

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of the Statue of Liberty against a clear blue sky. The statue's right arm, holding the torch, dominates the left side of the frame. The crown and face are visible on the right. The image has a slightly desaturated, vintage feel.

# USA

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

The logo for 'The Ultimate Travel Company' features a stylized white mountain range with a semi-circular arc above it, all in white against the blue background.

The Ultimate  
TRAVEL COMPANY



# USA



## THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

Welcome to the USA, our eighth and final brochure covering the world's continents. I do hope it convinces you to visit a remarkable and beautiful country that is often overlooked in favour of a more exotic sounding holiday in Africa or Asia. You will not be disappointed.

There is so much to discover and to enjoy. From the Golden State of California and the wonders of America's parklands to the musical heritage of the Deep South and the pageant of history, coastal scenery and riotous autumnal colour that is New England.

Indulge your inner cowboy on one of Montana's quintessential dude ranches, explore a 'top ten' American city, take to the highway on a Great American Road Trip, treat yourself to a few indulgent days of glorious seclusion at Belmond El Encanto in the hills behind Santa Barbara, or even hop across to the magical volcanic islands of the Hawaiian archipelago. The options are both varied and endless.

America might be bound by one language and to one flag, but its 50 separate states offer a diversity of experience and spectacle that is without peer.

Speak to our team of destination experts and they will help you make the right choices from the wealth available in this veritable "nation of nations".

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Nick Van Gruisen".

NICK VAN GRUISEN



# USA

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“Not merely a nation but  
a nation of nations”  
LYNDON B. JOHNSON



Monument Valley, Arizona / Utah



# WHY I LOVE THE USA

BY DAVID WICKERS



**David Wickers** was the Chief Travel Correspondent on The Sunday Times for 17 years, during which he was voted 'Travel Writer of the Year' three times. David was also a director of The Ultimate Travel Company from 2012-17.

If you've never been to the USA, you probably feel you already know it rather well, from its legacy of Hollywood movies, TV box sets, literature and musical heritage. But there's nothing that beats seeing it in the flesh.

You'll invariably kick off with a city. New York is the cultural hub of the universe - or so New Yorkers argue, citing its myriad museums, galleries, shops and diverse neighbourhoods.

But even in the east there's some serious competition. From Boston, for example, a much softer, leafier gateway, rich in art and oozing with historical pedigree, or imperial Washington with its squint-white marble memorials and monuments. And not forgetting Chicago, where 'high rise' is synonymous with architectural magnificence.

Summer in most American cities will come as something of a climate shock. Despite the air conditioning, you'll crave rural horizons and coastal escapes. In the east, the shores (and the lobsters!) of Maine or Cape Cod beckon, while inland the perfect season is the Fall when New England showcases a riot of blazing colours.

In the west, Los Angeles and San Francisco are also gateways to an array of Californian pleasures, from the vineyards of the Napa Valley to the towering granite walls of Yosemite. For sun and fun, head for the coast, perhaps driving the spectacularly scenic Pacific Highway to Santa Barbara and Big Sur, the jewel in the crown of America's many classic road trips. Fly further west and you'll come to tropical, dreamy Hawaii, the most remote island chain in the world.

The Deep South is a feast of music with Nashville the capital of country, New Orleans of jazz and Memphis, famously the home of Graceland, of blues. The South is also a feast of food, from grits to gumbo, fancy French Creole to fried chicken. History abounds too, on show in the scores of antebellum plantation homes, civil rights museums and heritage trails.

The USA is also a National Park wonderland. The oldest and most iconic of these sanctuaries is Yellowstone, a nature-in-the-raw landscape of geysers, bubbling pools and domed monoliths which echo to the howl of coyotes. Riders will feel especially at home on the range here in Wyoming, with dude ranches dotted across the state and neighbouring Montana.

But the Oscar for the USA's top topographical marvel goes to the mile-deep chasm of the Grand Canyon, 'the one great site that every American should see,' according to Theodore Roosevelt. Brits too. Combine it with Monument Valley and Utah's own outstanding portfolio of national parks on an unforgettable road journey through the 'Wild West'.

Manhattan Island, New York



# COASTAL CALIFORNIA

FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO SAN DIEGO

*“Hugging the voluptuous ocean shoreline,  
Pacific Highway 1 is one of the most  
scenic drives on the planet”*

Three times the size of England, with blazing deserts and snow-capped peaks, wild Pacific surf, enthralling cities and internationally acclaimed vineyards, California cries out to be explored. ➡

Pacific Highway 1, Big Sur, California





Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills



Shutters on the Beach, Santa Monica



Coronado Island, San Diego

Begin in San Francisco. Bound on three sides by water, its roller-coaster streets lined with pastel pretty Victorian houses, San Francisco is a city of neighbourhoods, ranging from enormous Chinatown to Italian North Beach and each with a distinctive social demographic. It also has a rich stock of museums.

Drive slowly south towards Los Angeles, hugging the voluptuous ocean shoreline on Pacific Highway 1 via Big Sur. This is one of the most scenic drives on the planet, so take your time and stop off at the artsy town of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Randolph Hearst's magnificent castle and Santa Barbara, picture-postcard queen of America's



Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO TO SAN DIEGO  
15 DAYS



**INCLUDES**  
3 nights at The St Regis, San Francisco  
2 nights at La Playa Carmel  
1 night at Post Ranch Inn, Big Sur  
2 nights at Hotel Cheval, Paso Robles  
2 nights at Belmond El Encanto, Santa Barbara  
1 night at Shutters on the Beach, Santa Monica  
2 nights at Hotel del Coronado, San Diego

**PRICES FROM**  
£6,695 per person  
Includes flights

**WHEN TO GO**  
Year round, but best from May - Oct. Or late Nov - early Dec after Thanksgiving if you want to avoid the crowds.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

'Riviera'. Allow time, too, for a couple of nights in Paso Robles where you can visit some stellar wineries and bathe in the city's famous hot springs.

'La La Land' is everything you've seen in the movies, but magnified, stretched and glamorized many times over. Essential viewings include Hollywood with its iconic 'Walk of Fame', Beverly Hills, funky Venice Beach and the exclusive boutiques on Rodeo Drive (stratospheric prices maybe, but definitely good value for a browse). And if you're travelling with the kids, then Universal Studios and Disneyland should also be on the agenda.

Low-key Santa Monica, the seaside 'west wing' of LA, feels more like a stand-alone resort than part of the general urban sprawl. Here, **Shutters on the Beach** puts you within strolling distance of the historic pier with its brightly lit amusement park, solar-powered Ferris wheel and soothing ocean views.

End your Californian road trip in balmy San Diego, best known for its zoo but worth visiting for its craft breweries and art galleries. The 70-mile coastline, stringing together some of California's finest beaches, is a magnet for local surfers, sunbathers and volleyball players.

MORE TO SEE & DO



**Raft and whale watch**  
Enjoy the beautiful coastal scenery and marine wildlife of the Monterey Sanctuary on this exciting adventure with Captain Kate, a trained biologist and accomplished wildlife artist with 20 years' experience navigating these waters.



**Hearst Castle design**  
Experience what life must have been like as a guest of W R Hearst on the Enchanted Hill and marvel at his personal collection of rare and ancient works of art housed in this eye-popping, 165-room extravaganza.



**Horse-n-around in Santa Barbara**  
Beginning at the Circle Bar B Ranch, ride up one side of the pass and cruise down by jeep on this cowboy-led sortie along the secluded canyon trails of the majestic Santa Ynez Mountains behind Santa Barbara.



**Ultimate Hollywood**  
Walk the avenue of the stars, explore fabulous Rodeo Drive and cruise down Sunset Boulevard while your private guide gives you an exclusive insight into the glamour, opulence and tragedy of Tinseltown.



# EL ENCANTO, A BELMOND HOTEL



SANTA BARBARA'S ICONIC HIDEAWAY



## SOME KEY FACTS:

- Landmark hotel in the American Riviera, a region blessed with 300 days of sunshine a year. Perfect conditions for a cooling dip in the resort's ocean-view, zero-edge pool.
- El Encanto can be reached via a breezy 90-minute drive from Los Angeles. A courtesy shuttle service is available to take guests to any destination within a five-mile radius, but you can also borrow one of the complimentary electric bikes to explore on your own two wheels.
- Activities in the area include hiking, horseback riding, cave diving, golf, coastal sailing trips and visits to boutique wineries.
- Rooms have large writing desks, locally carved furnishings and marble bathrooms with heated stone flooring.
- The restaurant's tasty coastal menu showcases freshly caught seafood, carefully selected wines and seasonal organic produce, matching the region's culinary abundance.



The hideout of Hollywood's Golden Age icons, El Encanto, a Belmond Hotel, still enjoys glorious seclusion in the coveted hills of Santa Barbara.

Occupying seven acres of landscaped gardens, the American Riviera's most sought-after address still feels far from the madding crowd. Views from this hillside hideaway are unrivalled, gazing across Santa Barbara's red-roofed downtown towards the Pacific Ocean and Channel Islands National Park.

