



50 REASONS TO LOVE THE U.S.A. NOW

NEVADA ➡

Bette Midler's new
Las Vegas extravaganza
at Caesars Palace.
See page 34 for more.

The latest Las Vegas spectacle. Homemade ice cream in a small Southern town. The start of rodeo season... It's July, and what better time to explore the country—whether rediscovering a classic spot or encountering something fabulous and brand-new? On the following pages you'll find our highly opinionated state-by-state guide, with tips and ideas to inspire your next trip. From Alaska to Maine, summer in America has never been more fun. Here are 50 reasons to pack your bags and go.



Cruising Tracy Arm, in Alaska.

1 ALASKA

Because our largest state still has secrets to reveal.

And the best way to explore its remote spots and hidden inlets is on a small ship, such as American Safari's new 36-passenger *Safari Explorer* (888/862-8881; amsafari.com; eight-day itineraries from \$4,395 per person, double). The ship docks in some familiar ports (Glacier Bay National Park), but it also ventures to Elfin Cove, a native Alaskan village, and Petersburg, a small fishing town that serves as a jumping-off point for backcountry hikes.

3 CALIFORNIA

The Parker
Palm Springs.

Because Palm Springs Modern will always be cool. California's retro resort town is back—again. The mod renaissance kicked off with Jonathan Adler's whimsical redo of the Parker Palm Springs (4200 East Palm Canyon Drive; 760/770-5000; theparkerpalmsprings.com; doubles from \$395) in 2004. A hotel boom has followed. In the last year alone, both the Horizon Hotel and Colony Palms reopened after head-to-toe renovations, and Portland's hip Ace hotel group is planning a desert outpost for 2009. Shoppers, meanwhile, have been pouring in from L.A. and San Diego to hunt for furniture, design accessories, and vintage clothes from the city's thriving Uptown antiques district. And for those with an eye to the future (rather than the mid-century past), there's the Backstreet Arts District across from the Parker, with galleries full of works by up-and-coming painters and photographers.

2 HAWAII

Because beach resorts are more fun when they're casual.

Until recently, the buttoned-up European look of the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua (808/669-6200; ritzcarlton.com; doubles from \$499) was strangely out of touch with its tropical surroundings. Now, after a \$180 million renovation, the hotel has lost the chintzy curtains, faux Renaissance artwork, and yes, the fireplace in the library. The 446 guest rooms are breezy yet refined: kukui tree-patterned area rugs cover dark Brazilian ironwood floors, and wrought-iron lanais look out on the island landscape. As they say in Hawaii, *Na mea maikai*—it's all good.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF AMERICAN SAFARI CRUISES; CREATAS IMAGES/JUPITER IMAGES; CATHERINE LEDNER



4 NEVADA

Because everyone loves a diva, especially in Las Vegas. In her new production, *The Showgirl Must Go On*, Bette Midler lights up the Colosseum at Caesars Palace (3570 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 877/723-8836; tickets from \$95) with a campy song-and-dance tribute to old-school Vegas vaudeville. "I'm resurrecting the form," she tells T+L. That includes a classic floor show with outrageous costumes and a chorus line to match. "They're called the Caesar Salad girls—with as little dressing as possible!"

The Divine Miss M.
on the road to Vegas.



5 OREGON

Because fashion has gone eco in Portland. With a fresh crop

of talented designers focused on sustainability, the city's fashion scene is getting international attention. Here are three names to look for. • **Anna Cohen's** so-called "Italian street couture" is informed by her four years spent designing for fashion houses in Florence, but—like Cohen—it's also homegrown: bamboo-jersey drape dresses and hemp-silk blouses. Available at Look (3909 NE MLK St.; 503/888-2182).

• **Suzi Johnson** hand-loomes sweaters, dresses, and even bikinis from Loro Piana cashmere and, this season, organic cotton sourced in Tanzania. Available at Souchi (807 NW 23rd Ave.; 503/525-0043; souchi.com).

• **Julia Barbee** adds whimsical embellishment to vintage finds for her deconstructed Frocky Jack Morgan line. Available at Seaplane (827 NW 23rd Ave.; 503/234-2409).

6 WASHINGTON



Because of the incandescent beauty of Tacoma's colored glass. This once-industrial city has become an international destination for glass art. The birthplace of acclaimed glass designer Dale Chihuly, Tacoma is home to not only the Museum of Glass (866/468-7386; museumofglass.org), but also galleries, shops, and a few unexpected spots that have embraced the medium. At the new Hotel Murano (888/862-3255 or 253/238-8000; hotelmuranotacoma.com; doubles from \$169), each of the 21 guest-floors honors a different artist (from Australian Cobi Cockburn to Chihuly), and rooms are filled with one-of-a-kind handblown pieces.

A Jesse Kelly glass pear, available at the Museum of Glass shop, in Tacoma.



A dress
from
Portland
designer
Anna
Cohen.

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF GREG GORMAN; DAVIES + STARR (2)



7 NEW MEXICO

Because Santa Fe chic is back.

