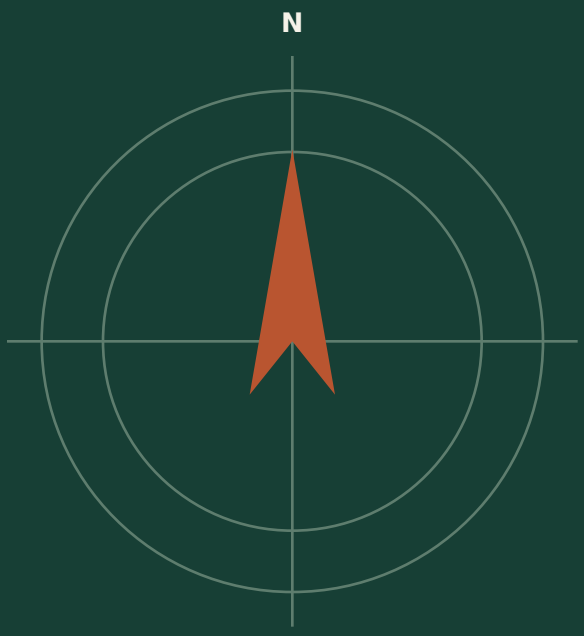
12 Road Trip Itineraries

Three days. One week. Two weeks.

Twelve day-by-day journeys, with thoughtful stops, flexible pacing and practical overnight bases.



SELECTED USA JOURNEYS

A reader bonus for the road ahead.

YOUR JOURNEYS

Choose your pace.

Use these plans as a starting point, with time to pause, take a short walk or stay an extra night. Overnight locations are suggested bases; accommodation is not included.

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Before departure

Pair the plans with the route-map collection. Longer journeys may include transfer days between featured roads. Check the linked road or park authority for current access, reservations and seasonal openings. Allow extra time for meals, walking, viewpoints and traffic.

JOURNEY 01 / 3 DAYS

Three Days Along the Great Rivers

A compact Illinois getaway with one town-focused day, one riverside drive and a park day. Keep one base if you prefer fewer check-ins.

Featured route maps: Meeting of the Great Rivers: Hartford to Pere Marquette

DAY 01

Hartford to Alton

Begin at the southern route approach, then leave the afternoon for Alton’s riverfront and town streets. This short first stage gives you time to settle in and check river conditions before the scenic bluff road.

Overnight base: Alton

DAY 02

Alton to Elsah and Grafton

Follow IL 100 beside the Mississippi. Pause in Elsah, then continue to Grafton for a leisurely meal and riverfront time. Keep the afternoon flexible for viewpoints rather than adding a ferry excursion.

Overnight base: Grafton or Alton

DAY 03

Pere Marquette park day

Drive to Pere Marquette State Park, use the visitor information to choose an open viewpoint and walk, and finish with a picnic. Depart after the park visit; add a night if a long trip home would make the day rushed.

Overnight base: Optional final night in Grafton

Before you leave

No ferry is needed for this itinerary.
Check flood notices before fixing the driving order.

Meeting of the Great Rivers: Hartford to Pere Marquette visitor information

JOURNEY 02 / 3 DAYS

Three Days on Lake Superior’s North Shore

A one-way lakeshore trip from Duluth to Grand Portage, with a practical division between the southern waterfall coast and the quieter northern shore.

Featured route maps: Lake Superior North Shore

DAY 01

Duluth to Two Harbors on Scenic 61

Spend the morning on Duluth’s waterfront, then choose County Road 61 along the lake rather than the inland faster road. Arrive in Two Harbors with time for its harbor area and an unhurried evening.

Overnight base: Two Harbors

DAY 02

Waterfalls and lighthouse to Grand Marais

Leave time for Gooseberry Falls and a separately planned Split Rock Lighthouse visit. Continue along MN 61 through the shore communities. If both stops deserve longer, shorten the day by sleeping around Tofte or Lutsen.

Overnight base: Grand Marais, or Tofte/Lutsen for a shorter drive

DAY 03

Grand Marais and Grand Portage

Enjoy the harbor early, then continue toward Grand Portage on the US side of the border. Choose one visitor or nature stop and allow time to return to your booked base. This plan does not include the full drive back to Duluth.

Overnight base: Grand Marais or Grand Portage; optional extra night

Before you leave

One-way itinerary; add a return travel day if needed.
Historic-site and state-park hours/admission are separate.
Do not cross the international border.

