

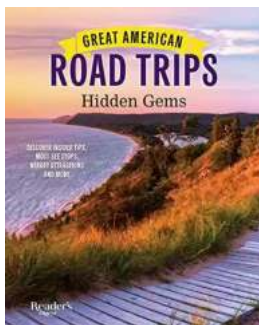
# Unveiling Hidden Gems: The Ultimate Great American Road Trip Adventure

Embarking on a road trip is an exhilarating experience that allows you to explore the picturesque landscapes, charming towns, and hidden gems of the United States. From the rugged coastlines of California to the stunning landscapes of the Southwest and the vibrant cities of the East Coast, there is no shortage of unforgettable moments awaiting you along the way.

While famous attractions and well-known landmarks often dominate travel itineraries, it's the hidden gems that truly capture the heart and spirit of a place. These lesser-known destinations offer a unique experience, away from the crowds and tourist traps, allowing you to discover the authentic soul of America.

## 1. Pacific Coast Highway: Embrace the Natural Beauty

Starting in northern California and stretching all the way down to Southern California, the Pacific Coast Highway offers stunning views of the Pacific Ocean and breathtaking natural beauty at every turn. Take a detour to Big Sur, a hidden gem nestled between the cliffs and the ocean, where you can hike along breathtaking coastal trails and enjoy the solitude.



## RD Great American Road Trips Hidden Gems

by Reader's Digest(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 191 pages



Be sure to stop by the quaint town of Pacific Grove, known for its monarch butterfly sanctuary. Witness thousands of butterflies fluttering gracefully, painting the skies with vibrant colors.

## **2. Route 66: A Journey Through History**

Route 66, often referred to as the "Main Street of America," is an iconic road trip route that spans from Chicago to Santa Monica. This historic route takes you through small towns frozen in time, offering a glimpse into the golden era of American culture.

Visit Seligman, Arizona, a quirky little town that proudly flaunts its Route 66 heritage. Here, you'll find vintage motels, diners, and souvenir shops that epitomize the nostalgia of the American road trip culture.

## **3. Blue Ridge Parkway: A Scenic Drive to Remember**

The Blue Ridge Parkway winds through the Appalachian Mountains, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding landscapes. This scenic drive guarantees a journey of awe-inspiring beauty.

Along the parkway, make a stop at Linville Falls, where you can witness the cascading waterfalls and hike to stunning viewpoints. Explore the charming town of Asheville, North Carolina, which is known for its vibrant arts scene, breweries, and the stunning Biltmore Estate.

## **4. The Great River Road: Following the Mighty Mississippi**

Follow the Mississippi River as it meanders through ten states on the Great River Road. This journey allows you to immerse yourself in the rich history and diverse cultures of the American heartland.

Be sure to explore the charming town of Galena, Illinois, known for its beautifully preserved 19th-century architecture and charming boutiques. Take a riverboat cruise along the Mississippi and experience the beauty of the river up close.

## **5. Oregon Coast: An Untouched Paradise**

The Oregon Coast offers a rugged and untouched beauty that is hard to find elsewhere. Explore Cannon Beach and witness the iconic Haystack Rock, a massive monolith rising from the ocean. Walk along the stunning sandy beaches and feel the cool breeze on your face.

Pacific City is another hidden gem along the Oregon Coast. This small coastal town is a surfer's paradise, where you can catch some waves or simply relax on the pristine beaches.

## **6. The Outer Banks: A Journey to Serenity**

If you're seeking tranquility and sandy shores, the Outer Banks in North Carolina is the perfect destination. This barrier island chain stretches for miles, with small towns and sandy dunes awaiting your exploration. Visit the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, a hidden gem where you can witness wild horses galloping along the shoreline.

## **7. The Florida Keys: Paradise Found**

For those craving a taste of the Caribbean in the United States, the Florida Keys is the ultimate destination. This chain of islands offers crystal-clear waters, breathtaking sunsets, and a laid-back atmosphere.

Make a stop at Bahia Honda State Park, located on one of the keys. Here, you can go snorkeling, kayaking, or simply relax on the pristine beaches, immersing yourself in the tropical vibes.

## **8. The Black Hills: A Journey to the Wild West**

Journey through the Black Hills of South Dakota and immerse yourself in the majestic beauty of the region. Visit Mount Rushmore, an American icon that showcases the faces of four influential presidents carved into the granite mountain.

Don't miss out on the scenic Needles Highway, where you can drive through narrow tunnels and marvel at the unique rock formations. Wind through Custer State Park and observe the roaming bison herds, bringing you closer to the untamed spirit of the Wild West.

## **9. The Byways of New England: Fall Foliage Extravaganza**

In the autumn months, New England bursts into a vibrant display of colors, creating a fairytale-like atmosphere. Take a road trip through Vermont's Route 100 and witness the stunning fall foliage, with its fiery reds, oranges, and golden hues.

Stop by the charming town of Woodstock, where you can stroll through quaint streets lined with antique shops and cozy cafes. Head north to Acadia National Park in Maine, where rugged coastlines and picturesque hiking trails await.