Southwest style gets a 21st-century spin at Auberge's 65-casita Encantado resort (198 State Rd. 592; 877/262-4666; encantadoresort.com; doubles from \$475), opening next month just outside Santa Fe. There's not a dream catcher or howling coyote in sight—instead, interiors soothe with earthy palettes and abstract works by local painters. The contemporary theme runs throughout the 57-acre resort—especially in the public spaces that feature revolving exhibitions curated by an area gallery.



8 OKLAHOMA

Because you can still get your kicks on Route 66. Pops (660 W. Hwy. 66; Arcadia; 405/928-7677; lunch for two \$28)—a combination gas station, diner, and soda shop north of Oklahoma City—has added a futuristic twist to that iconic highway. With its dramatic cantilevered steel canopy and 66-foot bottle sign, the store is impossible to miss from the road. Inside, more than 400 different sodas line the walls, making this the fizziest pit stop in all of Oklahoma.

9 TEXAS

Because you don't have to be 22 to get excited about Austin's music scene. Known as a mecca for the indie-music set (thanks to the annual South by Southwest festival in March), Austin now has a venue for Bach, Mozart, and Stravinsky as well. On the edge of Lady Bird Lake, the Long Center for the Performing Arts (701 W. Riverside Dr.; 512/474-5664; thelongcenter.org) houses the city's ballet company and symphony orchestra. The performance hall, designed by Nelsen Partners and Zeidler Partnership Architects, is in tune with Austin's unconventional spirit—70 percent of the structure was made from recycled materials, including the gigantic concrete ring that encircles the central building like a halo. On the lineup this summer: Austin's Chamber Music Festival, the Austin Shakespeare Festival, and free weekend symphony performances on the public terrace.



Austin's new Long Center for the Performing Arts.



10 ARIZONA

Because Scottsdale is (seriously) happening. The Arizona Canal is getting a major makeover with a number of stylish new openings. • The city's answer to Fred Segal, the Mix (7154 E. Stetson Dr.; 480/941-5555) is a well-curated collection of locally owned boutiques for clothes, beauty, home, and even toys. • James Beard Award-winning chef Nobuo Fukuda and native restaurateur Peter Kasperski join forces for Shell Shock (7154 E. Stetson Dr.; 480/481-9463; dinner for two \$65), a modern izakaya (Japanese tavern). Expect Asian dishes, like katsu burgers and tempura squash blossoms. • Go formal in the champagne-and-caviar bar at the multilevel Estate House (7134 E. Stetson Dr.; 480/970-4099), or head to the more casual lounge upstairs for small plates and live jazz.



The upstairs lounge at Scottsdale's Estate House. From far left: Braised oxtail with udon noodles at Shell Shock; beauty booty at the Mix.

12 IDAHO

Because rivers run through it.

To anglers, Idaho is synonymous with world-class trout fishing—and no outfitter knows the state's waterways better than Row Adventures (800/451-6034; rowadventures.com;

full-day fly-fishing for two from \$425), which brings 29 years of luxury-rafting experience to a new menu of fly-fishing trips. Guests cast in hidden eddies, while guides carry the heavy gear: tents, cooking supplies, and enough portable plumbing for hot showers all around.



11 MONTANA

Because there's nothing quite like waking up in a tent.

The Lodge at Sun Ranch (888/674-3030; papoosescreek.com; doubles from \$1,800 for three nights, including meals), Montana's latest luxury eco-resort, is a Big Sky playground for grown-ups. Consider the stats: the property holds only 16 people, and has 26,000 acres for hiking, fishing, and horseback riding. One highlight is the "educamping" program, where guests learn about the lodge's sustainable practices, then spend the night in a canvas tent. Lest you think you'll be roughing it, the tent comes mounted on a wooden deck, with a queen-size bed and down comforters.



13 WYOMING

Because we all still want to be cowboys. For cardholding members of the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) who hanker to rope a calf, ride a bull, or try to stick like a burr to a bronc's back, the first of July ushers in Cowboy Christmas: the time to win some of the biggest rodeo purses in Wyoming. The highlight of the season is always the Cody Stampede Rodeo (*July 1-4; 800/207-0744; codystampederodeo.com*), celebrating its 89th year. Also on the docket is the all-summer-long Cody Nite rodeos, which put semipros in the professional spotlight—nowadays including the occasional woman trying to break into saddle-bronc- and bull-riding events. A semipro this year could be a professional star (or starlet?) next, and you could see it happen.



At the Cody Stampede grounds.

**PLEASE
STAY OFF FENCE**



14 UTAH

Because you've always wanted to live at a spa.

For those who find a week of pampering is just not enough, Red Mountain Spa (877/246-4453 for general reservations; 800/444-4230 for residences; 1275 E. Red Mountain Circle, Ivins; redmountainspa.com) has added 12 residential villas (from \$540,000) to its 55-acre crimson desert setting. Owners get access to the resort's full range of amenities, from programs (new this year: tai chi on the rocks) to the dining room's healthy food, and—of course—the spa's 62 treatments.



15 COLORADO

Because amber waves of grain make for some damn good beer.