Lake Superior North Shore visitor information

JOURNEY 03 / 3 DAYS

Three Days Along Utah Scenic Byway 12

A compact west-to-east trip with a Bryce Canyon side visit, an Escalante overnight and time in Boulder before finishing in Torrey. Keep walks optional so the plan also works as a scenic driving journey.

Featured route maps: Utah Scenic Byway 12

DAY 01

Panguitch to Bryce Country

Follow US89 to UT12 and pass through Red Canyon. Turn onto paved UT63 for Bryce Canyon, choosing Sunset Point and one other rim stop instead of trying to see every viewpoint. Return to UT12 for the night.

Overnight base: Tropic or Bryce Canyon City

DAY 02

Tropic to Escalante

Continue through Cannonville and Henrieville to Escalante. Leave the afternoon for one local stop or a relaxed town break. Use the evening to check the next day’s road weather and museum hours; unpaved backways are outside this plan.

Overnight base: Escalante

DAY 03

Boulder and Boulder Mountain

Follow UT12 across the canyon country to Boulder. Visit Anasazi State Park Museum if its current opening arrangements fit, then continue over Boulder Mountain toward Torrey with daylight remaining. Finish with a quiet evening rather than adding a major Capitol Reef excursion.

Overnight base: Torrey

Before you leave

Best planned for suitable spring-to-autumn road conditions.
Check UT12 mountain conditions and Bryce access.
Reserve the two intermediate overnight bases.
Allow extra time for hikes or any separately planned dirt-road outing.

Utah Scenic Byway 12 visitor information

JOURNEY 04 / 3 DAYS

Three Days on the San Juan Skyway

A mountain circuit that gives Silverton, Ouray and Telluride space in the schedule. This is a summer or early-autumn outline with deliberate overnight breaks between the high passes.

Featured route maps: San Juan Skyway

DAY 01

Durango, Silverton and Ouray

Head north on US550 with time for the Molas Pass overlook and a break in Silverton. Cross the Million Dollar Highway section in daylight and finish in Ouray. Keep this first day focused on the road and towns rather than adding a long mountain hike.

Overnight base: Ouray

DAY 02

Ridgway to Telluride

Continue to Ridgway, follow CO62 west and CO145 toward Telluride. Spend the afternoon in town and leave the vehicle parked where permitted. The unhurried afternoon balances yesterday’s demanding mountain driving.

Overnight base: Telluride area

DAY 03

Rico, Dolores and the Southern Arc

Return to CO145 and drive through Rico and Dolores toward Cortez, then use US160 through Mancos to Durango. Choose one town or museum break. A substantial Mesa Verde visit needs an extra day and is not squeezed into this return leg.

Overnight base: Durango

Before you leave

Summer to early autumn, subject to mountain weather.
Check Colorado pass conditions and vehicle suitability.
Arrange lodging in Ouray and Telluride.
Travel the high-pass sections in daylight and retain a weather buffer in the wider vacation.

San Juan Skyway visitor information

JOURNEY 05 / 7 DAYS

Seven Days Across the Outer Banks

A slow barrier-island journey with two-night pauses on Hatteras and Ocracoke, plus time buffers around the ferry crossings.

Featured route maps: Outer Banks: Whalebone Junction to Cedar Island

DAY 01

Whalebone Junction and the northern seashore

Start at Whalebone Junction and check NC 12 and ferry status before moving south. Select one shore stop and settle near Nags Head. Keep the arrival day light rather than forcing a ferry connection.

Overnight base: Nags Head area

DAY 02

NC 12 to Hatteras Island

Drive through the Pea Island and Rodanthe corridor only when open, stopping at legal visitor or beach parking. Continue to a base around Avon or Buxton, where the next day can begin without changing lodging.

Overnight base: Avon or Buxton

DAY 03

Cape Hatteras light-station and shore day

Visit the Cape Hatteras light-station grounds, checking any restoration restrictions. Choose beach time or a short village outing for the afternoon. Treat climbing as optional only if officially available for your date.

Overnight base: Avon or Buxton

DAY 04

Vehicle ferry to Ocracoke

Travel to Hatteras village and take the vehicle ferry on its current operating schedule. Allow for waiting and disruption. After arriving on Ocracoke, drive NC 12 to the village and keep the rest of the day unscheduled.

Overnight base: Ocracoke

DAY 05

Ocracoke village and light station

Leave the car parked when practical and walk through the village to the light-station grounds. Use the rest of the day for a shore outing suited to conditions; avoid creating a tight sequence of timed activities.

