

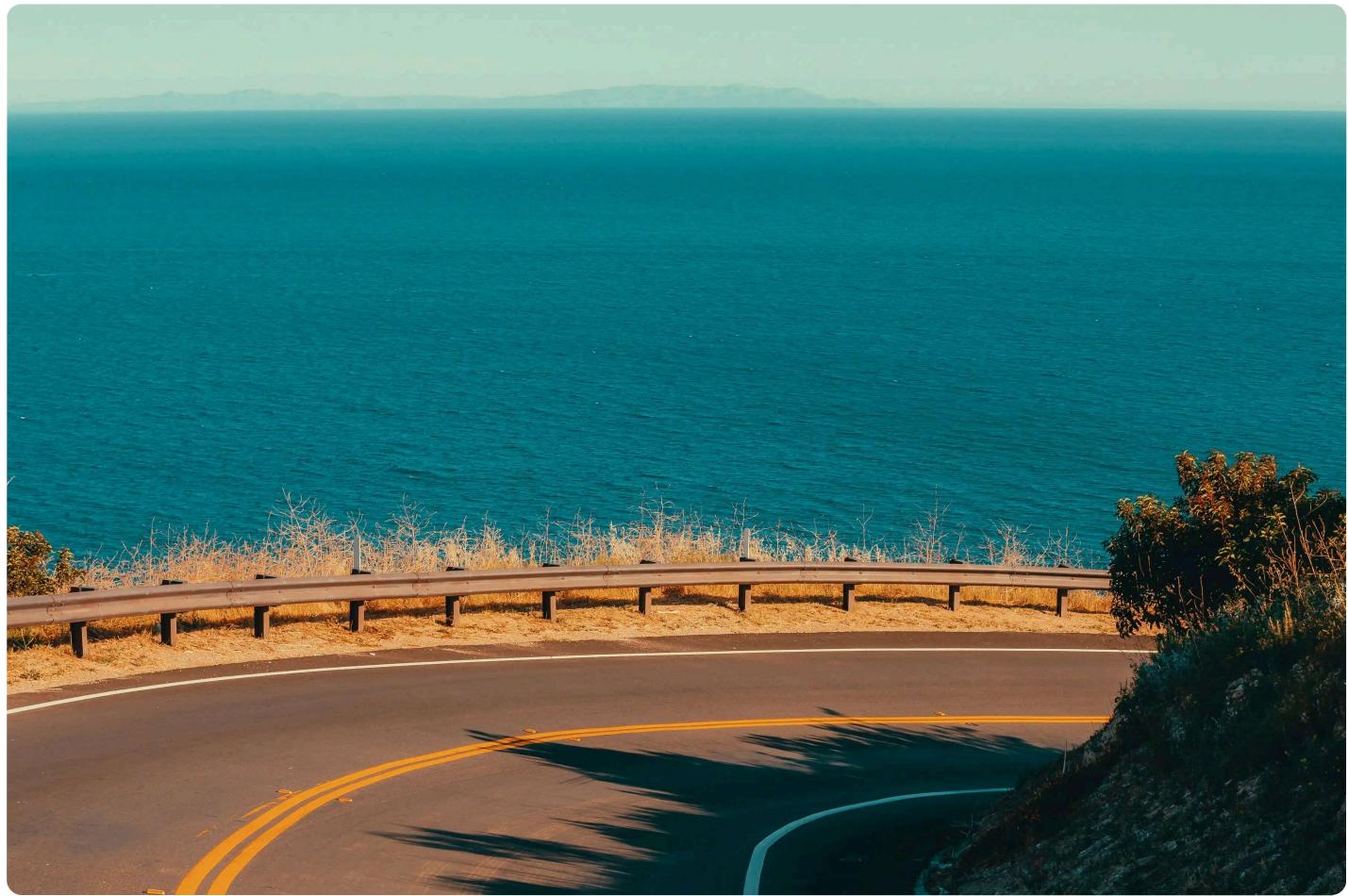
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5 Epic US Road Trips & Where to Stay

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There's something deeply satisfying about hitting the open road with no schedule except the one you create along the way. The US serves up road trip gold—from coastal highways that hug dramatic cliffs to mountain passes that reveal jaw-dropping vistas around every hairpin turn.

Whether you're craving salt air and crashing waves along the coastline, rolling mountain peaks, or the rugged wilderness of the American West, these five road trips deliver the kind of scenery no airplane window can match.

Each route has its own personality and pace, perfect for travelers who understand that sometimes the journey really is the destination. Pack light, download your road trip essentials, and prepare for adventures that unfold at exactly the speed they should.

Blue Ridge Parkway



Stretching nearly 470 miles through Virginia and North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains, the Blue Ridge Parkway is the ultimate American road trip for anyone who loves epic mountain views, slow-paced travel, and small-town vibes. Nicknamed "America's Favorite Drive," it links Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, which feature gorgeous overlooks, waterfalls, and hiking trails around every bend.

