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## USA Tour 80 Day Great 48

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** USA Tour 80 Day Great 48    **Trip Code:** USGR    **Duration:** From 80 days

### Trip Highlights

- Travel through 48 of America's 50 States
- See the 'Real America' - coast to coast
- Party as the sun goes down in Key West
- Hike the 'backbone of America', the Appalachians
- Delve into the nation's history & food in the Deep South
- The party towns of Vegas, Miami, New York & San Fran
- See Niagara Falls by night & on a Maid of the Mist cruise
- Run down or board white sand dunes
- Explore one of 400 caves at Mammoth Cave National Park
- Check out the live music scene in Nashville, New Orleans, Memphis & Austin
- Search the southern state swamps for alligators
- Stop by the 'Waterpark Capital of the World', the Wisconsin Dells
- Stroll the eclectic Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas
- Explore gnarly cave systems & see bats in Carlsbad Caverns NP
- Try and spot black bears & eagles in the Rocky Mountains
- See the faces of the presidents at Mount Rushmore
- Watch Old Faithful blow its top in Yellowstone National Park
- Swim in the Homestead Crater featured in the movie '127 hours'
- Explore the wind-carved landscapes of Arches NP & Monument Valley
- Watch the sun set over the Grand Canyon
- Limousine tour of Las Vegas
- Spot sealions off the California coast
- See Giant Sequoias & Half Dome's granite profile in Yosemite NP
- Experience the buzz of Pike Place Market, Seattle



### Overview

Who's up for 80 days of old school adventure? If a massive trip sounds right up your street, then this one off American road trip extravaganza is here for the taking, pal! With your group in tow, you'll work your way through

# USA Tour 80 Day Great 48

48 incredible states in the good ole US of A, from the flamin' hot Florida, to the Big Apple, terrific Texas and the sunny California (who wouldn't want a slice of Los Angeles and San Fran, after all?). Not only that, but you'll come across 19 incredible National Parks too, boom!

If you're a fan of all things Americana, then think we can safely say that this one's for you!

## Destination Info

There isn't a person out there that hasn't dreamed of taking off on the ultimate north American road trip with a bunch of mates! Cruising down the open road, tunes cranked, wind in your hair, not a care in the world; getting off the beaten track with a whole continent to discover.

The United States is a country of incredible diversity. The nation is home to dynamic cities and small towns that vary dramatically from region to region, and the awe-inspiring National Parks are unparalleled for their beauty and diversity. Eastern energy, slow-paced deep southern charm and a laid back west coast lifestyle, combine to create an incredible culture of virtually everything.

## Itinerary



### 1 - Miami & Key West, Florida

Here we go! This is going to be one heck of an adventure that will take you from the sublime sun sets of the Florida Keys all the way to those coffee shop mornings in Seattle. So, hold onto your sun hats as you depart Miami and head for the bright lights and uber-cool beach bars in Key West as you start as you mean to go on and celebrate the good times ahead. Accommodation: Camping included

### 2 - Key West & West Palm Beach, Florida

There's no way that last night's party is going to keep you from checking out the rest of Florida and as you travel north through some superb waterways, you'll be right on track for West Palm Beach and your next overnight stop-over. With palm trees lining the boulevards and more fabulous opportunities to shop, explore and soak up the sun than you'd care to imagine, it's no wonder that you'll already be getting into the holiday vibe and we're only on day two! Accommodation: Camping included

### 3-4 - Savannah, Georgia & South Carolina

The oldest city in the whole of Georgia is your aim for today and you'll get your first chance to sample the music, heritage and grub of the Deep South as you make your base in Savannah for the next couple of nights. With just over 20 historic squares it's easy to see why this was once the state's colonial capital and if you're looking for a combination of historic homes, park fountains and a huge helping of southern hospitality (devilled crab and smoked pork anyone?) then you'll be in your absolute element. Accommodation: Camping included

## **5 - Raleigh, North Carolina**

By now you should be getting to know your travelling companions fairly well and there's no better place in North Carolina to let off some steam other than Raleigh, the second-largest city in the state. Oak trees are literally everywhere you turn as are museums, parks and live music venues which is why tonight promises to be a splendid excuse to have fun after a day spent exploring. Accommodation: Camping included

## **6 - Asheville, North Carolina**

Wave goodbye to Raleigh as your Deep South stretch takes an altogether wilder turn as you enter the unique and freaky city streets of Asheville that serve as a great place to take stock and prepare for tomorrow's exploration into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Accommodation: Camping included

