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Florida Keys Overseas Highway, Miami – Key West

Driving to the Florida Keys as the sun sets is one of those things in life you simply must do once. As you move down the southernmost end of Highway 1, you seem to glide over the ocean while the sun dips into the Gulf of Mexico like a ball of fire. Simply stunning. A total of 42 bridges take you across Florida's coral islands, without the need for a boat. It's a four-hour drive from Miami to Key West – four hours you'll never forget.

*Distance: 110 miles
Where to stop: Seven Mile Bridge. This is the best-known bridge on the Overseas Highway, featured in such films as True Lies and Mission Impossible III.*

2

**Virginia to North Carolina,
National Park to National Park:
Blue Ridge Parkway**

The first thing that strikes you here is that there's no Starbucks®, no McDonald's® – there aren't even any motels. Just nature, pure and simple. After passing densely wooded hills and dales at a leisurely 45 mph (that's the speed limit), you take sweeping, elegant curves up to an altitude of over 6,000 feet. Off the Parkway are small towns, like Little Switzerland and Schuyler, where you can stock up on provisions. This is a low-profile but nonetheless spectacular side of America.

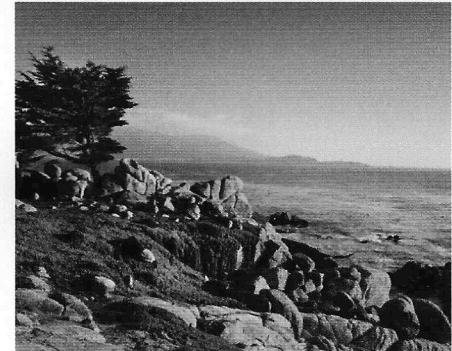
*Distance: 470 miles (Shenandoah National Park – Great Smoky Mountains National Park)
Where to stop: Waterrock Knob, a mountain peak and spectacular lookout point that can be easily reached from the Parkway.*

3

**New York:
Brooklyn-Queens Expressway**

Fifth Avenue may be unsurpassed for its glamour and allure, but on the "BQE" you get to see New York from a completely different perspective. Brooklyn Heights and Williamsburg, Queens, past the Brooklyn, Manhattan and Williamsburg bridges – this trip is a real adventure, with the traffic heavy and the drivers reckless. New York off the beaten tourist track.

*Distance: 17 miles
Where to stop: Calvary Cemetery in Queens, with its view of Manhattan, is the final resting place of many famous New Yorkers, including some legendary Mafiosi.*



4

California: State Route 1

Drivers on Route 1 can be sure to soak up the essence of California here. The road passes through small towns, such as Carmel-by-the-Sea (where aging hippies chill), through gigantic redwood forests, through the stylish artists' colony in Big Sur and past beaches that are more often than not deserted.

