

# DRIVING ACROSS THE STATES



THE BEST ROAD TRIPS  
AMERICA HAS TO OFFER

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ROUTE 66



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HIGHWAY &  
US 101



LET'S GO!





There's a lot of America out there. And we're betting you're ready to see it. Road trips are getting more and more popular as families and friends figure out ways to travel safely. Plus, when you fly, you miss the landscapes, the views, and the quirky roadside attractions. You lose the chance to experience all the special little stops that exist in between the big cities. To really get to know America, you have to drive through it.

With that in mind, we put together this Best Road Trips Guide to help you find some inspiration. Discover six of our favorite routes to drive – plus some of the best stops along each one. And remember: these are just jumping-off points. Once you're on the road, you'll think of other parts of the country you want to see. Along the way, you might even stumble upon a road that takes you even farther off the beaten path. If you do, we hope you'll follow your wanderlust. Trust us – it's worth it.



*there's no one "right"  
way to travel*



Before the completion of the 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 on the way. 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 storied route.

Route 66 no longer exists in its original form. But local and national preservation societies have worked to restore its landmarks and keep it alive, helping to save the roadbed of

the old route and supporting businesses and communities by encouraging tourist travel.

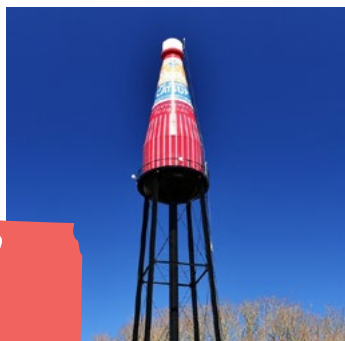
There's no one "right" way to travel Route 66 – even at its peak, construction and other changes continually altered its path – so there are many different ways to enjoy the journey. Customize your trip a little, and you'll be able to discover even more of the Midwest and Southwest in the process.

Want a little guidance as you're planning your trip? There are plenty of resources online that can help you choose your route and select your stops, like Road Trip USA.

**Discover Route 66 »**



## SOME OF OUR FAVORITE STOPS ON ROUTE 66



### **World's Largest Catsup Bottle** Collinsville, IL

Standing nearly 70 feet tall and built on top of a 100-foot-tall water tower, the World's Largest Catsup Bottle is large enough to hold 640,000 normal-sized bottles of catsup (ketchup).

### **Meramec Caverns** Stanton, MO

Stop for a tour of this incredible limestone cavern system, which reaches nearly seven stories underground and includes one of the world's rarest cave formations, the Wine Table.

### **Eisler Brothers Old Riverton Store** Riverton, KS

Constructed in 1925, it's the oldest continuously operating store on Route 66. Stop by to marvel at the pressed-tin ceiling, grab a deli sandwich, or shop for souvenirs.



### **The Blue Whale of Catoosa** Catoosa, OK

This 20-foot-tall, 80-foot-long blue whale was built in the 70s by local Hugh Davis as an anniversary gift for his wife, Zelta. It's now become one of Route 66's most popular stops.

### **Cadillac Ranch** Amarillo, TX

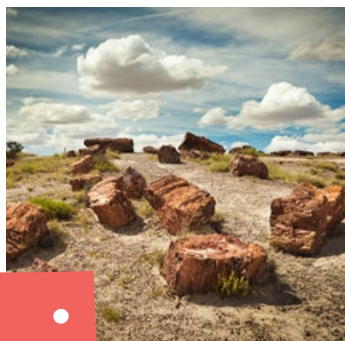
This art installation features 10 used Cadillacs half-buried in a row in the dirt, nose first. Mark your visit by spray-painting the cars – it's not only allowed, but encouraged.

### **San Miguel Mission** Santa Fe, NM

Established more than 200 years ago, this beautiful adobe church is on the National Registry of Historic Places. The Mission Arcade is original to the structure.

