



Driving Across America

The best road trips America has to offer



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Let's Go!

Introduction

There's a lot of America out there. It's a big country, and there's a whole lot to see – but when you fly to a specific destination, that's all you get. You miss out on everything in-between, the whole journey, the little things that come up between the big cities and parks. You have to drive America to really know it.

With that in mind, we'd like to help you get started with ideas for a few cool road trips. This is only the beginning. Once you're out the door, you'll think of other parts of the country you want to see. You might even discover something interesting on one of these road trips and get even farther off the beaten path. Trust us – it's worth it.



Route 66

Where's it located?

In the early days of the American highway system, between the advent of the automobile and the completion of today's interstate highway system, Route 66 was one of the few ways drivers could get from east to west and back again. It connected Chicago, Illinois and Santa Monica, California, passing through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona as well. Travelers who made the whole journey would pass landmarks like the Chain of Rocks Bridge in St. Louis, the U-Drop Inn in Shamrock, Texas, and the Santa Monica Pier in California – all of which are still hallmarks of the road.

Route 66 no longer exists in its original form, but local and national preservation societies have worked to restore old landmarks and keep it alive by helping to save businesses, communities, and the roadbed of the old route, and fueling tourist travel along it. There's no one "right" way to travel Route 66 – even when it was at its peak, construction and other changes continually altered its path. That means that today, there are many different ways to experience what was Route 66, so you can customize your trip a little and maybe discover even more of the Midwest and Southwest in the process.

There are tons of resources online to help travelers follow the various Route 66 paths, and if you're an iPhone user, there's even an [app](#) that you can use. It'll help you keep from getting lost, teach you about the various attractions and landmarks you'll see, and the well-preserved diners and motels you can visit along the way.

“There's no one *right* way to travel Route 66”



Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Where's it located?

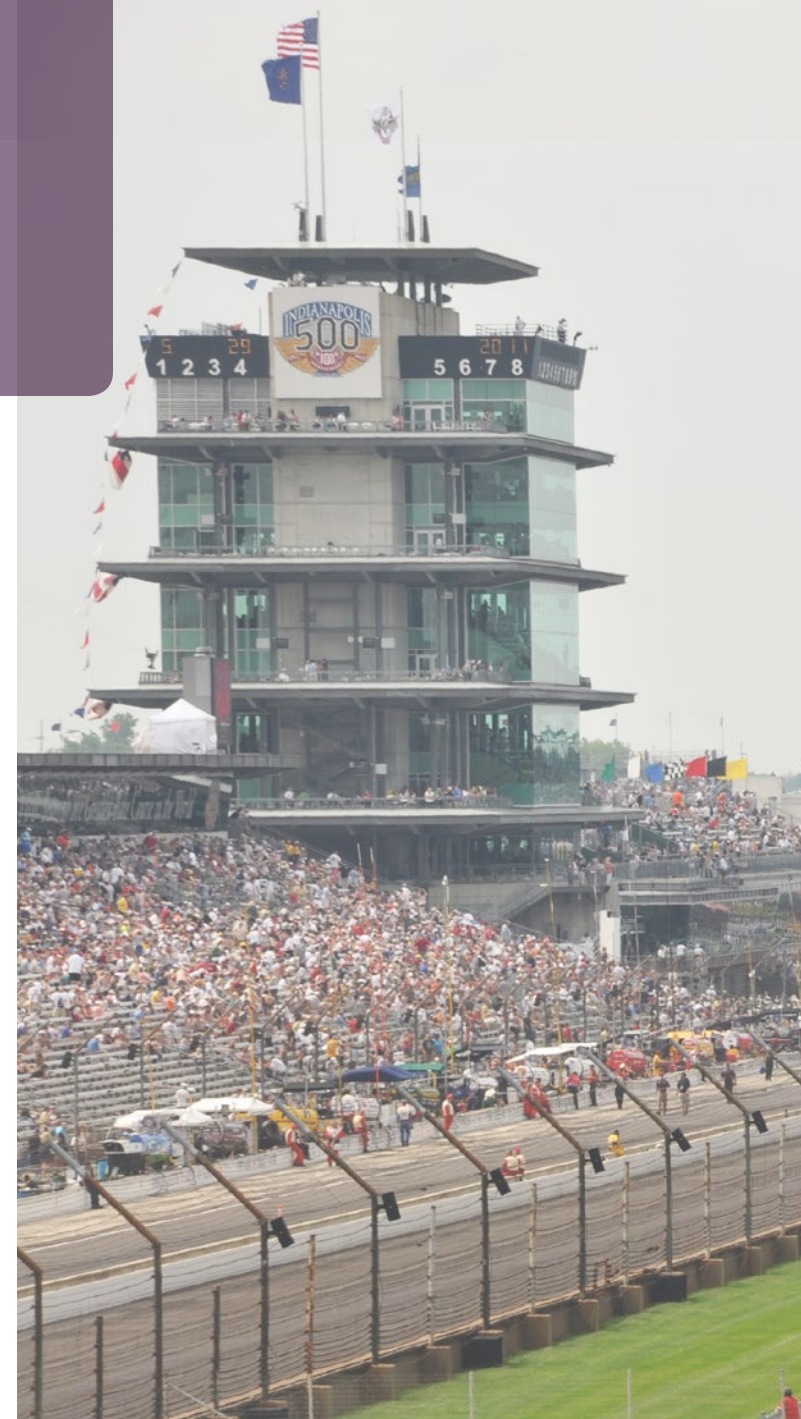
It's the Greatest Spectacle in Racing, and it's held on Memorial Day weekend every year – meaning it's a perfect time to hop in the car and travel. Sure, the race is in one location (the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in the heart of Indiana) but that doesn't mean it can't be part of a great road trip across the Midwest. With over 100 years of history, it's an event that brings the nostalgia for yesterday in direct contact with the technology and speeds of today's advanced racing.



