

TRAVELLER FEEDBACK REVEALED - THE BIGGEST ANALYSIS OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES EVER CONDUCTED

TripAdvisor travellers indicate Angkor in Cambodia is the most recommended World Heritage site, but Kasbah of Algiers is the World Heritage site in most need of attention

LONDON, U.K. – 26nd October, 2010 – TripAdvisor®, the world's largest travel site* and most popular travel community, today reveals the results to date of the biggest analysis ever conducted of UNESCO's World Heritage sites around the world.

The two year partnership between TripAdvisor, and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre launched in October 2009 to raise awareness of and gain travellers' support to preserve natural and cultural sites inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. Within the partnership, TripAdvisor will also donate up to \$1.5 million (USD) of support to the World Heritage Centre to help monitor the conservation of the world's most important cultural and historic sites.

Via on-site and email campaigns, TripAdvisor has, to date, collected nearly a quarter of a million (244,690) feedback submissions from travellers who have visited 789 of UNESCO's recently expanded list of 911 World Heritage sites. The results provide a unique insight into the views and recommendations of travellers themselves. As part of the partnership, TripAdvisor shares the feedback to the World Heritage Centre so that it may better engage UNESCO member states in matters of site conservation.

TripAdvisor travellers have given the nod to Angkor, Cambodia as the number one recommended UNESCO site to visit in the world, describing it as amongst other quotes, "Absolutely breathtaking" and "One of the wonders of the world." The second and third most recommended World Heritage sites are both in Italy and are respectively the Historic Center of Rome, the properties of the Holy See, and the Historic Centre of Florence.

At the top of the best condition list is Monticello and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, USA. Both are examples of outstanding neoclassical architecture based on Thomas Jefferson's educational ideas. Visitors have described it as: "Meticulously cared for, well-organized and rewarding", with state of the art visitor facilities. Close behind is Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire and the Place Stanislas, Place de la Carrière and Place d'Alliance in Nancy, France.

The TripAdvisor travellers' feedback also highlights those World Heritage sites they consider need the most attention. At the top of UNESCO's sites in 'Worst Condition' comes the Kasbah of Algiers in Algeria, described as a "crumbling site". The site includes remains of old mosques, Ottoman-style palaces and traditional urban structures.

Because countries often hope to draw additional tourism following the inscription of their sites onto the WH List, traveller feedback from TripAdvisor can help them address some of the issues raised and improve tourism to their sites.

"The fantastic response to the campaign shows that travellers have a passion for helping preserve the places that matter most and we are delighted to be able to continue to raise awareness of the World Heritage sites and collect this information on behalf of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre" says Steve Kaufer, CEO and Founder TripAdvisor

Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director General for Culture at UNESCO, and interim Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, said: "This valuable feedback certainly helps us and UNESCO member states better understand visitor perspectives regarding site conservation and provides useful information on how World Heritage travellers engage with the sites and their communities. We look forward to continuing the partnership with TripAdvisor on this initiative and say thank you to the travellers who have given the feedback to date."

According to TripAdvisor travellers:

Top ten most recommended sites:

1. Angkor, Cambodia
2. Historic Center of Rome, the properties of the Holy See, Italy
3. Historic Center of Florence, Italy

4. Historic Areas of Istanbul, Turkey
5. Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, Scotland
6. Historic Center of Prague, Czech Republic
7. Venice and its Lagoon, Venezia, Italy
8. Works of Antoni Gaudí, Barcelona, Spain
9. Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret's Cathedral, London, England
10. Historic Center of Vienna, Austria

Top ten sites in best condition:

1. Monticello and University of Virginia in Charlottesville, US
2. Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, England
3. Place Stanislas, Place de la Carrière and Place d'Alliance, Nancy, France
4. Hiroshima Peace Memorial, Hiroshima, Japan
5. Hiroshima Peace Memorial, Hiroshima, Japan
6. Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee, Israel
7. Old City of Dubrovnik, Croatia
8. Te Wahipounamu, South West New Zealand
9. Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, Peru
10. Jiuzhaigou Valley Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China

Top ten sites needing most attention

1. Kasbah of Algiers, Algeria
2. Historic Center of São Luís, Brazil
3. Villa Romana del Casale, Italy
4. Stone Town of Zanzibar, Republic of Tanzania
5. Historic Inner City of Paramaribo, Suriname
6. City of Potosí, Bolivia
7. Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas, Venezuela
8. Medina of Tétouan (formerly known as Titawin), Morocco
9. Portuguese City of Mazagan (El Jadida), Morocco
10. Historic Center of Naples, Italy

-Ends-

HERITAGE-SITES-EVER-CONDUCTED