### **Petrified Forest National Park** Northeastern Arizona

Petrified wood deposits are responsible for the striking color palettes you'll see inside the park. Some of the Painted Desert is also contained inside its borders.



### **Elmer's Bottle Tree Ranch** Oro Grande, CA

Comprising more than 200 trees built from recycled glass bottles and metal sign posts, this "forest" is unlike anything else you've seen.



*the  
greatest spectacle  
in racing*



Known as The Greatest Spectacle in Racing, the Indianapolis 500 is held on Memorial Day weekend every year. Sure, the race is in one location, but it's a great excuse for a road trip across the Midwest. With more than 100 years of history, the Indianapolis 500 combines nostalgia for days gone by with the incredible speed and technology of modern-day IndyCar racing. It's an experience you won't find anywhere else.

One of the race's biggest attractions is Carb Day (short for "Carburetion Day") – the last day of practice before the race, which includes parties and concerts on the track's infield. The city of Indianapolis also holds the 500 Festival, a month-long celebration that includes a

half-marathon, a parade, the Snakepit Ball on race eve, and more. Be sure you check the speedway's website to see if events are being held as scheduled and what preparations you'll need.

An Airstream will come in handy if you want to experience the full slate of events. Camping is pretty common, even for locals, and spaces are available for tents and RVs in the grass and paved lots surrounding the Speedway. This includes the famous Coke Lot, where you'll find tailgates galore in the days leading up to the race. Some lots even have electrical hookups. Wherever you set up camp, it's a great time – especially for race fans.



## THE INDY BUCKET LIST

There's more to Indianapolis than the 500, so make sure you spend some time exploring the city beyond the Speedway. Here are some of our favorite destinations.

- CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF INDIANAPOLIS
- INDIANAPOLIS ZOO
- WHITE RIVER STATE PARK
- INDIANAPOLIS CITY MARKET
- JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY MUSEUM HOME
- NEWFIELDS
- CULTURAL TRAIL
- CANAL WALK
- MASS AVE ARTS DISTRICT
- EAGLE CREEK PARK



[Visit Indianapolis »](#)

## WHERE TO NEXT?

Indianapolis is within easy driving distance of Cincinnati (2 hours), Louisville (2 hours), Chicago (3 hours), and St. Louis (4 hours).



One fascinating  
road trip



If you, your children, or your grandchildren are of a certain age, you'll probably be pretty excited about this one thanks to the eponymous computer game – you may even have fond memories of hunting for buffalo and fording rivers on-screen. But even if you've never heard of the game, the old trail still makes for one fascinating road trip.

The Oregon Trail was one of the many routes used by American pioneers traveling west to seek land and fortune. It was a dangerous road, but still much safer than trying to blaze a path on your own. Travelers had to confront perils like sickness, severe weather, hunger, and damaged wagons. But in the end, the trail brought them to a beautiful and fertile country

that allowed those who made it the chance to start anew.

The National Park Service (NPS), alongside other government entities and private individuals, helps to maintain parts of the old trail. Thanks to these efforts, today's travelers can still see many of the same landmarks the pioneers saw, like Chimney Rock, Fort Laramie, Scotts Bluff, and more.