The race is the Sunday before Memorial Day, but there are plenty of other things to experience surrounding it. There are a couple weeks of practice and qualifying for the race itself, and the Speedway makes sure to show spectators a good time. Carb Day – short for “Carburetion Day,” the last day of practice before the race – includes parties and concerts on the track’s infield, and is one of the race’s biggest attractions. Indianapolis also holds the 500 Festival, a month-long party that includes a mini-marathon, a parade, the Snakepit Ball on race eve, and more.

An Airstream will come in handy if you want to experience the entire slate of events. Camping is pretty common, even for locals, and spaces are available for tents and RVs in grass and paved lots surrounding the Speedway, all along Georgetown Road and 16th Street. This includes the famous Coke Lot, home of tailgaters galore for days leading up to the race. Some lots even have electrical hookups. But either way, it’s a great time, especially for race fans.

“*years of racing history*”





Oregon Trail

Where's it located?

If you, your children, or your grandchildren are of a certain age, there's probably going to be some excitement over this one. The younger generation was introduced to the Oregon Trail by an eponymous computer game and will probably have fond memories of hunting for buffalo and fording rivers. If you've never even heard of the game though, the old trail still makes for a fascinating road trip.

The Oregon Trail was one of many used by American pioneers traveling west to seek land and fortune. It was a dangerous road, but much safer than trying to blaze a path on your own. Travelers had to deal with perils like sickness, severe weather, hunger, and problems with wagons. In the end, the road brought them to a beautiful and fertile country that allowed those who made it there the chance to start anew.

The National Parks Service (NPS), alongside other government entities and even private individuals, helps to maintain parts of the old trail, so you can still travel it today and see many of the landmarks that the pioneers saw like Chimney Rock, Fort Laramie, and Scotts Bluff. Start in Independence, Missouri, as many wagon trains did, and visit the National Frontier Trails Museum. Then make your way across the western part of the country towards Oregon City, Oregon – the last stop on the Oregon Trail, and the place where successful voyagers were able to file land claims on the new homes they'd risked everything to find.

The NPS offers many resources for those who wish to experience the trail – while the trail covers six states, many sites along its path are parks of their own as well, and make good checkpoints. Visit the [Oregon National Historic Trail](#) website for maps and interpretive guides to help you plan a path and locate the sights you want to visit along the way.



Blue Ridge Parkway

Where's it located?

Known as one of the nation's best and most beautiful drives, the Blue Ridge Parkway runs for 469 miles across Virginia and North Carolina. It follows the Appalachian Mountains – the Blue Ridge chain, specifically – from Shenandoah National Park in the north to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the south.

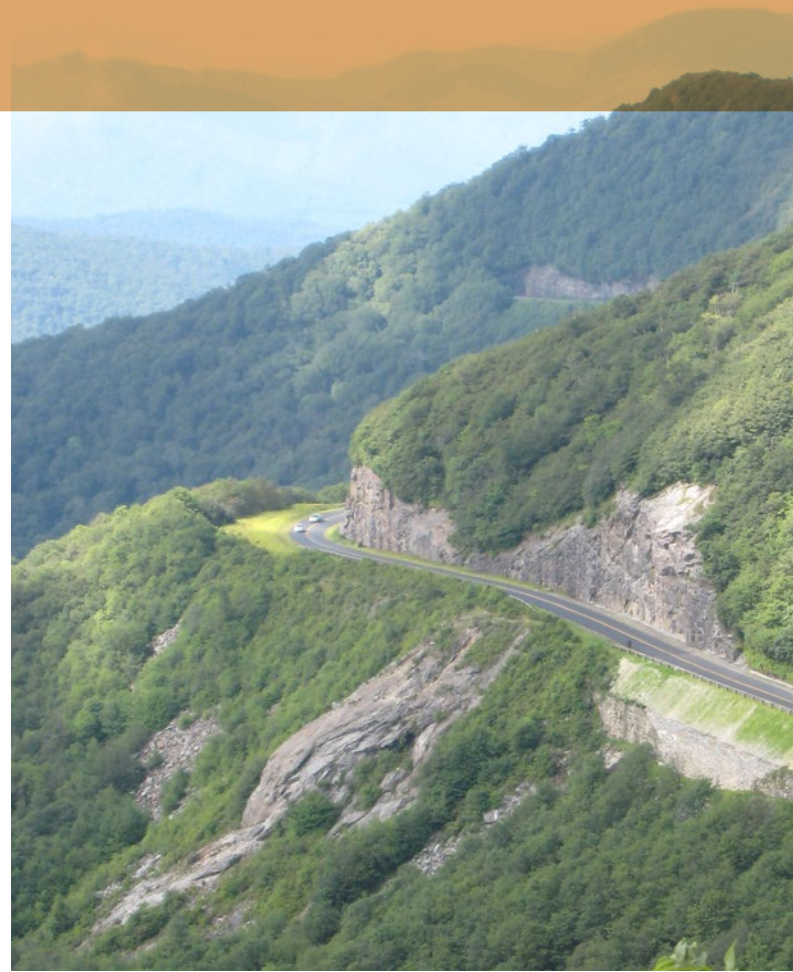
The parkway isn't technically a national park, but much of it is maintained by the National Parks Service. It also doesn't have official opening and closing dates or hours, but it does snake through a mountain range, so if you're planning a trip in winter, early spring, or late fall, you should definitely plan on snow. Parts of the parkway close due to weather as well, so planning ahead and flexibility are definite musts.