Opened in 1918, El Encanto has long been the refuge of the rich and famous, hosting the likes of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Carole Lombard and Clark Gable in its prime. Reopened under the Belmond portfolio in 2013 following a seven-year renovation, the hotel has reclaimed much of its original glamour. As well as

the addition of 21st-century comforts, many historical elements were painstakingly restored, including the trellis-lined Arbour and Lily Pond.

The building itself is a blend of California craftsman and Spanish colonial aesthetics, framed by winding brick pathways and grounds studded with eucalyptus and fragrant camellias. Modern facilities are seamlessly incorporated, including the spa with its enticing menu of coastal-inspired treatments. Of the 92 rooms, suites and romantic bungalows, the best have sunny, Pacific-facing patios.



Iconic hotels, luxury trains, river cruises, safaris: Belmond, a LVMH Maison, boasts 45 of the world's most celebrated destinations, thrilling journeys and inspiring retreats.





## SAN FRANCISCO TO LAS VEGAS 15 DAYS



### INCLUDES

3 nights at Argonaut Hotel, San Francisco  
3 nights at Hotel Yountville, Napa Valley  
3 nights at The Ahwahnee, Yosemite  
1 night at The Inn at Death Valley  
3 nights at Bellagio Las Vegas

### PRICES FROM

£5,295 per person  
Includes flights

### WHEN TO GO

More seasonal than the coast with chilly winters, so best from May - Oct.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

Head inland from the coast, and you'll discover rolling hillside vineyards whose produce is bottled into America's finest wines. Head further into the interior and you can explore natural sanctuaries with mile-high granite cliffs, ancient forests and sun-baked deserts where rainfall is the rarest of events.

A vision of gold-green hills scattered with family-run wineries and boutique hotels...California's wine country is a dream. From Frisco, hire a car and follow route 101 north across the Golden Gate Bridge towards Sonoma and the Napa Valley, whose renowned vineyards produce America's finest wines. Stay at least three nights and devote your days to private wine tastings, cycling through scenic countryside and indulging in contemporary, farm-to-table cuisine.

From here it's just a short turn inland to the vertical world of Yosemite National Park, where waterfalls hang from 3,000-foot granite cliffs like bridal veils. Visit either in high summer for the best weather, the spring for the sea of wildflowers that carpet the valley floor, or the chillier winter months for a chance to view the park's iconic granite landmarks frosted in snow.

Yet more extreme landscapes await further south in the appropriately named Death Valley National Park, one of the hottest and driest places on earth where sun-baked dunes and water-sculpted canyons harbour a surprising diversity of life. Base yourself at the **Inn at Death Valley**, whose natural spring-fed pool remains a balmy 30°C even on the coolest of desert nights.

Lying just over the state line in neighbouring Nevada, Las Vegas makes for a fabulous finale. With its lavishly themed hotels, glitzy casinos and wacky, over-the-top buildings - an Eiffel Tower one minute, Venice Grand Canal the next - this money-making desert oasis induces the same sorts of extreme opinions as Marmite. But even if you don't gamble a cent, you can still dine in Michelin-star restaurants, browse high-end boutiques and enjoy world-class shows such as Cirque du Soleil and the Blue Man Group.

## MORE TO SEE & DO



### Silicon Valley with Matt

Discover the internet giants of the Silicon Valley with resident guide Matt, who will introduce you to the main campuses (including world-famous Stanford) and also show you round the Intel Museum.



### Alcatraz by night

Join a guided tour by boat and on foot of San Francisco's infamous island prison, which at night provides a more intimate and engaging experience. Spectacular sunset views across the bay are an added bonus.



### Winemaker for the day

Dressed in a space silver lab coat and matching beret, learn how to blend, bottle, cork and foil your very own Napa Valley wine, before affixing a personally designed label. It's yours to keep, and you can even order additional cases to ship home!



### Stargaze in Yosemite

Take a trip though the dazzling summer night sky above Yosemite at the Glacier Point Amphitheatre, while listening to astronomy-related stories and learning about the park's extraordinary natural history.



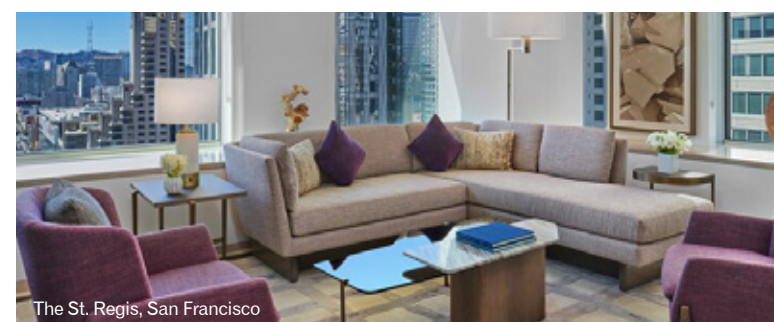
# GREAT PLACES TO STAY

OUR SIX OF THE BEST

The Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Beach



Meadowood, Napa Valley



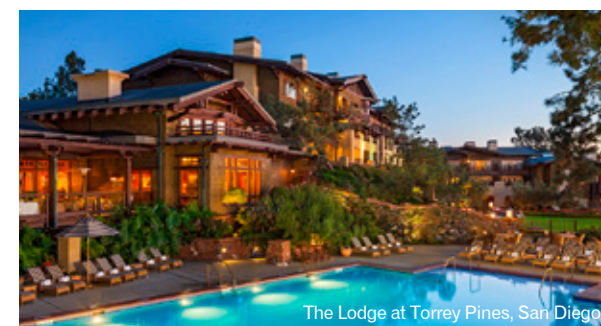
The St. Regis, San Francisco



Post Ranch Inn, Big Sur



Belmond El Encanto, Santa Barbara



The Lodge at Torrey Pines, San Diego

From signature city addresses and boutique coastal hideaways to spectacular golf resorts and country retreats where the food is Michelin starred and the wine even better...there really are some great places to stay in The Golden State.

## 1 MEADOWOOD, NAPA VALLEY

Wine tastings, croquet, tennis and golf...traditional pastimes abound at this romantic wine country retreat. Framed by pretty wooded hills on a private 250-acre estate, the three-Michelin starred Restaurant at Meadowood is ranked amongst Napa's finest.

## 2 THE ST. REGIS, SAN FRANCISCO

The landmark St. Regis offers you a spa, pool and easy access to the attractions of the vibrant SoMa neighbourhood, including the acclaimed Museum of Modern Art (just next door). The signature butler service has been a treasured tradition for the last 100 years.

## 3 POST RANCH INN, BIG SUR

From its spectacular cliff-top perch above Big Sur, few hotels can claim a better view of the Californian coastline. You'll find everything you need to unplug, from complimentary yoga and soothing spa treatments to an infinity-edge pool with uninterrupted ocean vistas.

## 4 BELMOND EL ENCANTO, SANTA BARBARA

First opened in 1918, the glamorous El Encanto sits secluded amidst the hills of Santa Barbara's illustrious 'Riviera' neighbourhood. The rooms, suites and bungalows, strewn across seven acres of gorgeously landscaped gardens, combine chic interiors with ocean-facing patios and top-of-the-line amenities.

## 5 THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL, NEWPORT BEACH

The Resort at Pelican Hill brings a touch of the Italian Renaissance to sunny southern California with its stately columns, hand-cut mosaic tiles and circular Coliseum swimming pool. Crystal Cove Beach, a magnet for surfers and sun-seekers, lies just below.

## 6 THE LODGE AT TORREY PINES, SAN DIEGO

Gazing across the dreamy coastal bluffs of La Jolla, this AAA Five Diamond-certified lodge neighbours the revered Torrey Pines Golf Course. Guests have access to priority tee times, as well as unspoiled beaches, scenic hiking trails and herbal-infused steam rooms at the spa.





Kauai

There really is something magical about the 50th US state. A string of emerald gems set with fiery volcanoes and surf-pounded beaches, Hawaii combines natural riches with a deep Polynesian heritage. Flung across the Pacific Ocean some 2,500 miles from California, this tropical paradise is surprisingly accessible.

Six hours will transport you from the urban bustle of San Francisco to the natural haven of Kauai, the oldest island in the Hawaiian chain and Jurassic Park filming location. When it comes to scenery, the 'Garden Isle' is truly unmatched - think tumbling waterfalls, rugged cliffs and green valleys draped in centuries-old rainforest. With 90% of the island inaccessible by car, a good pair of hiking boots are a must!

A short flight and you're in another paradise, Oahu, where the majority of Hawaii's diverse population reside. From the tropical glamour of Honolulu with its iconic crescent beaches to the less-developed Leeward Coast, each region has its own distinct personality. Watch pro surfers take on 30-foot waves at North Shore and experience the incredible storytelling dance of the hula at a traditional lu'au.