## **7-8 - Great Smoky Mountains, Tennessee**

This is what the Blue Ridge Mountains are all about and although this is America's most-popular national park you'll still be treated to a tranquil and inspirational natural experience that will stay with you for years to come. Loads of hiking trails give everyone the chance to soak up the misty mountain views and if you fancy a cheeky spot of white-water rafting then this is an opportunity you won't want to miss. Accommodation: Camping included

## **9 - Charleston, West Virginia**

You just try and stop yourself singing 'Country Road' as you head northwards out of North Carolina and into West Virginia. The state capital and largest city is Charleston and that's where you'll be aiming for prior to tomorrow's trip to Washington DC. Why not visit the Morgan's Kitchen Plantation Museum, once used as a hospital and a kitchen for both sides during the Civil War, this log kitchen displays an open fireplace, various original jugs and containers, a table setting, spinning wheel, and a bear trap. The West Virginia State Capital building is impressive and makes for great photos. Accommodation: Camping

## **10-11 - Virginia & Washington DC**

Cross the great state of Virginia and hike a section of the Appalachian Mountains on your way to Washington DC, which is interestingly not in any state, but its own District - the District of Columbia (or DC for short). Your first evening in DC promises an illuminated introduction to the White House, Jefferson Monument and Capitol Hill as well as all of the other iconic landmarks that are known the world over. Thanks to the Smithsonian Institution's generous attitude towards art and culture you'll be able to enter the majority of the capital's museums free of charge which is great news if you're planning on saving your dimes for a night out in New York. Accommodation: Camping included

## **12-13 - Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey & New York City**

The states on this side of the country are pretty small so we can cover 5 of them in no time at all. Try to collect a souvenir from each state on your way through! After visiting the Liberty Bell and shouting 'Adriaaaaan' from the steps leading up to Philadelphia's Museum of Art, it's time to move on to a few more famous film sites as you head for the city that never sleeps - New York City. The next two days will be crammed full of iconic buildings, historic monuments and more razzmatazz and bright lights than vendors selling pretzels and hot dogs. This is your chance to shop, bop and never stop amongst some of the world's most famous landmarks, including the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty and Brooklyn Bridge. Accommodation: Hostel included

## **14-15 - Connecticut, Rhode Island & Boston, Massachusetts**

After you've had your fill of the Big Apple there are two more tiny states to tick off your list as you make tracks for the cobbled streets and cultural trails of Boston, which is renowned as being one of the key locations for the start of the American Revolution. Aside from the Freedom Trail (which takes in 16 revolutionary sites) Boston is also an absolute legend on the food and drink scene with a whole host of Irish bars, coffee shops and snack-joints providing the sustenance to keep you going until the wee small hours. Accommodation: Camping included

## **16-17 - Acadia National Park, Maine**

Onwards and upwards through New England and into Maine which is not only the birthplace of Stephen King but also the home of Acadia National Park which is the perfect place to trek, picnic and mountain bike with the chance to go deep-sea fishing thrown in for good measure. This is all about exploring the great outdoors with mountains, woodlands, lakes and ocean views providing the backdrop to an exceptional array of scenery with Mount Desert Island providing the pick of the preserved natural areas. Accommodation: Camping included

## **18-19 - White Mountains National Park, New Hampshire**

After your time spent in Maine it's time to hop over to the neighbouring state of New Hampshire and over 100 miles of Appalachian Trail which criss-crosses throughout the White Mountains National Forest. The tree-covered trails provide not only some shaded respite from the sun but also plenty of optional activities that will have you hiking and camping amongst some of the best terrain that New England has to offer. As weather conditions can change in a flash you're advised to pack accordingly although, with views above the timberline ranging from

'WOW' to 'OMG' a spot of drizzle will probably be the last thing on your mind. Accommodation: Camping included

## **20 - Lake George & Vermont**

Just over 30 miles in length and 3 miles across, Lake George is pretty tricky to miss and as you head across the border into the maple syrup territory of Vermont you'll be able to make the most of a stretch of water that has been attracting NYC's wealthy and wise since way back in the 1800's. This is a great chance to kayak, hike or simply rest up and relax in and around one of the most popular lakes on the east coast. Accommodation: Camping included

