



## The ‘Thronies’ Pilgrimage: Hit TV show sparks worldwide wanderlust

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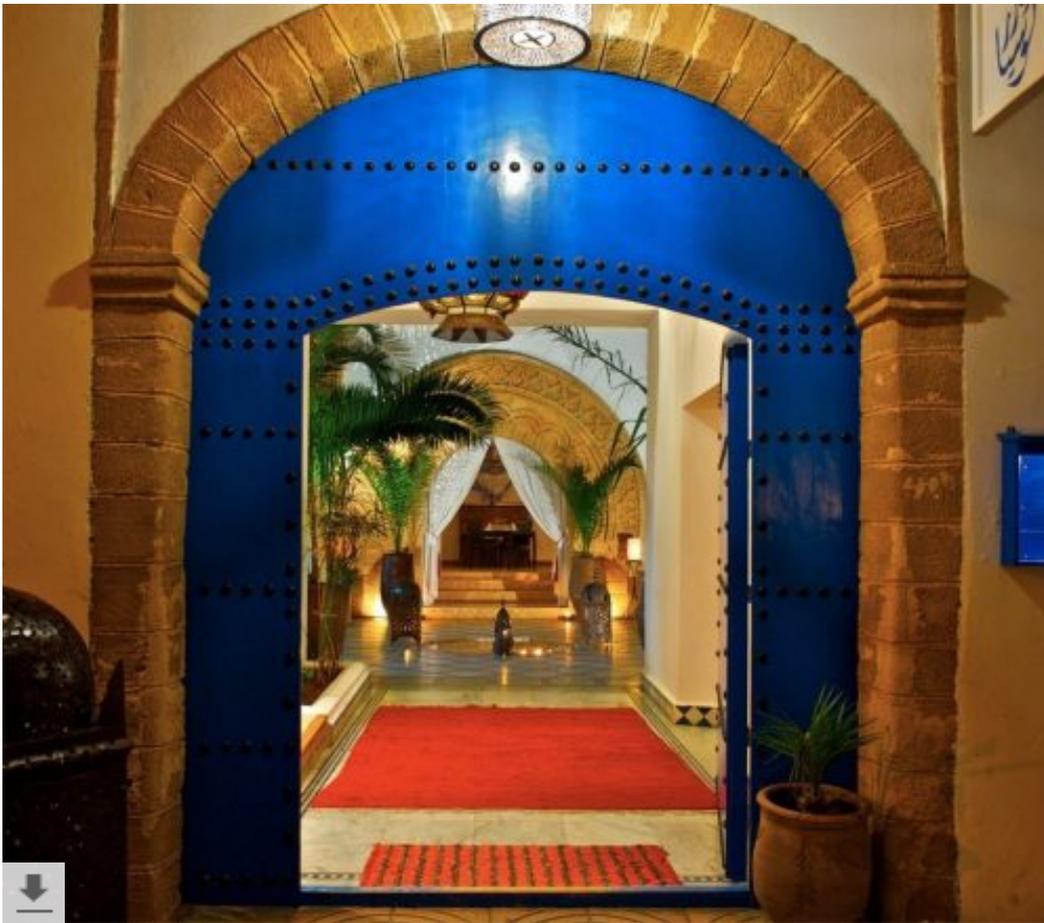
DALLAS, July 13, 2017 — The world is eagerly anticipating the premiere of Game of Thrones season 7 but fans aren't waiting for winter to come to enjoy Seven Kingdoms-inspired vacations, as Hotels.com® reports a dramatic hike in searches to the stunning destinations featured in the series.

Among the world's most popular shows\*\*, it has inspired the imaginations of millions of 'Thronies' across the globe since it first aired in 2011. Last season, over 23 million viewers\*\*\* worldwide tuned in to each episode.









The destinations that feature most heavily throughout the seasons, and those anticipated to appear in season 7, are becoming must-visit hotspots. Travel expert Hotels.com reports huge increases in searches to destinations in Iceland, Spain, Croatia and Northern Ireland.

### **Going Beyond the Wall**

Iceland, which plays host to arguably the series' most iconic landscape, Beyond the Wall, has enjoyed the most dramatic surge in searches. The scenic destination is up over **285%** since 2014, when the show mania truly began to take the world by storm.

The upward trend continues for the destination as year-on-year (2017 vs 2016) data shows a **30%** surge for those eager to walk in the frosty footsteps of heartthrob Jon Snow, where he famously battles Wildlings and White Walkers.

### **Landing in Croatia**

A number of destinations in Croatia, another key filming location, have also enjoyed a tourism boom. The ancient city of Split on the Dalmatian coast has seen an uplift of nearly **120%** in searches. Fans of Daenerys Targaryen enjoy touring the city's walled Diocletian's Palace, the site of the Mother of Dragons' throne room.

The less well-known Croatian city of Sibenik, the site for the famous city of Braavos, has enjoyed a similar lift with hotel searches up **60%**.

### **The Dorne of Seville**

Fans are also looking to the warm climes and epicurean lifestyle of Seville in Spain, with searches to the destination up **145%**. Seville was used for scenes set in Dorne, the most exotic of the Seven Kingdoms, where the ornate private estate of the House Martell stands.