Studded with earth's most active volcanoes, the Big Island has the awesome power of nature on full display. Hawaii Volcanoes National

Park (site of the world's only 'drive-in' volcano) is the star attraction, but you'll also find miles of glorious coastline lapped by clear, marine-rich waters. Relax between excursions at the **Fairmont Orchid**, an oceanfront oasis home to the award-winning Spa Without Walls.

Further south, Maui's black, white and red sand beaches beckon with their cobalt-blue waters and legendary surf spots. Early risers can climb the dormant Haleakala volcano to watch the most sensational sunrise from atop the clouds. It's also worth taking the ferry over to neighbouring Lanai to see playful spinner dolphins and explore tide pools carved out of volcanic rock.

The last of Hawaii's six major islands, Molokai remains relatively detached from the modern world with residents that live off the land and preserve the traditional lifestyle of their ancestors.

THE BEST OF HAWAII  
22 DAYS



INCLUDES

2 nights at Argonaut Hotel, San Francisco  
4 nights at St Regis Princeville Resort, Kauai  
4 nights at Halekulani Hotel, Honolulu, Oahu  
4 nights at Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii (Big Island)  
4 nights at Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea  
2 nights at Andaz West Hollywood, Los Angeles

PRICES FROM

£9,975 per person  
Includes flights

WHEN TO GO

Year round, but drier and warmer from Mar - Sep. Jan - Mar bring dramatic ocean swells and professional surfers.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

MORE TO SEE & DO



Kauai from the air

From the 'Jurassic Park Falls' of Mana Waipuna to eye-popping Waimea, famed 'Grand Canyon of the Pacific', and the sculpted beauty of the Na Pali coastline, this is helicopter flying at its spectacular finest.



Oahu birding adventure

Search for white-rumped Shama and red-billed Leothrix, as well as the endemic Oahu Amakihi and Oahu Elepaio, on this scenic expedition through the mountains high above Waikiki to the island's leeward coast.



A day at the volcano

Spend a day with John in Big Island's Volcanoes National Park and you'll hike to the steams, navigate a lava tube and at the end of the day watch the glow from the crater light up the night sky. A must do!



Surf with Kimo

It's such an integral part of Hawaiian culture, there's no better place to learn. Book a lesson with Kimo, who runs a surf school at Lahaina on Maui Island and is the proud nephew of infamous big wave rider Titus Kinimaka.



Haleakala volcano



Honolulu



# DUDE RANCHES

INDULGE YOUR INNER COWBOY

For a true taste of the American West, book yourself into a dude ranch. There are those that welcome complete beginners, with riding done at the gentlest of clops, some that are more resort than ranch with all the home comforts and a range of activities, and a few that are genuine working farms where you can live the cowboy (or cowgirl!) dream and wrangle for real. Here's our pick of the best...

## 1 THE RANCH AT ROCK CREEK, MONTANA

Immersed in 6,600 acres of pure Montana wilderness, this authentic 19th-century homestead takes Western adventure to the next level with all-inclusive amenities in its luxury log homes and stylish 'glamping' cabins. The 20-plus guided activities include fly fishing in Blue Ribbon trout streams.

## 2 THE RESORT AT PAWS UP, MONTANA

Learn to throw a lasso, experience the drama of a cattle round-up and dine alfresco on prime barbecued steaks at this 37,000-acre working ranch. Accommodation wise, the Big Timber Homes and Wilderness Estates are fantastic for multi-generational families, but you can also sleep safari-style in luxury canvas tents.

## 3 TRIPLE CREEK RANCH, MONTANA

At the award-winning Triple Creek Ranch, deep in the Bitterroot Mountains, you can combine as much time in the saddle as you want (through wildflower meadows and fragrant pine forests) with hiking, white-water rafting and fun ATV adventures.

## 4 BRUSH CREEK RANCH, WYOMING

Ride free across 30,000 acres of rolling Wyoming countryside, hone your rifle shooting skills and fish in crystal clear streams at the exclusive Brush Creek Ranch. Facilities include a state-of-the-art fitness centre and atmospheric Saloon Bar complete with swinging doors and poker table.

## 5 TANQUE VERDE RANCH, ARIZONA

Founded in 1868, Tanque Verde ranks among Arizona's finest dude ranches. At the base of the Rincon Mountains, with scenic desert views, the property combines unbridled (and beginner friendly) horseback adventure with cosy, southwestern style guestrooms. Don't miss the cowboy-themed barbecues!

## 6 WILDCATTER RANCH, TEXAS

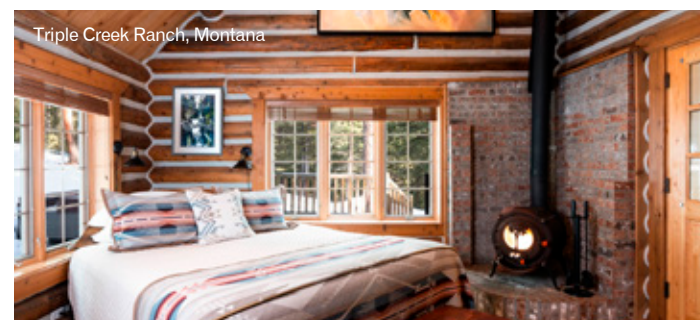
Whether for a family break or romantic escape, Wildcatter Ranch is a place to reconnect with nature at the heart of glorious North Texas Hill Country. Ride alongside Texas cowboys and test your aim at the archery range before retreating to the infinity pool.

**You'll also find dude ranches in Utah and Colorado. Subject to location, some open year-round, others are seasonal, but it should be feasible to include one or more in any USA itinerary.**

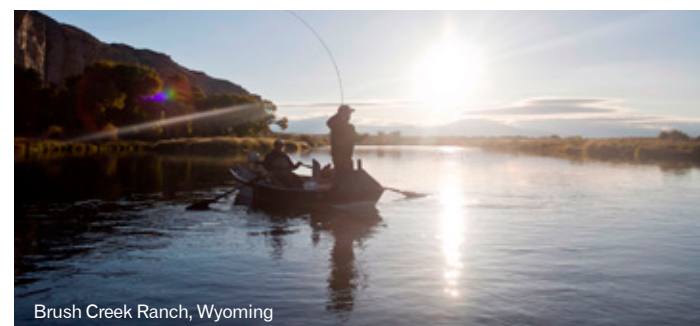
The Ranch at Rock Creek, Montana



The Resort at Paws Up, Montana



Triple Creek Ranch, Montana



Brush Creek Ranch, Wyoming



Tanque Verde Ranch, Arizona



Wildcatter Ranch, Texas





Grand Canyon, Arizona

*“A mile-deep, multi-coloured chasm carved into the plateau over some two billion years”*

What do the following have in common? The Statue of Liberty, a long stretch of sandy beach on Cape Cod, a 2,000-mile footpath between Maine and Georgia, the White House, the battlefield of the Little Bighorn in Montana, and the house where Eugene O'Neill penned *The Iceman Cometh*? They all fall under the protective umbrella of America's National Parks Service.

Enacted by US Congress in 1916, the 'Organic Act' created the National Parks Service in order to 'conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations'.

Twenty-seven states have national parks, with California possessing the most (nine), followed by Alaska (eight), Utah (five) and Colorado (four). Together, they occupy more space than the entirety of the UK. Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias, the largest at over 13 million acres, could absorb each of the nine smallest US states and is more than twice as large as all Britain's National Parks put together.



Everglades, Florida



Yellowstone, Wyoming



Colorado River, Grand Canyon

**The scale and statistics are impressive, but then so is the natural legacy they are designed to protect. Here are our 'six of the best'...**

**1. Grand Canyon, Arizona**

The earth's undisputed number-one natural wonder; a mile-deep, multi-coloured chasm carved into the plateau over some two billion years by the Colorado River. 'It's one of the great sights every American should see,' wrote Theodore Roosevelt.

And not just Americans. As well as the jaw-dropping landscape, there's a choice of active and adventurous pursuits that include hikes, mule rides (the Bright Angel Trail to the canyon floor being the most popular) and exhilarating rafting descents of the Colorado's 150 rapids.

**2. Everglades, Florida**

By way of complete contrast to the theme parks of Orlando and the popular beach resorts along both Atlantic and Gulf coasts, the Everglades is a subtropical wilderness of mangroves and sanctuary to a dazzling array of fauna (with crocodiles and manatees the star attractions).

Although the pancake-flat scenery may seem a little monotonous in comparison with the peaks and troughs of other parks, its ecosystem is truly unique. And such is the space and the silence, it's hard to believe that Miami is just 20 or so miles away.

**3. Yellowstone, Wyoming**

The oldest national park, and most famous for its thermal activity. Yellowstone's hot springs, boiling-mud cauldrons and erupting geysers are an awesome reminder of how violent the earth can be.

'Old Faithful' is the most enduring attraction, a smoking gun that fires its 130-foot plume with clockwork regularity, but the park is also home to more than 60 species of mammal, including wolf, grizzly bear, lynx, bison and elk.