With more than 100 excellent microbreweries spread across the state, Colorado has become something of the Napa Valley of beer. One of the latest ventures in the mountains of Ski Country is Aspen Brewing Company (557 N. Mill St.; 970/920-2739; aspenbrewingco.com), which turns out small batches of brown and hefeweizen-style ales, along with four other brews (including a cleverly named I.P.A., the Independence Pass Ale). You can tour the brewery's beer-making facilities, then settle down to sample all the drafts in the pint-size tasting room.

The serrated landscape of South Dakota's Badlands National Park.

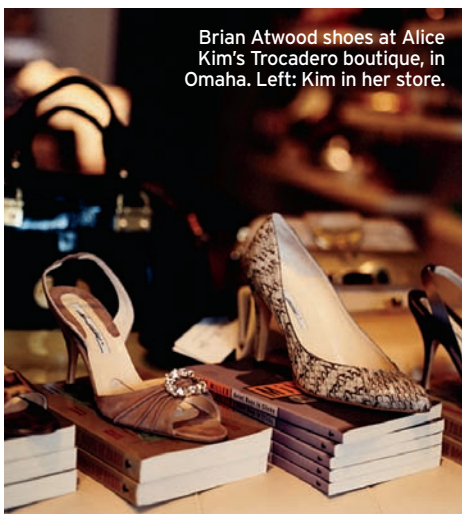


16 SOUTH DAKOTA

Because of the Badlands, of course. Immortalized in Terrence Malick's bleak 1973 film, the arid Badlands, which stretch south and west from South Dakota's 244,000-acre Badlands National Park (605/433-5361; nps.gov/bad/), have a reputation that precedes them. But this austere, otherworldly landscape also offers surprises for first-time visitors: fossil beds that are up to 37 million years old, and numerous free-roaming bison, fox, and bighorn sheep.

ULTIMATE U.S.A. GUIDE

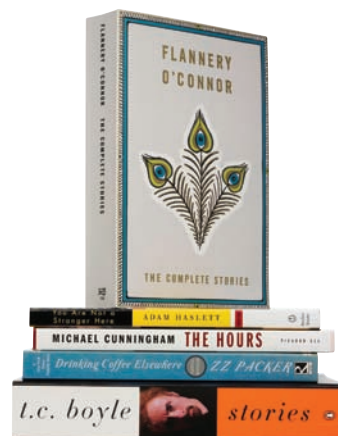
From beach resorts to lobster shacks, T+L has summer's best hotels and restaurants covered. Visit travelandleisure.com/guides for complete listings.



Brian Atwood shoes at Alice Kim's Trocadero boutique, in Omaha. Left: Kim in her store.

18 IOWA

Because of the hopping literary scene. Since 1922, aspiring authors have come to Iowa City (pop. 63,000) to enroll in the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, a pioneering program of fiction and poetry writing. Flannery O'Connor glided through, as did Raymond Carver and T. Coraghessan Boyle, and more recent stars like Michael Cunningham, ZZ Packer, and Adam Haslett. The town is also home to Prairie Lights (15 S. Dubuque St.; 800/295-2665), an independent bookstore and local institution; it hosts at least three major-league readings every week and broadcasts the events on public radio. This year, the store celebrates its 30-year anniversary with a line-up as ambitious as ever: Ethan Canin, Marilynne Robinson, Francine Prose, and Amy Bloom.



Works by graduates of the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop.

17 NEBRASKA

Because sometimes you have to travel all the way to Omaha to find the perfect accessory.

"This city is buzzing," says former *InStyle* fashion editor Alice Kim, who left New York last year to set up shop in Omaha's up-and-coming Old Market area. Her boutique Trocadero (1208½ Howard St.; 402/934-8389) holds an eclectic mix of Kim's favorite things (Giuseppe Zanotti pumps; John Derian decoupage plates). The walls, meanwhile, are lined with fashion-show invitations and notes from her designer friends, including Thakoon Panichgul, who was raised in Omaha himself.

19 NORTH DAKOTA

Because of the underrated beauty. Travelers looking to experience North Dakota's memorable skies (and landscapes) should head to Theodore Roosevelt National Park (701/623-4730; nps.gov/thro) where you can hike more than 100 miles of trails and tour the former president's cabin—he lived here in 1884 while working as a cowboy. Take along the upcoming *State by State* (October, Ecco), an anthology of essays edited by Sean Wilsey and Matt Weiland. In it, Louise Erdrich writes about her home state, North Dakota. Here, a preview in her own words: "Shattering, spectacular, inescapable. The North Dakota sky is a former tallgrass prairie heaven tarp that stretches down on every side and quiets the mind. In the summer, distance melts off into mirage, a jitter of shaking air on hot dust. When the sun is magnified by a dust storm, it can fill the sky like a nuclear dawn. Sounds travel as far as the ear allows. Vision stretches as far as the eye can strain. Pure sky pulls you right out of yourself and yet bears down so close it seems crushing."



The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, in Overland Park, just outside of Kansas City.