### **Irish Charm**

In the lead up to the much-anticipated season 7 premiere, Belfast has been on top of fans' wish lists. Having featured in almost all seasons, the wild and ragged northern end of the Emerald Isle is rumored to become the jewel in the latest season's crown. With searches for Belfast hotels up nearly **120%** ahead of the season premiere, the destination is set to welcome thousands of fans in 2017.

"The fantasy drama Game of Thrones has sparked the imagination of countless fans across the globe with huge increases in searches to the show's striking filming locations," said Josh Belkin, Vice President and GM North America for the Hotels.com brand. "We're thrilled to offer a wide range of places to stay in exotic locales from the show. We, like so many fans, are eager to see the stunning locations featured in season 7."

To help you experience the filming locations, for a limited-time Hotels.com is offering [free passports+](#) with qualifying international accommodation bookings.

## **From great houses to great hotels: Top hotels to stay when visiting filming locations**

### **Myvatn, Iceland - Beyond the Wall**

For the adventurous at heart, a stay at the trendy 3 star [Fosshotel Myvatn](#) is a must. A half hour's walk from Lake Myvatn, the location used for filming Beyond the Wall. Also nearby are Myvatn Nature Baths and the dramatic Hverfjall Crater - perfect for an immersion into the wilderness that the Wildlings and White Walkers roam.

[The Fosshotel Myvatn](#) is available from **\$252 per room per night\***.

### **Seville, Spain - Water Gardens of Dorne**

The 3.5 star [Hotel Boutique Elvira Plaza](#) is a step into the lavish world of Dorne, the southernmost part of Westeros. This light, bright, beautiful hotel is just a stone's throw from Seville's majestic Alcazar, also known as the private palace residence of the House Martell.

[The Hotel Boutique Elvira Plaza](#) is available **\$91 per room per night\***.

## Split, Croatia - Meereen

Want to stay like royalty? The 4 star [Bella Notte Di Spalato](#) is just the place. Situated next to the city's ancient Diocletian's Palace, this beautiful hotel is heavily influenced by its surrounding old-world architecture. Guests will enjoy wandering the narrow stone streets and exploring the hidden alcoves.

**The [Bella Notte De Spalato](#) is available from \$191 per room per night<sup>¥</sup>.**

## Sibenik, Croatia - Braavos

Situated just outside the center of Sibenik the 4 star [Heritage Hotel Life Palace](#) offers old world charm with all the decadent trimmings. Only a two-minute walk from the famous Saint James Cathedral - guests will stay right in the heart of this iconic city.

**The [Heritage Hotel Life Palace](#) is available from \$165 per room per night<sup>¥</sup>.**

## Belfast, Northern Ireland - The Iron Islands

With its sumptuous, yet contemporary style, the beautiful 4 star [Malmaison Belfast](#) is the perfect contrast to the rugged landscapes found in this region. Northern Ireland plays host to a huge amount of filming - but much of the action takes place at the Titanic Studios in Belfast's Titanic Quarter. True fans can enjoy a studio tour and spot the stars on set.

**[Malmaison Belfast](#) is available from \$113 per room per night<sup>¥</sup>.**

## Essaouira, Morocco - Astapor

The ancient city of Essaouira is the filming site for Astapor, the home of the Unsullied Army. Stay in the 5 star [Dar L'Oussia](#), located along the old Portuguese fortification by the sea, where most of the filming of Astapor took place. This unique property features beautiful traditional Moroccan design with a modern stylish flare and is located only minutes from the beach.

**The [Dar L'Oussia](#) is available from \$74 per room per night<sup>¥</sup>.**

## Ait Benhaddou, Morocco - Yunkai the Yellow City

Located between Marrakech and the Sahara and made entirely of clay, Ait Benhaddou was chosen as the filming location for the slave trading city of Yunkai. Staying at the [Dar El Haja](#) guests couldn't get closer to the action. Visitors will feel like true desert wanderers as they roam the ancient streets of this Moroccan UNESCO World Heritage Site treasure.

**The [Dar El Haja](#) is available from \$51 per room per night<sup>¥</sup>.**

### **Notes to Editors:**

<sup>¥</sup>Prices quoted include taxes and fees and are subject to availability at the time of booking.

\* Data taken from Hotels.com search data from 2014 - 2017. All data uplifts are taken from 2014 (April - June) compared to the same period in 2017, unless otherwise stated.

\*\*According to a 2016 global study by [Parrot Analytics](#)

\*\*\*According to 2016 [HBO data](#)

\*\*\*\*Free night does not include taxes and fees. See full [terms and conditions](#)

\*\*\*\*\* Secret Prices are available to Hotels.com app users, Hotels.com<sup>®</sup> Rewards members and

individuals who unlock Secret Prices on the website by subscribing to Hotels.com by email. Secret Prices will be shown where the “Your Secret Price” banner is displayed on your search results. Available on selected hotels and selected dates only. Subject to full terms and conditions.

+See [www.hotels.com/passport17](http://www.hotels.com/passport17) for terms and conditions.

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