With hundreds of miles of beautiful vistas, as well as **slow speed limits** to make sure you can enjoy them, the parkway is definitely worth the trip. If 469 miles isn't enough, you can keep the party going even farther. The north end of the parkway connects to Skyline Drive, which stretches 105 miles into Virginia and is similar in a lot of ways to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway follow along the Appalachian Trail footpath that runs from Maine to Georgia – an exciting option for the truly adventurous among you.

You can't drive on the actual trail, of course. However, the trail runs close to enough roads that you can follow a similar path on US 441, I-81, I-78, US 209, US 7, I-95, and others. You can drive the whole way just to enjoy the scenery, or you can take breaks to hike parts of the trail and camp along it, either in your Airstream or in a tent.

“If 469 miles isn't enough, you can keep the party going even farther.”





Great River Road

Where's it located?

Ten states. 3,000 miles. The Great River Road is not a single road; in fact, it's more of a route – but unlike the route to follow the Appalachian Trail, this one is officially designated and marked, and maintained by a number of official commissions.

The Great River Road follows the Mississippi River from its source in Minnesota to its mouth in Louisiana. Its designation as a National Scenic Byway means that it comes complete with tourism amenities, interpretive centers, and other attractions to help visitors experience the river to its fullest. Along the road you can see things ranging from breweries to state and national parks to Mark Twain's birthplace to the Gulf of Mexico.

Since it extends the full north-south length of the Midwestern United States, you might expect some differences in terrain, and the Great River Road doesn't disappoint. From the rugged hills and forests of the Driftless Area in the north and the Ozarks farther south, to the plains and farmland of Iowa and Illinois, you'll get a lot of what America has to offer, all along one single path.

10
3,000



Pacific Coast Highway and US 101

Where's it located?

California State Route 1 stretches along most of the Pacific Coast of California, and with twists and turns, hills, an ocean, and beautiful views, it's the best way to experience the West Coast. The actual Pacific Coast Highway is about 120 miles along the central California coast, running from Monterrey to Morro Bay, a few hours north of Los Angeles. While the Pacific Coast Highway is amazing, it's only the beginning.

By using a series of connecting local, state, and US highways like US 101, you can traverse the country all the way from Port Angeles in Washington to San Diego. Along the way, you'll be right in the middle of some of the country's most beautiful terrain. From the logging forests in the north through the redwoods in California, across the Columbia River and past San Francisco Bay, there are any number of natural wonders that will have you marveling. That doesn't even include the Pacific Ocean itself. State and national parks line the coast, many with campgrounds that offer a welcome respite from the road.

There are plenty of man-made attractions to visit as well. The Space Needle, Monterey Bay Aquarium, the surf at San Luis Obispo, and Hollywood are all worthwhile stops, and with cities like Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles along the route, there's plenty of civilization if you start to miss it.

“...You can traverse the country all the way from *Port Angeles* in Washington to *San Diego*.”



Let's Go!

Up and down the Pacific Coast, along the Mississippi, through the Appalachians, across the Great Plains, the Midwest, and the West – the great old highway system of America gives you the framework to see any part of the country as close-up as you could possibly want. With a little bit of planning and a good ride, the open road is ready for whatever adventures you have in mind. With an Airstream, your home away from home, you can make even the longest trips safely and comfortably. So go out and discover America. There's more than enough for all of us.

Since 1931 Airstream has been working to help people experience the world around them through travel. With comfortable, easy-to-tow, and durable travel trailers, everyone from a novice traveler to an expert can enjoy life on the road. Find the Airstream that's right for you, get out there, and start Living Riveted.