20 KANSAS

Because avant-garde art and architecture are giving the Great Plains a new edge. When the small but striking Kyu Sung Woo-designed Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art (12345 College Blvd.; 913/469-3000; jccc.edu/museum) recently held its opening gala in Overland Park, 13 miles from downtown Kansas City, the sight of New York's art-world luminaries descending en masse on the heartland surprised no one. This was, after all, just the latest addition to the Kansas City area's buzzing art scene, which in the last couple of years has witnessed Stephen Holl's addition to the city's Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (just across the border in Missouri) and the transformation of the Crossroads district into a gallery-filled square mile. It's all enough to make you feel like you're not in Kansas (City) anymore.

21 MISSOURI

Because we love pigs. What's the most prized animal in the country these days? The Berkshire pig, whose meat is found on the menus of ingredient-driven restaurants from Momofuku in New York to Chez Panisse in Berkeley. Those kitchens have to fly in their supplies, but chef Jonathan Justus, owner of the farm-to-table restaurant Justus Drugstore (106 W. Main St.; 816/532-2300; dinner for two \$90) in the little town of Smithville, only has to drive a few miles to pick up his. It's this ideal location, paired with Justus's "make it from scratch" philosophy, that has made his year-old restaurant the apotheosis of locavore dining. On the menu this summer: the pig (naturally), served with a blueberry-ginger sauce and heirloom polenta from nearby War Eagle Mill.



FROM TOP: COURTESY OF THE NERMAN MUSEUM; ROBERT DOWLING/CORBIS



22 MINNESOTA

Because paddling is fun. If you were dragged to the Boundary Waters as a child, maybe you remember more portaging of canoes than you'd care to. Go as an adult and you'll find Minnesota's sprawling northern wilderness an enchanted world of glassy lakes, glacier-carved cliffs, and pristine boreal forests. Arrange a guided trip with Wilderness Outfitters (800/777-8572; wildernessoutfitters.com; tours from \$250), the area's top tour operator.

Traveling between lakes, in Minnesota's Boundary Waters.

23 WISCONSIN

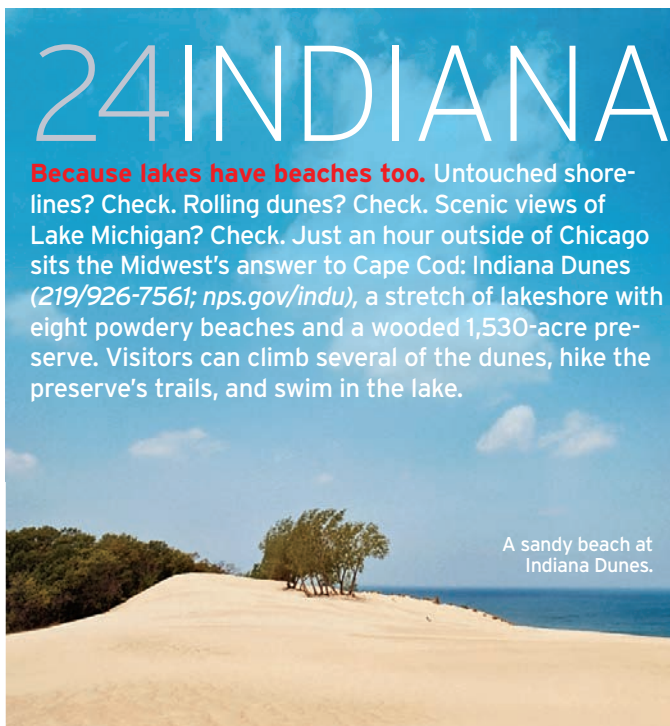
Because who can resist a good camp classic? Northern Wisconsin's favorite wilderness retreat, Canoe Bay (800/568-1995; canoebay.com; doubles from \$350), has upped the ante for lakeside cottages with four recently opened cabins. The striking two-story structures blend a modern aesthetic (cathedral ceilings; panoramic windows) with sustainable design and old-fashioned comfort. Cedar decks incorporate recycled wood, fireplaces are made from local stone, and Arts and Crafts-style rugs keep things cozy.

25 OHIO

Because in Cleveland, Old World meets new kids on the block. Combine alternative gallery owners, steelworkers, celebrity chefs, and transplants from the Old Country, and you get an idea of Cleveland's Tremont district. Hidden among Russian Orthodox churches, blue-collar bars, and Polish restaurants like the 85-year-old Sokolowski's University Inn (1201 University Rd.; 216/771-9236; dinner for two \$20), you'll find newly opened hipster hangouts. After dinner at Michael "Iron Chef" Symon's Mediterranean-style bistro Lolita (900 Literary Rd.; 216/771-5652; dinner for two \$60), everyone heads to Prosperity Social Club (1109 Starkweather Ave.; 216/937-1938), a late-night lounge and pool hall.

