Home Page

*“Roads were made for journeys, not destinations.” – Confucius*

**Hi there!**

I’m Braquel, a road trip expert who loves to travel to new places from the comfort of my car. I would love to help you explore the world in your own way by giving you trip ideas and recommendations that can be altered to fit your needs, interests, and schedule.

**What we offer**

* **Journeys**
  + See some of our favorite places to visit and find out why we love them so much.
* **Road Trip Tips**
  + Get insights on the best ways to plan and prepare for a road trip.

*“The world’s big and I want to have a good look at it before it gets dark.” – John Muir*

Page 2 – Journeys

*“Happiness is planning a trip somewhere new with someone you love.” – Unknown*

**California Coast**

* From the Redwood forests to San Francisco, along Hwy 1 and Big Sur down to Southern California. This road trip has some of the most beautiful outdoor adventures along with visits to some of the largest U.S. cities and theme parks. Take an epic adventure exploring the versatile coast of California!

**Glacier National Park**

* Some of the most magnificent scenery can be found in Montana at Glacier National Park. It will captivate all with its rugged peaks, clear lakes, abundant wildlife, and glacial-carved valleys. With 734 miles of hiking trails, guided tours for every activity, and a spot with a view no matter what you choose to do, Glacier National Park will be one of the most surreal trips you take!

**Southern Utah**

* An outdoor lover’s paradise, with five National Parks and numerous State Parks to explore you will never run out of things to do or new places to see. Whether you want to experience thrilling adventures that take your breath away or relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery, southern Utah is one of the top places everyone must encounter in their lifetime!

**Kauai, HI**

* The most adventurous Hawaiian island is an adventure-seekers playground. Hike in Waimea Canyon, explore beautiful sandy beaches, take a helicopter tour of the stunning island views, attend a luau, and spend some time in the ocean on this beautiful island. Kauai will take your breath away with its diverse landscape and activities!

**Yellowstone & The Tetons**

* Known in the United States as the first national park, and for good reason, this is a road trip you must take at least once in your life. Experience the towering and magnificent Tetons as you ride across a picturesque lake on a boat, see hundreds of buffalo, gorgeous waterfalls, and bubbling hot pots, and explore one of the most mysterious places on earth!

**Oregon**

* Explore the state of Oregon with the road trip of a lifetime. We take you to the awe-inspiring Smith Rock State park, Crater Lake, the rugged Oregon Coast, Columbia River Gorge, and to magnificent Mt. Hood. Whether you want to spend more time in larger cities or get a little more off the beaten path, we have the perfect Oregon road trip for you!

Journeys Subpages

*California Coast*

The California Coast is a one-way road trip with some of the best scenery in the U.S. You can start from either end of the state, but I enjoy going from north to south the best. Because this road trip is over 1,100 miles it’s nearly impossible to do everything unless you have at least 2 weeks. Most of the time I recommend doing either the northern coast from Crescent City to San Francisco or the southern coast from Monterey to San Diego. No matter what parts of this trip you choose to see, it will be stunning and awe-inspiring. Whether you want to spend some time in nature or in the big city, you will be able to find your perfect scene along the California Coast!

* Crescent City – the most northern town on the California coast. A visit here is not complete without a visit to the Jedidiah Smith Redwoods State Park. Howland Hill Road is a rugged and stunning drive that winds through the towering Redwood Forest, and the Stout Grove Trailhead is an easy walk that gets you a closer look at these magnificent trees. There are some cute things to see and do in town as well, and we always enjoy our time here.
* Wilson Creek Beach – a quick stop right along the highway at this beautiful beach is perfect for some time at the ocean.
* Trees of Mystery – one of the best stops to see the Redwoods up close and personal. They have interpretive trails, a huge Paul Bunyan statue, gift shop, skytrail, restaurant, motel, and canopy trail.
* Trinidad State Beach – one of my favorite beaches to visit in California, especially at low tide. The views are stunning, and the sea life is abundant!
* Eureka – a cute city with some amazing architecture, and plenty of conveniences.
* Ferndale – visit this beautiful small-town Victorian village. This town is one of my favorite stops along the California coast and the gateway to the Lost Coast which is a natural and undeveloped area for those who like to get off the beaten path.
* Avenue of the Giants – take this stunning drive to get some more amazing views of the beautiful Redwood trees.
* Fort Bragg – a city on the Mendocino coast that is known for its Glass Beach. While here make sure to ride the skunk train (or their rail bikes) that weaves its way through the forest.
* Point Reyes – a scenic national seashore with a gorgeous lighthouse. This 71,000 acre park boasts a visitor center, hiking trails, expansive beaches, and stunning views.
* San Francisco – explore this diverse city and immerse yourself in its rich culture. You will never run out of things to do here, including visiting the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman’s Wharf, Alcatraz Island, Museums and Cultural Halls, and beautiful parks. Our favorite way to explore this city is by bike, and there are plenty of places to rent them (including e-bikes).
* Monterey – explore this beautiful city with their own Fisherman’s Wharf, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, beautiful coastal views, and the must-do 17-mile drive!
* Carmel-by-the-Sea – a cute little town full of personality and things to do. This is the perfect place to spend some time if you’re looking for some luxury and more high-end shopping and dining.
* Point Lobos State Reserve – this scenic coastal area features a variety of wildlife, hiking, diving, and a whaling museum.
* Big Sur – one of the most beautiful stretches of coastal scenery. This stretch along Hwy 1 includes many charming viewpoints, gorgeous beaches, and great hiking trails. Bixby Bridge, Pfeiffer beach, Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, and McWay Falls are must-see places along this beautiful drive.
* Morro Bay – see the bay around Morro Rock and hunt for sand dollars. This is the perfect place to end your day after exploring Big Sur.
* Solvang – visit this charming town with a slice of Danish culture. You will find an array of cute shops, fabulous restaurants, and historic museums.
* Santa Barbara – a beautiful place between vineyards, mountains, and breathtaking beaches. Visit Shoreline Park, Stearns Wharf, the Santa Barbara Zoo, and even go Sailing on the Pacific Ocean during your time in this Mediterranean-style city.
* Los Angeles – The largest metropolitan area in California that has hundreds of things to do. Explore Beverly Hills, Long Beach, go to a Sporting Event or Theme Park, and get a taste of one of the most populous places in the U.S.
* Carlsbad and Oceanside – these cute little coastal towns are great stops if you want to slow down a little and relax.
* San Diego – the perfect place to play on the beach or explore the city. Some of our favorite places here include Old Town, La Jolla, Mission Beach, and Sea World.

