



HOT SPOTS *for* STORM WATCHING

Story | HALEY SHAPLEY

Plan a winter storm watching getaway. Put these spots on your bucket list if you want to see Mother Nature's majesty on mesmerizing display.

CATCH SIGHT OF A SANDSTORM IN AFRICA

Not all storms involve wet-and-wild waves—some kick up sand instead. Situated along the west coast of Namibia, a large country in southern Africa, the Namib Desert gets winds coming from the Skeleton Coast that can grow to be quite strong. Here, the red-hued sands often swirl and whirl around the dunes in a magnificent display of power during the winter months. When the fog rolls

in, as it often does, the scene is particularly captivating.

Don't miss a visit to the coast itself, known for its seals and shipwrecks. A thousand-plus vessels have met their fate along the aptly named Skeleton Coast (coined by an author writing a book about the Dunedin Star shipwreck).

Immerse yourself in the scene by staying at one of the camps run by luxury ecotourism operator Wilderness Safaris.

Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp opened last year in a particularly remote area, where the chances of seeing desert-adapted wildlife, including elephants, giraffes and springbok, are high. Guests here are treated to a daylong scenic flight excursion. At Little Kulala near Sossusvlei's famed dunes, the setting is spectacular and only enhanced by touches like elegant thatched accommodations, rooftop star beds and private plunge pools.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

If you have the opportunity to go on a nighttime safari, take it—there are dozens of nocturnal animals you'll have little chance of seeing in the daytime, from the popular lion to the elusive aardwolf.



GET BLOWN AWAY IN THE U.K.

When the winds begin whipping in the mighty Atlantic Ocean, the water swells against the shores of Cornwall, a peninsula on the U.K.'s southwestern coast. This area is one of England's windiest, with 118 mph gusts once charging through Gwennap Head.

Throughout the winter, but particularly in December and January, blustery days abound in coastal towns like Penzance, Porthleven and Sennen. Stay at The Headland luxury cottages in Newquay and listen from the comfort of your four-poster bed as the storm taps your window panes. The one-, two-, and three-bedroom cottages all come with fireplaces and feather duvets to keep you as cozy as can be, along with super-fast Wi-Fi if you can't wait to upload photos of the wondrous weather for friends back home.

When you're out and about, head to Polpeor Cafe at Lizard Point—the country's southern most café—for crashing waves and cream tea, an afternoon tradition of tea complemented by a delicious array of scones, clotted cream and jam. You can also visit the photogenic Lizard Lighthouse, dating back to 1752, to learn more about how ships navigate this treacherous passage.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

Tour The Minack Theatre, a gorgeous outdoor theater right on the water. It opened in 1932 and welcomes 80,000 people a year to see its performances, plus another 150,000 who just want to take a peek.



SPOT SWELLS ON CANADA'S COAST

Way at the western edge of Canada sits the pristine, decidedly laid-back town of Tofino. During the warmer months, the Vancouver Island outpost buzzes with surfers and beachgoers, but from November to February, the best activity is bundling up and watching the waves roll in.

At Pacific Sands Beach Resort, the beach-front suites are perfectly positioned on Cox Bay to watch driftwood logs wildly whip back and forth, gale winds sculpt the cliff-top trees, and raindrops drizzle their way into the vast Pacific Ocean. The three-story Beach Houses—boasting tall windows, gas fireplaces and a double soaker tub—are a luxurious and roomy choice, but no matter which accommodations you choose, you'll get yellow rain slickers that make it easy to step outside for a stroll.

When you're ready for sustenance, this town has more top-notch dining options than you would expect from a town of 2,000, including The Pointe, the famed Canadian restaurant at Wickaninnish Inn; the organic-minded Shelter, bedecked in leather and wood; and popular food truck Tacofino. Wolf in the Fog, which opened last year, is a must-dine, thanks to its emphasis on ingredients that have been foraged and fished locally, plus creative cocktails with housemade touches. ♡

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

Stop by Chocolate Tofino and pick up a Tofino Bear as a souvenir. The 5-inch-tall hollow bears, which come in both milk and dark chocolate, are filled with chocolate fish and sea creatures.