Shenandoah, Virginia

4. Shenandoah, Virginia

Only a couple of hours by road from Washington, DC, Shenandoah sits astride the wonderfully scenic Skyline Drive that runs for some 100 miles along the spine of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The park is rich in wildlife - residents include black bear and wild turkey - so a 35mph speed limit is imposed throughout.

5. Yosemite, California

'Into this one mountain mansion, nature had gathered her choicest treasures,' wrote Scottish-born 19th-century conservationist John Muir.

Perfectly described! Bulldozed by glaciers and defined by mile-high cliffs, dramatic waterfalls, old-growth forests and the iconic granite monoliths of Half Dome and El Capitan, the Yosemite Valley is beyond breathtaking.

6. Volcanoes, Hawaii

Hawaii's Big Island has a pair of super-active volcanoes. Mauna Loa is the world's largest, measuring an astonishing 31,000 feet from submarine base to summit. Kilauea is its most active, but you can drive around the crater, walk past steaming sulphur vents and watch red-hot lava fizzing into the ocean.



Yosemite, California



Volcanoes, Hawaii

UTAH AND ARIZONA  
20 DAYS

INCLUDES

- 2 nights at Encore at Wynn Las Vegas
- 3 nights at Zion National Park Lodge
- 2 nights at Lodge at Bryce Canyon
- 3 nights at Red Cliffs Lodge, Moab
- 1 night at Goulding's Lodge, Monument Valley
- 2 nights at Lake Powell Resort
- 2 nights at El Tovar Hotel, Grand Canyon
- 3 nights at L'Auberge de Sedona

PRICES FROM

£5,945 per person (Includes flights)

WHEN TO GO

From Mar - Oct, but avoid the peak summer season from Jul - Aug if you want to escape the crowds and the heat.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC



MONTANA AND WYOMING  
17 DAYS

INCLUDES

- 3 nights at Thompson Seattle
- 5 nights at The Resort at Paws Up, Montana
- 3 nights at Under Canvas Yellowstone
- 2 nights at Amangani, Jackson Hole
- 2 nights at The Grand America Hotel, Salt Lake City

PRICES FROM

£13,375 per person (Includes flights)

WHEN TO GO

Snow can be an issue in the Spring, so best from June to Oct.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

BEST OF THE  
REST FOR...



Glaciers

Watch in wonder as giant icebergs calve into Alaska's Glacier Bay, a dramatic 70-mile long fjord.



Cactus

The desert landscape of Joshua Tree near Palm Springs is dotted with distinctive candelabra cactus, as seen on the eponymous U2 album.



Coast

Acadia is an enchanting blend of island and mainland scenery in the New England state of Maine, with unbeatable seascapes and great lobsters!



Heat

California's Death Valley is the hottest, lowest and driest place in the USA, with record temperatures topping an unforgiving 56.7°C.



Rocks

Located at the junction of the Colorado Plateau, Great Basin and Mojave Desert, Zion is a geological wonder of sandstone canyons, mountain mesas and red-rock spires.



Trees

Sequoia in California's Sierra Nevada is home to the oldest living things on earth, and its largest trees.



# AMANGANI

From its lofty perch on the crest of the East Gros Ventre Butte, Amangani commands a breathtaking panorama of the Teton mountains and Snake River Valley.

Calling all nature, wildlife and adventure enthusiasts, Aman's luxe Wyoming resort is a genuine year-round escape. As well as easy access to the slopes of celebrated ski resort Jackson Hole, Amangani lies on the doorstep of the great Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks.

Spring, summer and autumn, with their clear blue skies and pure mountain air, are spent hiking through wildflower-carpeted valleys, fly-fishing on the Snake River and getting up close to bears and bison on guided wildlife tours. Naturally, winter is

dominated by the world-class skiing on offer, with Amangani's ski lounge conveniently located just below the main gondola, but you can also enjoy snowmobiling and romantic sleigh rides through the National Elk Refuge.

And when the day is done, you'll retreat to the serenity of Aman's redwood-lined resort where you'll be met by blazing log fires, deep-soaking tubs and a spectacular 35-metre heated outdoor pool. The 40 suites, bedecked in wood, stone and woven cowhide chairs, flaunt sensational floor-to-ceiling views.

## AMANGIRI, SOUTHERN UTAH



Amangani's sister property in Canyon Point with unrivalled access to Bryce and Zion National Parks, Amangiri nestles amongst spectacular slot canyons and rock formations dating back several millennia.

Blending seamlessly into the raw desert landscape, facilities include a 25,000-square-metre Aman Spa where treatments draw on the healing traditions of the Navajo.



### SOME KEY FACTS:

- Luxury three-storey wilderness retreat with access to some of the finest alpine, powder and cross-country skiing in North America.
- Convenient ski-in ski-out facilities, with complimentary transfers to Amangani's private ski lounge located just steps from Jackson Hole's Bridger Gondola and Aerial Tram.
- Other popular activities include wildlife watching, butte-top hikes, snowshoeing, fly-fishing, kayaking, mountain biking and hot air ballooning - to name just a few.
- Start your day with a private yoga session in the Movement Studio, and end with a deep tissue massage or Himalayan salt scrub in the dedicated Spa and Wellness Centre.
- The Grill Restaurant showcases locally sourced and sustainable ranch meats such as caribou sausage and bison steak, whilst the inviting Zinc Bar serves creative cocktails and locally brewed beer.







# THE DEEP SOUTH

FOLLOW THE BLUES HIGHWAY FROM  
NASHVILLE TO NEW ORLEANS

“...the Great Smoky Mountains, the south’s starring natural attraction whose fog-shrouded slopes straddle the Tennessee-North Carolina border.”

Great Smoky Mountains

A world of live jazz clubs and authentic Creole cooking, swampy bayous and stately antebellum mansions, musical legends, mint juleps and slow-moving Mississippi waters...nowhere can beat the Deep South for character and easy charm.

Begin in charismatic Atlanta, the epicentre of the Civil Rights Movement and birthplace of one of its principal figures, Martin Luther King, Jr. Trace King’s extraordinary legacy in the Sweet Auburn district where his childhood home, as well as the original Ebenezer Baptist Church, has been preserved as part of a National Historical Park.

North of Atlanta lie the Great Smoky Mountains, the south’s starring natural attraction whose fog-shrouded slopes straddle the Tennessee-North Carolina border. The celebrated Relais & Châteaux resort, **Blackberry Farm**, is a fine base for hiking these idyllic foothills, as well as trips to Dolly Parton’s Knoxville, Nantahala National Forest and the famous Jack Daniel’s Distillery in Lynchburg.

A few hours’ drive west and you’re in Nashville, the undisputed heart of country music where Ryman’s Auditorium and the Country Music Hall of Fame are among

the must-see musical attractions. If it’s soul and rock ‘n’ roll you’re after, follow the signs to Memphis to visit Presley’s Graceland mansion and the legendary Sun Studio where he, B.B. King and Johnny Cash all recorded albums. The National Civil Rights Museum, meanwhile, offers a moving insight into the south’s complex racial history.

Natchez, the oldest town in Mississippi state, might be less familiar but should not be overlooked. Lying at one end of the scenic Natchez Trace Parkway, the town overflows with lavish antebellum mansions and plantation homes whose graceful, columned facades belie a brutal past. Nearby Vicksburg is another key site for those interested in the Civil War.

Further down the Mississippi and an exuberant display of French, Caribbean and African influences, New Orleans needs little introduction. Head straight to the French Quarter where classic jazz and blues riffs spill onto the streets from bars on Bourbon and buskers in Jackson Square.



Blackberry Farm

## NASHVILLE TO NEW ORLEANS 18 DAYS



### INCLUDES

- 2 nights at Four Seasons Hotel Atlanta
- 3 nights at Blackberry Farm, Great Smoky Mountains
- 3 nights at Noelle, Nashville
- 3 nights at The Peabody Memphis
- 2 nights at Monmouth Historic Inn & Gardens, Natchez
- 3 nights Hotel Peter & Paul, New Orleans

### PRICES FROM

£8,095 per person  
Includes flights

### WHEN TO GO

From Mar - May for warm, sunny days and cool nights, Sep - Oct for the autumn colours, or Feb for Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

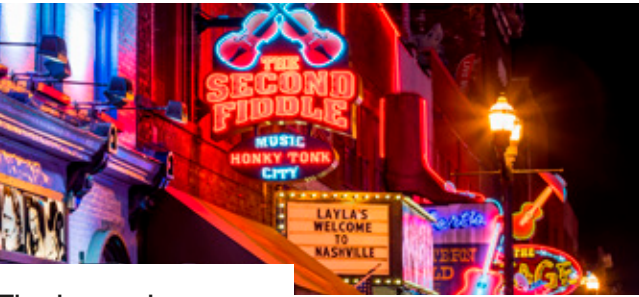
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

## MORE TO SEE & DO



### Hike the Smoky Mountains

Choose from a varied menu of expertly guided day hikes, with such evocative names as ‘Rock of Ages Adventure’, ‘Where the Big Trees Are’ and Old Growth Waterfall’, and discover the quiet beauty of these ancient lands.



