

TOP 10 DESTINATIONS IN THE USA FOR NATURE LOVERS



National parks, lakes, coastal destinations, and the famous Las Vegas are often on the itinerary for nature lovers to explore the United States. Tourism Review has selected ten destinations in the USA for those who prefer natural beauty rather than man-made tourist attractions. The itinerary includes national parks, lake regions, coastal attractions, and the Nevada desert. These destinations can be explored in periods of a few days, or as part of the plans of those who want to extend their holiday season, combining work and leisure.

10) Badlands National Park

The Badlands National Park in South Dakota is known for its cliffs, prairies, and ancient fossil terrain over more than 100.000 hectares. In addition to the peaks and rocks with different colors, Badlands also has plenty of wildlife, such as bison, wild sheep, prairie dogs, and antelopes.

To get to know a little of the park's almost 100.000 hectares, it is recommended to go on walks, by bike or by car. For whole groups, there are trails with several levels of difficulty, a fossil preparation laboratory and even an annual astronomy festival.

To experience the park, two full days are recommended. But it is possible to visit Badlands National Park in less time. The easiest access option is to land at Rapid City airport and drive about an hour to the park; it is also possible to use Sioux Falls and Pierre airports.

9) Oregon Coast

With coastal villages, beaches, forests and mountains, the Oregon coast is appreciated by both adventure travelers and nature lovers. The region stretches 584 kilometers along the Pacific Ocean, with beautiful scenery and outdoor adventure.

To explore the Oregon coastline, the best option is to drive along Highway 101, making strategic stops. Some options are the city of Seaside, the "Jewel of the Oregon Coast" - also Cannon Beach, one of the most famous in the state, and home to Haystack Rock, 70 meters above the water.

To explore the Oregon Coast, taking advantage of the views and stops along the way, between 5 and 7 days are recommended. The suggestion is to land at Portland Airport, rent a car and drive along Highway 101 along the coast.

8) Lake Powell

Lake Powell is an artificial reservoir on the Colorado River, on the border between the states of Utah and Arizona, near the town of Page. The lake shores are composed of white sandy beaches, blue water, and reddish sandstone rocks, and are a recreational option for 2 million people each year.

Lake Powell is excellent for canoeing, kayaking and fishing, as well as being a great spot for stargazing at night. The region has other attractions, such as Antelope Canyon, one of the most

photographed canyons in the country, and Horseshoe Bend, a famous spot where the Colorado River bends.

To enjoy not only Lake Powell, but all the other attractions in the area, three days would be good enough. Page can be reached from either Page or Flagstaff Pulliam airports.

7) Zion National Park

Zion National Park in the state of Utah is one of the most visited destinations in the USA, with about 4.5 million visitors a year. This park is home to Angels Landing, a rock formation with a steep and narrow trail, one of the most challenging in the country. One of the park's most popular attractions is The Narrows, the narrowest section of Zion Canyon, where the trail is the Virgin River itself.

As well as trails with varying levels of difficulty, Zion National Park also allows you to go climbing, horse riding, cycling, boating and bird watching.

To explore the park well, 4 or 5 days are recommended. But it is possible to get to know the area in less time. To get there, the most common options are to stay overnight in Las Vegas or Salt Lake City and then travel to the park.

6) Bryce Canyon National Park

Bryce Canyon National Park, in the state of Utah, has the world's largest concentration of hoodoos, irregularly shaped rock pillars. Different colored rocks and huge canyons create the unique landscape of this park, which receives 2 million visitors per year.

Some trails last from 1 to 5 hours, but it is also possible to explore the park by car or horseback, stopping to do some sightseeing and photograph the landscapes. Each year, the park organizes an astronomy festival and a geology festival.

It is possible to visit the park in just one day. But, if you want to do longer trials, you will need more time. Most people land at Las Vegas Airport and drive to Bryce National Park. Another option is to land at Cedar City Airport.

5) Arches National Park

In the state of Utah, Arches National Park has the highest concentration of natural sandstone arches in the world. Due to the climate, the park is a great place to visit regardless of the season and receives about 1.5 million visitors a year.

One of the best ways to explore the park is on foot, using trails whose distances can be covered in minutes or 4 to 5 hours. It is possible to climb and rappel in the canyons, ride a bicycle or horseback, and enjoy one of the darkest skies in the country to observe the stars.

To calmly enjoy the park and explore all its landscapes, you will need two days. The main airports to get there are Grand Junction and Durango-La Plata, from where you can drive to Arches National Park.

4) Grand Teton National Park

Grand Teton National Park is in the state of Wyoming. It is a perfect destination for those visiting Yellowstone National Park, most of which is also in Wyoming. The highlights are the Teton mountains, with irregular, jagged peaks, crystal-clear lakes, and huge biodiversity. You are likely to encounter animals such as elk, eagles, coyotes, and bison.

There are hundreds of kilometers of trails (some quiet, some more challenging), with spectacular views. Besides hiking, you can also go fishing, canoeing, and climbing. Once you leave the park, it is worth exploring Jackson, a charming village with restaurants, shops and a ski resort.

To enjoy the park calmly, at least three days are recommended. If you are short of time, you can see the main part of the park and, with more time, you can take other tours. There is an airport in Jackson, which serves as a base to explore the park. But most fly into Salt Lake City or Idaho Falls airport, rent a car, and drive on to Grand Teton.

3) Las Vegas

Las Vegas, world-renowned for its casinos and luxury hotels, was built in the desert in the state of Nevada. It is one of the most visited cities in the world, it has countless entertainment options for tourists.

Besides the luxury of Vegas, the state of Nevada has beautiful landscapes that please those who love nature and outdoor life. For example, the Valley of Fire State Park, with different rock formations, Lake Mead, which is perfect for water sports, and Red Rock Canyon, a national conservation area with amazing scenery.

To explore Las Vegas at your leisure, a minimum stay of 5 days is recommended. Although it is possible to land directly at Las Vegas airport, many prefer to fly to Los Angeles and hire a car to make the drive to Vegas, taking the opportunity to make stops along the way.

2) Crater Lake National Park

The Crater Lake National Park in the state of Oregon has impressive landscapes. A lake with clear blue waters, steep gorges and two unique islands. Crater Lake, which gives the park its name, is inside the crater of an extinct volcano and is considered the deepest lake in the USA.

You can drive along the road that goes around the lake, stopping at the viewpoints to do some sightseeing and take pictures. Other options are a boat trip, a tram ride and the trails through the forest.

To admire all the beauty of the park, three days would be recommended. The closest airports are Medford-Rogue Valley, Eugene and Portland, finishing the journey by car to Crater Lake National Park.

1) Big Sur and California Coast

The California Coast is extensive and has the famous Highway 1, which connects the north and the south of much of the state's coastline. One of the highlights is Big Sur, the most beautiful stretch of the highway. It is almost 70 km of sharp curves, decorated by paradisiacal beaches and pointy rocks.

The journey along the Californian coastline is beautifully scenic and allows you to visit numerous towns. Besides Big Sur, the cities of San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Santa Monica and San Diego are a must, enjoying the beaches, piers and restaurants of each place.

To explore the California Coast and its charms, 10 and 15 days are required. Most land at Los Angeles Airport and rent a car to make the trip along the coast, as the iconic highway is one of the great attractions of this itinerary.

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