Overnight base: Ocracoke

DAY 06

Ocracoke to Cedar Island

Take the separately reserved vehicle ferry to Cedar Island. Check its status before checking out. Continue only as far as your mainland accommodation requires, keeping a buffer for a delayed sailing.

Overnight base: Cedar Island area or a prebooked mainland base

DAY 07

Mainland buffer and departure

Use the final day for a quiet coastal morning or absorb a weather-related shift from the previous days. A longer onward drive should begin only after the ferry-dependent part of the trip is complete.

Overnight base: Departure or optional mainland night

Before you leave

Confirm actual 2027 ferry schedules and booking rules; no sailings are prebooked.
Do not substitute the passenger-only Ocracoke Express when moving a car.
The route can be interrupted by storms and overwash; retain cancellation flexibility.

Outer Banks: Whalebone Junction to Cedar Island visitor information

JOURNEY 06 / 7 DAYS

Seven Days Down the Florida Keys

Use three bases to turn the Overseas Highway into a holiday with water, shore and town time. The schedule ends in Key West; a mainland return is extra.

Featured route maps: Florida Keys Overseas Highway

DAY 01

Arrive in Key Largo

Start on US 1 in Key Largo, buy supplies and settle into the Upper Keys. Choose a short shore walk or early meal instead of driving deep into the island chain on arrival day.

Overnight base: Key Largo

DAY 02

Pennekamp stay day

Use John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park as the day’s anchor. Choose a shore-based visit or a separately booked boat outing after checking the weather. Keep enough free time to change activities if conditions turn.

Overnight base: Key Largo

DAY 03

Islamorada to Marathon

Continue on US 1 through Islamorada and Long Key, allowing village and meal stops. Arrive in Marathon before the evening so the middle Keys become a real base rather than a fuel stop.

Overnight base: Marathon

DAY 04

Marathon and bridge views

Spend the morning near Marathon, then choose a legal pedestrian or park viewpoint associated with the historic bridge landscape. Leave the afternoon open for shore time or an independently arranged local activity.

Overnight base: Marathon

DAY 05

Bahia Honda and the Lower Keys

Cross the modern Seven Mile Bridge on US 1 and stop at Bahia Honda if capacity permits. Continue through the Lower Keys and check into Key West. Keep the park visit flexible rather than arriving at closing time.

Overnight base: Key West

DAY 06

Key West without a long drive

Use a full stay day for the island’s streets, waterfront and chosen cultural visits. Walking or local transport can make the day easier than repeatedly moving and parking the car.

Overnight base: Key West

DAY 07

Weather buffer or departure

Use the last morning for an activity postponed by weather, then depart according to your transport plan. If driving all the way back to the mainland, treat it as a full separate travel stage and avoid stacking timed excursions onto it.

Overnight base: Departure or optional extra night

Before you leave

Book lodging and any boat trips independently; check park entry arrangements close to departure.
Confirm construction notices and current park capacity rules.
Keep storm flexibility when booking, and recheck current schedules before traveling.

Florida Keys Overseas Highway visitor information

JOURNEY 07 / 7 DAYS

Seven Days Around the Olympic Peninsula

Move between a northern lake-and-mountain base, the western rainforest and the Pacific coast. The plan uses optional paved side trips and avoids assuming there is a road through the center of the park.

Featured route maps: Olympic Peninsula Loop

DAY 01

Olympia to the Northern Peninsula

Follow US101 along Hood Canal and through the northern gateways to Port Angeles. Stop where the waterfront or a town invites a break, then use the evening to check park road conditions and prepare for two nights in the same base.

Overnight base: Port Angeles

DAY 02

A Flexible Mountain Day

If Hurricane Ridge Road is open and weather allows, make the paved out-and-back from Port Angeles. Otherwise use the park’s lower-elevation visitor areas and town waterfront. Keep the second night in the same base so a weather change does not force a long transfer.

Overnight base: Port Angeles

DAY 03

Lake Crescent to Forks

Drive west on US101 and stop at Barnes Point by Lake Crescent. Choose a short lakeshore visit or a longer permitted walk according to conditions. Continue to Forks with time to resupply before the rainforest day.

Overnight base: Forks

DAY 04

The Hoh Rain Forest

Use Upper Hoh Road as an out-and-back excursion from Forks, subject to current access. Arrive early enough to absorb entrance delays and choose a short forest walk if suitable. Return to the same base rather than adding a second distant park area.

