

2019 SPRING COAST MAGAZINE



**Slow Down,
You Move Too Fast**
Meander the Blue Ridge Parkway

SPRING DESTINATIONS

Bass Lake Resort
Parish, New York

Ghost Mountain Ranch
Pollock Pines, California

Lake of the North Resort
West Branch, Michigan

**Whispers from
the Ancients**

Tour these Southwest
ruins and walk where
they walked

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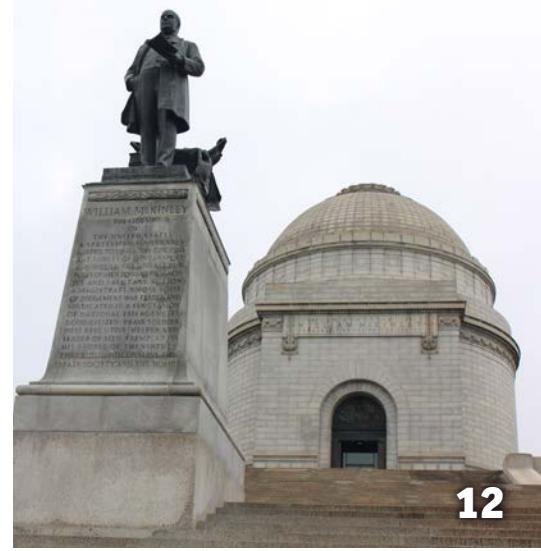
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

PUTTING MEMBERS FIRST

Win \$100 by Telling Us –

"Where has Coast taken you?"

Coast to Coast is sponsoring a contest during 2019 in which members can tell us, "Where has Coast taken you?" We're looking for testimonials about places that your Coast membership has taken you, whether in an RV, a cabin, a condo, a hotel, on a cruise ship or a houseboat, or even great savings you enjoyed using your Trip Plus benefit. You can enter one time per month, and each month we'll award a \$100 merchandise certificate good at Camping World, Gander Outdoors, or Overton's retail stores. For more information see page 5 of this issue or visit www.CoastResorts.com/ContestRules.

2019 Directory Updates

Directory update PDF available on CoastResorts.com

As the result of a member suggestion, we created a PDF listing all the changes to the network since the publication of our printed 2019 Coast Resort Directory. This makes it easy for you to find all the resort and Good Neighbor Park changes in one convenient place. You can find this PDF on the www.CoastResorts.com website by clicking on "Find a Resort", which will take you to the main search page for our online directory. The directory search page contains a link to the PDF, which you can either print or download and save. Keep checking back as we will continue to update this PDF throughout the year when we have additional changes to our network. We hope you find this a useful tool as you make plans to travel using your Coast membership.

2019 Rentals Directory

Coast Rentals Directory and Rentals Video available on www.CoastResorts.com

Last year we created a separate Rentals page on our website to make it easy for Coast members to find all

the information on Coast network rental availability in one location. This rentals page even includes a Rentals Video showing actual rental units that are available in the Coast network. We have just updated this page with a PDF of the 2019 Coast Rentals Directory so members can easily view rental availability online. To access the new 2019 Coast Rentals Directory, or the Rentals Video, just visit www.CoastResorts.com/cabinrental.

Know Your Member Benefits

Coast has created a series of videos to help members understand how to use your member benefits. There is even a member video for your membership type that gives you a quick overview of the many benefits of your Coast membership. To view the videos, visit www.CoastResorts.com, log in, and then at the top of the page under Benefits click Videos in the drop-down menu. The first video will be an overview of your Coast membership, and the other videos will be more detailed "how to" videos on specific membership benefits. You can also view a list of your membership benefits by clicking Member Benefits under the Benefits tab, then click the "+" symbol at the right of each benefit to see details of each benefit and instructions how to use each benefit.

Hopefully you have already made plans to travel this spring or summer using your Coast membership. If you need our help with travel plans, just call our Coast Member Service Center at 800-368-5721. Or you can use the travel planning tools on our member website, www.CoastResorts.com. As always, we welcome your feedback on ways that we can make your Coast membership even better. If you have feedback for Coast, just send an email to CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com.



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WORLD**

**GANDER
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**Simply send us a short testimonial
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It could be about an RV stay at a Coast resort, a cabin rental, a condo vacation getaway or unique getaway booked through Hopaway Holiday, a trip or a cruise you booked through Coast Travel Services, or even savings you received using your Trip Plus Discounts. We will have a drawing each month during 2019 from all the entries submitted that month for a \$100 Merchandise Certificate to use at Camping World, Gander Outdoors, or Overton's retail locations.

**To enter, send us up to five sentences about your great
experience using your Coast membership.**

You can even send us a picture with your entry, although it's not necessary to send a picture to enter the drawing. Each month from the entries submitted that month we'll draw a winner of the \$100 Merchandise Certificate to use at Camping World, Gander Outdoors, or Overton's retail locations.