### There’s a song in everyone...

Create a little of your own Nashville magic, and who knows even a hit, by co-writing and recording a song with a bona fide veteran of the city’s musical scene. And, at the end of the 3-hour session, it’s yours to keep.



### The flight of Jack Daniels

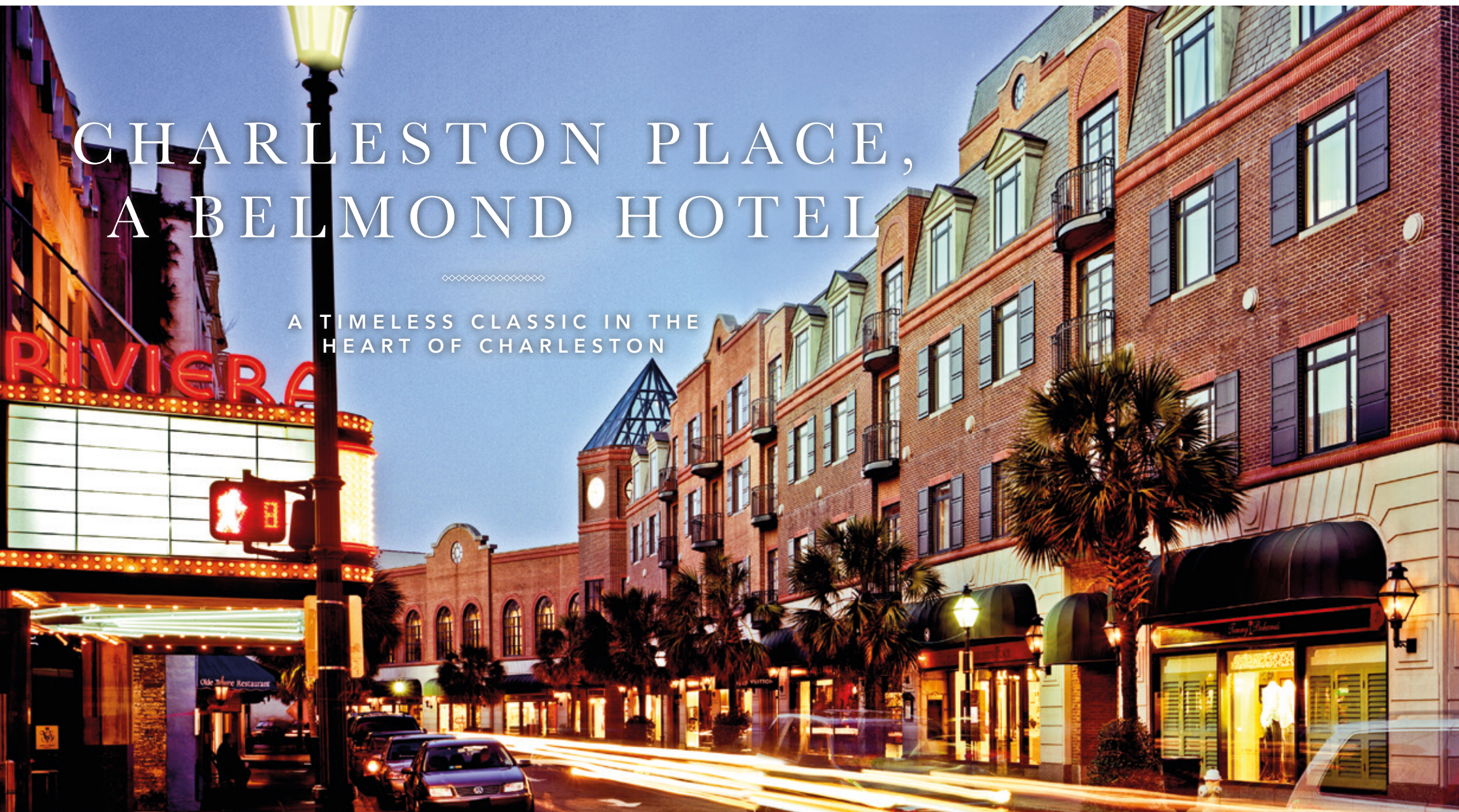
You won’t take to the air, but you will enjoy a special flight in the Jack Daniel’s Hollow as a seasoned storyteller guides you through Mr Jack’s distillery and old-time Tennessee whisky-making. You’ll also visit historic Barrel House 1-14 and sample some of its offering...provided you’re over 21 of course!



### New Orleans Jazz

From Dixieland to big brass and everything in between, hear about the origins and culture of jazz before heading for the French Quarter to discover the best musical talent in town. There’s nothing quite like a night out in ‘The Big Easy’!





# CHARLESTON PLACE, A BELMOND HOTEL

A TIMELESS CLASSIC IN THE  
HEART OF CHARLESTON

With a sought-after location in Charleston's historic downtown area, Charleston Place, A Belmond Hotel, exudes modern luxury and vintage grandeur.

Inspired by the historic homes for which Charleston is famed, the hotel's impressive Georgian-style lobby welcomes you with gleaming marble floors, an open-arm staircase and dazzling chandelier. The airy rooms you'll find adorned with classic wainscoting, antique furniture and plush fabrics, with the best skyline views to be had from the Club Level rooms and suites occupying the top two floors.

In the face of some stiff competition, the acclaimed Charleston Grill restaurant maintains its spot amongst

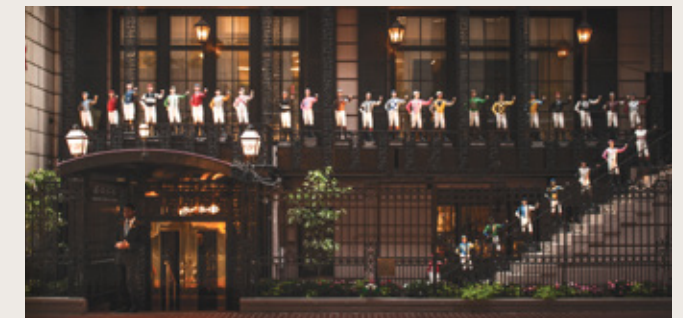
the city's top eateries, offering an irresistible blend of southern flavours, modern gastronomy and live jazz music. Meanwhile, the plant-filled Palmetto Café is the perfect setting for a lazy brunch, providing guests with the fuel needed for a day of plantation visits, dolphin watching and horse-drawn carriage tours.

Between excursions, you can head up to the fabulous rooftop bar for a signature Charleston Place Punch cocktail, or cool off with a dip in the 50ft saltwater pool.

Iconic hotels, luxury trains, river cruises, safaris: Belmond, a LVMH Maison, boasts 45 of the world's most celebrated destinations, thrilling journeys and inspiring retreats.



## '21', NEW YORK



A Prohibition-era speakeasy complete with camouflaged wine cellar, Belmond's '21' restaurant is a New York icon and haunt of countless Hollywood stars, athletes and politicians.

The atmospheric Bar Room, whose ceiling is adorned with the gifts of famous patrons, is the main draw, serving reimagined American classics alongside world-class wines.



## SOME KEY FACTS:

- Ranked among the top hotels in North America by both Condé Nast Traveller and Travel + Leisure.
- A total of 434 rooms and suites, including 72 at Club Level. Club Level guests enjoy access to the plush two-storey Club Lounge among other exclusive benefits.
- Lavish Italian marble bathrooms with brass fittings, walk-in rain showers and deep soaking tubs.
- The hotel's polished restaurant, the Charleston Grill, has received the Forbes Four Star Award and AAA Four Diamond Award for Food Excellence.
- The extensive facilities include a sumptuous spa, beauty salon, modern health club and rooftop bar complete with 50ft infinity pool and retractable glass roof.



# NEW ENGLAND

A parade of historical landmarks and acclaimed museums, pretty seaside towns and clapboard villages, verdant mountains and glorious fall foliage...New England certainly doesn't lack charm. Comprising the northeastern states of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, this is the birthplace of America. →





Beacon Hill, Boston

MASSACHUSETTS AND  
RHODE ISLAND  
15 DAYS



INCLUDES

3 nights at Fairmont Copley Plaza, Boston  
3 nights at Wequassett Resort, Cape Cod  
2 nights at Menemsha Inn, Martha's Vineyard  
2 nights at White Elephant, Nantucket  
3 nights at Castle Hill Inn, Newport

PRICES FROM

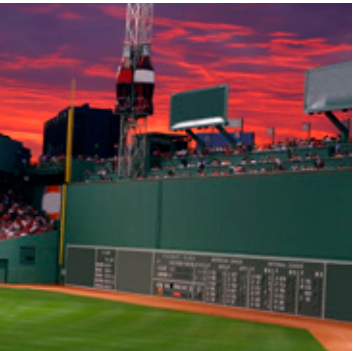
£6,745 per person  
Includes flights

WHEN TO GO

Either in high summer from Jun - Aug, or from Sep - Oct for the fall colours and whale watching.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

MORE TO SEE & DO



Behind the scenes at  
Fenway Park

Enjoy a coveted, behind the scenes tour of 'America's Most Beloved Ballpark', home to the Boston Red Sox. Visit Pesky's Pole and sit atop the Green Monster, which stands 37'2" high overlooking leftfield.