Overnight base: Forks

DAY 05

Ruby Beach and Kalaloch

Follow US101 south, stopping at Ruby Beach and continuing toward Kalaloch. Keep beach time flexible around weather, tide and the condition of the access paths. A night near the coast leaves room for changing light without a late drive back to Forks.

Overnight base: Kalaloch area or an arranged nearby base

DAY 06

Quinault and a Slower Afternoon

Continue toward the Quinault area and choose an open, easy-to-reach lakeside or rainforest stop. Verify the specific access road first. The full Quinault loop includes gravel sections; check surfaces and access before considering an additional drive.

Overnight base: Quinault or Amanda Park

DAY 07

Return Through Aberdeen

Follow US101 to Aberdeen, then US12 and SR8 toward Olympia. Make this a flexible final leg with a meal and rest break rather than a last major park excursion. Allow extra time if storm damage or road work changes the route.

Overnight base: Olympia or onward departure

Before you leave

Late spring through early autumn offers the broadest optional park access; check each side road.
Check US101 Hoh River Bridge notices and Olympic alerts.
Reserve Port Angeles, Forks and coastal lodging.
Confirm the actual 2027 campsite and road opening dates before booking.

Olympic Peninsula Loop visitor information

JOURNEY 08 / 7 DAYS

Seven Days Down the Oregon Coast

Follow US101 from Astoria to Brookings with one manageable coastal stage per day. Afternoon time is deliberately left for viewpoints, a beach walk when conditions allow, or simply enjoying the town where you stay.

Featured route maps: Oregon Pacific Coast

DAY 01

Astoria to Cannon Beach

Begin in Astoria and follow US101 through Seaside to Cannon Beach. Keep the first day short enough to settle into the coast’s slower rhythm. Choose one beach or viewpoint stop after checking parking and local conditions.

Overnight base: Cannon Beach or Seaside

DAY 02

Northern Headlands to Tillamook

Continue south on US101 past the Manzanita area toward Tillamook. Use formal overlooks and leave room for a town lunch. Optional coastal side loops require their own access check and can be omitted without compromising the journey.

Overnight base: Tillamook area

DAY 03

Tillamook to Newport

Drive through Lincoln City and Depoe Bay toward Newport. Pick a small number of stops rather than crossing parking lots all day. A harbor-area meal or a relaxed evening in Newport provides a useful break from highway sightseeing.

Overnight base: Newport

DAY 04

Newport to Yachats

Use a shorter coastal stage to reach Yachats. Choose a morning stop near Newport and an afternoon near the new base. This light day provides a buffer if fog or rain affected yesterday’s viewpoints.

Overnight base: Yachats

DAY 05

Cape Perpetua and the Central Coast

Check visibility before visiting Cape Perpetua’s high viewpoint. Continue via Florence and Reedsport toward Coos Bay. Treat the summit access as a separate excursion and keep the rest of the day on US101.

Overnight base: Coos Bay area

DAY 06

Bandon to Gold Beach

Head south through Bandon and Port Orford toward Gold Beach. Stop at designated coastal viewpoints and allow a proper break in one of the towns. Keep the evening open rather than adding a long activity after the drive.

Overnight base: Gold Beach

DAY 07

Samuel H. Boardman to Brookings

Take time in Samuel H. Boardman State Scenic Corridor, including Arch Rock Picnic Area if open. Select two or three designated stops and finish in Brookings. Extra coastal walks are optional and should match weather, daylight and your mobility.

Overnight base: Brookings or onward departure

Before you leave

Flexible year-round outline; adapt for wind, fog, winter storms and shorter daylight.
Reserve overnight bases before high-demand travel periods.
Check Oregon road conditions and each planned park stop.
Keep beach outings optional and choose them to suit weather, tides and daylight.

Oregon Pacific Coast visitor information

JOURNEY 09 / 14 DAYS

Fourteen Days from Shenandoah to the Smokies

A ridge-to-ridge journey that gives Shenandoah its own stay days before the long Blue Ridge Parkway traverse. The plan works section by section and must be adapted to published road closures.

Featured route maps: Skyline Drive · Blue Ridge Parkway

DAY 01

Front Royal arrival and northern Skyline

Enter through Front Royal if open and choose a northern overlook or the Dickey Ridge area. Keep the first day short enough to learn the park road’s pace and confirm the next day’s conditions.