## **21 - Buffalo, New York State**

Located on the shores of Lake Erie and packed-full of arts and culture, Buffalo is a totally worthwhile city to visit and as you're a mere stone's throw from the thundering water of Niagara Falls, this could well be a highlight that you wouldn't previously have envisaged. Your visit to the famous falls takes place this evening and if you thought this incredible landmark looked cool in the day then try taking a look when it's illuminated with coloured spot-lights at night - 'magical' just doesn't do this experience justice. Accommodation: Camping included

## **22 - Cleveland, Ohio**

Ok, Ok, one more visit to Niagara Falls has to be done and today you'll be donning your waterproof poncho and clambering aboard the Maid of the Mist before you venture into the spray-drenching realm of pretty much the most famous water feature on the planet. After Niagara by day you'll be skirting the edge of Lake Erie as you journey to Cleveland, Ohio, for a spot of free time and lake swimming. Accommodation: Camping included

## **23-24 - Van Buren State Park, Michigan**

You should be getting the hang of 'lake life' by now and you'll be pleased to know that for the next couple of nights you'll be located within Van Buren State Park which promises 400 acres of woodland trails, gigantic sand dunes and a mile of sandy beach which has some excellent spots for swimming and generally taking it easy.

Accommodation: Camping included

## **25 - Indianapolis, Indiana**

And now for something completely different as you travel south to Indianapolis and the slightly kooky capital of Indiana. Guaranteed to feed your cultural, retail and night club needs, Indianapolis is an awesome city with indie brewery tours, ethnic food corridors and mind-bending live shows always proving popular. Accommodation:

Camping included

## **26 - Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky**

Still pondering last night's mind-tripping show you'll continue south and into Kentucky where the world's longest known cave system, the aptly named Mammoth Cave, is awaiting your exploration. This is twice the size of the world's next largest cave setting with over 400 miles of sandstone and limestone passageways, corridors, rivers, stalactites and stalagmites providing an amazing adventure deep beneath the hills of Green River Valley.

Accommodation: Camping included

## **27-28 - Nashville, Tennessee**

Nashville has so much to offer as well as the inimitable country tunes and as you venture ever-further into America's Deep South you'll be treated to a whole host of things to do along the banks of the Cumberland River. Halls of fame, Civil War heritage, Elvis's recording studios and more honky tonk bars than you can hit with a banjo - have fun y'all! Accommodation: Camping included

## **29 - Birmingham, Alabama**

Time to get Lynyrd Skynyrd on your iPod as you check into Birmingham, Alabama, the home of southern jazz, Civil-Rights and juicy country-fried steak with butter beans - mmmm! Accommodation: Camping included

## **30-31 - New Orleans, Louisiana**

If you've just started to get into jazz then prepare to crank it up a notch as you make your way into New Orleans' historic French Quarter where you're never far away from a sax or trumpet as well as some darn fine bars to kick up your heels. Your home for the next couple of nights is right in the beating heart of New Orleans and from tours along the Mississippi to plenty of Cajun cuisine, this is the perfect place to celebrate your 30th day on the road.

Accommodation: Hotel included

## **32 - Tupelo, Mississippi**

For all you lovers of slicked back hair and rock & roll, Tupelo will certainly resonate as this is the birthplace of The King and a visit to the stomping ground and birthplace of Elvis Presley will no doubt inspire at least a couple of renditions of Blue Suede Shoes, Hound Dog etc. Accommodation: Camping included

## **33-34 - Clarksdale & Memphis, Tennessee**

Stop by Clarksdale, which many claim to be the birthplace of Blues, to see the famous Crossroads of Highway 61. More musical heritage can, of course, be found in Memphis and as we turn our attention to Blues, Country and 60's soul, we'll stop for a couple of nights just to check that the largest city on the Mississippi has still got it going

on. With Johnny Cash, Muddy Waters and Otis Reading as our guides, this stop-over in Memphis is pure gold to music fans and the chance to visit Graceland and Sun Studios as well as the National Civil-Rights Museum presents a thoroughly absorbing tour no matter what you're into. Accommodation: Camping included

### **35 - Arkansas & Mingo National Wildlife Reserve, Missouri**

Aside from the music the south of America is also revered for its wildlife-packed swamps and rivers which is exactly what you'll discover when you head west into Arkansas and the Mingo National Wildlife Reserve. This is a completely surreal experience and as you stroll over board-walks and into the very heart of swampland you maybe forgiven for getting that sinking feeling as you find yourself surrounded by over 20,000 acres of natural habitat for the local and migratory wildlife. Accommodation: Camping included

