

<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-20-essential-pilgrimages-inspiring-art-destinations>

20 Essential Pilgrimages to Inspiring Art Destinations

Here, we share a list of 20 art destinations beyond the well-trodden art capitals. While seeing art is generally a tame experience, these pilgrimages are not necessarily. Expect to go out of your way—and maybe even out of your comfort zone—to see famed gardens, prehistoric cave paintings, dazzling museums, and surreal landscapes encrusted with sculpture. Whether you're up for a rugged adventure or a really spectacular place to meditate, there's something here for you.

The artist-designed gardens that inspired Yves Saint Laurent (Jardin Majorelle, Marrakech, Morocco)



The French painter Jacques Majorelle began his greatest work when moved to Morocco in 1923. He bought a grove outside of Marrakech, commissioned an Art Deco studio, and started building a bountiful botanical garden. Over four decades, he cared for the land and sourced plants from around the globe. The finishing touch was the cobalt blue he used to paint his studio, which he would trademark as "Majorelle blue."

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After the artist died in 1962, the property languished until 1980, when Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé bought the studio and gardens, and restored them. Saint Laurent would later attest to the great inspiration he gleaned from Jardin Majorelle. Today, you can book a visit to the gardens, which are part of the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech.

While you're there: Majorelle's former studio is now the Berber Museum, dedicated to the creative output of the Berber people.

The land art road trip through the American Southwest
Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and Arizona, United States

Link to video:

<https://artsy-vanity-files-production.s3.amazonaws.com/videos/spiral-jetty-header.mp4>

It's nearly impossible to pick just one work of land art to see in the American Southwest. Why would you? Given the relative proximity between the works, many visitors choose to turn their outings into art-fueled road trips.

Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty (1970) is probably the most famous work of American land art, and you might want to plan your journey around it. Due to its location in Utah's Salt Lake, visibility differs depending on the weather.

Other favorites include Nancy Holt's Sun Tunnels (1973–76) in Wendover, Utah; Michael Heizer's Double Negative (1969) near Overton, Nevada; Walter de Maria's Lightning Field (1977)—which you'll need to reserve well in advance via Dia—in Quemado, New Mexico; Ugo Rondinone's Seven Magic Mountains (2016) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

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The Japanese island that's an art and architecture sanctuary (Naoshima, Japan)



A small, remote island in the Seto Inland Sea, Naoshima is a tranquil escape where striking art installations, museums, and architecture are couched in serene nature. The island became an art destination in the 1990s, when the Benesse Corporation chose it to house its impressive collection of modern and contemporary art.

The West Texas Minimalist mecca (Marfa, Texas, United States)



At just 1.6 square miles, Marfa has earned its reputation as a serious art enclave thanks to Donald Judd. In the 1970s, the artist settled in the town—a disused military training facility from World War II—and began transforming it. These days, you can visit the artist's work and the works of fellow artists that he commissioned; plus, the Judd Foundation offers tours of his former home and studios.

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The secluded Brazilian art oasis (Inhotim, Brumadinho, Brazil)

Video link:

<https://artsy-vanity-files-production.s3.amazonaws.com/videos/inhotim-clip.mp4>

Set on 5,000 acres of lush green space and gardens, the art and botanical institute is also the largest open-air contemporary art center in Latin America. A visit involves plenty of walking outside to see its installations and architectural pavilions.

The iconic home of the Bauhaus (Bauhaus Dessau, Dessau-Rosslau, Germany)



When architect Walter Gropius founded the Bauhaus in 1919, he couldn't have anticipated the school's indelible influence on art and design. During its 14-year run, the school had three homes and an illustrious faculty, including Anni and Josef Albers, Marcel Breuer, Paul Klee, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Wassily Kandinsky, among others. Today, the most emblematic site of the Bauhaus is Dessau, where the school operated from 1925–32; students convened in the now-iconic modernist Bauhaus Building that Gropius designed.

An asymmetrical volume of glass facades and clean lines, Gropius's Bauhaus Building is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You can visit to wander its halls; take a guided tour to see more of the site, including the auditorium. And venture to the

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Masters' Houses to see the living quarters of professors, including Gropius, Kandinsky, Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, and others. Those keen to live like a Bauhausler may choose to stay the night at The Studio Building, in bare bones dormitories that students once used.

The art world's Olympics (The Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy)

You may not be a fan of Venice—but no art lover can deny the wonder of the Venice Biennale. Every other year, the event sees the small city of canals become a powerhouse of international contemporary art. The two anchor venues, the Giardini and the Arsenale, are host to national pavilions where respective countries appoint prominent artists who fill them with exhibitions. There is also a central exhibition, organized by a world-renowned curator, who invites dozens of influential contemporary artists to respond to a unifying theme. Across the city, arts organizations fill palazzos, churches, and other historic structures with bold and ambitious contemporary art.

The Venice Biennale



Visiting the Venice Biennale, which runs from early May through November, is a bit of an art marathon. Give yourself a

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long weekend or more to take in the abundance of international art—which also extends to the city’s prominent art institutions.

The oldest cave art you can experience firsthand (El Castillo cave, Cantabria, Spain)



The most renowned sites for cave art bear the world’s earliest traces of creative expression. Due to the fragility of such prehistoric markings, many have been closed to the public for years, sending visitors instead to see a replica. To experience the real thing, head to the Spanish cave known as El Castillo.

Archaeologists have studied El Castillo—discovered in 1903—to learn about how prehistoric people lived and thought. Primarily dating to the Palaeolithic era, the cave art includes 275 depictions of humans and animals, including horses, bison, deer, goats, ibex, and mammoths.

The Basque city with a mind-bending museum (Bilbao, Spain)



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The Guggenheim Bilbao has incited debate since opening in 1997, but it's endured as a critical juncture of wild starchitecture and world-class contemporary art.

A visit to the spectacular museum begins outside—not just to see Frank Gehry's design from various angles, but to see the public artworks, including Jeff Koons's giant topiary *Puppy* (1992) and Louise Bourgeois's 30-foot-plus spider *Maman* (1999). Inside, there's a sprawling gallery dedicated to the steel ellipses of Richard Serra, as well as impactful temporary exhibitions.

The transcendent desert art festival (Burning Man, Black Rock, Nevada, United States)

TO BE CONTINUED!