

# 5 Places in the U.S. Perfect for a 3-Day Weekend

(Courtesy of Cynthia Barnes, The Discoverer)

Everybody's working for the (long) weekend — and three days is the perfect length for a fun-packed excursion that won't break the bank or leave you needing a vacation to recover from your vacation. Holiday weekends are an obvious option (we're looking at you, Memorial Day) but if you want a less-crowded experience, schedule a different Monday off (flights are usually cheaper than Friday or Sunday) and pick your pleasure. Consider a road trip to explore an interesting part of your region — state tourism websites will have tons of ideas — or fly nonstop with only a carry-on to eliminate the stress of canceled connections and lost luggage. Here are five of our favorite places in the U.S. for a three-day getaway.

## New Orleans, Louisiana



Credit: [Steve Robinson](#)/ Shutterstock

You could spend weeks recreating in the Crescent City, but three days is plenty to let the good times roll. New Orleans is a 24/7 feast for the senses, and offers something for friends, couples and even families with kids. Water is at the heart of the city, so take a two-hour cruise on the [Steamboat Natchez](#) or a [kayak tour](#) through Bayou St. John. Legendary jazz venue [Preservation Hall](#) is all-ages, and those 21 and up won't want to miss live music in the bars and clubs that line [Frenchmen Street](#).

In the heart of the French Quarter, Jackson Square is surrounded by the St. Louis Cathedral and other gorgeous historic buildings, and a great place for people-watching and street performers. Grab a muffuletta from [Central Grocery](#) and a bag of beignets from the world-famous [Cafe du Monde](#). "Go-cups" are a time-honored NOLA tradition, so feel free to enjoy a [refreshing beverage](#) (perhaps a Hurricane) with your treats while you wander the city. Keep the Mardi Gras spirit alive any time of year with a visit to the [Mardi Gras Museum of Costumes and Culture](#).

## Washington, D.C.



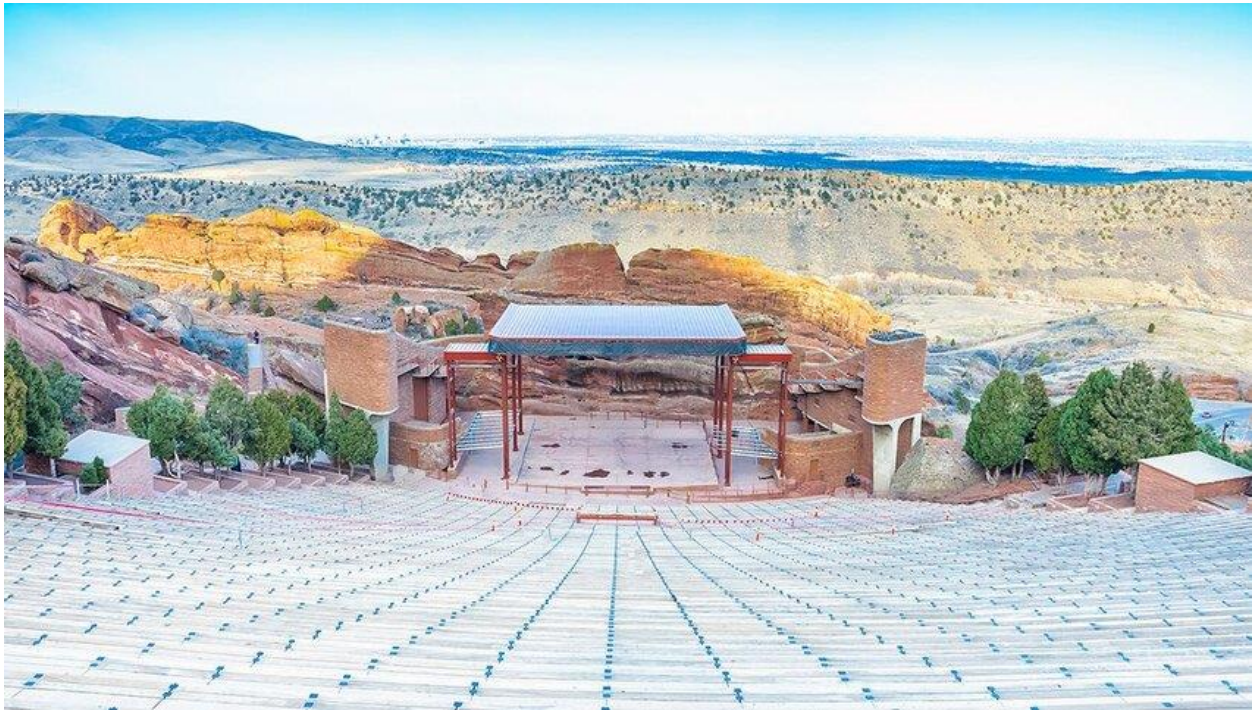
Credit: [AlbertPego](#)/ iStock

The nation's capital offers a lot more than monuments. (Although those are still pretty great.) By all means, admire everything on the [National Mall](#), but don't miss some of the city's newer attractions. Opened in 2016, the [National Museum of African American History & Culture](#) is an architecturally stunning building that documents the life, history, culture, and contributions of African Americans. Intrigued by espionage? Get your cloak and dagger on at the [International Spy Museum](#), which celebrates all things top-secret.