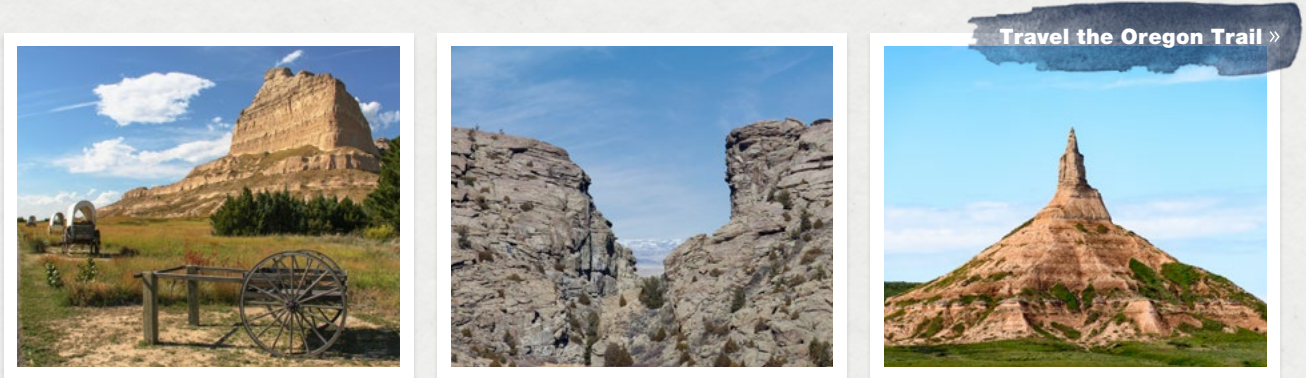
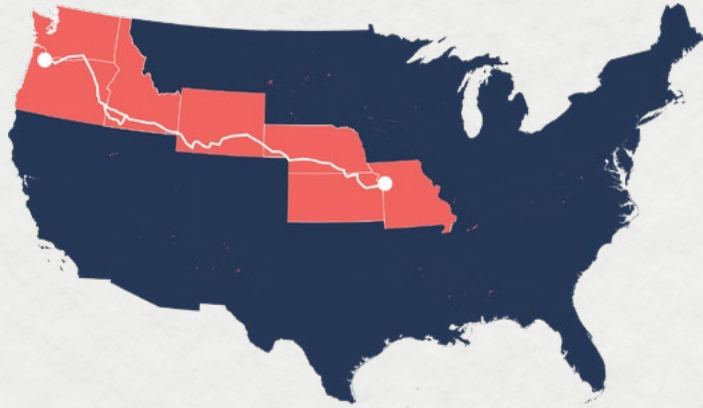
Start in Independence, Missouri – as many wagon trains did – and visit the National Frontier Trails Museum. Then make your way west towards Oregon City, Oregon – the last stop on the trail and the place where settlers filed land claims on the new homes they'd risked everything to find.



## PLAN YOUR ROUTE

The National Park Service offers lots of trip planning resources for those who want to experience the trail, which passes through seven states:

- IDAHO
- KANSAS
- MISSOURI
- NEBRASKA
- OREGON
- WASHINGTON
- WYOMING



Check out the Oregon National Historic Trail website for maps and interpretive guides to help you plan your route and pick the sights you want to see along the way.

## AN AIRSTREAM CONNECTION

Airstream's founder, Wally Byam, grew up in Baker City, Oregon, where his grandparents settled after traveling the Oregon Trail in a mule-drawn wagon.





one of the most  
beautiful drives



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 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 Park Service. And although it doesn't have official opening and closing dates or hours, it does snake through a mountain range – so if you'll be driving it during winter, early spring, or late fall, you should expect some snow. Parts of the parkway close due to weather, so plan to be flexible about your route.

With hundreds of miles of beautiful vistas, the parkway is worth the trip. And if 469 miles isn't enough, you can keep driving even farther. The north end of the parkway connects to Skyline Drive, which stretches 105 miles into Virginia and provides similarly beautiful views.

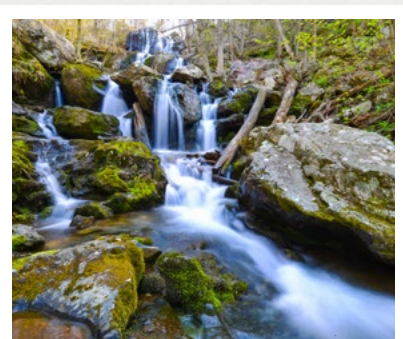
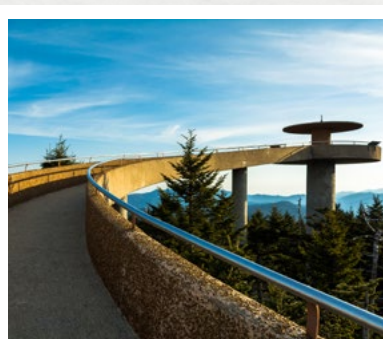
Both the Blue Ridge Parkway and Skyline Drive also follow along the Appalachian Trail footpath, which runs from Maine to Georgia. You can't drive on the actual trail, of course, but you can follow a similar path on US 441, I-81, I-78, US 209, US 7, I-95, and others. Drive the whole way to enjoy the scenery. Or, take breaks to hike or camp along parts of the trail – either in a tent or in your Airstream.