Overnight base: Front Royal area

DAY 02

Northern Skyline to Big Meadows

Continue south using only open Skyline Drive sections. Choose a few overlooks, then reach the Big Meadows area with daylight for orientation and an easy walk. Book your in-park or gateway lodging independently.

Overnight base: Big Meadows area or Luray

DAY 03

Big Meadows stay day

Spend time around the meadow and visitor information, selecting a walk that fits the group. A second night here allows a clearer weather window without another check-in or a long driving commitment.

Overnight base: Same Big Meadows/Luray base

DAY 04

Southern Skyline to Waynesboro

Complete the southern park section if open and exit at Rockfish Gap. Restock in Waynesboro and check the Blue Ridge Parkway closure list before planning the following morning’s access.

Overnight base: Waynesboro

DAY 05

Northern Blue Ridge Parkway

Begin the Parkway from its northern terminus, taking a modest section with overlooks and a picnic. Select an overnight gateway around the northern Virginia portion so the next day does not start with a long retrace.

Overnight base: Buena Vista or an independently chosen northern Parkway gateway

DAY 06

Toward Peaks of Otter

Continue through the Virginia mountain corridor, leaving an afternoon for the Peaks of Otter area when accessible. Choose a shoreline or visitor-area outing rather than assuming a summit hike fits everyone.

Overnight base: Peaks of Otter area or Bedford

DAY 07

Roanoke service and rest day

Move toward the Roanoke access area and use the day for laundry, supplies and a town visit. A lighter day here makes the second week more comfortable and creates room for weather delays.

Overnight base: Roanoke

DAY 08

Mabry Mill and Meadows of Dan

Return to the open Parkway and travel toward Mabry Mill. Allow time for the mill grounds and any currently offered interpretation. End around Meadows of Dan or a nearby booked community.

Overnight base: Meadows of Dan or Floyd area

DAY 09

Into North Carolina

Continue into the North Carolina high country on open Parkway sections. Choose one picnic or visitor stop and use a nearby town for the night rather than trying to make up distance.

Overnight base: Sparta or a nearby Parkway gateway

DAY 10

Boone and Blowing Rock area

Travel toward the Boone/Blowing Rock gateways and make this a shorter driving day. Use the afternoon for a town walk or an accessible parkway stop after checking current openings.

Overnight base: Boone or Blowing Rock

DAY 11

Linn Cove and Linville region

Plan the day around the open road sections in the Grandfather Mountain and Linville region. Mountain weather may obscure views; keep a local alternative and confirm access to sections under repair with NPS before setting out.

Overnight base: Linville or Spruce Pine area

DAY 12

Toward Asheville

Continue toward Asheville using official detours where necessary. Allow a shorter stop at an open visitor or cultural site, then spend the evening in the city with time to restock.

Overnight base: Asheville

DAY 13

Southern mountain viewpoints

Choose an open southern Parkway section toward the higher mountain viewpoints. Waterrock Knob is an option only if access and visibility are suitable; its parking-area view does not require taking the summit trail.

Overnight base: Maggie Valley or Waynesville

DAY 14

Cherokee and the southern terminus

Finish the remaining open Parkway section toward Cherokee at a relaxed pace. Keep the final afternoon for departure or a local stay, allowing the itinerary to absorb earlier weather changes without a last-day rush.

Overnight base: Cherokee or departure

Before you leave

Keep the schedule flexible: mountain-road closures may require extra travel time or revised overnight bases.
Use only officially documented detours around closed sections; revise overnight bases if a long closure changes the route.
Parkway lodging, campgrounds and nearby businesses have their own seasons and booking windows.
Confirm your vehicle dimensions against current tunnel and road restrictions.

Skyline Drive visitor information · Blue Ridge Parkway visitor information

JOURNEY 10 / 14 DAYS

Fourteen Days Through New England’s Mountains and Coast

A four-region journey from the Berkshires through Vermont and New Hampshire to Acadia. Two-night bases, a dedicated transfer day and a coastal weather buffer keep it from becoming a daily packing exercise.

Featured route maps: Mohawk Trail: Williamstown to Greenfield · Vermont Route 100: Wilmington to Stowe · Kancamagus Highway · Acadia Park Loop Road

DAY 01

Williamstown arrival

Arrive in the northern Berkshires and settle around Williamstown or North Adams. Keep the afternoon for a town walk and supplies before beginning the scenic mountain road.

