



5 Best U.S. Road Trip Ideas



On a road trip in Utah. Courtesy Indagare

The American Road Trip is having a renaissance (although gas prices are making travelers think twice before taking to the road).

We've mapped out five of our favorite all-American drives that allow you to take in some new destinations (or revisit beloved ones) while staying a little closer to home. So whether you're considering heading north, south, east or west—to enjoy a long weekend in New England or Charleston or an extended adventure in Utah's wild west or on the California coast—we've got you covered.

Contact [Indagare](#) for assistance planning the perfect road trip for you. Our dedicated trip designers can match you with the best properties and restaurants along the way. Plus, we remain committed to helping you get there as safely, responsibly and meaningfully as possible.

California Road Trip



17 Mile Drive in Monterey. Courtesy Indagare

Yes, the drive between San Francisco and Los Angeles is doable in under seven hours, but where's the fun in that? The drive along the Big Sur coastline—a spectacular sweep of the Pacific Coast Highway—is one of America's most beloved road trips for good reason, and our favorite California road trip itinerary takes its time. Starting from [Los Angeles](#), we love stopping for a beach detour near [Santa Barbara](#), where [Rosewood Miramar Beach](#) invites guests to bask in the sun along 500 feet of south-facing sands. Continuing north, stop by San Luis Obispo to spot elephant seals relaxing on shore, with views of [Hearst Castle](#) (currently closed to visitors) in the hills behind. Next, drive further up the coast to Big Sur, objectively one of the world's most beautiful coastlines, where mountains cascade into the sparkling blue sea. Make the area your home base for at least one night (romantics should stay at the [Post Ranch Inn](#) or [Ventana](#), while families will appreciate the [Carmel Valley Ranch](#)) to hike and explore. Next, venture onwards to the charming [Carmel-by-the-Sea](#), a 20th century arts colony with several fabulous restaurants, and along the scenic **17 Mile Drive** in Monterey (also home to a [world-class aquarium](#)). The final leg of the trip, up to [San Francisco](#), weaves through the fertile Santa Clara Valley, both a major tech hub and the artichoke capital of the world. End the adventure in the city, or continue just a bit further north for a food and wine retreat in [Napa](#) or [Sonoma](#).

Member Recommendations:

“In between Monterey and Santa Barbara lies an arid stretch of land specializing in Rhone varietals and undervalued wines (the two biggest being Grenache and Syrah). A small cowboy town, Paso Robles is reminiscent of 1970s Napa: it’s wine country with breathtaking views and superior wines, but without any pretension.” - *Indagare member Ashton Keefe*.

Related: [Navigating the California Coast](#)

National Parks Road Trip of the American West



Zion National Park. Courtesy Indagare

Embark on an epic adventure through America’s former frontier. Here, turns in the road are few and far between, but when they occur, the shift in view—thanks to wild geologic formations—is dramatic. Start in [Las Vegas](#) and cross into the southwestern corner of [Utah](#) (for an additional excursion before leaving Nevada, the historic Hoover Dam is located less than an hour from Las Vegas). The neon intensity of the city gives way to the open, empty road as you continue to [Zion National Park](#). Try to enter the park through the East Entrance, which is jaw-droppingly scenic. Spend some time hiking and exploring this majestic landscape. To make sure you can park close to many of the best

trails, consider staying within the park at [Zion Lodge](#). For more adventure, head to [Bryce Canyon](#), known for its other-worldly landscapes and colorful limestone rocks. Drive to [Amangiri](#), surrounded by 100 acres of sand-hued canyons near the border of Utah and Arizona, for a relaxing conclusion to your trip. The property houses a one-of-a-kind pool built around the landscape, a 25,000-square-foot spa and several on-site hiking routes. Another favorite stop—with a scenic drive along the way—is [Moab](#), where [Arches National Park](#) has some of the best stargazing in the world.

Option: Continue from Arches into Colorado, driving into the High Rockies for an outdoorsy visit to [Aspen](#), and, three hours northeast, **Rocky Mountain National Park**, before ending in Denver.

Member Recommendations:

“While hiking The Narrows in Zion, we happily tucked ourselves into the base of this tall slot canyon and navigated the chilly waters of the Virgin River (which at times was as high as mid-thigh) for three glorious hours.” - *Indagare member AE Rueppel*. [Read more](#) of AE’s recommendations from a family trip to Zion, the Grand Canyon and Sedona.