## NATIONAL PARKS

Because the Blue Ridge Parkway connects two national parks, it's easy to visit both during your drive. In Great Smoky Mountains National Park, check out Clingmans Dome – as the park's highest point, it offers amazing views – or hike around Cades Cove, where you're likely to catch a glimpse of local wildlife like black bears, deer, and turkeys.

In Shenandoah National Park, hike Old Rag Mountain, the park's most popular and most challenging trail. Or wait for night to fall and head for Big Meadows – the lack of light pollution makes for great stargazing. Of course, there's so much more to see and do in both parks, so check out their websites as you plan your visits.



[Explore the Great Smoky Mountains »](#)

[Experience Shenandoah Nat'l Park »](#)



*the changing  
scenery is part of the  
experience*



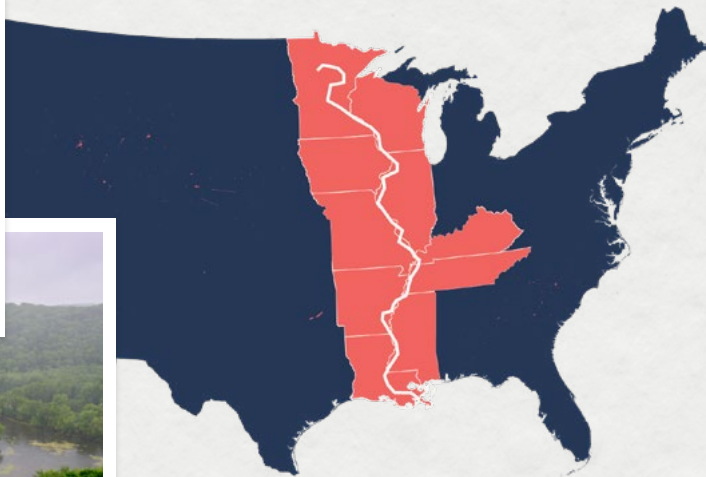
Crossing ten states and covering more than 2,000 miles, the Great River Road isn't a single road at all. It's actually a network of state and local roads that follows the course of the Mississippi River, beginning at its source in Minnesota and stretching all the way to its mouth in Louisiana. The road's designation as a National Scenic Byway means you'll pass plenty of tourist attractions along your way: think state and national parks, historic sites, museums, and more.

Plus, because the country's geography varies so much from north to south, taking in the changing scenery is part of the experience. 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, to the white-capped waves of the Gulf of Mexico, you'll see so much of the natural beauty America has to offer.



## WHERE TO STOP IN EACH STATE

- **MINNESOTA** National Eagle Center, Wabasha
- **WISCONSIN** Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum, Pepin
- **IOWA** Effigy Mounds National Monument, Harpers Ferry
- **MISSOURI** Mastodon State Historic Site, Imperial
- **KENTUCKY** Columbus-Belmont State Park, Columbus
- **TENNESSEE** National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis
- **ARKANSAS** Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Manila
- **MISSISSIPPI** Delta Blues Museum, Clarksdale
- **LOUISIANA** West Feliciana Historical Society Museum, St. Francisville



Explore the Great River Road »

Find even more interesting places to stop, plus get shopping, dining, and lodging information at [experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com).



the best way to  
experience  
the West Coast



## PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY & US 101

California State Route 1 stretches along most of the Pacific Coast of California, from Leggett in the north to Orange County in the south, passing through cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara – to name just a few. With twists and turns and beautiful views, it's one of the best ways to experience the West Coast. The storied Pacific Coast Highway is about 120 miles along the central California coast, running from Monterey to Morro Bay, a few hours north of Los Angeles. And while the Pacific Coast Highway is amazing, it's only the beginning.

