

Title:

America's Great Western States Provide Diverse Vacation Options

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Summary:

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Article Body:

As summer approaches, there's only one way to beat the heat--lakeside! According to a 2005 summers survey conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), over 70 percent of Americans will spend their summer splashing in lakes or heading to the beach for their vacation. Whether you're planning a weekend away or spontaneously hitting the road, some of the best lakeside vacation destinations reside within our own National Park system.

"The U.S. National Park system offers a wide variety of destination and accommodation options at some of the most magnificent lakes in the country," said Sheri Smack, a spokesperson for ARAMARK Parks & Resorts, an authorized concessioner of the National Park Service. "We strongly suggest planning your next vacation at one of our national treasures."

Several of the National Parks located in the Western states provide unique lakeside vacation options.

Lake Powell, Arizona/Utah

Often referred to as America's favorite houseboating destination, Lake Powell, located on the border of Arizona and Utah in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, offers a wide array of houseboats for rental, including the new luxury-class, 75-foot Excursion, featuring a fireplace, an eight-person hot tub, home theater system, six staterooms, gas BBQs, waterslide and a GPS auto-tracking satellite system. Additional houseboat rentals include the Discovery- and Adventurer-class houseboats that sleep up to 12 individuals and include all the comforts of home.

With thousands of miles of shoreline to explore and rising lake levels, Lake Powell's most popular water-based activities include powerboating, fishing, wakeboarding, jet skiing, water skiing, tubing, kayaking and water trampolines. All equipment is available for rent at Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas, and personalized water-based instruction is also available.

Lake Powell is also home to Rainbow Bridge National Monument, offering visitors the opportunity to explore one of the Southwest's natural wonders. Full-day and half-day boat tours operate daily from Wahweap Marina.

Lake Quinault, Washington

For those planning a getaway in the Pacific Northwest, Lake Quinault is nestled among the lush Olympic National Forest, offering a myriad of activities from fishing to canoeing. Built in 1926 within the heart of one of only three temperate rain forests in the world, Lake Quinault Lodge is a rustic, historic retreat offering lakeside lodging and spanning views of the forests.

Visitors can explore the lake by renting canoes, kayaks, rowboats, or by scenic boat tours, which are available through the summer and offer breathtaking views of the lake and surrounding Olympic Mountains. Lake Quinault is also a great place for fishing, with an abundance of trout, salmon and steelhead, and guided and non-guided fishing excursions can be arranged.

Lake Tahoe, California/Nevada

Located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe just four miles from Stateline, Nevada, Zephyr Cove Resort & Marina is an historic recreational destination offering everything from camping and lakeside cabins to boating and watercraft rentals and cruises to Emerald Bay. The Zephyr Cove Marina serves as the departure point for the authentic paddlewheeler M.S. Dixie II, voted "Best of Tahoe" for the past 11 years. The M.S. Dixie offers daily cruises, including the Glenbrook Historic Breakfast Buffet and champagne brunch in the summer season and the Emerald Bay Sightseeing Dinner cruise featuring a three-course dinner, live music and dancing.

More adventurous visitors can rent powerboats, WaveRunners®, pedal boats, kayaks and canoes. Zephyr Cove Marina also offers parasailing aboard a new 12-passenger parasail boat.