Overnight base: Williamstown or North Adams

DAY 02

Mohawk Trail forest and ridge day

Drive Route 2 through the hairpin and wooded ridge section, using legal overlooks. Add a suitable Mohawk Trail State Forest outing, then return to your base or continue a short distance if preferred.

Overnight base: Same northern Berkshires base

DAY 03

Deerfield River towns to Greenfield

Continue east along the Mohawk Trail, allowing time around Charlemont and Shelburne Falls. End near Greenfield with a quiet evening rather than adding the Vermont transfer at the end of a sightseeing day.

Overnight base: Greenfield area

DAY 04

Transfer to Wilmington and Route 100

Make the regional connection to Wilmington using a current road planner, then begin VT 100 through West Dover. Allow time for the transfer and check its current road conditions separately.

Overnight base: Wilmington or West Dover

DAY 05

Village day toward Ludlow

Continue through the southern Route 100 villages, selecting a country-store or village stop and an unhurried lunch. Stay around Ludlow so there is time to enjoy the valley after the car is parked.

Overnight base: Ludlow area

DAY 06

Rochester and Granville Gulf

Follow the central Route 100 corridor through Rochester and stop at Granville’s Moss Glen Falls when conditions permit. Continue only as far as your chosen Mad River Valley base.

Overnight base: Warren or Waitsfield

DAY 07

Waterbury to Stowe

Take a short final Vermont driving stage via Waterbury to Stowe. Use the remaining day for a town walk or a chosen local activity, with no need to add a mountain-gap road to make the day worthwhile.

Overnight base: Stowe area

DAY 08

Transfer to the White Mountains

Travel from Vermont to Lincoln using a separately checked connector route. Leave time for groceries and local orientation so the Kancamagus crossing can start without arrival-day pressure.

Overnight base: Lincoln area

DAY 09

Kancamagus crossing to Conway

Drive NH 112 from Lincoln to Conway, selecting a few viewpoints and Rocky Gorge rather than stopping at every pullout. Carry lunch and fuel beforehand; this is the principal scenic day of the New Hampshire section.

Overnight base: Conway or North Conway

DAY 10

White Mountains stay day

Stay in the same base for a village visit and a chosen short outdoor outing. Use local visitor information to match the walk to weather and mobility. This spare day also permits a clearer repeat of part of the Kancamagus.

Overnight base: Same Conway/North Conway base

DAY 11

Dedicated transfer to Mount Desert Island

Allow a full travel day to the Acadia gateway, with breaks and no timed park booking on arrival. Check the park’s current road, pass and transport information before the following morning.

Overnight base: Bar Harbor or nearby Mount Desert Island base

DAY 12

Acadia Park Loop Road

Begin from the Hulls Cove approach and follow the one-way direction toward Sand Beach. Select a few coastal stops, then continue to Jordan Pond. Cadillac Summit Road is a separate optional booking, not part of this loop plan.

Overnight base: Same Mount Desert Island base

DAY 13

Jordan Pond and a slower coastal day

Use a second park day for a suitable walk or a shore stop missed earlier. Consider the operating seasonal bus if parking is difficult. A repeat visit in better weather is preferable to adding distant attractions.

Overnight base: Same Mount Desert Island base

DAY 14

Acadia weather buffer and departure

Keep the final morning flexible for weather, a relaxed village visit or departure. If continuing a long distance, leave the park activities for earlier days and make this a straightforward travel day.

Overnight base: Departure or optional extra night

Before you leave

Check the three inter-region transfers separately using current traffic and road information.
Do not assume spring or winter access to every park road or mountain-gap shortcut.
Foliage timing varies by elevation and weather; check local reports close to departure.
No accommodation, park entry or summit-road reservation is included.

Mohawk Trail: Williamstown to Greenfield visitor information · Vermont Route 100: Wilmington to Stowe visitor information · Kancamagus Highway visitor information · Acadia Park Loop Road visitor information

JOURNEY 11 / 14 DAYS

Fourteen Days from Olympic Shores to California Redwoods

A one-way Pacific journey from Olympia to the Avenue of the Giants. It follows selected western Olympic Peninsula segments, the length of Oregon’s coast and a clearly identified US101 transfer into northern California.

Featured route maps: Olympic Peninsula Loop · Oregon Pacific Coast · Avenue of the Giants

DAY 01

Olympia to Port Angeles

Use US101 along Hood Canal and the northern peninsula to reach Port Angeles. Keep the arrival afternoon simple and prepare for a one-way coastal journey. This itinerary will leave the Olympic loop at Aberdeen rather than returning to Olympia.

