

NATURE ENVIRONMENT

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The Allure of Nature

Mountain peaks that tower skywards. Beaches shaped by the force of ocean waves. Fjords that reach far into craggy mountainscapes like glistening arms. Deserts that form fantastical panoramas of ever shifting sands. Ancient forests that have an aura of dignity and tranquility. Animals that enter into a harmonious union of incredible complexity and perfection with their natural habitats. The diversity of the natural world is the Earth's greatest asset. We celebrate **The Allure of Nature** in breathtaking images.

01 The Islands of the North

Iceland is a place to experience the elemental forces of nature at first hand. The island, located between the European and American continents, is a stunning example of the forces that have shaped our planet. The ice-covered neighboring island of Greenland offers a tranquil contrast. The calving of the gigantic glacier in the Ilulissat icefjord is an especially majestic sight.

02 In Search of Water

The most beautiful part of the African desert region of Ténéré is where it is most hostile to life – at its heart, where huge ochre sand dunes dominate the landscape. Here, not even the native Tuareg are able to find water. The search for this life-giving element also dominates the existence of animals in the Serengeti, where sprawling herds roam the savannah during the dry season.

03 Created by the Gods

As legend would have it, Australia's Fraser Island is a beautiful goddess who wanted to remain on Earth forever. The world's largest sand island can boast an astonishing variety of vegetation. The sacred Mount Tongariro in New Zealand is also shrouded in legend. The region encompasses spectacular volcanic phenomena as well as diverse flora and fauna.

04 The Mysteries of the Pacific

Two of the natural wonders are in the Pacific Ocean – and are not immediately obvious to the eye. The Galápagos archipelago in the eastern Pacific is an evolutionary laboratory with incomparably rich animal and plant life. On the other side of the ocean, beneath the surface of the water, are the paradise gardens of the Great Barrier Reef.

05 Breathtaking Sights

Just a century ago, the inhabitants of the western US found themselves having to contend with two almost insurmountable natural obstacles: the Rocky Mountains and the Grand Canyon, which plunges almost two kilometers at its deepest point. Today both are easily accessible, but they still have the power to take our breath away.

06 Powerful and Unpredictable

The Perito Moreno Glacier in Patagonia, southern Argentina, continues to grow. At irregular intervals, its errant masses of ice dam up Argentino Lake until the water pressure builds and shatters the icy barrier. Three thousand kilometers to the north, the seasonally fluctuating water volumes of the Río Iguazú come crashing down in one of the Earth's most powerful Falls.

07 Mountains of Fire

There are no fewer than 170 volcanoes on the Kamchatka Peninsular in Russia's far east. The region is a natural paradise with diverse and abundant wildlife, including very large brown bears. The Kilauea Volcano is located on the island of Hawaii. It is one of the most active volcanoes in the world, and has been continuously erupting lava since 1983.

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