### **36 - St Louis, Missouri**

After managing to scrape the swamp off those rhinestone boots you bought in Memphis it's time to hit the 'coasters and thrill rides at Six Flags, St. Louis, before checking out the night life or sampling the local beer on an Anheuser-Busch Brewery tour. Accommodation: Camping included

### **37-38 - Chicago, Illinois**

Cross the state of Illinois heading north and you'll find your home for the next two nights surrounded by the shimmering towers, designer malls and all-important Lake Michigan views of Chicago. The Windy City is an exciting and fast-paced metropolis with a huge range of cultural museums, live music venues and deep-dish pizza houses, promising an extremely exciting stop-over as we near the half way stage of this incredible tour of America. Accommodation: Hostels included

### **39 - Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin**

After all of that deep-filled pizza indulgence you may consider taking it easy for the next few days however, you're bound to find room for some tasty Wisconsin Dells fudge before you ease in the reigns. Aside from the sugar-laced loveliness, The Dells is jam-packed full of water parks, roller-coaster rides and chances to tour on land and water on-board an amphibious Wisconsin Duck bus. Accommodation: Camping included

### **40 - Black River Falls & Minneapolis, Minnesota**

You've made it to the half-way stage of this phenomenal tour and you'll get the chance to celebrate in Minneapolis via a short break for lunch at Black River Falls. More cascading water lies in-store this afternoon at Minnehaha Falls and if you fancy going all 'Man v's Food' then chomping into a 'Jucy Lucy' Burger before you check out America's largest mall and the Minneapolis' night life is definitely recommended. Accommodation: Camping included

### **41 - Des Moines, Iowa, Missouri & Kansas City, Kansas**

There's no place like home, and as you travel through Iowa, Missouri and into Kansas you'll get to stop at Des Moines for lunch before reaching the heart of middle America. Steamboat museums, barbecue smoke pits and some fairly swanky country clubs provide plenty of options for your single night in Kansas. Accommodation: Camping included

### **42 - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

You're on the southern trail again where the wind comes rushing across the plain as you head to Oklahoma City the home of cattle, cowboys and some of the wildest nightspots this side of Texas. Accommodation: Camping included

### **43-44 - Austin, Texas**

Prizes go to the first person to spot a 'Keep Austin Weird' bumper sticker and as you enter the Lone Star state and try to shake off the Dallas theme tune, you'll be able to discover just how Austin, Texas, has managed to gain the reputation as being one of the best live music locations on the planet. Aside from the music scene Austin also has over 50 parks and public swimming pools which will be great news if you need to cool off after a night out on 6th Street. Accommodation: Camping included

### **45 - San Antonio, Texas**

Obviously as Texas is so vast, visiting another city was always on the cards and the chance to check out the restaurants, bars and tax-free shopping opportunities on San Antonio's Riverwalk is certainly worthwhile before heading west into New Mexico. As an alternative to the retail therapy, San Antonio is also well-known as the site of the Battle of the Alamo and the chance to find out a bit more at the Alamo Mission presents a fascinating insight into America's relationship with its neighbours south of the border. Accommodation: Cabin included

### **46-47 - Carlsbad & Roswell, New Mexico**

After taking in the stalactites and stalagmites in the Carlsbad Caverns you may be forgiven for thinking that things couldn't get much spookier. We spend tonight camping outside Roswell hunting for aliens! Accommodation: Cabin & Camping included.

**48-49 - Roswell and Santa Fe**

Roswell is shrouded in mystery for all things of the alien kind. No trip to Roswell would be complete without a visit to the Roswell UFO Museum and Research Center. Here, travellers can really explore the truth behind the mysterious crash of 1947. Moving onto Santa Fe, we soak up the artsy vibe of this oldest US capital high in the desert foothills. Stroll down Canyon Road where locals are peddling their wares and get ready to hit the town tonight. Accommodation: Camping included

