

of the BEST

LITERARY FOOD EXPERIENCES

Combine your clients' love of literature, food and travel with **Ella Buchan's** pick of culinary experiences inspired by authors

You can learn a lot about a place through a plate of local food or a sip of a city's signature cocktail. Sampling a destination's cuisine connects visitors with its history, heritage and culture. In the case of places roamed by famous literary giants, it can also offer a new and delicious way to discover their legacy.

Whether it's trying a local delicacy loved by Jane Austen, slurping ramen at shops made famous by Haruki Murakami or sipping Tennessee Williams' favourite cocktail, these are the best ways to follow in the food footsteps of famous authors.



JANE AUSTEN'S BATH

Bath's honey-hued buildings, cobbled lanes and thermal waters have drawn pleasure-seekers for centuries. The UK city has also been home to an impressive roster of authors including Mary Shelley, whose life and most famous novel are celebrated in the attraction Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein, which opened this year.

Most famously, Jane Austen lived here for five years from 1801. Clients can experience the city as she did by sampling some of her favourite foods. The local speciality (loved by Austen) is the Sally Lunn bun, similar to a sweet brioche. Another essential stop is the Royal Crescent Hotel, once home to Austen's aunt, where the restaurant serves up a delightful five-course tasting menu.

Book it: The 10-night Country Roads of Wales, Devon and Cornwall tour includes two nights exploring Austen's Bath, with optional afternoon tea at Sally Lunn's. From £2,950 per person, departing from London. insightvacations.com



HARUKI MURAKAMI'S TOKYO

Ramen joints and jazz bars feature heavily in the novels of Haruki Murakami, who owned a Tokyo club called Peter Cat (now closed) when he wrote his debut novel, *Hear the Wind Sing*, in 1979.

Fans of his fiction can graze their way through Japan's capital at spots such as Tempura Imoya, where a pre-fame Murakami and his wife often dined, and Hope-ken, a ramen shop namechecked in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*.

Suggest they also seek out Dug, a jazz bar that features in Murakami's best-known (and food-rich) novel *Norwegian Wood*.

Book it: A bespoke, six-night Murakami's Tokyo tour costs from £1,569 per person (excluding international flights). The trip includes a night at a traditional ryokan in Hakone (featured in *South of the Border, West of the Sun*), ground transport and a private tour of locations with links to Murakami and his works. insidejapantours.com

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ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S FLORIDA KEYS

It feels like every other destination, from Cuba to Paris, lays some claim to Ernest Hemingway. Key West, though, has something to trump them all: The Hemingway Home, now a museum overrun by descendants of the author's six-toed cats (a genetic trait).

Clients can visit other haunts including Sloppy Joe's, his favourite drinking spot, Captain Tony's Saloon and Blue Heaven, a popular brunch and lunch restaurant in the building where Hemingway officiated boxing matches.

Book it: A seven-night Florida Keys fly-drive costs from £1,559 per person in June 2022, including Virgin Atlantic flights from Heathrow to Miami, car hire, one night at the Marina del Mar in Key Largo, four nights at the Best Western Hibiscus in Key West and two nights at Coconut Cay Resort in Marathon, all B&B. americaasyoulikeit.com



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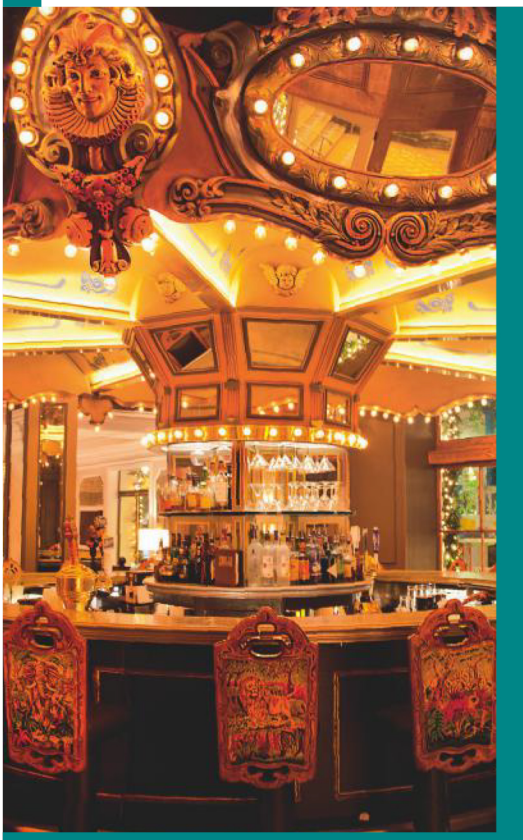
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS' NEW ORLEANS

Many authors have ties to the Louisiana city, though few quite so deeply as Tennessee Williams. The playwright lived in the city and used it as the setting for his most famous work, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and several short stories.

There's even a March festival dedicated to his legacy, with cocktail-making classes, hosted dinners and a Books and Beignets book club (complete with the city's famous puffed-up doughnuts).

Clients can also hop aboard the revolving Carousel Bar (Williams' favourite, pictured) at Hotel Monteleone and order the author's signature cocktail, a brandy Alexander.