Kick things off in Shenandoah National Park—hike up Hawksbill Mountain, the park's highest point, then cool off at Dark Hollow Falls. As you head south, stop at iconic overlooks like

Humpback Rocks, and take a detour to Natural Bridge, a stunning limestone arch steeped in history and some great trails. Asheville is next, with its artsy neighborhoods, the impressive Biltmore Estate, and plenty of local breweries. For a more laid-back trip, swing through Boone. Further along, visit Mabry Mill, a historic gristmill hidden in the woods, and soak up panoramic views at the Peaks of Otter. Wrap up your trip surrounded by the forests and secret valleys of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Where to stay

Primland, Auberge Resorts Collection. A sprawling mountain retreat set on 12,000 acres, offering an 18-hole ridgeline golf course, stargazing observatory, and outdoor adventures from horseback riding to fly fishing.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

The Omni Grove Park Inn & Spa. Iconic Asheville landmark with extensive spa treatments, lively arts programming, and sweeping terraces overlooking the mountains.

- Fora's **Omni Select** partner perks include \$50 resort credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Pacific Coast Highway (Highway 1)



California's Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) runs 655 miles along one of the most dramatic coastlines in the world, from Orange County's relaxed beaches up to eclectic San Francisco. Whether northbound or southbound, it's a mix of crashing waves, rugged cliffs, and towns each with their own vibe.

After exploring San Francisco, kick off your road trip by cruising past Half Moon Bay's windswept beaches and the vintage charm of Santa Cruz's boardwalk, where surf culture and laid-back hangouts shape the scene. Stop in Monterey to visit the renowned aquarium and drive the scenic 17-Mile Drive, dotted with rugged coastline and impressive seaside homes. Big Sur is the route's heart—towering cliffs, hidden coves, and waterfalls spilling into the Pacific, with the iconic Bixby Creek Bridge a must-stop. Further south, tour the sprawling Hearst Castle estate, then watch elephant seals lounging at Piedras Blancas. Quaint coastal towns like Cambria and Paso Robles are all about wine tastings in rustic settings before you wrap up in Santa Barbara with its palm-lined streets, fresh seafood, and craft cocktails.

Fora Advisor Katherine Flynn suggests making a stop in Los Alamos near Santa Barbara: “*At first glance, you'd drive right through Los Alamos thinking there's not much besides some old*

Western buildings and antique stores. However, tucked away are some of the best unassuming food spots, including a bakery that will change your life. Spend the afternoon at Bodega Los Alamos sipping on natural wine surrounded by olive trees and fire pits. Grab dinner at Michelin-starred spot Bell's or seasonal pizza local's fave Full of Life Flatbread".

Heads up: A section of Highway 1 south of Big Sur remains closed due to a landslide. You can access Big Sur from the north (Monterey/Carmel), but through-traffic from the south is not possible. Always check for updates on official sites before your trip.

Where to stay

Post Ranch Inn. Perched atop Big Sur cliffs, this eco-conscious retreat pairs stunning ocean panoramas with a focus on wellness, featuring a spa, infinity pools, and hiking trails.

- **Fora Perks** include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Le Petit Pali at Ocean Ave. A breezy boutique hideaway close to Carmel's lively main street, offering spacious suites, a fresh coastal design, and a relaxed atmosphere.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include a welcome amenity and an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Florida Keys Scenic Byway



Image courtesy of Hawks Cay Resort

The Florida Keys Scenic Byway threads over 100 miles of island life, turquoise waters, and endless ocean views. From Key Largo's coral reefs down to Key West's colorful streets, this drive feels like a sun-drenched escape where every bridge you cross is a mini adventure.

Start in Key Largo, the dive capital, where snorkelers flock to John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park's underwater gardens. Cruise on to Islamorada, the sportfishing capital, with waterfront cafés serving fresh catch and a relaxed island vibe.

Fora Advisor Dara Schopp recommends Robbie's of Islamorada as a must-stop: "*Robbie's is renowned for its picturesque marina, where visitors can hand-feed massive tarpon fish from the docks. Buy a bucket of bait fish, hold out your hand, and wait for one of these large marine animals to jump up and eat it from your hand. Robbie's is also home to a charming market with local arts, crafts, and souvenirs, making it a must-visit destination, even for those passing through on the long drive down to the Lower Keys.*"

Next, Marathon is a laid-back stop with its Turtle Hospital—rescuing and rehabilitating sea turtles—and calm beaches perfect for paddleboarding or kayaking. Finally, Key West bursts

with energy: colorful architecture, lively Duval Street bars, historic haunts like the Ernest Hemingway Home, and sunset celebrations at Mallory Square. The best time to visit is November through April, when the weather is cooler and the crowds thinner.

