# Introduction

Exploring the world by camper van offers unmatched freedom to shape your own path, stop wherever inspires you, and wake up to ever‑changing landscapes. In 2024, the **vanlife** movement reached new heights — with travelers prioritizing natural beauty, off‑grid destinations, and authentic cultural experiences.

This document presents the **top ten trending destinations for van‑life in 2024**, organized by continent. Each region includes three standout spots that are especially camper‑van friendly — whether for road‑trip routes, scenic camping, or flexible travel infrastructure. For each spot, you'll find location details, reasons to visit, and must‑see highlights.

# North America

## Sedona, Arizona (USA)

**Summary:** Red‑rock town in northern Arizona, population around 10 000. High desert climate; hot summers (35 °C) and mild winters, mild spring and autumn ideal for camping.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Sedona’s iconic red sandstone formations and energy vortex lore make it a spiritual and scenic magnet. Plenty of dispersed camping and boondocking. Excellent trail network accessible directly from van sites.

### Highlights:

* **Cathedral Rock & Bell Rock** – walkable trails with striking views and sunrise/sunset hues.
* **Oak Creek Canyon scenic drive** – canyon route with picnic spots and creekside van stops.
* **Chapel of the Holy Cross** – built into red cliffs, offering panoramic vistas.
* **Local wineries & art galleries** – nearby Verde Valley villages like Jerome and Cottonwood with local flavor.

## Banff National Park, Alberta (Canada)

**Summary:** Mountain resort town in Canadian Rockies, population ~8 000. Alpine climate: cool summers (~15–20 °C), snowy winters.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Majestic peaks, turquoise glacial lakes, abundant wildlife and well‑established RV sites and scenic routes make Banff a bucket‑list favorite.

### Highlights:

* **Lake Louise & Moraine Lake** – incredible alpine lakes against towering peaks.
* **Icefields Parkway drive** – legendary scenic road with glaciers, viewpoints.
* **Hot springs at Banff** – soak after a day exploring.
* **Johnston Canyon hike** – waterfalls and catwalks suitable for families or solo campers.

## Moab, Utah (USA)

**Summary:** Small town (~5 000 residents) in southeastern Utah. Desert climate: hot summers (~40 °C), chilly nights; spring/fall ideal.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Gateway to Arches and Canyonlands national parks, Moab offers red‑rock desert vistas, easy off‑road access, and dispersed camping among stunning formations.

### Highlights:

* **Arches National Park** – Delicate Arch, Landscape Arch, scenic drives.
* **Canyonlands Island in the Sky** – mesa drives with panoramic overlooks.
* **Dead Horse Point State Park** – dramatic canyon rim views ideal at sunrise/sunset.
* **Off‑road 4×4 trails** – like Hell’s Revenge or Poison Spider Mesa for adventure seekers.

# Europe

## North Coast 500, Scotland

**Summary:** Scenic 800 km loop around northern Scottish Highlands, passing small towns. Population sparse; Inverness (~60 000) is main hub. Maritime climate: cool, often rainy; 10–18 °C in summer.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Often referred to as Scotland’s answer to Route 66, NC500 takes van travellers past rugged coastline, lochs, castles, and remote beauty — using many free and official motor‑home lay‑bys.

### Highlights:

* **Smoo Cave & Durness** – sea‑carved cave and coastal cliffs.
* **Castle Varrich and loch views** – historic ruins with sweeping valley vistas.
* **Grey Cairns of Camster** – ancient burial chambers.
* **Beaches like Balnakeil & Achmelvich** – wild white sand and turquoise waters.

## Trollstigen Pass, Norway

**Summary:** A dramatic mountain road (road 63) through western Norway, connecting Geiranger to Åndalsnes. Thinly populated highlands; nearby towns have small populations. Cool alpine climate; route open May‑Oct.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Trollstigen is among Europe’s most scenic and adrenaline‑inspiring drives — with hairpin turns, waterfalls, and commanding mountain vistas. Norway’s liberal wild‑camping policy makes van life easy here.

