

AUTUMN & WIND

After the warmth of our 'summer', the harsh British winds and rains soon set in by mid-September. Then comes the hail and snow. It is a time to shut the windows, light the fires and sweep the sodden leaves off the drive. It is also a time when travel to Asia is a much better alternative, giving you the chance to experience the colours of

AUTUMN



Japan

This is an idyllic time to visit Japan, famed as much for its modern wonders as for its ancient history and natural beauty. There is a pleasant climate as the trees sway in the breeze, their leaves the colours of sunset. The magnificent temples and gardens of Kyoto are arguably at their finest, as you will avoid the crowds that can arrive with springtime cherry blossom season.

Nick Coates



Himalayan Kingdoms

When combining countries it is important the climate is good in both. As your entry and exit point to the Himalayan region, Nepal is getting cooler and drier from October onwards. Autumn is a good time to combine the majestic icy summits and lush jungle lowlands of Nepal with either Bhutan or Tibet. With its colourful towns and time-worn fortresses, Bhutan sees clear skies after the summer rains, and Tibet's enigmatic lands can be visited until late October, after which the cold makes travel impossible.

Craig Burkinshaw



China

With its immense landscape of mountainous realms, pastoral scenes, modern cities and sweeping desert, China's climate varies all year round. However, September, late-October (early October is very busy as the Chinese enjoy their National Holiday) and November offer warm weather and fewer tourists. You can also see more of China's variety because the southern heat and northern chill are much less extreme. Additionally, September is an excellent time to catch a cruise down the striking Yangtze River before it disappears forever later this decade.

Stuart Challis



Borneo & Malaysia

At summer's end, Borneo's tranquility returns after the school holidays, while the September weather remains equally good. Exploring this land of lush rainforest, rivers and national parks, search out some of the great wildlife and see how the indigenous tribes live. On the east coast of Peninsula Malaysia there are a sprinkling of lovely undiscovered resorts to be found, and the rains stay away until around November. After the peak season surcharges, prices for flights are down as well.

Chris Orme

WINTER IN FOCUS

autumnal Japan, Borneo's lush rainforests, the clear skies of Laos and Southern India's delightful backwaters. The possibilities are almost endless, so here our specialists present just a few ideas for travel into Asia over the autumn and winter months.

WINTER



India

Southern India is a tropical paradise during our winter, with the area a vision of coconut palms, lagoons, backwaters and beaches. You can also join in the harvest 'Pongal' festivals. Meanwhile, in the north, it is ideal weather for a comfortable safari. There are good opportunities for camel rides in Rajasthan and, of course, the thriving Pushkar Camel Fair with its array of musicians, soothsayers and traditionally dressed Indians filling the colourful bazaars and joining in the festivities.

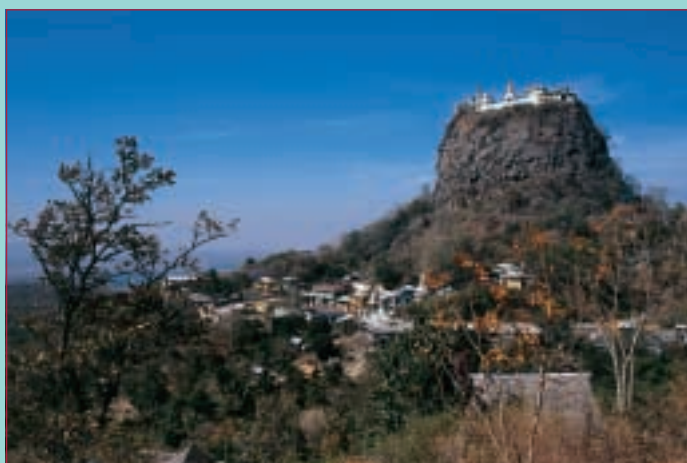
K Russell Kate Russell



Indochina

Temples glittering in the sunlight on the banks of the Mekong River, Luang Prabang is definitely one of South East Asia's highlights and enjoys its best weather during our winter. In Cambodia, the temples of Angkor look particularly stunning before the spring heat dries their moats. Meanwhile in Vietnam, Hanoi's TET festival sees thousands of candles floated on the Hoan Kiem Lake. The country's beaches seem deserted compared to Thailand's more mainstream alternatives, and the hilltribe regions are fresh and clear with a crisp breeze.

J Spilsbury Jane Spilsbury



Burma & Thailand

This is the perfect time of year to visit Burma, with its wonderful atmosphere of time having stopped half a century ago. Visit the hill tribes or relax at the lesser-known beach resorts on Ngapoli. Across the border in Thailand, we can steer you away from the crowds of Chiang Mai to quieter wonders like Ayuthaya, Sukhothai and Lampang. Visit the under-rated national parks and then relax on the southern beaches while they're at their tropical best.

N Page Nick Page



Sri Lanka

Under clear blue skies, the waters of the Indian Ocean lap against golden sands. What better way to escape the winter than to relax on Sri Lanka's beaches – arguably the best in Asia. However, often overlooked by other tour operators, the country has a lot more to offer than coastline. As well as the fascinating cultural triangle you could explore the hill country. Although a little chilly, the area offers pleasant walks coupled with stunning views.

S Roberts Sarah Roberts