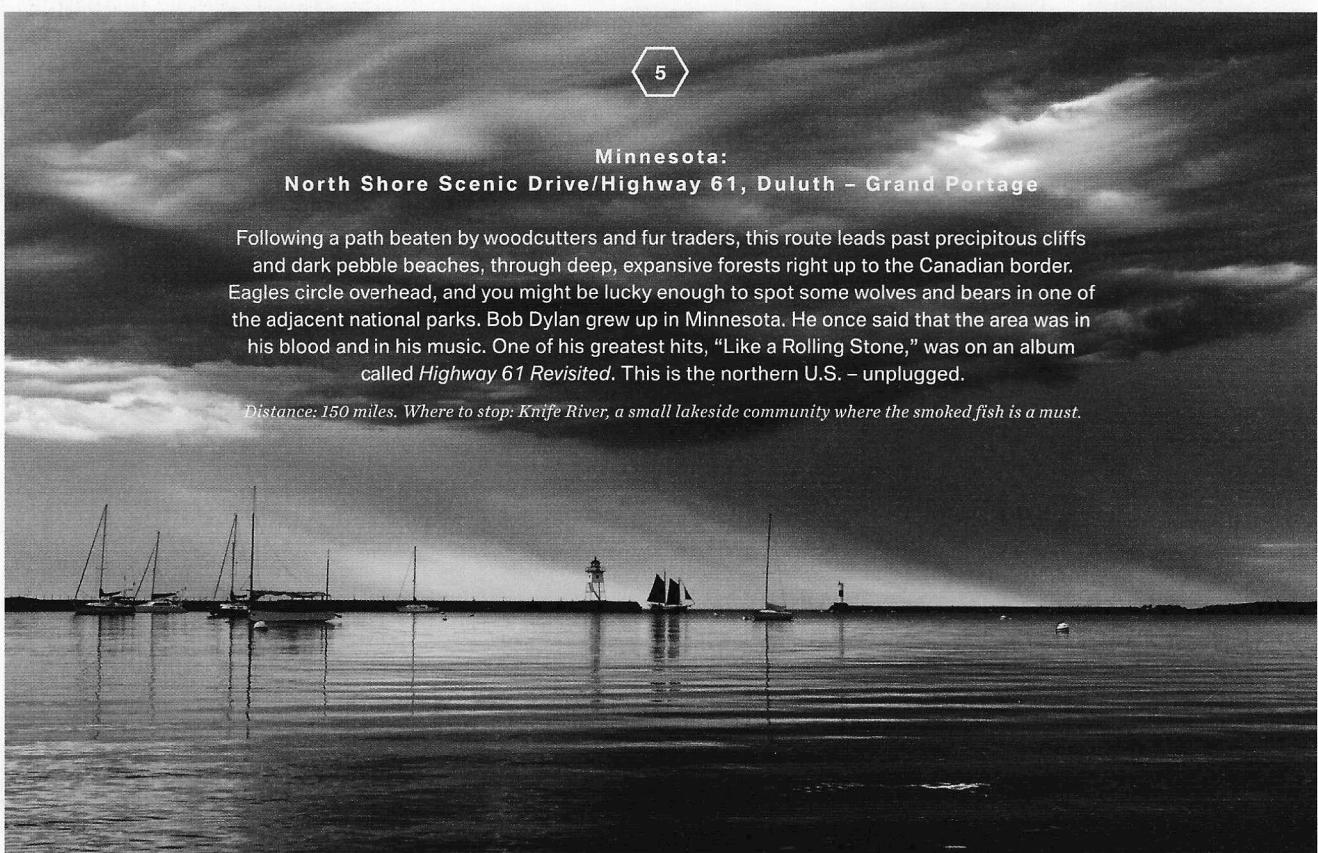
*Distance: 125 miles (Monterey – Morro Bay)
Where to stop: San Simeon, Elephant Seal View Point.*

5

**Minnesota:
North Shore Scenic Drive/Highway 61, Duluth – Grand Portage**

Following a path beaten by woodcutters and fur traders, this route leads past precipitous cliffs and dark pebble beaches, through deep, expansive forests right up to the Canadian border. Eagles circle overhead, and you might be lucky enough to spot some wolves and bears in one of the adjacent national parks. Bob Dylan grew up in Minnesota. He once said that the area was in his blood and in his music. One of his greatest hits, "Like a Rolling Stone," was on an album called *Highway 61 Revisited*. This is the northern U.S. – unplugged.

Distance: 150 miles. Where to stop: Knife River, a small lakeside community where the smoked fish is a must.



6

Louisiana Great River Road

On this road – which is, in fact, a confluence of a number of highways – you can watch one of the most famous rivers in the world grow. The route begins in the north, in Itasca State Park, with its more than 100 lakes, and culminates in Venice in the south of Louisiana, where the river disgorges its water into the sea. Just as the Mississippi morphs from a small stream into the mile-wide “Old Man River,” the whole scenery changes in tandem: from the forests in the north through the wine-growing districts of Illinois to the cotton fields of the south. Minneapolis, St. Louis, Memphis: you pass by no fewer than 33 cities in the course of this trip, so allow plenty of time for the journey!

Distance: 2,500 miles. Where to stop: Gateway Arch, St. Louis' 630-foot steel arch.