Wings over Martha's Vineyard

Take to the air in the front seat of a biplane while your pilot gives you a guided aerial tour of Martha's Vineyard iconic attractions from behind. Flights last from fifteen minutes to one hour. Aerobatics are entirely possible but optional!



Wine, whisky and beer

Located in the pastoral heart of the island, Nantucket Vineyard combines old world techniques with state-of-the-art technology in its hand-crafted production of fine wine, beer and spirits. You'll get to sample two of each.



America's Cup sailing

Board an historic America's Cup winning boat for an invigorating sail on Narragansett Bay to the north of Newport, Rhode Island. You can either participate as an active crew member or sit back, relax and enjoy the experience.

The Pilgrim Fathers first made land at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts, aboard the Mayflower in 1620. Today, the state's capital - leafy, walkable Boston - is still New England's gateway. Take a stroll around the historic, gas-lit neighbourhood of Beacon Hill before picking up the iconic Freedom Trail. This dotted red line on the sidewalk will lead you through 200 years of US history and past 16 of the main revolutionary sites, including the church steeple where Paul Revere hung his lanterns to warn of the impending British invasion.

To the south of Boston lies Cape Cod, a wholly maritime place with nowhere more than six miles from the sound of waves and the screech of scavenging gulls. Quiet beaches and whale watching (in season) are two of the Cape's biggest draws, but if it's links golf that you're after, then check-in to **Wequassett Resort** for access to the prestigious Cape Cod National Golf Club.

Cape Cod, in turn, is the gateway to two very different islands but both an easy ferry ride away, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. The former is all breezy beach grass, artisan coffee and brightly painted cottages, whilst the latter is a National Historic Landmark comprised of weathered, cedar-shingled buildings and a fascinating whaling history. Both preserve their small-town charm through a total lack of highways, traffic lights and chain-owned stores.

Make your way back onto the mainland for a tour around the glamorous, Gilded Age mansions (the former homes of America's wealthiest vacationers) lining the streets of Bellevue Avenue in Newport, Rhode Island. The city's yacht-filled harbour famously hosted the America's Cup sailing regatta a dozen times between 1930 and 1983.



Harwich, Cape Cod



Whale watching, Cape Cod





MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
AND VERMONT  
16 DAYS



INCLUDES

3 nights at XV Beacon Hotel, Boston  
2 nights at The Kennebunkport Inn  
2 nights at Mill Falls, Lake Winnepesaukee  
2 nights at The Lodge at Spruce Peak, Stowe  
2 nights at Woodstock Inn  
3 nights at The Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge

PRICES FROM

£5,145 per person  
Includes flights

WHEN TO GO

Either in high summer from Jun - Aug or from  
Sep - Oct for the fall colours.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

Though a year-round playground, New England is at its scenic best in autumn when the leaves turn colour and the bright, summer green landscape transforms into a spectacular patchwork of deep crimson, vibrant orange and rich gold. A sight well worth crossing the pond for!

And where better to see the seasons change than in New Hampshire, where forests (some 4.8 million acres) make up more than 80 per cent of the land. Pumpkins, corn stalks and red dairy barns dot the landscape, and the cool, crisp air makes for wonderful hikes in the White Mountains. Scenic backroad drives and cruises on Lake Winnepesaukee are also very much on the menu.

For an even deeper rural experience, cross the Connecticut River into the Green Mountains of Vermont, 'a state in a natural state' to borrow from long-time resident and poet, Robert Frost. Vermont is more rural than even Wyoming or Montana - the capital of Montpelier has a population of less than 8,000! 'Leaf peeping' hotspots include historic Woodstock and the postcard-perfect alpine village of Stowe, the 'ski capital of the east'.

Continue south to the softly rolling Berkshires and some of the prettiest villages in the US, an enchanting world of wooden churches with pencil fine spires, traditional country stores and elegant, weatherboarded inns. Head to Stockbridge for a night or two at the atmospheric **Red Lion Inn**, which dates its founding back to 1773, and a visit to the celebrated Norman Rockwell Museum - home of the world's largest collection of original Rockwell art. The Tanglewood Music Festival, held in Stockbridge every summer, is also a must for music lovers.

Find a few more days, and you can add the rocky, lighthouse-studded shoreline of Maine, a state steeped in maritime history and doorstep to the wild fist of coastal glory that is Acadia National Park.

MORE TO SEE & DO



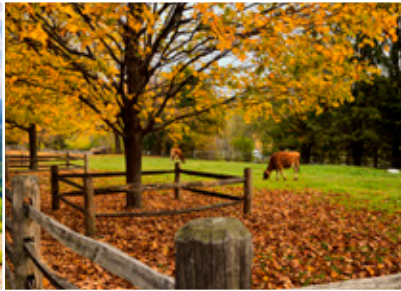
Dine at The Lighthouse

Enjoy a private dining experience at the top of Newburyport's lighthouse tower to the north of Boston. Delicious local food paired with views across the bay and nearby harbour - the perfect way to commemorate a special event.



Hike the Berkshires

Follow the Appalachian Trail to the summit of Race Mountain for some of the best views in the Berkshires and learn forest bathing techniques from certified mindful guide and long-time resident Mark.



A day at the farm

A short scenic stroll from the village centre of Woodstock, Billings is both a fully operational Jersey dairy farm and outdoor history museum with educational exhibits and interactive events. A wonderful insight into America's rural past.



Lobstering with Captain John

Learn the life of a Maine lobsterman on this day out from Bar Harbour. Discover how the traps are set and observe an array of marine wildlife in its natural habitat, set against a backdrop of picture postcard coastal scenery.



# CHATHAM BARS INN



CAPE COD AT ITS MOST GLORIOUS



Rich in character and steeped in New England charm, the beloved Chatham Bars Inn has stood at the elbow of Cape Cod for over 100 years.

Emerging in 1914 as a hunting retreat for affluent Bostonians, Chatham Bars Inn today is Cape Cod's choicest seaside retreat. A stone's throw from quaint downtown Chatham, guests can look forward to all-embracing Atlantic Ocean views, warm hospitality and fresh, farm-to-table cuisine - courtesy of the resort's very own eight-acre farm.

Sailing, sunset cruises, tennis, golf and big game fishing are all on the agenda, whilst those looking to get up close to giant whales can do so aboard the Billy Joel-designed Shooting Star - just one among the resort's private fleet. A classic boardwalk connects the property to its private beach lapped by the calm blue waters of Aunt Lydia's Cove - swim, stroll and soak up the sun as refreshments are delivered to your personal beach cabana.

You can stay in the historic Main Inn or choose one of the classic, shingle-style cottages along the sand. For a more pampered experience, the adults-only Spa Suites have oversized hydrotherapy tubs, saunas and steam showers.



## SOME KEY FACTS:

- 217 individually styled rooms, cottages and suites spread across 25 oceanfront acres.
- Four unique restaurants and bars - Stars, The Sacred Cod, The Beach House Grill and The Veranda. Each offers a very different culinary experience, from modern classics to laidback coastal fare.
- Set in a Zen garden, the luxury spa is a true sanctuary offering five oversized treatment rooms with hydrotherapy tubs. Other facilities include a heated ocean-facing pool, state-of-the-art fitness centre, Har-Tru tennis courts and regulation-size croquet lawn.
- A fleet of luxury boats offering private charters, sunset cruises, fishing trips, whale watching tours and excursions to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.
- Every 30 minutes the resort runs a complimentary boat shuttle to the pristine Cape Cod National Seashore.
- Award-winning kids' programme offering an array of fun activities including scavenger hunts and archery hoverball.





# GREAT DRIVES AND TRAIN JOURNEYS

OUR SIX OF THE BEST

Road-tripping is a quintessential American experience. The thrill and freedom of the open highway, combined with the country's grand scale and diverse landscapes, promises real adventure. Not to mention all the hidden gems you'll uncover along the way.

With four million miles of roads, the US has more than its fair share of great drives. Here, we shortlist our favourite six...

## The Grand Circle - Las Vegas to Las Vegas

This extraordinary 11-day road trip spans 1,500 miles between Utah and Arizona, encompassing six national parks, two national monuments and countless geological wonders.

Unsurprisingly, you'll be confronted with spectacular displays of nature at every turn. Ensure you have enough camera space for the emerald pools and blue skies of Zion, the colourful 'hoodoos' of Bryce Canyon, the towering red buttes of Monument Valley and the dramatic sweep of the Grand Canyon.

**Note:** If you prefer rail to road, and have less time available, **Rocky Mountaineer** (of Canada fame) have added a spectacular 2-day train journey between Denver and Moab to their portfolio.

## Route 66

Originally constructed in 1926 to connect rural communities with larger, urban cities in the west, Route 66 has cemented its place in popular American culture. Though officially decommissioned in 1985, the romance of the road survives, with much of the original route still paved and driveable.

