

The Best U.S. Summer Getaway for Every Type of Traveler

(Courtesy of Aimee Long, The Discoverer)

For many, summer brings unforgettable getaways and relaxing vacations, ushering in a season of both rest and adventure. Whether you want to escape to rugged mountains or relax on pristine beaches, the United States offers endless options for unique escapes. Here are the best U.S. summer getaways for every type of traveler.

For Mountains: Telluride, Colorado



Credit: [Kristi Blokhin](#)/ Shutterstock

Snowy slopes and cozy mountain lodges might be the first thing that come to mind when envisioning Telluride, but this Colorado ski town is also an incredible place to spend your summer vacation. Come summer, the ski resort transforms into a mountain biking haven, nearby streams are perfect for trying your hand at fly fishing, and the many art galleries in town are waiting to be perused. Nestled in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado, Telluride has endless day trip options, like the mining towns of Silverton and Durango, and the UNESCO World Heritage site Mesa Verde. If you're feeling especially adventurous and want to take on a challenge, head up one of the popular Colorado 14ers, a mountain over 14,000 feet tall, for breathtaking views and a chance to boost your confidence. Though be warned, these hikes aren't for the faint of heart.

For the Beach: Ocracoke Island, North Carolina



Credit: [Chansak Joe](#)/ Shutterstock

Looking for a beach that isn't on the typical tourist path? Bypass the hordes of visitors who flock to Florida or California come summer, and head instead to the Outer Banks, the rugged coastline of North Carolina. Ocracoke Island, located smack dab in the middle of this chain of barrier islands, is a magical place to spend your summer. Search for shells on nearby Portsmouth Island, learn about the history of the infamous pirate Blackbeard, and indulge in local seafood at the Ocracoke Oyster Company. You'll be enraptured by the fascinating past and unpretentious beauty of the Outer Banks. Be sure to stop by 1718 Brewing for a Notorious Fig, an homage to the island's signature fruit.

For a City: San Francisco, California



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Not only one of the best city breaks in the United States, San Francisco is also one of the best summer destinations for those seeking an urban sprawl with lots to explore. Take a catamaran cruise underneath the Golden Gate Bridge, laugh at the sea lions at Fisherman's Wharf, or dig into a sourdough bread bowl of clam chowder at the famous Boudin Bakery. Come prepared with warm layers as the Golden City can have chilly nighttime temperatures and foggy conditions, even in the heart of summer. San Francisco enjoys a Mediterranean climate which means mild temperatures year-round and scorching summer heat is a rarity.

For a Lake: Finger Lakes, New York



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Not far from the Canadian border, a cluster of lakes, like fingerprints in the sand, were created by glaciers thousands of years ago. These are the Finger Lakes, an idyllic setting for your next summer vacation. Hop between towns like Elmira, Watkins Glen, Penn Yan, and Owego, all just as quaint as their names suggest. Wine lovers are in for a treat as the Finger Lakes is a burgeoning wine region with pinot noir and cabernet franc being the most popularly grown varietals and a dedicated Finger Lakes Wine Festival takes place every July. Art lovers will rejoice with the Corning Museum of Glass and Rockwell Museum both located in this picturesque countryside. Mark Twain himself was inspired by the natural beauty of the area, spending many summers writing his most famous books by the lakeside. When the heat gets going, head to the lakes for a refreshing dip or to rent a boat to search for the perfect secluded swimming hole. If you're looking for a larger lake to explore, Cayuga or Seneca Lake are the largest of the eleven, offering plenty of activities on the water and the shore.

For the Desert: Sedona, Arizona



Credit: [Nikolas jkd](#)/ Shutterstock

Embrace the arid summer heat and head to the desert for a unique escape this summer. Located in Arizona's Verde Valley, the Red Rock City, as it was affectionately dubbed, is the perfect getaway for outdoor lovers with over 400 miles of hiking trails among beautiful sandstone rock formations. Despite often being thought of as a strictly desert destination, Sedona is a climate hybrid of sorts and enjoys four distinct seasons. This corner of the world is said to be a healing energy vortex and has been a hub for spirituality seekers for decades. Head to one of the many spas or wellness retreats to get a taste of the magic yourself. While Sedona can see temperatures in the range of 100° come July, the climate is arid and doesn't feel quite as hot as other cities in Arizona like Phoenix and Scottsdale with cool, desert evenings that can dip as low as 60°. If you aren't afraid to take the heat, head out to the Grand Canyon's South Rim, only a short drive away, and witness one of the world's natural wonders. Just remember to bring lots of sunscreen and water.