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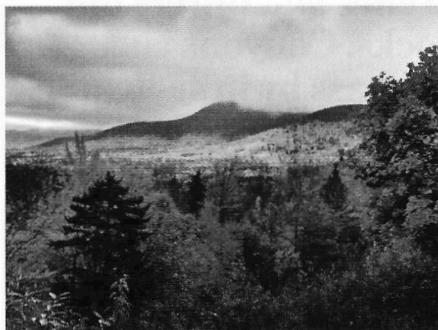
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Chicago: Lake Shore Drive

Take this urban expressway, called LSD for short, and sail along the shore of Lake Michigan. As you do so, you pass the apartment buildings of 860–880 Lake Shore Drive by Mies van der Rohe, as well as the Y-shaped Lake Point Tower by John Heinrich and George Schipporeit – a quick ride through modern architectural history.

Distance: 15 miles. Where to stop: Lincoln Park, a huge public park on the shore of Lake Michigan with a zoo and two museums.

8

**New Hampshire:
The
Kancamagus
Highway**

When orange, yellow and red foliage signal that autumn is on its way, it's time to head for New Hampshire. “Leaf peeping” is the order of the day, as the forests here are particularly stunning in the Indian summer. This is old Native American country, the home of the Penacook and their last chief, Kancamagus. The mountains bear his name and those of his forefathers.

*Distance: 55 miles (Bath – Conway)
Where to stop: Lower Falls, a waterfall with a basin that is wonderful for swimming.*

9

Québec: Route des Navigateurs

Along the south bank of the St. Lawrence River, you can retrace the footsteps of the first French settlers who crossed the river going inland. The villages along the way are picturesque, their houses often retaining their original Victorian style. Single- and double-masted sailboats sweep across the water while swarms of seabirds hover above: perfect maritime cruising.

Distance: 290 miles

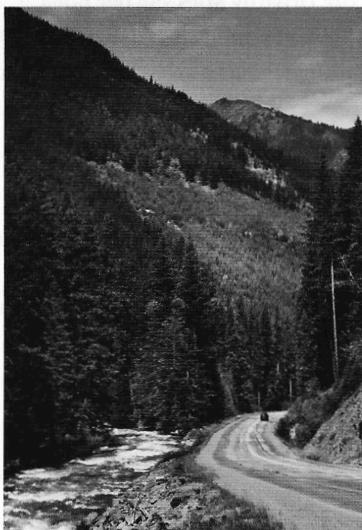
Where to stop: Onondaga in Rimouski, a former Royal Canadian Navy submarine that is now accessible to the public.

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**Canada: British Columbia
Highway 99, Vancouver – Lillooet**

Not so long ago, Highway 99 was known as the "Killer Highway" – before it was upgraded in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Driving north from Vancouver, you first speed along the deep blue network of fjords called Howe Sound, then bisect the lichen-covered northern rain forest. From Whistler upwards, the route takes in four vegetation zones.

Distance: 255 miles. Where to stop: Any of the countless little lakes after Whistler, known as "the mirrors."

**Utah: State Route 12**

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What was originally intended as a transport route for the farmers of this sparsely populated area turned into a spectacular panoramic road through one of the most bizarre regions in the West. Every hilltop and bend in the road reveals a startling new view of the rust-colored rock formations. Wind and weather have done a superb job of carving the most absurd needles, arches and towers out of the rocks. Canyons and national parks pass by in such quick succession that it's difficult to make up your mind where to stop.

Distance: 120 miles

Where to stop: Lower Calf Creek Falls, a waterfall nestled in a cove between towering walls of sandstone. It can only be reached on foot and is usually deserted.

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**California:
Interstate 80,
Sacramento –
Lake Tahoe**

There is an ideal route to the Sierra Nevada, a landscape that is part barren land and part lush vegetation, but always supremely beautiful. Shortly after Sacramento, you enter Tahoe National Park. At a surface elevation of 6,224 feet and surrounded by a pine forest, Lake Tahoe might well be the most beautiful lake in the U.S.