**50-51 - Great Sand Dunes National Park & Buena Vista, Colorado**

As you travel northwards and across the border into Colorado you'll be well-aware of the ever-changing scenery that has formed the backbone of your tour and entering Great Sand Dunes National Park provides yet another chance to immerse yourself in some incredible landscapes. After a spot of sand-surfing and swimming in Medano Creek it's time to spend a night surrounded by snow-capped mountains under a velvet blanket pin-pricked with twinkling stars as you camp out in Buena Vista at the foot of the Continental Divide. Trekking the trails or just meandering around the shops are all part of the Buena Vista social experience. Accommodation: Camping included

**52-53 - Boulder & Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado**

The moment when someone whispers 'what's that?' is pretty much when you know that your wildlife trail has reached its zenith and the chance to hike amongst the fantastic formations of the Rocky Mountain National Park has to be up there with the best of them. Two days spent exploring and keeping your eyes peeled for eagles, elk and bears is definitely an experience to truly savour. Accommodation: Camping included

**54-55 - Nebraska, Mount Rushmore, South Dakota & Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota**

Check out the views as you travel further north through Nebraska into South Dakota where you'll be treated to a photographic opportunity like no other as you edge ever-closer to the chiselled presidential features of Mount Rushmore. Step into the auspicious shadows of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Lincoln prior to paying your respects to another heroic icon from American history; Crazy Horse, who also has a mountain monument carved in his honour. Next, explore Theodore Roosevelt National Park and if you're starting to get into your birdwatching you'll have around 200 species to look out for, including: grouse, eagles and wild turkeys - gobble gobble! Accommodation: Camping included

**56 - Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana**

As you start your journey west of North Dakota and into Montana you'll no doubt be discovering more about America's often brutal past and nowhere more-so has this been immortalised other than the place of Custer's last stand at the Battle of Little Bighorn. The national monument is a shrine to the Sioux and Cheyenne Native American's struggle to survive in an ever-changing world and will no doubt present a pertinent chance to reflect as you pay your respects. Accommodation: Camping included

**57-58 - Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming**

Make sure you keep your eye on your picnic baskets as you head into Yogi country and the awesome range of experiences that are abound in one of the best-loved national parks on the planet, Yellowstone. Spurting geysers, grazing buffalo, star-filled nights and no end of wildlife peeping out from lush green forest and valley trails make the next two days incredibly special. Accommodation: Camping included

**59 - Craters of the Moon National Monument, Idaho**

Lunar landscapes don't really get much more impressive unless you own a rocket and the chance to stroll across solidified lava flows, dotted with cinder cones and caves, is a slightly surreal experience that you'll no doubt remember for many moons to come. Accommodation: Camping included

**60-61 - Salt Lake City & Homestead Crater, Utah**

Temples, museums, heritage parks and hip-hop clubs can be all found in Salt Lake City and if you fancy a bit of a hop-on/hop-off sightseeing tour then the Salt Lake Connect Pass is certainly the way to go. Also, if you've seen the film '127 hours', you may be pleased to hear that our second day in Utah is all about the Homestead Crater in Blue John Canyon which is much closer to Salt Lake than Danny Boyle may have led you to imagine - don't forget your swimmers or video camera. Accommodation: Camping included

**62-64 - Moab/Arches National Park & Dead Horse Point, Utah**

Photography students take note: if you're searching for a sandstone archway juxtaposed against an infinite cobalt blue sky then this is where you implode with far too much choice. Arches National Park not only contains more than 2000 natural archways but it's also considered to be an absolute adventure playground with mountain biking, Hummer safaris and canyon trekking all considered as good clean fun in the sun. The Tower of Babel, the Organ, Delicate Arch and Dead Horse Point State Park - it's no wonder that Moab is Utah's inspirational adventure capital. Accommodation: Camping included

## **65 - Monument Valley, Utah**

More movie moments arise today as you hit the trail into Monument Valley and those legendary landscapes that have formed the backdrop to a whole host of Westerns as well as 2001: A Space Odyssey. Optional 4x4 tours with a Native American guide will take you deep into the heart of the valley where you'll discover the sandstone formations and vast stretches of canyon lands that have long been the spiritual home of the Navajo nation.