24 INDIANA

Because lakes have beaches too. Untouched shorelines? Check. Rolling dunes? Check. Scenic views of Lake Michigan? Check. Just an hour outside of Chicago sits the Midwest's answer to Cape Cod: Indiana Dunes (219/926-7561; nps.gov/indu), a stretch of lakeshore with eight powdery beaches and a wooded 1,530-acre preserve. Visitors can climb several of the dunes, hike the preserve's trails, and swim in the lake.



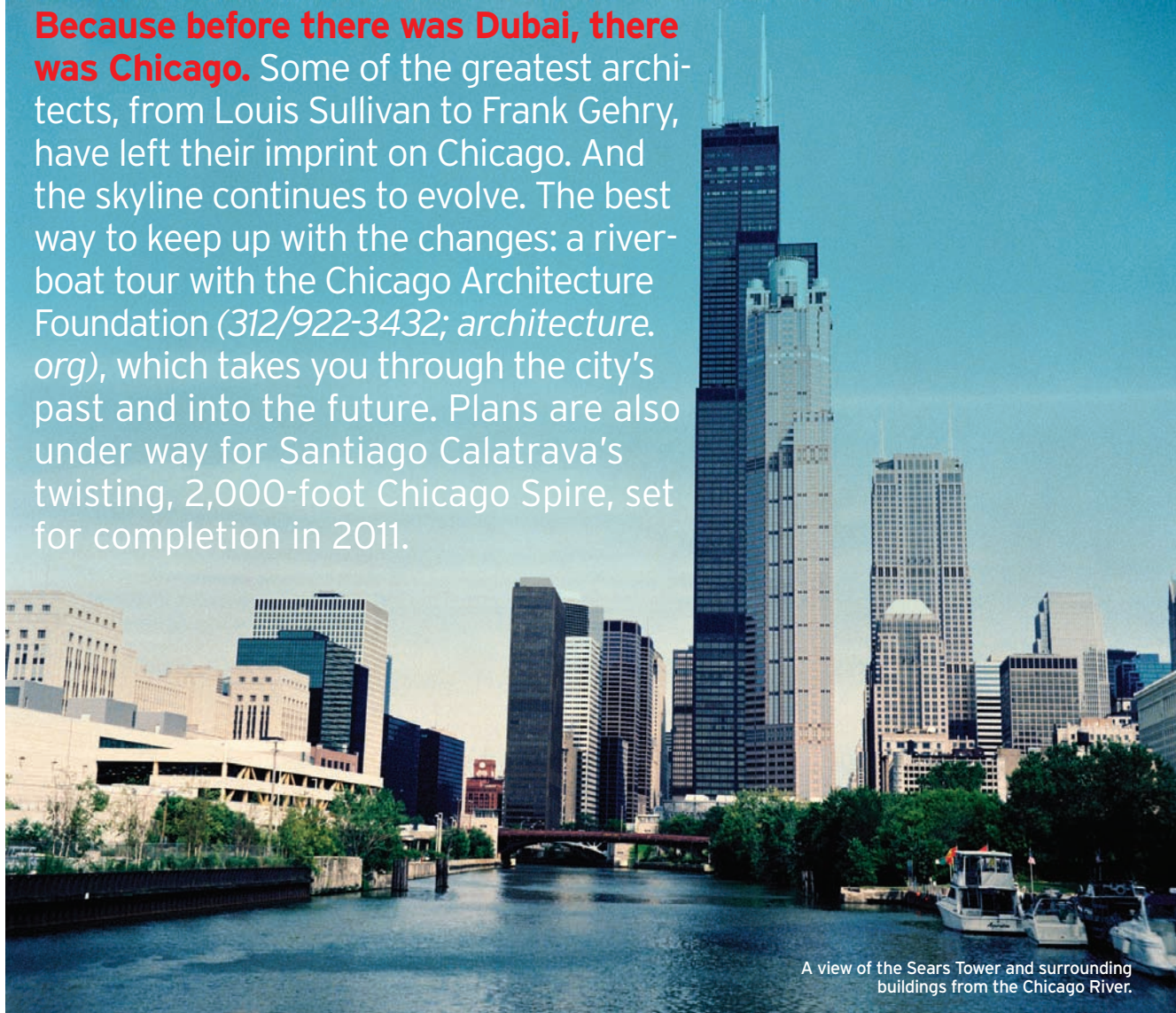
A sandy beach at Indiana Dunes.

FROM TOP: SALLY GALL; JÜRGEN FRANK



26 ILLINOIS

Because before there was Dubai, there was Chicago. Some of the greatest architects, from Louis Sullivan to Frank Gehry, have left their imprint on Chicago. And the skyline continues to evolve. The best way to keep up with the changes: a riverboat tour with the Chicago Architecture Foundation (312/922-3432; architecture.org), which takes you through the city's past and into the future. Plans are also under way for Santiago Calatrava's twisting, 2,000-foot Chicago Spire, set for completion in 2011.



A view of the Sears Tower and surrounding buildings from the Chicago River.