### Highlights:

* **Stigfossen waterfall viewpoint** – near hairpin switchback lookout.
* **Trollveggen (Troll Wall)** – Europe’s tallest vertical rock face.
* **Hikes from the top plateau** – sweeping views over fjords and peaks.
* **Nearby Geirangerfjord** – UNESCO‑listed fjord with scenic campsites.

## Amalfi Coast, Italy

**Summary:** Coastal stretch in Campania south of Naples, with towns like Positano and Amalfi. Local populations vary; Amalfi town ~5 000. Mediterranean climate: warm summers (~25–30 °C), mild winters. **Why it’s worth visiting:** Though roads are narrow, van travellers enjoy dramatic seaside views, cliff‑side villages and delicious cuisine. Many campsites serve camper‑vans, and stops allow walking into picturesque towns.

### Highlights:

* + **Positano** – pastel towns cascading to the sea with beaches and boutiques.
  + **Path of the Gods hike** – cliff‑top trail above Amalfi and Praiano.
  + **Historic Amalfi & Duomo** – cathedral, piazzas, limoncello.
  + **Fisherman’s villages** – Ravello and Vietri sul Mare for arts, ceramics, scenery.

# Oceania

## New Zealand (South & North Islands)

**Summary:** Island nation (~5 M population) renowned for its camper‑friendly culture. Climate varies from temperate to sub‑antarctic in south. Freedom camping is widespread.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** With well‑marked camper‑van amenities at grocery stores and parks, endless scenic roads from beaches and volcanoes to fjords and mountains, New Zealand is consistently ranked the most van‑friendly country.

### Highlights:

* **Milford Sound & Fiordland** – sublime fjords reachable by road and boat.
* **Tongariro Alpine Crossing** – iconic volcanic hike in North Island.
* **Rotorua geothermal fields** – geysers, Māori cultural experiences.
* **West Coast glaciers** – Franz Josef & Fox glaciers accessible via scenic runs.

## East Coast Australia (e.g. NSW/Qld)

**Summary:** Coastal corridor from Sydney up to Queensland. Major cities like Sydney (~5 M), Brisbane (~2.5 M), with coastal towns in between. Sub‑tropical to temperate climate.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Rising in popularity for road‑trip travel, Australia’s east coast offers beaches, rainforests, national parks and excellent caravan parks geared to camper vans.

### Highlights:

* **Great Ocean Way or coastal Queensland routes** – for beaches, waterfalls, surfing.

### National parks:

* **Byron Bay area** – laid‑back surf town with campsites.
* **Blue Mountains** near Sydney – bushwalks and lookout views.
* **Margaret River region** (if including west coast) – wineries and surf.

# Asia

## Central Asia “Stans” (Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan)

**Summary:** Vast sparsely populated countries; nomadic and desert scenery dominate, with cities like Astana (~1 M), Ulaanbaatar (~1.5 M). Continental climate: hot summers, cold winters.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** In 2024, region saw surging interest for off‑the‑beaten‑path van‑style or overland travel. New tour routes and immersive itineraries—mountain nomad stays, desert drives, Silk Road heritage—make Central Asia a frontier for adventurous van travellers.

### Highlights:

* **Tien Shan or Pamir mountain drives** – rugged alpine vistas and small village stopping points.
* **Gobi Desert camps** in Mongolia – nomad‑style stays and sand dunes.
* **Silk Road historic cities** – Khiva, Samarkand, Bukhara in Uzbekistan.
* **Kazakh steppe roads and yurts** – freedom to camp in remote, open landscapes.

# South America

## Patagonia, Argentina/Chile

**Summary:** Region spanning southern Andes, vast pampas and glaciers; small town populations, few services early season. Cool temperate to polar climate.

**Why it’s worth visiting:** Patagonia is van‑trip iconic—unbeatable for winding scenic roads, remote campsites beside glaciers and lakes, and immersive wilderness travel. It frequently complements New Zealand and Central Asian overlanding itineraries.

### Highlights:

* **Carretera Austral (Chile)** – twisting mountain route through fjords and forests.
* **El Chaltén & Fitz Roy trekking** – trekking base for glaciers and peaks.
* **Tierra del Fuego road networks** – remote drives ending at Ushuaia.
* **Perito Moreno Glacier & Argentine lakes region** – vast ice walls and lagoons.