By using a series of connecting highways like US 101, you can drive all the way from Port Angeles, Washington, to San Diego. And along the way, you'll drive through some of the country's most beautiful landscapes. From the logging forests in the north to the redwoods in California, across the Columbia River and past San Francisco Bay, America's natural wonders will have you marveling – all while the Pacific Ocean is right outside your window. Need a break from the road? Plenty of state and national parks line the coast, and many have campgrounds so you can stop overnight and explore.



## SOME OF OUR FAVORITE STOPS

- **OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK**  
Port Angeles, WA
- **HAYSTACK ROCK**  
Cannon Beach, OR
- **OREGON DUNES NATIONAL RECREATIONAL AREA**  
North Bend, OR
- **MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM**  
Monterey, CA
- **BIKBY BRIDGE**  
Monterey, CA
- **HEARST CASTLE**  
San Simeon, CA
- **POINT ARENA LIGHTHOUSE**  
Point Arena, CA
- **CHANDELIER DRIVE-THRU TREE**  
Leggett, CA
- **POINT LOBOS STATE NATURAL RESERVE**  
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA







Up and down the Pacific Coast, along the Mississippi River, through the Appalachians, across the Great Plains, the Midwest, and the West – America's highway system gives you the framework to go just about anywhere in this big, beautiful country. And when you're traveling with an Airstream, your home away from home, even the longest trips are safe and comfortable. So go ahead – hit the road and see where your next adventure leads.

## ADVENTURE. INSPIRED BY AIRSTREAM.

Our founder, Wally Byam, was driven by an unending desire to see what was over the next hill, and the next after that. And he wasn't alone. Thousands of Airstreamers know just how important the freedom to wander really is, and how enjoyable having the whole world at your doorstep can be. So, what are you waiting for? Find your Airstream at [airstream.com](http://airstream.com).

**Find your Airstream »**

AIRSTREAM



## MORE AIRSTREAM-APPROVED TRAVEL IDEAS

Find Airstream-created Round Trip guides where we fully immerse ourselves – and you – into the nooks and crannies of places like Stowe, VT, Bandon, OR, and more. Find your perfect Round Trip and shop for the gear you might need along the way at [airstreamsupplycompany.com](http://airstreamsupplycompany.com).



### **Fall Foliage** New England

Follow ASC up to New England for a leaf-peeping trip for the ages.

### **Maine** South Thomaston, ME

Get away from the crowds and experience the rocky, rural coast "Down East" as you make your way to Acadia National Park.

### **Bandon, Oregon** Pacific Northwest

Where the land meets the sea in the Pacific Northwest you'll find rugged beaches, towering forests, and friendly faces.

### **Stowe, Vermont**

From the craft beer to the rolling hills and myriad trails, Vermont is a winter wonderland where anything is possible.

### **Joshua Tree** Joshua Tree, CA

Come for one of our most unique National Parks. Stay for a desert oasis of art, culture, music, and food.

### **Dark Skies** USA

Public Service Announcement: Half the park is after dark.

### **Ohio** Jackson Center, OH

More than simply a stretch of endless cornfields and factories, there are plenty of reasons to believe the Midwest is the Best.

### **Franklin, Tennessee**

Franklin, Tennessee is 30 minutes away from Nashville – and a world away from the hustle of Music City.

### **Salida, Colorado**

Salida has a piece of everything that makes Colorado magical, monumental, and majestic.

Find your perfect Round Trip »





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