27 MICHIGAN

Because Mackinac Island is timeless. It's not as though this six-square-mile island at the juncture of lakes Huron and Michigan is immune to change. The 41-year-old Mustang Lounge (1485 Astor St.; 906/847-9916; dinner for two \$21), a local watering hole, just reopened after a complete renovation. And every couple of years, the legendary 1887 Grand Hotel (800/334-7263; grandhotel.com; doubles from \$490) unveils an addition, such as the Gate House restaurant, where gentlemen can finally dine sans coat and tie. But with a ban on motorized vehicles and a position as a National Historic Landmark to maintain, Mackinac's sensibility is decidedly traditional—just the way we like it.



The Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island.



28 ALABAMA

Because small-town diners can't be beat. Florence, Alabama, a well-scrubbed town overlooking the Tennessee River, isn't retro in that faux-Mayberry sort of way. It's the real deal. And so is Trowbridge's (316 N. Court St.; 256/764-1503; lunch for two \$10), an eight-stool lunch counter where, in 1918, Paul Trowbridge began churning and scooping orange-pineapple ice cream. Ask for their trademark egg-and-olive sandwich, and someone will toast it for you in a stainless-steel press. If you order a white-bread banana sandwich, you get a choice of mayo or peanut butter—or both.



Cherry vanilla ice cream at Trowbridge's, in Florence.

Morris Island, a barrier island off the coast of Charleston.



29 SOUTH CAROLINA

Because of its untouched islands.

Just south of Charleston Harbor, tiny Morris Island (tpl.org/morrisisland) is probably the last undeveloped spot on the South Carolina coast. The site of a Civil War battle (dramatized in the film *Glory*), the island will be put under permanent conservation easement this summer, the result of a successful public land trust campaign. Then, the habitat for osprey, blue herons, bald eagles, and two endangered species—the piping plover and the loggerhead sea turtle—will be preserved for hikers and bird-watchers for years to come.

31 TENNESSEE

Because even cowgirls need to shop. The epicenter of country music is going glam: Nashville royalty Faith Hill, Carrie Underwood, and LeAnn Rimes were among the first in line at the city's coolest new boutique, H. Audrey (4027 Hillsboro Pike, suite 703; 615/760-5701; haudrey.com). Owner Holly Williams (Hank's granddaughter) appointed her loftlike shop with French antiques and stocked it with everything from Rick Owens to Alexander McQueen and Helmut Lang—a far cry from cowboy boots and rhinestone jeans.

30 MISSISSIPPI

Because who doesn't love a county fair?

Held annually in central Mississippi during the last week in July, the 119-year-old Neshoba County Fair (*Philadelphia*; 601/656-8480; neshobacountyfair.org) is a study in Americana: there are harness races, corn dogs, fresh-squeezed lemonade, a Ferris wheel, and plenty of old-fashioned tree-stump politicking. Everyone from state senators to Ronald Reagan has dropped by.



32 FLORIDA

Because South Beach will *a*lways be sexy. Miami has outdone itself once again: a 26,000-square-foot rooftop nightclub—one of the largest in the Americas—has just opened atop the new oceanfront Gansevoort South Hotel, Spa & Residences (2377 Collins Ave.; 305/604-1000; gansevoortsouth.com; doubles from \$495). Called Plunge, the over-the-top playground features chandelier-lit cabanas, an elevated 110-foot-long pool, a dozen palm trees, and a granite bar. The highlight is the view: to the west, the city skyline; to the east, the vast Atlantic.



The 110-foot-long pool at South Beach's new Gansevoort South Hotel.

EMILIANO GRANADO



33 NORTH CAROLINA

Because Greensboro is going green. The 147-room Proximity Hotel (704 Green Valley Rd.; 800/379-8200; proximityhotel.com; doubles from \$249) is one of the first hotels to aim for LEED Platinum status, the highest rating in sustainable design and construction from the U.S. Green Building Council. The structure, which uses about 45 percent less energy and 33 percent less water than comparable properties, has solar panels, heat-deflecting plants on the roof, and a regenerative-drive elevator.



The St. Charles streetcar, in New Orleans.

35 LOUISIANA

Because New Orleans is getting back on track. Take the historic St. Charles streetcar: it came to a standstill after Hurricane Katrina, but the trolley is once again winding over 13.2 miles, from the edge of the French Quarter, through the Garden District, and on to the Riverbend—as it has for more than 150 years. It is, as residents say, the “Streetcar Named Inspire.”

34 GEORGIA

Because rap and roti make a very Hotlanta. “Honestly, I didn’t plan on doing it,” says rap musician Chris “Ludacris” Bridges of his decision to create Straits (793 Juniper St.; 404/877-1283; dinner for two \$80) with chef Chris Yeo, in Atlanta’s Midtown neighborhood. “But I was blown away by Chris’s use of spices—plus, what better way to be hands-on in your hometown than bringing something it’s never seen before.” The menu is a mix of Asian-influenced small plates, with a nod to Singaporean dishes, such as *roti prata* with minced beef, and seafood in a coconut curry. Ludacris’s favorite dish? The “Kung Pao lollipops” in a red-jalapeno sauce.



Chris Yeo (left) and Chris “Ludacris” Bridges.