*Distance: 120 miles
Where to stop: Lake Tahoe, Crystal Bay.*

13

**Washington:
Chuckanut Drive**
The Pacific Northwest is home to dense, damp primeval forests. Chuckanut Drive cuts right through the home of the grizzly bear.

*Distance: 21 miles
Where to stop:
San Juan Islands,
by rowboat.*

**Louisiana:
US Route 90 W, New Orleans – Lafayette**

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The trip begins in "N'Awlins," with its unique blend of French heritage, Caribbean energy and *joie de vivre*, its proud jazz tradition and laid-back southern comfort. It continues through the Atchafalaya Basin, the largest swamp in North America, where brightly colored houseboats are moored in the stagnant waters of the dense mangrove forests. The smell of grilled catfish fills the air and there's no hurry to move on.

*Distance: 150 miles
Where to stop: Shadows-on-the-Teché historic plantation residence near Jeanerette.*

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Nova Scotia: The Cabot Trail

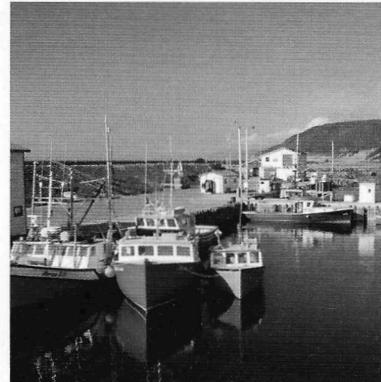
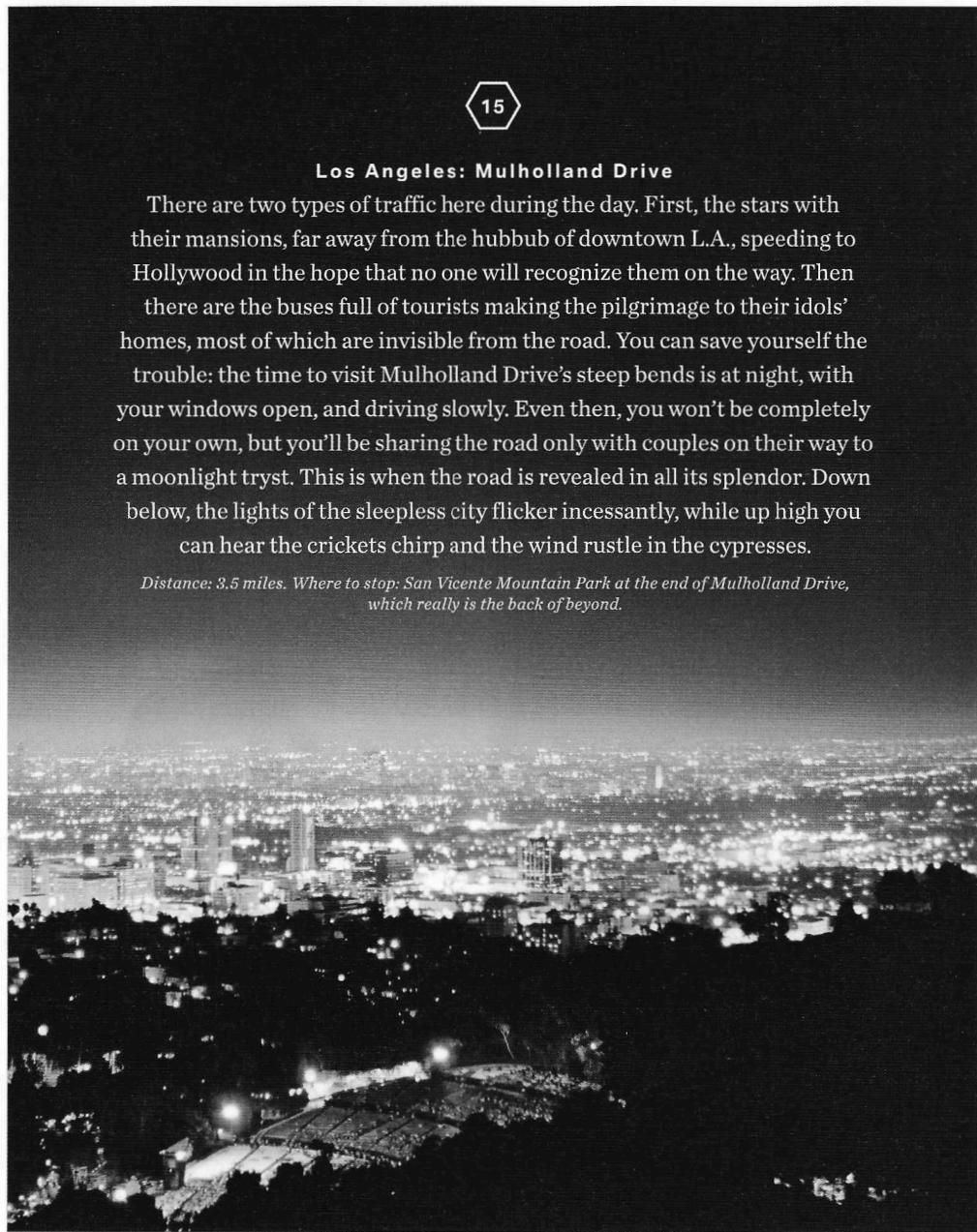
Alexander Graham Bell once said that he had been to many delightful places in North America, but for simple beauty, none could match Cape Breton Island. He was right. This island off the Atlantic coast of Canada is a gem, with mountains reaching all the way to the ocean and forming steep cliffs and little bays, along with a mixed forest that is both lush and