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New England Road Trip



Begin in the seaside resort town of [Newport](#) with fresh seafood and a tour of the area's historic mansions. From there, it's a short drive to [Boston](#), home to excellent dining and world-class museums, including the [Museum of Fine Arts](#) and the [Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum](#)—not to mention several historic day-trips (such as Concord and [Walden Pond](#)) as well as [Fenway Park](#), a must-see for sports fans. From Boston, those looking for a taste of charming coastal New England should continue north to Maine, stopping in Bald Head for a stay at the sprawling oceanfront [Cliff House](#) and in the buzzing harbor town of [Kennebunkport](#) or Portland. Here, New England road-trippers will need to decide whether they continue north along the coast towards **Acadia National Park**, or head inland through **New Hampshire** to get to Vermont instead. Both options involve quintessential New England towns in gorgeous settings (rocky coast or forested hills), excellent hiking options and quaint, luxurious inns.

Member Recommendations:

“Long a favorite destination of ours, the Woodstock Inn is the quintessential [New England](#) experience. The premier location on the Woodstock Green is a plus for golfers, and the resort is just a short walk from town, which is teeming with charming shops and restaurants.” - *Indagare member Lindsay Purcell. [Read more](#) of Lindsay's recommendations in Vermont.*

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Charleston & Savannah Road Trip



Savannah, GA. Courtesy Indagare

Immerse yourself in history on this journey through the South. Begin your road trip in one of the country's earliest and most elegant cities: [Charleston](#), South Carolina. Tour historic homes, enjoy a drink at [The Belmont](#) and spend the night in the cozy [Zero George](#) before setting off on your drive. About one-and-a-half hours from Charleston is beautiful Beaufort, the backdrop of several memorable movies, including *The Big Chill* and *Forrest Gump*. From there, it's less than an hour to the [Montage Palmetto Bluff](#), a waterfront hideaway with an award-winning golf course and bike paths draped in Spanish moss that promises a tranquil mid-trip stop before hitting the pavement once again. [Savannah](#), Georgia is less than an hour away, where you can dine on innovative Southern fare in this burgeoning foodie capital and sip rooftop cocktails at the chic and whimsical [Perry Lane Hotel](#) in between lazy walks through its charming, Spanish-moss-draped squares. End your trip about two hours south of Savannah in the Golden Isles of Georgia with a stay at the oceanfront [Sea Island](#) resort for golfing, fishing and relaxing on the beach.

Member Recommendations:

"Our mini 'Southern tour' was like a living history lesson, made even more fun by seeing wonderful houses, gardens and landscapes. We also had some seriously good food along the way." - *Indagare member Pamela Murdock*

The Best of Texas Road Trip



Lake Austin. Photo by Nikki Erlick, courtesy Indagare

A Southwest road trip can combine the exciting cultural hubs of Texas and New Mexico with a stay at one of our favorite spa retreats in [Arizona](#). Start in [Dallas](#)—home to delicious barbecue, yes, but also a thriving downtown [arts district](#) with top museums (we love [Nasher Sculpture Center](#)). Next, drive about three hours to [Austin](#), the state capital that’s become a national mecca for counter-culture, tacos and laid-back fun. After a day or two here—staying at the newly opened **Commodore Perry Estate**, perhaps, or the waterfront [Lake Austin Spa Resort](#), continue just two hours to San Antonio. Here visitors can stroll along the river walk or visit some of the city’s top museums, including the San Antonio Museum of Art, the McNay Art Museum and the Linda Pace Foundation. Art lovers should keep going to Marfa, a unique ghost town-meets-hipster enclave that is home to impressive art institutions such as the Chinati and Donald Judd Foundations, as well as the iconic Prada Marfa building and the mysterious Marfa lights.

Option: From Marfa, it’s about seven hours across the border of New Mexico to reach [Santa Fe](#), a colorful oasis in the desert that left a deep impression on American cultural influencers like Georgia O’Keeffe and Bob Dylan. Follow the path of the Anasazi through to the Cliff Palace of Mesa Verde in Colorado, and see the power of the sky and land at

the Petrified Forest. From here, a classic American Southwest Road Trip could continue towards [Arizona](#)'s Phoenix and Sedona or even [Los Angeles](#).

Member Recommendations:

"Go to Jeffrey's for the most original high-end Austin food or go to Hudson's out on Lake Way. The Four Seasons Austin is one of best I have ever stayed at anywhere, with an unbelievable brunch." - *Indagare member W.M.* [Read more Indagare members' recommendations for a Texas road trip.](#)

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- Nikki Erlick on April 21, 2021