Book it: The four-day All That Jazz tour of New Orleans includes a mixology class, Cajun-style crawfish boil and a jazz dinner cruise down the Mississippi. From £1,179 per person (based on two sharing), excluding flights. theculturetrip.com



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DESTINATIONS

FOOD & DRINK HOLIDAYS | LITERARY EXPERIENCES

MARGARET LANDON'S BANGKOK

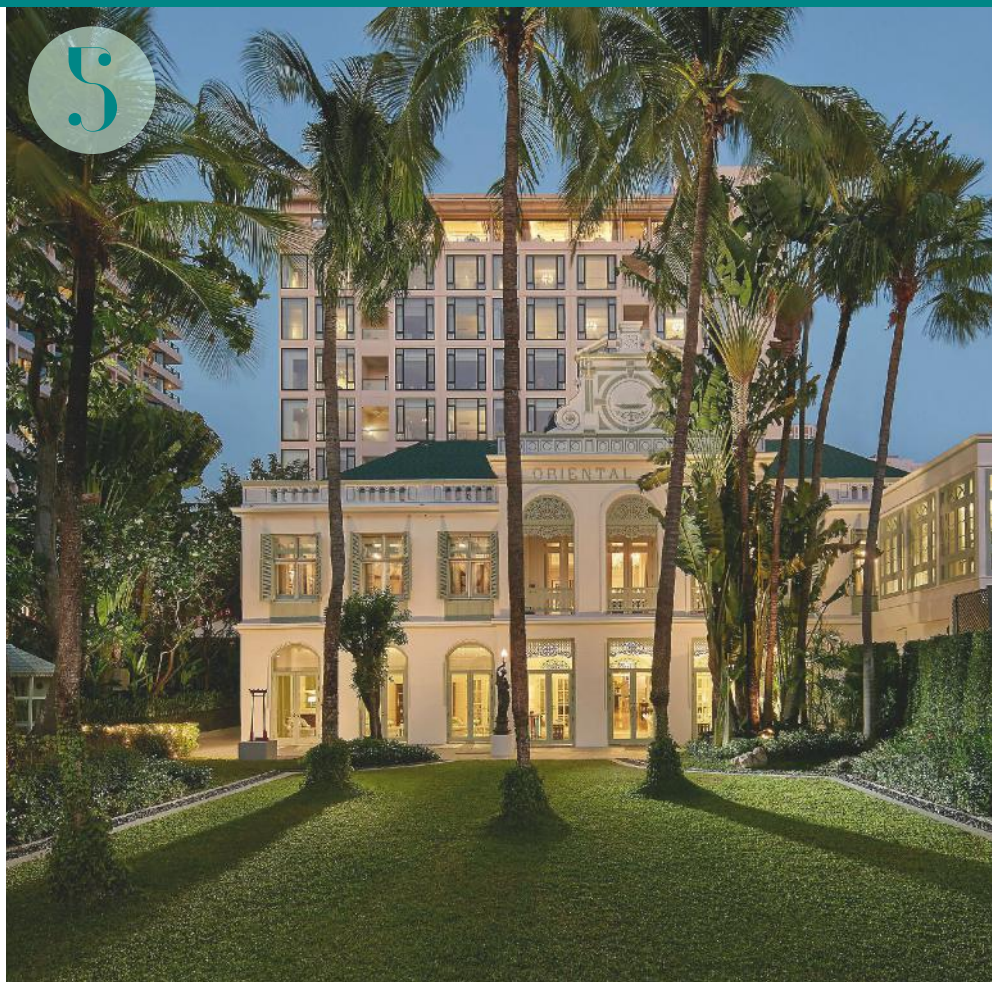
In Margaret Landon's 1944 novel *Anna and the King of Siam*, adapted for stage and screen as *The King and I*, Anna arrives in Bangkok and asks for directions to a small hotel with a French flag.

That same hotel is now the elegant Mandarin Oriental, so clients can stay in one of the story's central locations and explore the city that inspired Landon to write her classic.

They can also follow in her footsteps, and those of other famous writers such as Somerset Maugham and Barbara Cartland, with a lavish afternoon tea served in the Authors' Lounge, filled with photos of those who have stayed here.

Book it: If Only has three nights in the Mandarin Oriental Bangkok from £1,470 per person, based on two sharing a deluxe room on a B&B basis and including return flights from Heathrow, departing on May 2, 2022. The price includes afternoon tea in the Authors' Lounge.

ifonly.net



FRANZ KAFKA'S PRAGUE

Franz Kafka was born and buried (in New Jewish Cemetery) in Prague and spent most of his life there, describing the Czech capital as a place that "never lets you go". Its atmospheric cobbled lanes, cellar restaurants and pretty squares certainly have a way of grabbing hold of visitors, and exploring places where the *Metamorphosis* author walked, drank and ate makes it all the more beguiling.

There are several statues of the literary giant, while the Franz Kafka Museum shows how his surrealist works were influenced by the city. Suggest clients seek out one of his and other writers' favourite hangouts, Café Louvre. He regularly came to the spot to write and philosophise over coffee and perhaps a *trdelník* (a cylindrical pastry).

Book it: A half-day Gastronomical Experience with ToursByLocals is £655 for up to 10 guests, including local guide, transport and food samples. toursbylocals.com