D.C.'s once-derelict waterfronts have undergone a renaissance, and are well worth a visit. Hop the metro to the now-hip Navy Yard, and pedal or stroll the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. At Kingman Island, you'll find a serene wetlands wilderness that's home to bald eagles, great blue herons and all manner of birdlife. Reward your exercise with some of the city's phenomenal food offerings — the diversity of cuisines is nothing short of capital.



## Denver, Colorado



Credit: [NaughtyNut](#)/ Shutterstock

Craft beer, unstoppable sunshine and [the world's best outdoor amphitheatre](#) make the Mile High City a must in any season. Colorado's capital abounds with live music (from the aforementioned Red Rocks to historic theatres-turned-concert venues), and art of all kinds, including classics at the DAM, out-of-this-world installations at [Meow Wolf](#), and abundant street murals at the [River North Art District](#). Go back in time at the [city's oldest bar](#), where Beat Generation legends Jack Kerouac and Neal Cassady also enjoyed beer and burgers. If you prefer to soak (literally) in your suds, [The Beer Spa](#) offers beer-infused spa treatments and hopped water soaking tubs ... and (naturally) a taproom offering local craft beers.

Denver loves outdoor recreation as much as it loves beer, and the city and surrounding area has no shortage of ways to work up a sweat and work off the giant green chile-smothered [burrito](#) that is the breakfast food of choice. At Confluence Park, artificially constructed whitewater breaks let you perfect your paddling on SUPs or kayaks, as cyclists whiz by on the Cherry Creek Trail. [Rock climbers](#) can challenge themselves all up and down the Front Range, with routes of varying difficulty located not far out of town. Powderhounds can reach some of the state's most legendary slopes without a car — numerous ski resorts are served by [train](#) and [bus](#), making for easy day trips.

## Chicago, Illinois



Credit: [MaxyM](#)/ Shutterstock

Second City, Third Coast — as long as you don't call it "Chi-Town," Chicago doesn't care. In spite of its world-class cultural offerings and proud history, the Windy City never takes itself too seriously ... except for sports (yes) and ketchup on hot dogs (no). Beyond the glittering skyline, visitors will find a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique feel. Founded as a small trading outpost at the mouth of the Chicago River, a river cruise is a great way to get a feel for the city. Chicago's architecture is legendary (the Home Insurance Building was the world's first skyscraper) and a [boat tour](#) is the perfect way to learn more about these iconic buildings. For art of a different sort, the collection of Impressionists at the [Art Institute](#) alone is worth visit. (It's located right by [Millennium Park](#), so you can grab a selfie reflected in the famous "Bean.")

Summer brings out the best in the city, and by "best" we mean "baseball." No matter which team you root for (and it should be the Cubs), an afternoon game at iconic [Wrigley Field](#) is a summertime pleasure. The oldest National League ballpark, the ivy-covered brick walls of "the Friendly Confine" have been home to the Chicago Cubs since 1914. If sports aren't for you, the warmer months find festivals happening throughout the city every week.



## Seattle, Washington



Credit: [Angel Ceballos](#)/ Unsplash

With the Puget Sound lapping at her feet and Mount Rainer towering in the background, Seattle is a visually striking city even before you explore her tree-lined and history-laden streets. Lush and green, the “Emerald City” combines natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities with thriving cultural and outstanding culinary scenes. Long occupied by the Coast Salish people, the Indigenous communities of the First People still exert a strong influence over the city. The Klondike Gold Rush of the late 1890s attracted subsequent waves of immigrants, and Seattle boasts a vibrant Asian community that has spread far beyond the Chinatown-International District. The city’s diversity is reflected in its delicious [food scene](#). Don’t worry about being a tourist while snapping up delicacies at the historic [Pike Place Market](#) — locals (including many local chefs) — are shopping there, too.

Get a bird’s-eye view of the city from the observation deck of the futuristic Space Needle, which was built for the 1962 World’s Fair. Then walk over to admire the riotously colorful [Chihuly Garden and Glass](#), showcasing the work of the world’s most famous glass artist. Get out on the water with a whale-watching tour or a quick trip by [ferry](#) to Bainbridge Island.