Accommodation: Camping included

## **66-67 - Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona**

Undoubtedly the highlight of any trip to Arizona, the Grand Canyon National Park is simply a breath-taking experience that you'll want to play over again and again. Optional helicopter rides take you swooping through the valleys and buzzing over the river far below however, no matter how you decide to spend your time, the sun set on your first day will always prove to be a moment of divine intervention. If your first day was spent looking down then Day 67 is all about delving a little deeper and from the Bright Angel Trail down to Plateau Point the views of the gushing Colorado River have never looked so grand. Accommodation: Camping included

## **68-69 - Route 66 & Las Vegas, Nevada**

There are road trips and then there's the inimitable Route 66 and as you leave Arizona behind and head west into Nevada you'll be beginning to get that tingling feeling that something special is just around the bend. After a cheeky stop-over in the long-preserved town of Seligman, it's time to hit the slots, soak up the sights and party like you've just been on tour for 69 days, that's right - you're in Vegas baby! The Strip, the Fremont Experience, the Bellagio Fountains and a couple of nights in a hotel - is there any reason not to get excited? Accommodation:

Hotel included

## **70 - Los Angeles, California**

So, you've just left Sin City and you've still retained the shirt on your back, where next? Well, there's only one stop on the California trail that's going to top Vegas and that's the movie star-filled boulevards and beaches of LA. Los Angeles presents your first taste of the Pacific Coast with the most and from Venice Beach and Santa Monica to Mullholland Drive and the Hollywood sign, this is where your tour really gets the VIP treatment. Accommodation:

Hostel included

## **71 - Santa Barbara, California**

Head away from the bright lights of Hollywood as you continue your Californian leg northwards and into the prestigious waterfront attractions of Santa Barbara. If you're hoping to chill and watch the world go by over a coffee or drop from a local vineyard then you'll find plenty of opportunities to do so as Santa Barbara boasts almost 700 eateries as well as a whole host of arts and crafts centres to help you get into the laid-back west coast vibe. Accommodation: Camping included

## **72 - Monterey, California**

Any fans of John Steinbeck will find themselves in their absolute element today as you stroll through the historic canneries and coastal trails that have long been associated with one of America's finest authors. This is a fabulous location to try to spot whales and sea lions emerging above the swells although, if you have the time, Monterey Aquarium also presents an excellent chance to get up close to the local marine life and without the need for binoculars. Accommodation: Camping included

## **73-74 - Yosemite National Park, California**

Just when you thought there was nothing else that could cap your tour you end up strolling around Yosemite National Park for a couple of days. Attempt to put your arms around a Giant Sequoia, dip your toes into the Merced River or simply marvel at the mountains as you hike or bike over some of the lesser-frequented forest trails - Yosemite NP is a simply mesmerising experience. With legendary land features (Half Dome, El Capitan and Cathedral Rocks) as well as some of the world's highest waterfalls (Nevada, Vernal and Yosemite), it's easy to understand why this is one of America's most treasured national parks. Accommodation: Camping included

## **75-76 - San Francisco, California**

Say goodbye to Yosemite and hello 'Frisco as you reach the russet red arches of the Golden Gate Bridge and check out some of the world's most famous folding footpaths. With a tour of the famous bridge included you'll also be treated to an array of classic San Francisco highlights with a free day enabling you to discover Chinatown, Pier 39, Fisherman's Wharf and even the foreboding walls of Alcatraz (make sure you book this well in advance of your tour as spaces fill up fast). Clam chowder, sea lions and cable cars by day combined with clubs, bars and speakeasys by night, San Francisco is just one of the places that you'll want to return to again and again.

Accommodation: Hostel included

## **77-78 - Eureka & Redwood National Park, California**

Hopefully you've saved room on your camera for a few more shots of California's giants as over the next couple of days you're going to be gazing skywards as you enter the realm of the tallest trees on the planet, the Giant

Redwoods. Infinite prairies, sublime coastline and rushing river trails - there's going to be much more to Redwood National Park than you may have first envisaged. Accommodation: Camping included

## 79 - Portland, Oregon

Your penultimate day on tour deposits you in Portland where you'll have the chance to recount a few of many awesome highlights that you've experienced over the past 80 days. Ah, do you remember that night out in New York or hiking in the Appalachians? How about Chicago or the time you saw that grizzly in Yellowstone? All of these chapters in your life are yet to be written but written they will be and as you chat with your new-found friends amongst the micro-breweries and Voodoo Donut shops of Portland you'll no doubt be blessed with an array of stories to last a life time. Accommodation: Camping included

## 80 - Seattle, Washington State

We love you Seattle! With Eddie Vedder ringing in your ears it's time to say goodbye to your travelling companions after one last opportunity to get some souvenirs at the craft food board-walk empire of Pike Market. If you have any camera film left then the Space Needle is always worth a snap however, you may just want to save your last iota of memory for a group shot as your epic trip finally draws to a close. So long, it's been a blast - same time next year? This tour ends at approximately 17:00 hrs. We can book you post-tour accommodation at our gateway hotel if required. If you are planning to fly tonight, please do not book a flight that departs before 21:00 hrs.