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Los Angeles: Mulholland Drive

There are two types of traffic here during the day. First, the stars with their mansions, far away from the hubbub of downtown L.A., speeding to Hollywood in the hope that no one will recognize them on the way. Then there are the buses full of tourists making the pilgrimage to their idols' homes, most of which are invisible from the road. You can save yourself the trouble: the time to visit Mulholland Drive's steep bends is at night, with your windows open, and driving slowly. Even then, you won't be completely on your own, but you'll be sharing the road only with couples on their way to a moonlight tryst. This is when the road is revealed in all its splendor. Down below, the lights of the sleepless city flicker incessantly, while up high you can hear the crickets chirp and the wind rustle in the cypresses.

Distance: 3.5 miles. Where to stop: San Vicente Mountain Park at the end of Mulholland Drive, which really is the back of beyond.



diversified. The coastal road from which all this can be seen loops around the island and is recognized as one of the most beautiful scenic routes in North America. They say the Cabot Trail is addictive.

Distance: 185 miles. Where to stop: Pleasant Bay, a good spot for whale-watching on Cape Breton.

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**Hawaii - Maui:
Hāna Highway**

Driving along this route on the east coast of Maui, with its 620 curves and 54 bridges, is like riding the waves. Along the way, waterfalls cascade like curtains of silk into round pools below.

*Distance: 52 miles
Where to stop: Garden of Eden and Botanical Arboretum.*

**Alaska: Richardson Highway,
Valdez - Fairbanks**

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It's a rugged landscape that flanks the oldest road in Alaska. Constructed at the end of the 19th century, it took the gold diggers from the coast to the Alaskan interior. Back then, they must have felt very small and insignificant in these wide valleys beneath the peaks of the Chugach Mountains with their massive glaciers. We don't feel any different today amidst this awesome scenery.

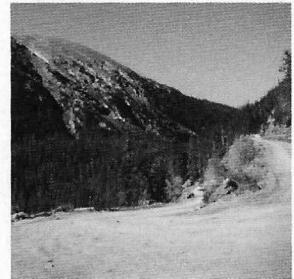
*Distance: 360 miles
Where to stop: Worthington Glacier is on the highway and is Alaska's most easily accessible glacier.*

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Colorado: Old Fall River Road

This is no road for the fainthearted. Old Fall River Road was built in 1921 with the most basic of materials, and looks about the same today: a hard-packed clay track leading up across Fall River Pass to an altitude of over 11,000 feet in a series of heart-stopping hairpins and without any protective barriers. It is only open in the summer and the speed limit is 15 mph.

