

10 World's Most Beautiful National Parks

1. Snowdonia, Wales



As you might suppose from the name, **Snowdonia National Park** is set on Snowdon Mountain. The mountain is 3560 feet tall and as picturesque as it is peaceful. Lakes and rivers are set amid trees and rocky outcroppings, making it the perfect place to practice photography. Visitors will also find old buildings, including several castles within park borders. The history of the area is full of folk tales and legends and makes it an even more exciting place to visit.

In 1951, the Park was established as the 3rd National Park in Great Britain, after the Peak District and the Lake District. The Park covers 2,140 km² (827 square miles), and has 60 km (37 miles) of coastline. The natural forests of the Park are of the mixed deciduous type. The Welsh Oak, ash, birch, hazel and mountain-ash are the most common trees. Over 26,000 people live within the Snowdonia National Park, of whom approximately 62% can speak some Welsh. Every year Snowdonia National Park attracts more than 6 million visitors, making it the 3rd most visited National Park in Wales and England. If you are a hiker, Snowdonia National Park is the perfect place to visit.

2. Grand Canyon, the United States



The Colorado River carved out the Grand Canyon over hundreds of years, creating an amazingly complex canyon. Tourists flock to the site every year to admire it or even to hike down and camp in the myriad of channels cut out by the water. The Grand Canyon is one of the Natural Wonders of the World and has also been named a UNESCO World Heritage site. It stretches over more than 1,200,000 acres in Arizona.

One of the best things about the Grand Canyon area is that it has some of the cleanest air in the US. There are about 1,737 famous species of vascular plants, 195 species of lichen, 167 species of fungi and 64 species of moss found in the Park. Grand Canyon has also a dozen endemic plants, which are known only within the boundaries of the Park. However, only 10% of its flora is actually exotic. Apart from casual sightseeing from the South Rim, running, hiking, rafting and helicopter tours are highly popular here. The Grand Canyon 24 hour Ultra Marathon is a 126 km (78-mile) race that takes participants out on the North Rim of Grand Canyon. So, if you are a runner, you shouldn't miss this event.

3. Kruger National Park, South Africa



One of the largest national parks in the world, Kruger covers millions of acres of land. It is host to an amazing number of African species, including elephants, giraffes and many other animals. You can check these animals out from viewing towers scattered throughout the park. Apart from the towers, development is nearly nonexistent and the park funds for itself in most ways.

The Park boasts 21 rest camps, 2 private lodge concessions, along with 15 private designated safari lodges. Camping in the Kruger National Park has become more popular with backpackers and tourists since it is cheaper, open to everyone and doesn't require any special permission to partake. The Kruger National Park offers 9 different trails, including overnight, but you may not find trails in the wilderness areas.

4. Deosai, Pakistan



Deosai National Park is best known for its impressive flowers. Every spring, thousands of different types of flowers bloom. They form a living carpet of color that attracts an even larger variety of butterflies. The park is certainly worth seeing in the spring, though it is lovely all year round. Another point of interest would be the park's incredible plateaus, some of the highest in the world.

In 1993, the Park was established to protect the Himalayan Brown Bear along with its habitat. Though the Government of Pakistan has taken several effective measures during the last decade, the bear is still under great threat. There are also many great and unique animals and birds. The Deosai National Park is a tourist attraction and many tourists who visit Baltistan also go to Deosai.

5. Kakadu National Park, Australia



The Australian government and the aboriginal people work together to manage the Kakadu National Park. It is a World Heritage site and the amazing views attract tourists year round. One of the most interesting attractions is the aboriginal rock art that can be found in the area. It is also home to a range of animals, including the saltwater crocodile.

The flora of the Kakadu National Park is among the richest in northern Australia with over 1700 plant species, which is a result of the landform, geological and habitat diversity of the Park. The Kakadu National Park is also one of the world's most weed free national parks. No wonder the Park draws hundreds of thousands of tourists per year.

6. Hortobagy, Hungary



Hortobagy National Park was the first national park in Hungary. It was established as a national park in 1973. In 1999, the Park was elected among the World Heritage sites. Hortobagy is rich with unique folklore and interesting cultural history. It's an official refuge for wild horses and home to a number of endangered birds. The Park provides habitat for over 342 species of birds and is a bird watcher's paradise, with plenty of migratory waterfowl, too.

7. Plitvice Lakes, Croatia



If you head into inland Croatia, you will find Plitvice National Park. It is an area of mountainous terrain ideal for hiking and a number of lakes and streams. The unique thing about the water in the park is that most of the lakes and streams contain travertine. This gives the water a clarity seldom found in nature, as well as a very bright blue-green hue.

8. Madain Saley National Historic Park, Saudi Arabia



Where many national parks are heavily forested, Madain Saley is almost entirely made up of desert and rock. It is still one of the most beautiful sights you'll see, however, particularly when you come across one of the amazing oases scattered throughout the park. An ancient burial ground is also located on the site. It's estimated that the more than 125 tombs and facades were cut from rock somewhere between 500 BC and 100 AD. They are still in amazing condition and certainly worth a visit if you're in the area.

9. Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal



Nepal has a unique, wild look to it and Sagarmatha is no exception. The park contains a number of Sherpa villages, as well as a few monasteries. Here you will find Mount Everest, as well as its sister mountains, so the national park sees quite a bit of traffic. Several animals make their home here, including mountain goats that balance precariously along seemingly sheer rock cliffs.

10. Iguazu National Park, Argentina and Brazil



The Iguazu National Park runs through Argentina and into Brazil. It protects the subtropical rainforest here, as well as the Iguazu Falls. The falls are actually made up of hundreds of waterfalls around a curved cliff. Visitors to the falls can take a boat to get a closer look or can walk through the various waterfalls by crossing catwalks. The park is home to a wide range of wildlife, including howler monkeys, jaguars, tapirs, and caimans.

Around the world, countries are preserving their most fascinating and historical areas. National parks protect the natural beauty and keep it accessible for future generations. While all parks have something lovely about them, the places on this list are some of the more amazing ones out there. Have you ever visited any of these breathtakingly beautiful parks? Do you know any other park to add to this list?