Overnight base: Port Angeles

DAY 02

Lake Crescent and the Western Gateway

Travel west on US101 with time at Lake Crescent’s Barnes Point area. Continue to Forks and resupply for the next day. Choose a lakeshore visit instead of adding multiple distant side valleys.

Overnight base: Forks

DAY 03

A Rainforest Base Day

Make the optional Upper Hoh Road excursion if open. Give the forest visit its own morning and allow for queues; return to Forks for a second night. The repeat base avoids carrying a late rainforest departure into a long coastal transfer.

Overnight base: Forks

DAY 04

Ruby Beach to Quinault

Continue south to Ruby Beach and the Kalaloch coast, then toward Quinault. Choose accessible stops based on the weather and stay near the southern rainforest gateway. Do not add a full gravel-road lake circuit.

Overnight base: Quinault or Amanda Park

DAY 05

Transfer to Astoria

Follow US101 through Aberdeen and the southwest Washington coast to the Columbia River crossing at Astoria. This is a connector day between the mapped Olympic and Oregon routes. Plan regular meal and rest breaks, and check the entire transfer against current road conditions.

Overnight base: Astoria

DAY 06

Astoria and the Northern Oregon Coast

Spend part of the morning in Astoria, then continue on US101 through Seaside to Cannon Beach. The short stage leaves room for a coastal stop if conditions are good.

Overnight base: Cannon Beach or Seaside

DAY 07

Headlands and Tillamook Country

Continue through the northern headlands on US101 to Tillamook. Pick one or two formal viewpoints and a town break. Keep optional loops flexible so weather or parking changes remain easy to absorb.

Overnight base: Tillamook area

DAY 08

Lincoln City, Depoe Bay and Newport

Follow the main coast road south and choose a relaxed meal stop on the way. Finish in Newport with time for the waterfront or another locally suitable short visit.

Overnight base: Newport

DAY 09

Yachats, Cape Perpetua and Florence

Travel to Yachats, checking visibility before the separate Cape Perpetua high-viewpoint drive. Continue to Florence and stop for the night rather than extending the day to the southern coast.

Overnight base: Florence

DAY 10

Coos Bay and Bandon

Drive through Reedsport and Coos Bay to Bandon. A shorter driving stage gives room for a planned coastal stop and restocking before the more remote southern sections.

Overnight base: Bandon

DAY 11

Port Orford to Gold Beach

Follow US101 through Port Orford toward Gold Beach. Use only designated stopping places and keep the afternoon adaptable to coastal wind or fog.

Overnight base: Gold Beach

DAY 12

Boardman Corridor to Brookings

Enjoy a selected set of Samuel H. Boardman stops, starting with Arch Rock if open. End in Brookings with time for laundry, supplies or a quiet evening before the California transfer.

Overnight base: Brookings

DAY 13

US101 Transfer into California

Continue on US101 through Crescent City and the Orick area toward Eureka. Use this day to move from the southern Oregon coast to the Humboldt area; check access separately for any national or state park excursion.

Overnight base: Eureka area

DAY 14

Avenue of the Giants, North to South

Join SR254 near Pepperwood and drive the Avenue of the Giants in reverse of the map’s south-to-north ordering. Stop at the Humboldt Redwoods Visitor Center and select an open grove visit. Finish near Phillipsville or Garberville, with onward travel planned separately.

Overnight base: Garberville area or onward departure

Before you leave

Late spring to early autumn is the broadest planning window; coastal weather remains variable.
Arrange a one-way vehicle and departure plan if needed.
Check Washington US101 bridge work, Oregon road alerts and California conditions.
Book the small coastal bases before setting fixed travel dates.
This is a point-to-point journey, not a return loop.

Olympic Peninsula Loop visitor information · Oregon Pacific Coast visitor information · Avenue of the Giants visitor information

JOURNEY 12 / 14 DAYS

Fourteen Days Across the Northern Rockies

A summer point-to-point journey linking Idaho’s Sawtooth country, Grand Teton, Yellowstone, Beartooth Highway and Glacier. Two full transfer days, plus shorter connections, leave time for travel between the featured roads.

Featured route maps: Sawtooth Scenic Byway · Grand Teton to Yellowstone’s West Thumb · Beartooth Highway · Going-to-the-Sun Road

DAY 01

Shoshone to the Wood River Valley

Begin ID75 at Shoshone and travel through Bellevue and Hailey to Ketchum. Use the afternoon to settle in and gather supplies rather than continuing over the summit late in the day.