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Page 3 – Road Trip Tips

*“Once a year, go someplace you’ve never been before.” – Dali Lama*

**How to plan an amazing road trip**

**Plan your Route**

* Decide where you want to go and what you want to see. Google Maps is a great tool for planning trips with multiple stops and tells you the approximate driving time between destinations. Researching things to do and top attractions along your route will help you maximize your vacation. I love to read travel blogs and visit Pinterest for ideas.
  + <https://www.google.com/maps>

**Set a Budget**

* It’s helpful to know the approximate price of your flights and accommodations before making a budget to give you a starting point. Make sure to include the expense of a rental vehicle (if needed) and fuel costs. Allocate a budget for food and activities. I like to begin with what I hope to spend and try to stay within that amount, though sometimes I find the need to adjust based off our travel plans.

**Plan your Flights and Vehicle**

* I like to find the cheapest airport before determining the start/end points of my road trip. Kayak is my go-to site for finding the best deals on flights, and lets you choose ‘nearby airports’ and ‘flexible dates’ to find the best deals. It also highlights the cheapest days to fly on their calendar, which is great if you can be flexible.
  + Flights - <https://www.kayak.com/flights> OR <https://www.skyscanner.com/>
  + Cars - <https://www.kayak.com/cars> OR <https://www.rentalcars.com/us/>

**Book your Accommodations**

* Once you have a route mapped out, decide where and how you want to stay each night. Pay special attention to the activities you want to do as they may lengthen your travel time or determine multiple stays in the same location. Some people prefer hotels, while others prefer to camp. I personally enjoy a mix of both if it is feasible. My favorite sites to book stays include:
  + Airbnb - <https://www.airbnb.com/a/stays>
  + Hotels - <https://www.kayak.com/> OR <https://booking.com/> OR <https://hotels.com/>
  + Camping - <https://www.campingroadtrip.com/>
  + Hostels - <https://www.hostelworld.com/>

**Book your Activities**

* I typically choose free activities when I travel, but I do enjoy splurging on a few must-see experiences each vacation. Make sure you book everything well in advance to ensure the dates all line up. Some great sites for finding and/or booking experiences are:
  + <https://www.getyourguide.com/>
  + <https://www.withlocals.com/>
  + <https://www.google.com/travel/>
  + <https://www.pinterest.com/>

**Pack**

* Once you have everything booked and planned, it’s time to pack! Make sure you pack enough clothing for all possibilities of weather (and extra), toiletries, snacks, travel games/entertainment, and anything else you’d like to make your trip more enjoyable. I always bring my cooler full of snacks, cold drinks, and food that we restock at the grocery store to save money and eat healthier. You also may want to pack garbage bags, hand sanitizer, music, and a water bottle. It’s best to make yourself a checklist and start planning early so you don’t forget anything.

**Additional Tips**

* Make sure you pick a route that is feasible for the amount of time you have. You don’t want to feel rushed on your vacation or spend several long days driving for hours. Maximize your time by keeping the overall miles relatively low and putting your favorite attractions at the top of your list and working from there. I like to plan each day with must-see attractions along with other possibilities if we end up having time. You also want to leave a little room for spontaneity. You never know what you will find on the open road.
* Spend time in both cities and outdoor recreation. One of the best parts about road tripping is the ability to see and do a variety of things. Don’t be afraid to step away from your norm and spend some time experiencing new things!
* If you are driving your own car, make sure you prepare it before your trip by checking that everything is full and functioning properly. I always make sure I have a first aid kit and car maintenance kit with me when I travel.