## Accommodation

All accommodation - 66 camping, 7 hostel, 4 hotel & 2 cabin nights

## Meals

## What's Included

- Services of a TrekAmerica tour leader
- Private transportation with free Wi-Fi
- All accommodation - 66 camping, 7 hostel, 4 hotel & 2 cabin nights
- All camping equipment (except sleeping bag)
- Activities as listed in the itinerary



## What's Not Included

- Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Optional activities
- Food (kitty will be collected USD\$10 a day)
- Sleeping bag





## Additional Information

### Group Size

13

### Transportation

Private transportation with free Wi-Fi

### Budget

We run a Food Kitty on this trip - you will need to contribute US\$10 a day which covers all your meals whilst camping.

## Tour Operator

This tour is operated by Trek America.

## Minimum Age

Minimum age 18 years old.

## Flights

Your flight to the USA should arrive at Miami International Airport (code MIA) no later than the day before your programme start date. Your return flight should be arranged for no earlier than the day after your programme end date from Seattle.

To book your flights, call our expert team on 01273 647219 and they can help you find a great deal. Just check with us that your trip is guaranteed before booking your flights. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

## Programme Changes

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

## FAQs

- 1. How many people will there be on the tour?**  
Between 6 and 13 people with one tour leader.
- 2. What is the average age of the tour participants?**  
The age range is 18-38 and early to mid twenties are the most common ages.
- 3. How fit do I need to be?**  
There will be a fair bit of walking and hiking on the tour as well as the opportunity to do lots of activities. So you should be relatively fit but dont forget that activities are optional so you can do the trip at your own pace.
- 4. Will I be the only person travelling on my own?**  
No, the majority of our travellers are solo travellers and you will meet lots of people on your tour!

## 5. What if I have never camped before?

Don't worry, your fantastic tour leader will show you how to put your tent up and use your camping equipment.

## 6. How much money do I need to bring on the tour?

For TrekAmerica camping tours you will need to budget for the food kitty. This is usually US\$10 a day however see individual tour pages for specific details. This will cover all of your meals while camping but does not cover meals during hotel stops or when the group chooses to sample regional cuisine.

## 7. Do I need to tip?

Although it may not be customary in your country, it is normal and expected in North America to tip waiters, bar staff, any type of guide and taxi drivers. Service workers are paid a low wage and depend upon their tips for their livelihood. A minimum of 15% is standard in restaurants. Your trek leader works long and hard for you. He or she may well become your close friend during the trek, but they also need to pay their bills. If the leader's performance meets or exceeds your expectations we recommend a tip of US \$5 per person, per day.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

The currency in the US is the US Dollar (USD, symbol; \$), which is divided into 100 Cents. Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 Cents (¢) and the 1 Dollar coin. Notes come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 Dollars, though the \$2 note is rarely used.

No other currency is accepted but most major credit cards are universally accepted, especially Visa or MasterCard, and may even be required for larger purchases. ATMs are available almost everywhere and will charge a small fee for withdrawing cash using a credit card or international card, unless your card belongs to a worldwide network such as Cirrus or Exchange.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 11.16 \$

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 3.21 \$

Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 1.48 \$

Water (0.33 litre bottle) 1.27 \$

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

## Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

For stays of up to 90 days citizens of Australia, New Zealand and most European countries will need to apply for an ESTA visa before they go. The ESTA visa can be applied for online for a small fee and must be used within two years of issue.

For working holidays applicants will usually need to hold an ESTA visa and a working visa, the type of visa required will depend on the nature of your work, your nationality and the length of your stay; you will also usually need some form of sponsorship from an employer in the USA.

For the most up to date information on passports, visa requirements and working in the USA, please visit <http://www.visabureau.com/america/default.aspx>

## Cultural Considerations

A global culture and tradition is virtually non-existent in the USA because of the vast mixture of backgrounds that its original immigrant education came from. This is particularly reflected in the number of China Towns, Irish Districts, Jewish districts and so on that are in virtually every city across North America, as well as the fact that several states have Spanish and French as official state languages alongside English.

