

TRAVEL

Best beaches: A look at the finest beaches in the world

Australia too far to go? Check out Travel Editor Jim Byers' list of some great beaches closer to home.



DREAMSTIME

The beach at Tulum, Mexico is one of the finest on the planet.

By: [Jim Byers](#) Travel Editor, Published on Fri Feb 01 2013

Looking for a stretch of sand that doesn't require 18 hours of flying? Here are some options closer to home.

Caladesi Island, Florida: Just off the coast of Dunedin, this is a quiet stretch that you can reach by boat from Honeymoon Island park or, at low tide, by walking north from busy Clearwater Beach. A fabulous nature trail with explanations of flora and fauna, plus great shells.

Tulum, Mexico: It gets crowded, but the water is beautiful and there are rocks to sun yourself on and wander around. Plus, rising above the beach is an ancient Mayan temple, and how cool is that?

Napili Beach, Maui, Hawaii: A local ordinance forbids buildings higher than two stories, so you won't get any wall of condos here. A perfect crescent beach with quiet spots for snorkeling and, especially in winter, great areas for bodysurfing. Fabulous views of neighbouring Molokai and world-class sunsets.

***** Anywhere on the shores of Lake Huron:** We here in Ontario have some of the best sand in the world. From fun and funky Sauble Beach in the north to Southampton, Port Elgin, Goderich and beyond, you can go for miles and miles and bathe in warm, shallow water in the summer. Killer sunsets, too. *******

Sugar Beach, St. Lucia: Nestled between the gloriously rugged and jungle-clad cliffs of the formations called the Pitons, this small stretch features not only outstanding views but a wonderful coral reef for diving and snorkeling.

Jekyll Island, Georgia: Another long, long, long piece of property, where you can not only walk but ride a bike on the firm sand. It's a quiet, old-timey kind of place with a real southern feel and a beautiful, historic inn, the Jekyll Island Club Hotel.

Tofino, British Columbia: Chesterman Beach is a fine stretch south of the renowned Wickanninish Hotel, with piles of driftwood for resting and good surfing to be had. A great place for a romantic walk.

Trunk Bay, St. John, USVI: Perfect blue water, a curving stretch of white sand backed by thick jungle, a great off-shore reef for snorkeling, lovely islands nestled in the distance and hardly a building in sight make this a Caribbean gem. Perfection.

Horseshoe Bay, Bermuda: Lovely, slightly pink-hued sand and beautiful rock formations on a long, curving arc of sand on the south coast of this gentle string of islands. Usually placid but winter can bring big waves.

Corona Del Mar, California: Nestled just south of Newport Beach, this small stretch features crumbling, yellow-gold cliffs topped with palm trees and might just be the prettiest bit of sand in California.

Bathsheba, Barbados: There are gentler stretches galore on the more developed western side for snorkeling or sunning or swimming, but here you can walk for miles and watch the wild waves roll in from the Atlantic and bounce off beautiful rock formations.