Overnight base: Ketchum or Hailey

DAY 02

Galena Summit to Stanley

Continue on ID75 over the Galena area, stopping at the Bethine and Frank Church Overlook when conditions allow. Reach Stanley with an afternoon available for a locally chosen lakeside visit or quiet rest.

Overnight base: Stanley

DAY 03

Full Transfer to Idaho Falls

Leave the featured byway and follow the separately checked main-road connection via ID75 toward Challis, US93 south toward Arco and US20 east to Idaho Falls. Reserve the day for driving, meals and rest stops.

Overnight base: Idaho Falls

DAY 04

Into Jackson Hole

Use the main-road transfer via US26 toward Alpine and US89 north to Jackson. Check the Grand Teton and Yellowstone road situation before the following park days, then spend the remaining afternoon near the overnight base.

Overnight base: Jackson

DAY 05

A Grand Teton Local Day

Keep the same base and choose a focused day around the Tetons. Jenny Lake is an optional seasonal paved side trip; a shoreline stop may be enough. Avoid turning the day into a checklist of every park road and trail.

Overnight base: Jackson or a reserved Grand Teton base

DAY 06

Jackson Lake to West Thumb

Follow the northbound park corridor through Moran and the Rockefeller Parkway to Yellowstone’s South Entrance. Add Jackson Lake Dam as a short side stop if practical, then visit West Thumb’s boardwalks. Finish at a prearranged southern Yellowstone base.

Overnight base: Grant Village area, subject to booked seasonal availability

DAY 07

Old Faithful Region

Make this a regional Yellowstone day using the open Grand Loop Road toward Old Faithful. Choose the boardwalk areas that are currently accessible and allow time around an eruption forecast. The information and forecast must be checked locally.

Overnight base: Old Faithful area or another reserved Yellowstone base

DAY 08

Yellowstone Lake and Canyon

Use a separate day for the lake-and-canyon side of Yellowstone. Choose a small set of open viewpoints rather than circling the entire park. Overnight placement should follow the actual lodging available when you book.

Overnight base: Canyon or Lake area

DAY 09

Northern Yellowstone to Cooke City

Travel via open park roads toward the northern sector and Northeast Entrance. Make wildlife viewing only from legal pullouts and allow for traffic. Reach Cooke City with fuel and supplies arranged for the high crossing.

Overnight base: Cooke City or Silver Gate

DAY 10

Beartooth Crossing

Drive US212 toward Red Lodge only after confirming the pass is open. Stop at formal overlooks such as Rock Creek Vista when weather permits. If the crossing closes, revise the next transfer instead of relying on a backcountry detour.

Overnight base: Red Lodge

DAY 11

Full Transfer to Great Falls

Take a separately checked main-highway transfer via the Billings area and US87 toward Great Falls. Keep this longer day for driving, regular breaks and time to rest on arrival.

Overnight base: Great Falls

DAY 12

US89 Transfer to Glacier’s East Side

Travel north on US89 through the plains-and-foothills corridor toward Browning and St. Mary. Confirm Glacier’s current entry arrangements and road status. Stay on the east side so tomorrow’s crossing does not begin with a long approach drive.

Overnight base: St. Mary area

DAY 13

Going-to-the-Sun, East to West

Cross the featured road from St. Mary toward West Glacier, opposite the map’s default ordering. Allow the day for Logan Pass and a few legal pullouts. Check vehicle size restrictions and use the current reservation or shuttle arrangements that apply.

Overnight base: West Glacier area

DAY 14

Lake McDonald and Departure Buffer

Keep the morning flexible for Lake McDonald or an open lower-elevation park area. This day can absorb a delayed crossing or simply provide a relaxed finish. Any airport transfer or onward drive is a separate final connection.

Overnight base: West Glacier or onward departure

Before you leave

Plan for summer only after all intended high roads and Yellowstone’s South Entrance have opened.
Reserve all national-park-region overnights; the named bases are conditional on availability.
Check Glacier vehicle restrictions, entry arrangements and shuttle plans.
Check Beartooth and Yellowstone road status just before those stages.
Allow extra vacation time if a high-pass weather delay cannot be absorbed in the final day.

Sawtooth Scenic Byway visitor information · Grand Teton to Yellowstone’s West Thumb visitor information · Beartooth Highway visitor information · Going-to-the-Sun Road visitor information