Quapaw Baths & Spa.
Above: Hot Springs,
Arkansas. Below:
Fordyce Bathhouse.



38 ARKANSAS

Because everybody loves a hot bath. The historic mountain town of Hot Springs has a new way to take the waters: the recently reopened Quapaw Baths & Spa (413 Central Ave.; 501/609-9822; quapawbaths.com), a 1922 Spanish-colonial mansion with a mosaic-tiled central dome and seven private soaking rooms. Also in the town center is the Fordyce Bathhouse (369 Central Ave.; 501/624-2701; nps.gov/hosp), a 1915 spa that now serves as a museum, complete with a restored marble lobby, gymnasium, and even the original billiards parlor.



36 KENTUCKY

Because the good old boys are still drinking whiskey and rye.

Long before the settlers of Kentucky put corn mash into their copper stills and called it bourbon, the Scots and Irish of the Eastern seaboard were using an Old-World grain: rye. An essential ingredient in the classic Manhattan cocktail, this original American whiskey is now making a comeback in the heart of Bourbon Country in the form of excellent aged ryes such as Rittenhouse, Van Winkle, and Sazerac. To taste it at the source, visit Heaven Hill Distilleries (1311 Gilkey Run Rd., Bardstown; 502/337-1000; heaven-hill.com), which makes Rittenhouse. Buffalo Trace Distillery (1001 Wilkinson Blvd., Frankfort; 502/696-5926; buffalotrace.com) is the place for Sazerac and Van Winkle.

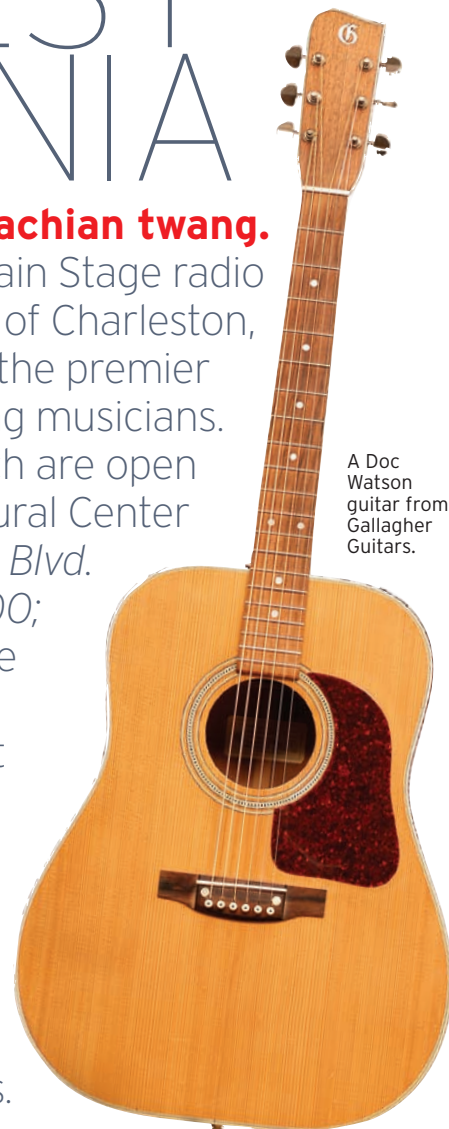
37 WEST VIRGINIA

Because of the Appalachian twang.

For 25 years, the Mountain Stage radio program, broadcast out of Charleston, West Virginia, has been the premier venue for up-and-coming musicians.

The performances, which are open to the public at the Cultural Center Theater (1900 Kanawha Blvd. E., Bldg. 9; 304/556-4900; mountainstage.org) have

helped regional talents—from legendary guitarist Doc Watson to country-folk singer Iris Dement—reach a broader audience. This year, keep an eye out for the Punch Brothers and the Carolina Chocolate Drops.



A Doc Watson guitar from Gallagher Guitars.



39 NEW JERSEY

Because rock and roll will never die. Can an indie music-and-art festival founded in the desert near Palm Springs thrive in the land of Bruce Springsteen? The organizers of the annual Coachella festival think so. Their All Points West festival (*August 8-10; apwfestival.com*) is set to take place at New Jersey's historic Liberty State Park. British rockers Radiohead and Mali-born Afro-blues duo Amadou & Mariam, among others, will perform against the backdrop of the Manhattan skyline and the Statue of Liberty.



Young riders in Virginia.

40 VIRGINIA

Because it's horse country. Thoroughbreds, steeplechase jumpers, polo ponies—Virginia has them all. Cross Country International (800/828-8768; equestrianvacations.com; three-day trips from \$1,895, including meals and accommodations), which plans deluxe horseback adventures in Ireland, Peru, and beyond, recently introduced its first trip in the state: the three-to four-day Hunt Country Trail Ride. Using the 1778 Federal-style Willow Grove Inn as a base, participants saddle up and follow Civil War soldiers' footpaths through the rolling forests of Shenandoah National Park, then trot to the Wilderness Battlefield, where wartime homesteads and fighting trenches remain intact. Novice equestrians can book lessons with an Olympic gold medalist at the inn's training ring.

