



THIS IMAGE: The helical stairway at the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg; **BELOW:** Visitors at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

TPA Once sleepy, the Tampa/St. Petersburg area has quietly exploded. St. Pete, for example, offers an impressive array of arts-focused institutions, all situated on the bay in the city's cozy, pedestrian-friendly downtown. The historic, 18-room Birchwood Inn makes a stellar home base before exploring the Dali Museum, the Chihuly Collection at Morean Arts Center and the Museum of Fine Arts. Antiques collectors will enjoy Central Avenue with its vintage outposts and eclectic eateries (Taco Bus, the Queens Head). And then there are the beaches: Stellar strands await at nearby St. Pete Beach, and check out the funky Postcard Inn on the Beach for sunset cocktails. ¶ Across the Bay, Tampa boasts a newly revved-up downtown that includes the Tampa Museum of Art, the Riverwalk with its eBoats, the Henry B. Plant Museum (housed in the minaret-topped former Tampa Bay Hotel) and the iconic Tampa Theatre for an arts film paired with a performance on a Wurlitzer organ. Families will appreciate the Florida Aquarium, a baseball game courtesy of the Tampa Yankees and the wild animals and amusement rides at Busch Gardens. Style aficionados shouldn't miss the restaurant-café-bookshop-boutique Oxford Exchange or the shops at Hyde Park Village. For a taste of old Florida, visit Ybor City with its historic cigar factories, cafés and bars. Wind down with dinner at Mise en Place (cornmeal-crusted oysters), the Edison Food + Drink Lab (bone marrow-crusted halibut), the just-opened Élevage at the Epicurean hotel (the latest from the owners of the iconic Bern's Steakhouse, just across the street) or Restaurant BT (Vietnamese bouillabaisse). — **JASON OLIVER NIXON**



AMSTERDAM

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Amsterdam's so-called Latin quarter, or De Pijp, was once a funky off-center

market district consisting largely of night cafés and taxi driver-frequented Shoarma shops. Today, the Heineken Brewery-adjacent neighborhood retains a bit of its multicultural spunk and bohemian charm (the Molli squatter café, for instance), but it's also polished up some of its rough edges and emerged as a trendy "it" hood. De Pijp recently became home to the Sir Albert, a stylish boutique hotel conceived by Dutch ad agency KesselsKramer. Located on the site of a former diamond factory, the property quirkily simulates the experience of staying at an aristocrat's city manor house with a wink and a nudge. Upscale Japanese fusion eatery Izakaya is attached to Sir Albert's "residence." Across the street, a Good Genes bespoke denim store sells vintage American jeans. Even Dutch celebrity chef Julius Jaspers is infiltrating the area with his modern, light barbecue restaurant Julius Bar & Grill. Internationally renowned art is just a stroll or bike ride away at the recently revamped Rijksmuseum, in the bordering museum quarter. There's no better time to visit Amsterdam than April for the first King's Day (the 26th) since Prince Willem-Alexander took the throne.

— **SHANA TING LIPTON**

