

Literary Vacations: from Key West to London?

Because experiencing history is more fun than just reading about it, families looking for travel options should consider bringing their children's summer reading lists to life with "literary travel". So, grab those summer reading lists and enjoy watching as your children's books come to life on this family travel idea - a once-in-a-lifetime peek into the world of literature.

Whether you're looking to explore the Hemingway's life in the 1930's while indulging beachside or walk in the shoes of Sherlock Holmes' creator while exploring the streets of London, the options for vacationing and indulging in literary legacies seems to suit every taste. Here are some options for families to discover together through amazing family vacation options:

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KEY WEST, FL - Historical Writers & Six-Toed Cats: While some might think of Key West and visualize beaches and Margaritaville, the destination also has a vast literary history. To immerse yourself in the island's literary legacy, take a tour of Ernest Hemingway's house and also see his famous six-toed cats who still inhabit the grounds, or participate in the annual Hemingway Days' events celebrated Tuesday through Sunday, July 15 - 20. Although you can't enter them, you can stroll past the homes of Tennessee Williams, Elizabeth Bishop, and John Hersey. At the East Martello Museum & Gallery has numerous historical writers' photographs and early editions of their works are exhibited. Over a century later, Key West is still a rich historical destination that honors these literary figures and is a perfect getaway for families looking for both fun in the sun along with a trip with some substance. The redesigned Hyatt Key West Resort and Marina is a perfect place to stay while touring all that Key West has to offer. The property is a true "Sanctuary off of Duval Street" - just steps from all of the action while maintaining the feeling of a small oasis. www.keywest.hyatt.com

ROSEWOOD RESORTS - Hot off the Presses: Ladies and gentlemen, you read it here first: The final word in intellectual one-upmanship is the exclusive arrangement that Rosewood Hotels & Resorts has forged with America's top book publishing houses entitling you, the pampered privileged guest, bragging rights to the next wave of best sellers before they're even for sale. The program, called "Hot Type," puts an end to the high class ennui of "been there, read that." Caneel Bay, Jumby Bay, Las Ventanas Al Paraiso and Little Dix Bay, all Rosewood resorts, will make available advance copies of new fiction and non-fiction works by the world's most prominent authors including Candace Bushnell, John Updike, Steve Martin, Stephen King, Annie Proulx and many others. New titles will arrive monthly to the "Hot Type" library. Whether lounging poolside or on the pristine beaches, Rosewood guests - who have historically been avid readers - will be delighted by the special "book menu" from which to choose an advance copy to devour during their stay.

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TAHITI, FRENCH POLYNESIA - Local Literature: Most people go to Tahiti to bask in the sun, but bibliophiles who want to take a break from the rays can visit the island's James Norman Hall home, the residence of one of Tahiti's famous resident authors. Best known for *Mutiny on the Bounty*, which he co-authored with Charles Nordhoff, Hall lived in the home from 1920 to 1951. Located just a short drive from Le Méridien Tahiti, visitors can see his original writing desk, art collection, and library with 3,000 books, and can even enjoy tea in the garden under the terraced mango tree. Guests staying at the resort can request transportation to the James Norman Hall home via the concierge. www.lemeridien-tahiti.com

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CHIPPING CAMDEN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE – Where for art thou vacation?: Guests of Cotswold House, a luxury 30-room hotel located in the village of Chipping Campden in the English Countryside, can indulge their love of all things literary with an excursion to nearby Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare. Travelers can stroll through the Olde English village and visit sites including Shakespeare’s birthplace, Anne Hathaway’s Cottage and Mary Arden’s House, and take in a performance of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Back at the hotel, guests can pore over the variety of fiction and non-fiction books available in every guest room!
www.cotswoldhouse.com

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LONDON – Literary History is no Mystery: At Langham London there is a suite named the Conan Doyle suite after the famous mystery writer and creator of Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle was something of a gourmet and today you can dine where Doyle and Holmes enjoyed some of London's finest food. The restaurant in the Langham Hotel was one of Doyle's favorite places to eat, and he contrived to mention the hotel in several stories including “A Scandal in Bohemia” and “The Sign of Four”. Today, the Langham has been refurbished to its previous high standards and is once more one of London's finest hotels.

Other famous past literary guests include Oscar Wilde, Arnold Bennett, poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, American writer Mark Twain, playwright and novelist W. Somerset Maugham, actor and playwright Noel Coward.
www.langhamhotels.com

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SOUTH AFRICA – Lions, Tigers and Nobel Prize Winners: South Africa’s stunning landscapes and tumultuous history make it fertile ground for writers and visitors to explore. Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer’s new book, *Beethoven Was One-Sixteenth Black: And Other Stories* is a collection of short stories set in the diverse South African landscape and tells the tales of the people and creatures that inhabit it. Delve deeper into the Rainbow Nation with Nelson Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom* and Desmond Tutu’s *No Future Without Forgiveness*, whose authors won the Nobel Peace prize for their work in bringing down apartheid. Then go back to the indelible classic that first brought South Africa’s story to the world stage, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton. The only better way to experience this dramatic country than through the pen of its most cherished writers is to experience it for yourself. <http://www.southafrica.net/>