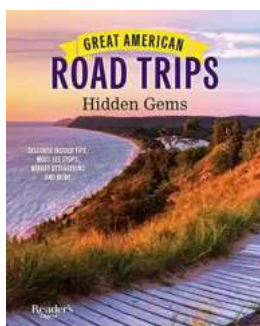
## **10. The Great Lakes Circle Tour: Unleash the Water Lover in You**

Discover the beauty of North America's Great Lakes by embarking on the Great Lakes Circle Tour. This road trip takes you through the stunning landscapes of

Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and other surrounding states while showcasing the vastness of these incredible freshwater bodies.

Visit Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan, where you can hike up towering sand dunes and enjoy breathtaking views of Lake Michigan. Take a ferry trip to Mackinac Island and discover a Victorian-era paradise without cars.

As you plan your great American road trip, remember to embrace the unexpected and uncover the hidden gems along the way. It's in these lesser-known places that you will create the most unforgettable memories and truly experience the essence of America.



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First-person accounts and gorgeous landscape photos paired with practical information and tips to help travelers make the most of their journeys through 39 special hidden gems found across the country.

Discover the most beautiful places in America that you might never have heard of before. Hidden Gems features:

- engaging first-hand travel accounts;
- helpful advice about must-see spots, rest stops, and other ways to get the most out of your trip; and
- stunning images taken by many of America's best scenic photographers.

Some spots offer activities for the more adventurous, such as rafting or mountain biking; others include suggestions for the more leisurely traveler who wants to stop and take in the views by the roadside. The small towns and people you encounter along the way will certainly be memorable. This book will help you set the agenda for your next getaway.

So, get ready to jump in the car or RV and share these experiences with the ones you love! From the Organ Pipe Cactus in Arizona and Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan to Gullah Geechee in South Carolina and Litchfield Hills in Connecticut, these lesser-known scenic spots are definitely worth exploring!

List of locations:

## WEST

- Chugach National Forest, Alaska
- Channel Islands National Park, California
- Devils Postpile National Monument, California
- Shasta-Trinity National Forest, California
- Camas Prairie Centennial Marsh, Idaho

- Lost River Range and Lemhi Mountain Range, Idaho
- Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Idaho
- Valley of the Fire State Park, Nevada
- Wallowa Lake State Park, Oregon
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah
- Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Washington
- Bighorn Mountains, Wyoming

## SOUTHWEST

- Chiricahua National Monument, Arizona
- Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Arizona
- Verde Valley, Arizona
- Northern Rio Grande, New Mexico
- Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Texas

## MIDWEST

- Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area, Iowa
- Flint Hills (Flint Hills Scenic Byway), Kansas

-Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Michigan

-Arrowhead Region, Minnesota

-Pipestone National Monument, Minnesota

-Door County, Wisconsin

-Iron and Ashland Counties, Wisconsin

## SOUTHEAST

-Alabama's Coastal Connection Scenic Byway, Alabama

-Newton County, Arkansas

-Wakulla Springs, Florida

-Red River Gorge Geological Area, Kentucky

-Atchafalaya Basin, Louisiana

-Cataloochee Valley, North Carolina

-Linville Gorge Wilderness, North Carolina

-Gullah Geechee, South Carolina

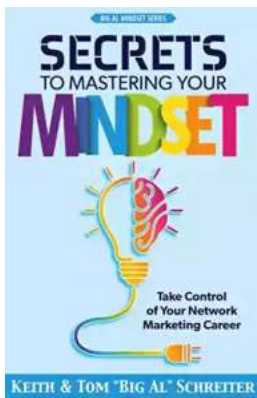
-Burke's Garden, Virginia

-Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, West Virginia and Maryland



## NORTHEAST

- Litchfield Hills, Connecticut
- Birch Hill State Wildlife Area, Massachusetts
- Tully Lake Recreation Area, Massachusetts
- The Great Swamp, New York
- Pine Creek Gorge, Pennsylvania



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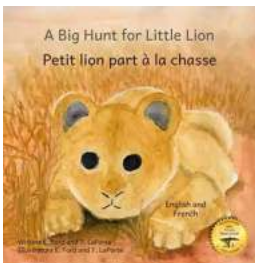
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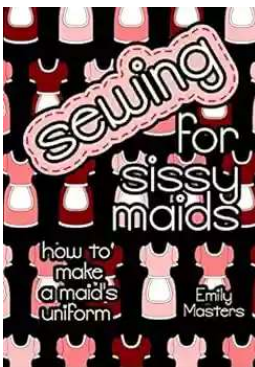
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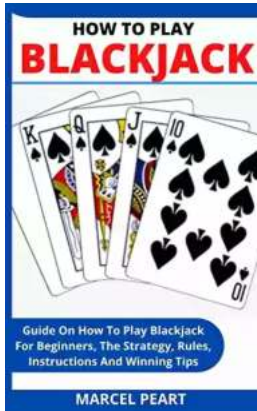
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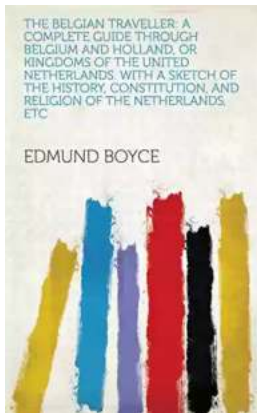
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