41 MARYLAND

Because minor-league baseball is the real deal. In May, fans gathered in the Washington, D.C., suburb of Waldorf to see the debut of the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs at their intimate new 4,200-seat stadium (11765 St. Linus Dr.; 301/638-9788; somdbluecrabs.com). Owned by former Orioles third baseman Brooks Robinson, the team plays in a ballpark that has ice cream and hot dog stands, luxury amenities, and a grassy outfield that's ideal for a pregame picnic.





The living room at Fallingwater.

42 PENNSYLVANIA

Because it's Wright. We all know about the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Fallingwater in western Pennsylvania. Now, visiting devotees of the American architectural master can spend the night in the 1957 Duncan House at Polymath Park (1 Usonian Dr., Acme; 877/833-7829; polymathpark.com; from \$425), a 125-acre nature reserve in the Laurel Highlands just 17 miles south. The house is one of 50 simple buildings that Wright designed in his very democratic "Usonian" style.

43 DELAWARE

Because \$39 million buys a lot of flowers. After a three-year overhaul, the Nemours Mansion & Gardens (Wilmington; 800/651-6912; nemoursmansion.org) has reopened. The formal gardens (modeled after those at Versailles' Petit Trianon) have been restored, along with the reflecting pool, hedge maze, and a 1929 gold-leafed sculpture by Henri Crenier. While you're there, drop by Winterthur (Winterthur; 800/488-3883; winterthur.org), another Du Pont family estate in the Brandywine Valley.



The Brandywine Valley's Nemours Gardens.

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY;
COURTESY OF NEMOURS MANSION & GARDENS



44 NEW YORK

Because there's always something to see in the Big Apple. This summer, the East River takes center stage with a spectacular installation by Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson: *The New York City Waterfalls* (nycwaterfalls.org; through October), a series of four 90- to 120-foot-tall curtains of water that will punctuate the river and harbor at different spots off Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Governors Island. Get a closer look with a 30-minute boat tour (circlelinedowntown.com) organized by the Public Art Fund, which is sponsoring the \$15 million project.



A rendering of Olafur Eliasson's New York City Waterfalls.



On Rhode Island's Little Compton beach.

45 RHODE ISLAND

Because you can escape the crowds at the beach.

Compared with Newport, its famous neighbor to the west, Little Compton remains off the beaten path. The town's pebbly beach and pastoral mood is a refreshingly quiet haven on the shores of Narragansett Bay.



46 NEW HAMPSHIRE

Because lighthouses are irresistible. Coastal New England has one of America's largest collections of working lighthouses (138). New Hampshire native Jeremy D'Entremont leads five-hour land-and-sea tours (603/431-9155; newenglandlighthouse.com.) of the most enchanting locations. Top stop: Portsmouth Harbor, allegedly haunted by its former keeper.

47 CONNECTICUT

Because our founding fathers were gentleman farmers, too. Before Litchfield County became prime weekend-house territory for New Yorkers, it was farmland. Now a growing number of city folks are rolling up their sleeves and reclaiming Connecticut's agricultural roots. Consider John Morosani, who worked on Wall Street until 2006, when he left behind stocks for livestock and opened Laurel Ridge Farm (lrgfb.com) on his Litchfield estate. Now he sells grass-fed beef out of a converted windmill on the property. To get a feel for the area's other small producers, visit the Saturday Litchfield Hills Farmers' Market (Center School Parking Lot, 125 West St.), in its second season.



A cheese plate at Hen of the Wood, in Waterbury.

49 MAINE

Because there's no place quite like it. Salt air, fresh seafood, cottages lining pine-trimmed beaches—it's summer in Maine. The recently revamped 32-room Inn at Ocean's Edge (24 Stonecoast Rd., Lincolnville; 207/236-0945; innatoceansedge.com; doubles from \$260, including breakfast), outside Camden, satisfies the season's requirements in style. Chef Bryan Dame, formerly of Virginia's Inn at Little Washington, has taken over the waterfront restaurant, the Edge, where he reinterprets classics (flan with Maine sweet corn; brick-oven salt-roasted lobster). The glass-fronted pool house and attached pair of suites all have views of picturesque Penobscot Bay.



48 VERMONT

Because we love cheese. Vermont may be the cheddar capital of North America. But today more than 30 small-scale *fromageries* are producing a range of sophisticated alternatives. At Hen of the Wood (92 Stowe St.; 802/244-7300; dinner for two \$75), set in an early-19th-century mill in Waterbury, chef Eric Warnstedt presents dozens of the state's best options, from semisoft raw-goat's-milk to blue Stilton-like sheep's-milk varieties.

50 MASSACHUSETTS



The new Tadao Ando-designed Stone Hill Center at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, in the Berkshires.

Because there's art in those hills. Art and architecture buffs have a new reason to head to the Berkshires this summer: the Stone Hill Center, Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando's addition to the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute (225 South St., Williamstown; 413/458-2303; clarkart.edu). The concrete-and-glass building houses galleries, a terrace café, and a studio where visitors can watch art conservators at work.

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