Where to stay

Hawks Cay Resort. A sprawling island retreat on Duck Key offering diverse water sports, multiple pools, and lively dining in a family-friendly setting.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, a welcome amenity, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Oceans Edge Key West Resort, Hotel & Marina. A waterfront resort offering marina access, pools, and easy shuttle rides to Key West's historic Old Town.

- Fora's **Preferred Platinum** partner perks include \$100 hotel credit, a welcome amenity, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

San Juan Skyway, Colorado



Image courtesy of Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection

The San Juan Skyway loops 233 miles through Colorado's southwest, where alpine peaks, historic mining towns, and thrilling mountain passes set the scene. Ideal for travelers seeking Colorado's rugged high-country beyond the ski slopes.

Beginning in Durango, a lively town known for its historic railroad and craft breweries, the route climbs into the high country via the Million Dollar Highway—famous for steep cliffs and dramatic drop-offs. Silverton, a preserved mining town, offers rustic charm and a taste of wild history, while nearby Ouray, dubbed the “Switzerland of America,” invites relaxation in natural hot springs with a spectacular mountain backdrop. The loop finishes in Telluride, a former mining town turned stylish mountain retreat, where arts and music thrive alongside mountain adventures.

Fora Advisor Gillian Spatz says: “*Don’t miss Telluride’s music festivals and events, like the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, Telluride Film Festival, and Telluride Jazz Festival where you can enjoy live performances against the backdrop of the beautiful mountains*”.

Where to stay

Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection. A luxe, slopeside sanctuary in Telluride, with sleek rooms, refined dining, and easy access to year-round outdoor pursuits.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include \$100 resort credit, \$45 daily breakfast credit per person, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Dunton Hot Springs. A meticulously restored ghost town turned luxury resort, known for its natural hot springs, log cabins, and immersive Western experiences.

- **Fora Perks** include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Going-to-the-Sun Road, Montana



Image courtesy of Paws Up Montana

Deep in Glacier National Park, the Going-to-the-Sun Road is a short but unforgettable drive weaving through some of Montana's most epic scenery. This 50-mile stretch cuts right through

the park's rugged mountains, offering stunning views of glaciers, alpine lakes, and towering peaks at every turn.

Start your journey in West Glacier and wind your way up to Logan Pass, the highest point on the road. Here, take a hike to Hidden Lake or simply soak in panoramic vistas that feel like they belong in a nature documentary. Keep an eye out for mountain goats and bighorn sheep as you descend toward St. Mary and the park's eastern edge.

Fora Advisor Tilghman Whitacre shares key tips in her Ultimate Family Adventure itinerary: *"Book your vehicle pass early for Glacier National Park—especially June to September when demand peaks. If you miss out, the park's shuttle system is a great alternative to access highlights like Logan Pass and Sunrift Gorge without the hassle of driving."*

Though it's one of the shorter drives on this list, the Going-to-the-Sun Road delivers big on drama and natural beauty. It's perfect for travelers who want a concentrated dose of Glacier's wilderness without the need for a multi-day trek.

Extend your Montana road trip:

- **Whitefish:** Cozy mountain town vibes, great eats, and charming shops—all just a quick hop from Glacier. Perfect for unwinding after your park adventures.
- **Big Sky:** Where rugged wilderness meets luxe living. Ski, hike, or just soak up the views before retreating to luxe resorts and gourmet dining.
- **Dude ranch life:** Saddle up for authentic Western vibes—horseback rides, fly fishing, hearty meals, and evenings by the fire at a luxury ranch.
- **Yellowstone National Park:** If you are ready to take your Rockies road trip to the next level, Yellowstone's north gate is about six hours away, offering iconic geysers, wildlife, and epic landscapes.

Where to stay

Triple Creek Ranch. A remote, all-inclusive ranch featuring elegant cabins, gourmet dining, and a lineup of outdoor adventures from horseback riding to fly fishing.

- **Fora Perks** include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Paws Up Montana. A premier luxury ranch retreat delivering horseback rides, fly fishing, and plush cabins amid sweeping Big Sky country.

- **Fora Perks** include \$300 activity credit, complimentary round-trip airport transfers, a bottle of wine upon arrival, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

One & Only Moonlight Basin. Big Sky's newest alpine escape featuring sleek cabins, floor-to-ceiling windows, and year-round mountain adventures.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include \$100 hotel credit, daily breakfast, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Get in touch with Gregory

Reach out for travel inspiration, hotel bookings or customized itineraries.

*Email Address

*First Name

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Please provide some details about your trip.

You can expect a response from Gregory within 1-2 business days. You'll also be subscribed to our traveler newsletter (you can unsubscribe at any time).

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