds and offers an impressive range of restaurants catering to every taste. It's also the center of the Nordic food resurgence and there's a thriving café culture.

9 | BANGKOK

Flavors and aromas are an integral part of Bangkok life and even the most picky foreigner ends up surrendering to the tempting street food. That's Thai food at its best and most authentic, and you haven't eaten until you've eaten on a Bangkok street. Spicy, sweet, salty, or sour, you can taste it all in one single meal, and with immigration adding other flavors of the world, the city has become the most relaxed and one of the best dining destinations in the world.

10 | SÃO PAULO

The world's largest Latin metropolis is a seriously hot food city. It's long been a center of outstanding cuisine(s) but its reputation is growing and gone international. It was the mass immigration of the late-1800s that provided all the ingredients for the fusion of flavors (Italian, Japanese, Lebanese...) that created the diverse, high-quality cuisine in the city today.

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