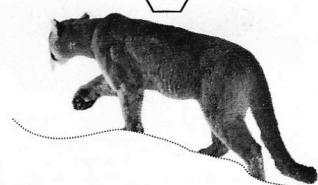
But the rewards are plentiful. You



can encounter deer and bears as well as cross the Great Divide: all the streams at the start of the route flow toward the Atlantic, while those after the pass head for the Pacific.

*Distance: 11 miles
Where to stop: Fall River Cirque, a natural amphitheater formed by glaciers.*

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**Montana: Glacier National Park**

The roadway rises slowly through cedar forests occasionally interrupted by the glint of a rock. Above the tree line, mountains with names like Siyeh, Cataract and Going to the Sun are resplendent against the blue sky, looking like slightly misshapen pyramids. The meadows are adorned by alpine flowers, while tame mountain goats won't mind if you pet them. The road is open seasonally, from June until mid-October, but it's covered by many feet of snow the rest of the year. In summer, though, you feel as close to the sun as you're ever likely to feel.

Distance: 50 miles. Where to stop: Logan Pass, a popular starting point for a variety of hiking trips and an ideal place to explore the flora and fauna of the area.

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Nevada: Highway 376, Tonopah – Austin

Nevada State Route 376 heads straight through Big Smoky Valley, a dry valley bordered by snow-clad mountains 6,500 feet high and in full view throughout the trip (as the plain is completely flat). The charming little towns of Hadley, Carvers and Kingston serve burgers to die for, and the hospitality of the locals is legendary among truckers. In a nutshell: there aren't many roads where you can experience the vastness and solitude of the American West as authentically as in Big Smoky Valley.

Distance: 120 miles. Where to stop: Toiyabe National Forest, mountains as high as the Alps, but without a soul in sight.



Texas: Highways 207 and 86

22

The route starts off flat, as Highway 86 leads you through the southernmost tail of the Great Plains where herds of buffalo once grazed. After Silverton, things start to get interesting: you drop down into Tule Canyon with sparkling Lake Mackenzie. After a few miles, you realize this was just a taste of what is to come as you enter Palo Duro Canyon, the second-largest in North America.

Distance: 120 miles

Where to stop: Mackenzie Reservoir, a lake that stands out in sharp contrast to the red rock.



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Nebraska: Gold Rush Byway

They say the golden sunsets recall the road's history: it was once used to transport the precious metal found in the Black Hills. Back then it was a place of hardship, but now the roadway is a feast for the eyes where you can relax and let go. Gently sloping hills of delicate greens, lakes and sleepy rivers line the way. To ensure things don't get too boring, unusual rock formations like the Courthouse and Jail Rocks pop up now and then.

*Distance: 160 miles (south from Chadron on U.S. 385)
Where to stop: Chadron State Park, an idyllic camping and hiking spot.*

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Washington: Soap Lake to Grand Coulee Dam

The landscape could be from another planet: barren, steppe-like – and, right in the middle, the Dry Falls: huge cliffs over which the largest waterfall on earth cascaded into the plunge pools below at the end of the last Ice Age.

Distance: 55 miles. Where to stop: Sagebrush scrublands – no other steppe wind evokes such loneliness.



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Oregon: Historic Columbia River Highway

When the decision was made 100 years ago to connect the town of Troutdale with The Dalles in Oregon, engineer Samuel C. Lancaster chose to use not the quickest but the most beautiful route. In so doing, he created the first "scenic byway" in the U.S. – a road with a panoramic view. The highway winds its way through the valley of the Columbia River, hugs rock faces, runs over plateaus with stunning views and slinks past fierce waterfalls.

Distance: 75 miles

Where to stop: Multnomah Falls, a two-step waterfall – with a bridge in the road leading right across the plateau in the middle of the falls.