The 'Mother Road' today is a nostalgic foray into classic Americana and quintessential roadside displays - think neon signs and drive-in movie theatres, old-school diners and classic motels. Other highlights include Arizona's Painted Desert, the Lincoln Home National Historic Site and St Louis' enormous Gateway Arch.



## Pacific Coast Highway

Stretching virtually the entire length of the west coast, this famous cliff-hugging highway embraces over 650 miles of gorgeous Californian coastline.

En route, you can visit delightful seaside towns like Carmel-by-the-Sea and Monterey, soak in the rugged grandeur of Big Sur, admire the architectural jewel of Hearst's Castle and discover geological attractions like Bowling Ball Beach. Stop to stretch your legs in beautiful redwood forests or head further inland to the celebrated wine regions of Napa and Sonoma Valley.

## Oregon Coast Highway 101 - Seattle to San Francisco

Although little known in comparison with its Pacific Coast neighbour, the eight-hour drive between Seattle and San Francisco has its own share of majestic coastal scenery.

Snaking down the Oregon coast, Highway 101 will lead you past bustling beach towns and old-growth forests, historic lighthouses and countless state parks. Cannon Beach, home of the 235-foot Haystack Rock, is particularly worth pausing for, as is the award-winning Tillamook dairy where you can enjoy a free, self-guided tour.

## Blue Ridge Parkway - Virginia & North Carolina

A 469-mile ribbon twisting and turning through the green, mist-shrouded valleys of the Appalachian Mountains, the Blue Ridge Parkway connects Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina.

With a speed limit of 45mph, the route is designed to be enjoyed at a leisurely pace, with lots of scenic hiking trails, waterfalls and fishing spots to discover along the way. Keep your eyes peeled for white-tailed deer, wild turkey and the elusive black bear!

## Overseas Highway - Miami to Key West

Encompassing sensational land and seascapes, the dreamy Overseas Highway (and its 42 elegant bridges) crosses turquoise waters to connect the beautiful coral cay islands known as Florida Keys.

Beginning in Miami, the 113-mile route can be accomplished in just four hours, but allot more time for the sea turtle hospital in Marathon Key, the sports fishing hotspot of Islamorada and the Bahia Honda State Park with its superb snorkelling and kayaking. Finish in Ernest Hemingway's former home, Key West.

## THE GREAT AMERICAN RAILROAD

...for those who prefer to sit back and watch the world go by



## Grand Canyon Railway - Williams to the Grand Canyon South Rim

Weaving through pine forest, prairie and desert, the Grand Canyon Railway has been transporting travellers to the South Rim since 1901.



## Amtrak Coast Starlight - Seattle to Los Angeles

Encapsulating fertile valleys, great cities and miles of Pacific shoreline, the hugely popular Coast Starlight flaunts the best west coast views.



## Amtrak Vermonter - Washington/ NYC to Vermont

The panoramic Vermonter will whisk you from Washington to the legendary ski resorts of the Green Mountain State in just thirteen hours.



## Amtrak Empire Builder - Chicago via St. Paul/Minneapolis/ Spokane/Portland to Seattle

The Mississippi, Montana's 'Big Sky' country and Glacier National Park all feature on this epic journey through the American West.



## Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

Awe-inspiring mountain and canyon landscapes abound on this historic steam-powered locomotive running between the old Colorado mining towns of Durango and Silverton.



## Amtrak Acela - Washington via Philadelphia to NYC

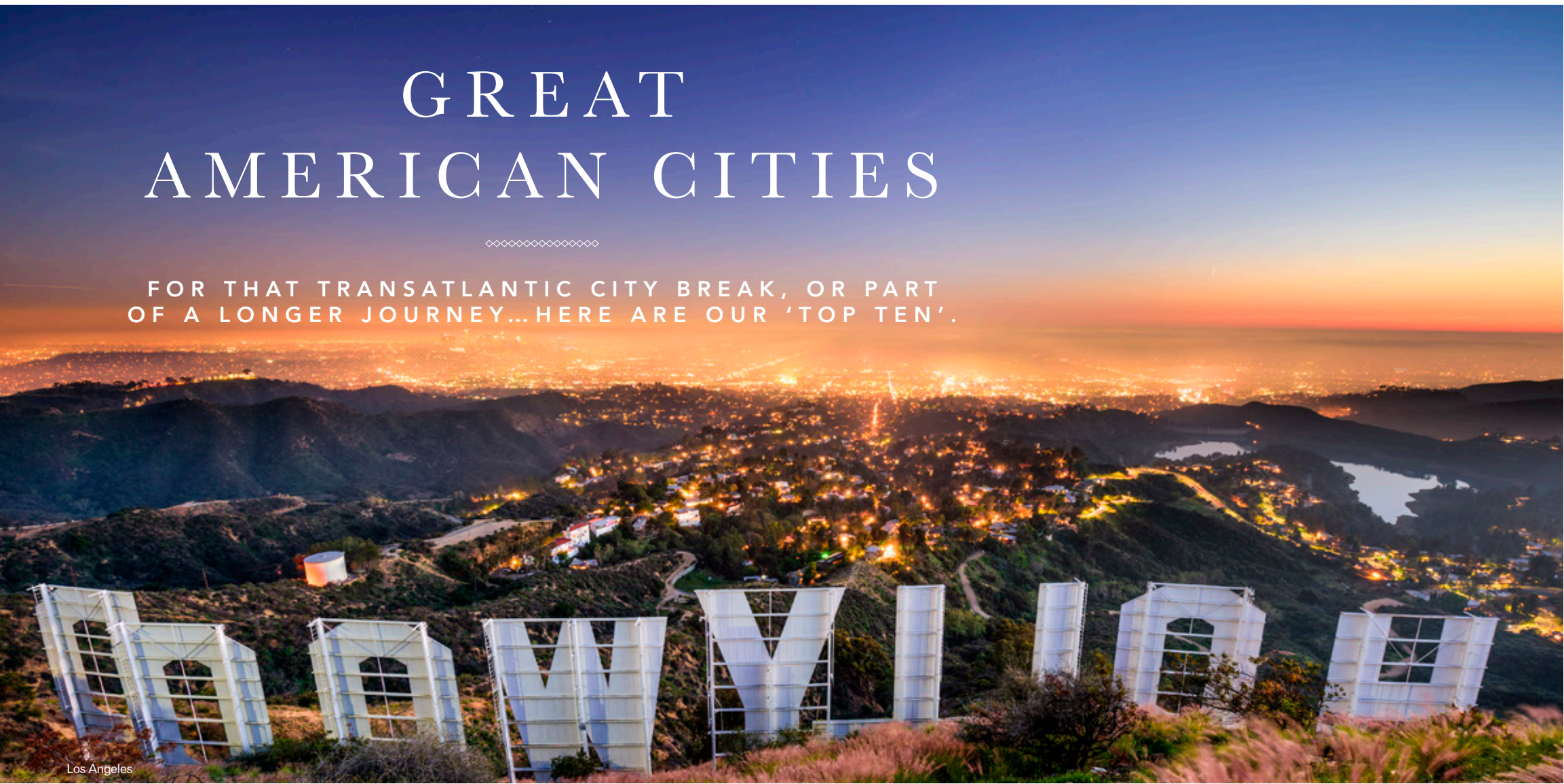
Skip the traffic on Interstate 95 and combine these great East Coast cities with ease aboard the Acela.



# GREAT AMERICAN CITIES



FOR THAT TRANSATLANTIC CITY BREAK, OR PART OF A LONGER JOURNEY... HERE ARE OUR 'TOP TEN'.



Los Angeles

**Los Angeles**

From the exclusive boutiques along Rodeo Drive to the cutting-edge restaurants in Little Tokyo, the movie star mansions of Beverly Hills to the electric energy of Koreatown, there are many different sides to the star-spangled City of Angels.

This is the heart of the nation's film and television industry, so be sure to get a behind-the-scenes glimpse at all the action with tours around Paramount Pictures, Universal Studios and Warner Brothers. Other essential stops include the buzzing Grand Central Market, the glamorous rock clubs lining Sunset Strip and, for the culture vulture, the sky-lit galleries of the Getty with its vast collection of European art. Sun lovers can soak up the Californian rays on free-spirited Venice Beach or stroll along the promenade to neighbouring, more refined Santa Monica.

And when you need to escape the hustle and bustle, head into the hills on a late-afternoon hike around Mount Hollywood, popping into the Griffith Observatory for uninterrupted city views.

**Stay at:** Andaz West Hollywood, Casa del Mar, Shuttters on the Beach



San Francisco

**San Francisco**

A sprawl of steep hills in northern California, San Francisco, like all great cities, is made up of uniquely different neighbourhoods. These include student Berkeley, hippy historic Haight-Ashbury, the largest Chinatown in North America and distinctly Italian North Beach where you can peruse the aisles of the legendary City Lights Bookstore.

