

up, comedy films, plays and the odd comedy seminar. So far, the only headliner announced for 2007 is Russell Brand (March 10), but last year's line-up included Jimmy Carr, Dara Ó Briain, Neil Innes and Jerry Springer The Opera. glasgowcomedyfestival.com.

Trailer park snowboarding, France

Instead of cramming dozens of people into an apartment made for four, you can pile into a mobile home. The Parc L'Escale is in the pretty little French resort of Le Grand Bornand. From £413 for a week, including ferry crossings (for one car, don't get cheeky), you get a six-bed trailer with a kitchen/diner, and a decking area with barbecue and patio heater. Linda Barker designed the interiors, but don't let that put you off. thomson-ski.com.

Extreme ice skating, Stockholm

As the Baltic sea freezes around the 24,000 islands of the coast around Stockholm, Swedes take to the ice. "Trip skating" gives you a mix of exhilaration (you can pick up a fair amount of speed on the open ice) and tranquility (it's crisp and quiet out here between the forested islands). Make sure you team up with a local guide who knows the safest places to skate. [Nature Travels \(naturetravels.co.uk\)](http://NatureTravels.com) offers guided and fully equipped day skating trips on the ice just south of Stockholm at Trosa, for £199 for a group of up to five. For travel go to visitsweden.com.

Nuremberg Christmas market

Unlike many Christmas markets in Germany and elsewhere, Nuremberg's Christkindlesmarkt has strict rules on what can be sold – just traditional decorations, mulled wine, sausages, Zwetschgenmännle ("little prune people") and the excessively moreish Lebküchen (ginger cakes). The setting – especially if there's a dusting of snow on the steep, tiled roofs – is almost Disney Christmassy. [Lufthansa \(lufthansa.com\)](http://Lufthansa.com) flies London City-Nuremberg for £102 in December.

As well as raising the profile of native writers such as Romesh Gunesekera and Yasmine Gooneratne, it will feature Indian stars such as Kiran Desai and Suketu Mehta – plus British authors with regional links: former BBC India correspondent Mark Tully, William Dalrymple, and sci-fi legend Arthur C Clarke, who has lived in Sri Lanka for half a century.

[cazenove+loyd \(cazloyd.com\)](http://cazenove+loyd.com) offer a week at Galle Fort Hotel during the festival from £1,290pp and can book festival events including dinners with authors at private houses; galleliteraryfestival.com (site not yet running).

Drink a proper caipirinha, Rio

Go to a small bar, where you wait and watch as the drink is freshly prepared. The best place is Academia da Cachaça in Leblon, near Ipanema, which stocks 2,000 varieties of the spirit, and serves a hearty feijoada – pork and black bean stew – to line the stomach. academiadacachaca.com.br. Five nights at the Caesar Park Hotel in Rio starts from £1,542 including flights and an evening with an expert at the Academia da Cachaça with [cazenove+loyd \(cazloyd.com\)](http://cazenove+loyd.com).

Get dressed up in Hoi An, Vietnam

Like a Vietnamese Cochin, this world heritage site is a fascinating mix of foreign influences – Chinese traders' houses and a Japanese bridge alongside traditional Vietnamese buildings – and a thriving shopping spot where cut-price tailors abound. Stay at the 150-year-old former home of a Chinese merchant, Vinh Hung 1 (that "1" is important, there are other Vinh Hungs) – and book one of the balcony rooms, featured in The Quiet American film, for £25 a night. Or splash out on a night at the new Nam Hai, a luxurious beach resort just outside the town (£180 per room). vietnamstay.com/hotel/vinhhung1. thenamhai.com



drink rum cocktails and dance to Junkanoo music – as popularised by the Baha Men of Who Let The Dogs Out? fame. The biggest Junkanoo is in Nassau. And, yes, it is funky. For affordable accommodation in Nassau, go to bahamas.co.uk.

Festival of a Thousand Stars, Ethiopia, Dec 16-18

Tribes from all over Ethiopia walk out of the desert or the Gamo highlands foothills and the Rift valley to gather on a football pitch in Arba Minch, the main town of the area. There, they perform a dazzling array of ceremonial dances and songs, kicking up clouds of red dust. Fans of Bruce Parry's BBC series, Tribe, will recognise the Dasnach and Hamar peoples. [Wild Frontiers \(020-7736 3968, wildfrontiers.co.uk\)](http://WildFrontiers.com) offers a one-week trip with three days at the festival for £1,350.

Experience New Mumbai, India

The best Indian chefs were once to be found in big hotels, but several high-quality restaurants (pointedly referred to as "standalones") have succeeded. These often serve Mediterranean or Asian food from further east, but always with a local reinterpretation. Most become nightclubs later in the evening – look out for Bollywood stars at Olive (0091 22 2605 8228), Indigo (+22 5638 5490) or Trishna's (+22 5639 9999). [Jet Airways India \(jetairways.com\)](http://JetAirways.com) flies to Mumbai for £375 in February.

Marrakech Marathon, Morocco, Jan 28

One of the world's most beautifully set races traces its way through the Medina, past the jutting muezin towers of mosques, weaving among palm groves and all with the startling backdrop of the Atlas mountains. When you've run yourself into the ground, stagger back to a riad. [The Best of Morocco](http://TheBestofMorocco.com) has a selection from £610pp for the week of the race, including flights and transfers. morocco-travel.com, marathon-marrakech.com.