

TORONTO
SUN

'Coolcation' destinations will beat the summer heat

SARAH TRUMBLEY

While heat waves have been making headlines around the globe since the end of May, rising temperatures have intensified across parts of North America and Europe over the past few weeks, breaking records and prompting heat warnings in several countries.

With prolonged heat waves expected to continue in many regions, searches for cooler holiday spots have risen significantly.

If you're looking to jump on the "coolcation" trend — centred on escaping soaring temperatures in favour of milder climates — these destinations prove that sweeter weather and summer vacation can exist in the same sentence.

ICELAND

If you're looking for the perfect place to beat the heat, where better than a destination with "ice" in its name?

Summer is one of the best times to experience Iceland, when average temperatures hover between 10 and 15 C, and daylight stretches for nearly 24 hours.

The Ring Road — a scenic highway that circles the island — has all the makings of an epic road trip, winding past glacier-capped volcanoes, thundering waterfalls and black-sand beaches.

LOFOTEN ISLANDS

Situated above the Arctic Circle in northern Norway, the Lofoten Islands are the perfect antidote to sweltering summer temperatures.

Summer highs rarely climb much above 15 C, and locals will tell you wool sweaters and shorts are the unofficial summer uniform. Packed with views of dramatic coastlines, towering fjords and jagged mountain peaks, the archipelago is a dream for adventure seekers, with opportunities for kayaking, Arctic surfing and hiking. Renowned for its Nordic



Iceland's Ring Road, a highway that circles the island, winds by glacier-capped volcanoes, thundering waterfalls and black-sand beaches. ADOBE STOCK

spas, the Lofoten Islands are scattered with scenic saunas overlooking the ocean. Meanwhile, friendly locals and charming fishing villages like Reine, Å and the UNESCO-listed Nusfjord, home to Norway's famous red rorbuer (traditional fishing cabins), are just as memorable as the scenery.

LOFOTEN ISLANDS

Situated above the Arctic Circle in northern Norway, the Lofoten Islands are the perfect antidote to sweltering summer temperatures.

Summer highs rarely climb much above 15 C, and locals will tell you wool sweaters and shorts are the unofficial summer uniform. Packed with views of dramatic coastlines, towering fjords and jagged mountain peaks, the archipelago is a dream for adventure seekers, with opportunities for kayaking, Arctic surfing and hiking. Renowned for its Nordic spas, the Lofoten Islands are scattered with scenic saunas overlooking the ocean. Meanwhile, friendly locals and charming fishing villages like Reine, Å and the UNESCO-listed Nusfjord, home to Norway's famous red rorbuer (traditional fishing cabins), are just as memorable as the scenery.

Winter is a season, with spots along the coast can explore the Big Five safari, where lion, leopard, elephant, rhinoceros and Cape buffalo sightings are at their peak.

TOFINO

While several cities across Canada during significant heat waves, Tofino's laid-back surf town almost always offers a respite with summer highs ranging from 15 to 18 C.

Perfect destination for anyone seeking vacation without the sweltering temperatures, as there's no sand, sandy beaches, crashing waves and spectacular sunsets. Hiking through the lush forest of Pacific Rim National Reserve to surfing, kayaking and watching.

HIGHLANDS

Mountains and dramatic fields dotted with adobe huts, the Scottish Highlands offer a relaxing summer adventure. Hiking is one of the region's most popular activities, made all the more enjoyable by temperatures ranging between 15 and 19 C. Wild camping is legal in Scotland, making it ideal for travellers who love sleeping under the stars,

while those who prefer a few more comforts can rent a camper van and road trip through the Highlands.

Popular stops include the rugged Isle of Skye, known for its crystal-clear Fairy Pools and the spectacular rock formations, Glencoe, one of Scotland's most beautiful valleys, and Inverness, where you can cruise the waters of Loch Ness.

ST. JOHN'S, N.L.

Situated on the East Coast, St. John's has the cool North Atlantic breezes to thank for its refreshingly mild summers, with daytime highs typically averaging around 20 C.

A perfect combination of lively city vibes and small-town charm, St. John's is great for those in search of a fun urban escape. From its colourful row houses and vibrant music scene to its famously friendly locals, there's plenty to love.

And for those craving something a little more nature-forward, Witless Bay and Bay Bulls are just 30 minutes away and home to the largest Atlantic puffin colony in North America, while the scenic East Coast Trail offers kilometres of spectacular coastal hiking.

kvd creative