The American people are similar to Europeans in terms of what does and doesn't offend them. Although sometimes seen as loud and crass when outside their native country, you may find that Americans in America are less overpowering than you might expect. Here are a few ways to avoid offending your hosts:

- It is best to avoid talking about religion – faith is seen as being entirely personal to many Americans, although you are likely to come across people belonging to religions that have the intention of trying to convert you. Whichever of these you come across, they will not be used to having their beliefs challenged and may become offended easily.

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- Smoking in public is becoming restricted more and more – keep an eye out for signs.
- Americans tend to have a relaxed social attitude and you may find that people (even shop assistants and waiters) are really interested in talking to you, especially about your country of origin. This is seen to be polite so engage them in casual conversation.
- In such conversation you may find that the person you are talking to has little knowledge of life outside the US (this is by no means the majority of people) and may refer to stereotypes – if you feel that you need to correct their views, do it politely and they will be gracious.
- US residents feel a strong connection to their 'land of origin' even if their family has lived in America for 200 odd years and once had an Irish relative!
- Terrorism is still very much a topic that must be approached with utmost respect. Talking about war should also be approached with caution - the American public are very patriotic about their troops.

## Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in the USA. The legal age of alcohol consumption in the US is 21. However, please respect other participants. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact on your volunteer work during the week. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into the USA. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, the USA has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including "soft" drugs like marijuana, are ILLEGAL. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

## Tipping

In a restaurant or taxi you should tip 15- 20% of the bill total, as no service charge will be added on. Tipping is widely practiced due to the low wages that the workers in such professions receive.

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you stay safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your bag without your permission.
- Don't carry excess amounts of cash
- Wherever possible, walk around in groups, especially after dark, and avoid taking short cuts
- Do not pick up hitch hikers if you are driving and do not hitch hike yourself
- When you are out do not leave your drinks unattended, as there have been reports of drinks being spiked

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

USA: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

Australia: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

## Language Guide

Here are some choice American phrases to get you started!

Pants - *Trousers*

Restroom/washroom - *Toilets*

Sidewalk - *Pavement*

Subway - *Underground*

Laundromat - *Laundrette*

Band-aid - *Plaster*

Soccer - *Football*

Football - *American Football*

Fanny Pack - *Bum bag*

Philly Cheese Steak - *A long sandwich made with thin slices of steak and melted cheese*

Twinkie - *A little golden sponge cake with a cream filling*

Candy - *Chocolate/sweets*

Americans tend to call certain things by their brand names, for example tissues are 'Kleenex' and so on.

## Food & Drink

Currently the USA is famed for its love of the quick and easy fast food- burgers, pizza, fries and so on. However, there is so much choice out there, budget and otherwise- get out and sample it! You will be able to get any ethnicity food you could possibly imagine but if you want something properly American try out some steak, ribs, seafood in the coastal areas (especially Florida and California). Try some Cajun food (spot the European influence!) or something Mexican both options are delicious.

It is really important that you let us know before you depart if you are a vegetarian or have any other dietary requirements.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country.

To view a list of the public holidays for the USA, please see the link below:

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/)

## Weather

The climate in the USA is relatively temperate though specific weather conditions can vary greatly depending on where you are; this country is pretty huge! As a general rule the further south you go, the hotter it gets, while the north and areas far from the coast experience the most extreme weather. California and the east coast are warm and balmy for most of the year while northern areas such as New York experience 4 definable seasons.

Hurricanes and tornadoes are more common in south-eastern areas and occur during excessive warm weather on a sporadic basis. The USA is the only country in the world to cover all of the six climactic zones, ranging from tropical to polar, which means that a trip here will be an adventure in more ways than one!

## Time

The USA has four time zones (not including Hawaii and Alaska) all of which are behind the Greenwich Mean Time. They are:

- Eastern time; five hours behind GMT (New York)
- Central time; six hours behind GMT (Chicago, Texas)
- Mountain time; seven hours behind GMT (Rocky Mountains, Southwest)
- Pacific time; eight hours behind GMT (California, Nevada)

Don't forget to take Daylight Saving Time into account from mid-March to early November

## Electricity

In the USA the electric system is 120 Volts and frequency 60 Hertz. If your device does not accept power at this voltage you will need an adapter. Outlets in United States of America / USA generally accept 1 type of plug:



Flat blade plug

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!



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## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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