San Francisco's open-sided cable car system has been around since the 1870s and is still a fun way of exploring places like Fisherman's Wharf, Lombard Street and Union Square. Other highlights include cycling across the Golden Gate Bridge, wandering the infamous prison island of Alcatraz and experiencing a virtual earthquake in the excellent California Academy of Sciences. Or head to Pier 39 for another classic Frisco sight - sea lions.

**Stay at:** Argonaut, St. Regis, The Battery

**Austin**

On top of an increasingly dynamic culinary scene (starring food trucks, BBQ joints and the choicest farm-to-table restaurants), Texas' state capital has earned a reputation as the 'Live Music Capital of the World'. South by Southwest and Austin City Limits are the two main festivals of note, but you can also catch live country, blues and rock performances every night in the myriad bars and clubs about town. Another attraction is the pink marbled, Revival-style Texas Capitol building which, at over 300 feet tall, overshadows its Washington D.C. counterpart.

Austin is very much an outdoorsy city, with miles of much-loved cycling, walking and jogging trails. Take a kayak out on Lady Bird Lake or head next door to swim in the refreshing, spring-fed waters of Barton Springs Pool.

**Stay at:** Austin Proper, Kimpton Van Zandt, The Driskill

**Chicago**

Chicago is the classic American city, an open-air museum of architecture and one of the few places in the world where the words 'high rise' are synonymous with structural magnificence. 'Make no little plans,' urged city planner Daniel H Burnham, 'they have no magic to stir men's blood.'

To appreciate its fine looks, take a Chicago's First Lady cruise on the city's eponymous waterway before riding the escalator to the airy summit of Willis Tower. For a more architectural bias to your trip, head out to Oak Park, a quiet semi-rural village where Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie-style masterpieces abound. You can also visit his home and studio.

There are many museums here too, but one not to miss is the Art Institute of Chicago in Millennium Park, one of the city's many green acreages on the shores of Lake Michigan.

**Stay at:** Soho House, The Langham, The Peninsula



Chicago



New Orleans

A boisterous, jazz-loving city with a penchant for street parties, there's nowhere quite like New Orleans. African, American, Caribbean and European cultures merge in the 'Big Easy', so-named after the locals' laidback way of life, to form an irresistible melting pot of history, music and food on the banks of the Mississippi.

Take your time as you wander the evocative French Quarter, a National Historic Landmark where restaurants serve southern staples and music fills the air from every bar, club and street-corner saxophonist. At its heart, Bourbon Street embodies New Orleans' party spirit with a buzzing, round-the-clock nightlife. Make time, too, for a stroll around the leafy Garden District with its extravagant antebellum mansions and historic Lafayette Cemetery.

Stay at: Peter & Paul, Soniat House, The Roosevelt

Miami

Miami's 'party city' reputation centres around the glam neighbourhood of South Beach where you'll find trendy nightclubs, classy rooftop bars and celebrity-fronted fusion restaurants. Not to mention an array of beautifully preserved Art Deco buildings. By day, head for the shops along Lincoln Road and the opulent Versace Mansion on Ocean Drive, formerly owned by Italian designer Gianni Versace.

Miami has more serious cultural attractions in leafy Coconut Grove, namely the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens on Biscayne Bay, the lavish former estate of businessman James Deering. For street art at its most cutting edge, go to Wynwood Walls, whilst Little Havana and its main drag Calle Ocho welcomes you with Cuban cigars and steaming cups of café con leche.

Stay at: COMO Metropolitan Miami Beach, Faena Miami Beach, The Betsy

Charleston

There's quite a small-town charm to Charleston, despite being South Carolina's largest city. In fact, it's one of the friendliest places in the US, with locals who embody that famous southern hospitality.

It's also a city of deep-rooted history, one that stretches beyond the Civil War to its founding in 1670. Every building, street and home in Charleston has a story to tell, especially in the romantic, cobbled French Quarter with its pastel-painted antebellum houses, horse-drawn carriages and spired churches. You can also wander America's oldest public gardens at the historic Magnolia Plantation or ride the ferry over to Fort Sumter, where the first shots of the American Civil War were fired.

Stay at: Belmond Charleston Place, The Dewberry, Zero George Street

Washington

Washington is one of the world's great imperial cities, its squint-white marble memorials and monuments, towering statuary, triumphal avenues, obelisks, shrines and stately edifices every inch as majestic as those in Paris or Rome, Vienna or St Petersburg.

In many ways, Washington is a surprisingly un-American city, full of breadth, incised by wide boulevards, punctuated with circuses and partitioned by parks. A fifth of the map is shaded green. Washington's famous National Mall is not a shoppers' paradise with branches of Gap or Walmart, but a swathe of grass and gravel, a déjà vu of the Tuileries Gardens in Paris rather than utterly urban USA.

Washington is also a repository for some of America's greatest treasures. Stretching for two miles, from the arm-chaired Abe at the Lincoln Memorial to the Capitol, the Mall is lined with fourteen separate museums.

Stay at: Rosewood, The Hay-Adams, The Watergate



New Orleans



Charleston



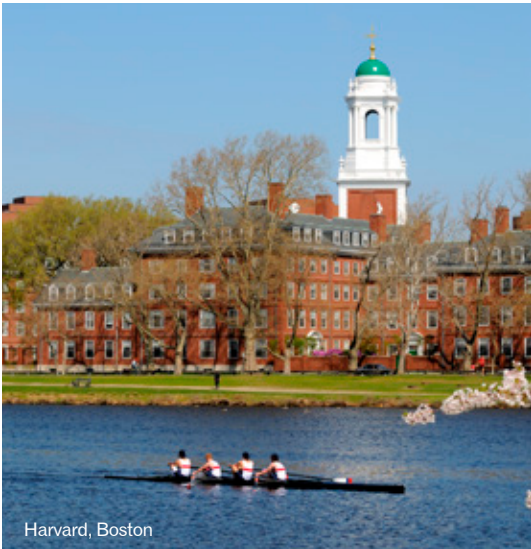
Miami



New York



Washington



Harvard, Boston

New York

Whether it's your first visit or your fiftieth, the 'Big Apple' never ceases to amaze. As sandbanks shift, so neighbourhoods are always changing, run-down blocks are renovated, and chic stores open in previous no-go zones. Begin in Washington Square, the heart of Greenwich Village and hub of the old Beat culture. From there, pick up the High Line elevated walkway and head for the new Whitney Museum of American Art and bustling Chelsea Market food court.

Walk off lunch with a stroll around Central Park. Book tickets for the MOMA and view its collection of Picassos, Matisses and Jackson Pollocks. By way of contrast, the Frick Collection is full of Old Masters, and for serious art lovers, there's the original Whitney and the Guggenheim, housed in Frank Lloyd Wright's distinctive 'helter-skelter' building.

For dramatic views of the New York skyline, don't miss out on your free ride past the Statue of Liberty on the Staten Island Ferry, before heading back towards Wall Street and the deeply moving 9/11 Memorial and Museum.

Stay at: Baccarat, 1 Brooklyn Bridge, Crosby Street, The Whitby

Boston

Boston is a city for walkers. Take a stroll around the historic, gas-lit neighbourhood of Beacon Hill. Then pick up the Freedom Trail, a line of red dots on the sidewalk that will lead you through 200 years of history and past several revolutionary sites, including the church steeple where Paul Revere hung his lanterns to warn of the impending British invasion.

'God made Boston on a wet Sunday,' wrote Raymond Chandler, which might explain why the city also has so many excellent museums. In affluent Back Bay, there's the Museum of Fine Arts and the unique Isabella Stewart Gardner, a Venetian mansion groaning with treasures from Rembrandts to Rubens that were collected by this 19th-century society queen and philanthropist.

Two worthy but very different waterfront attractions include the Aquarium and the powerful Kennedy Museum housed in IM Pei's striking building. And if time allows, ride 'The T' subway to Cambridge on the north bank of the Charles River to explore the prestigious Harvard campus and one or two of its museums. Pick of the collections would include the 800 species of flowers beautifully crafted from glass in the Botanical Museum, and the Islamic art in the Sackler Gallery.

Stay at: Boston Harbor, The Elliot, XV Beacon





# CANADA & ALASKA

From the 'great outdoors' of the west, with its irresistible combination of mountain, coastal fjord, lake and forest, to the maritime magic of the Atlantic seaboard, **Canada** really is a country with something for everyone. There are black, brown, grizzly, polar and even 'white spirit' bears to track, historic cities to explore, wilderness trails to hike and canoe, Fall colours to marvel at and superb seafood to enjoy. And let's not forget the thundering splendour of Niagara Falls, the colourful pageantry of the Calgary stampede, iconic rail journeys through the heart of the Rockies and the rugged, untamed wilderness of Newfoundland.

**Alaska**, America's last frontier, is arguably even wilder. The largest of its eight national parks, Denali, measures a staggering six million acres. Half the world's glaciers flow from its majestic mountain peaks. Vast rivers flow silently through epic landscapes. And Alaska's fabled Inside Passage is every bit as stunning as the polar regions, an awesome spectacle of icefields and calving icebergs that is theatre to some of the finest expedition cruises on the planet.



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