**Send your entries, including your testimonial (and picture if possible)
with your name and member number, to:**

Email: CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com

Mail: Coast to Coast, Attn: Bruce Hoster,
PO Box 7028, Englewood, CO 80155-7028

Contest rules: Coast to Coast "Where Has Coast Taken You" SWEEPSTAKES ABBREVIATED RULES. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Begins 01/01/19 and ends 12/31/19. Enter by sending a testimonial of a great experience you had using your Coast to Coast* membership to ccrpresident@coastresorts.com or by mail to Coast to Coast, Attn: President, PO Box 7028, Englewood, CO 80155-7028. One winner will be randomly selected each month during sweepstakes period from all eligible entries by the 10th of each month. For full Official Rules, by which this Sweepstakes is governed, go to www.CoastResorts.com/ContestRules by 12/31/19. Void where prohibited. This Sweepstakes is in no way affiliated with, sponsored, endorsed, or administered by Facebook*, and therefore Facebook* assumes no responsibility or liability for its conduct or administration. Sponsored by Camp Coast to Coast, LLC, Englewood, CO. CTC55265 - 1018



MEMBER MATTERS

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR COAST TO COAST MEMBERSHIP

New Good Neighbor Park – Phillips RV Park

Eight Decades of Hospitality in Evanston, Wyoming

Since 1936, the Phillips family has provided a place to stay for weary travelers—many on their way to and from Yellowstone National Park—at Phillips RV Park. Back then, in addition to offering gas services, there were seven trailer spaces, tent camping, and 11 cabins available to customers traveling the Lincoln Highway, one of the earliest transcontinental highways for automobiles.

The following was posted on the family's 80th anniversary in 2016:

"From 1936 to the present, the Phillips family has worked together. Every year the second-, third-, and fourth-generation Phillips' family members have strived to improve and maintain Phillips RV Park, as well as welcome every customer."

Phillips RV Park, our newest Coast Good Neighbor Park, is located in the picturesque town of Evanston, Wyoming. The town is nestled in the Bear River Valley, and the Bear River flows through the community. Nearby is the Bear River State Park where elk and bison roam. To the south are the Uinta Mountains.

Onsite, enjoy 56 full hookup RV sites with the majority being pull-throughs. Wi-Fi is available at all sites, as are picnic tables. Satellite reception is available at some sites. Bring your four-footed friends because there's a convenient dog run area. Meet new friends at the horseshoe pits, playground, or while playing basketball or bocce ball.

Bear River Greenway provides additional recreational opportunities including fishing, biking, walking trails, exercise stations, and paddle boat rentals. If you visit from June through September, take time to enjoy the Evanston Rodeo Series, which takes place every other weekend. Golfers, visit the Purple Sage Golf Course.

Even if you're not heading to Yellowstone National Park, make plans to visit Phillips RV Park, which is open April 15 to October 15. You can even visit from October 16 through April 14 with electricity only.



RESORT UPDATES

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE 2019 DIRECTORY

The 2019 *Coast to Coast Resort Directory* is packed with everything you need to navigate the network of Coast to Coast Resorts and Coast Good Neighbor Parks. To keep members up-to-date, each issue of Coast magazine includes any updates that have occurred since the last issue.

COAST DELUXE RESORT UPDATES

TEXAS

Holiday Villages of Medina - Texas Resort Company, Bandera (page 170) Email: hvmpoa@gmail.com

Whitney Resorts, Whitney (page 175)

Formerly: Sun Country;
Email: whitneyresortsrv@gmail.com

GOOD NEIGHBOR PARKS UPDATES

FLORIDA

Luna Sands Resort, Orange City (page 203)
Reservation telephone: 855-432-8457

OHIO

Sandy Springs Campground, Stout (page 208)
Telephone: 701-640-7858;
Email: sandyspringscampground@gmail.com

NEW GOOD NEIGHBOR PARKS

WYOMING

Phillips RV Park, 225 Bear River Dr, Evanston, 82930; Telephone: (307) 789-3805; URL: www.phillipsrvpark.com; Email: phillipsrvpark@nglconnection.net
Directions: From Jct of I-80 & I-80 Bus Loop (E Evanston Ex 6): W 0.6 mi on I-80 Bus Loop/Bear River Dr, park on L. Note: Do not use GPS. Latitude: 41.27096; Longitude: -109.94778; Check-in 11:00 a.m.; Check-out: Noon; Maximum RV length: 40 feet; Max amps: 50. RV Notations: 2019 Coast rate: \$34.50 - \$37.25. Rate includes: 2 people per site, full hook-ups, 30 amp. Additional charges: Extra adult \$2/night, extra child \$1/night, 50 amp \$2/night, extra vehicle \$3/night, tax 8%. Open: April 15 to June 30; September 1 to October 15.

GOOD NEIGHBOR PARKS TERMINATIONS

ARIZONA

Turquoise Valley Golf, Restaurant & RV, Naco



RESORT TYPE
Coast Premier

LOCATION
Parish, New York

SEASON
May 1 – October 14

WEBSITE
www.travelresorts.com

Bass Lake Resort

This resort has helped make family memories for more than 30 years

If you're looking for a place to stay that provides fun for every age, drive your RV into this gated Central New York resort. Bass Lake Resort, owned by Travel Resorts of America, opened in 1987 and features 244 acres of natural beauty. You don't have to look far to find the lake. If you like fishing, boating, or just relaxing, head to the 30-acre private lake. According to management, the lake is an opportunity for a child to catch his or her first fish with mom, dad, or a grandparent.

In addition to the lake, don your swimming suit and head to one of the two outdoor swimming pools. If water isn't your dream activity, head to the family clubhouse or find some "me" time at the adult-only clubhouse.

The size of the resort means there's plenty of space to take long or short hikes. Although it's a large space, the gated entry means you can feel comfortable and safe, which helps you gain a warm sense of community where you can take time to make friendships among the other guests.

Hang up your apron and take advantage of the restaurant and bar, which features delicious, large-portion homemade meals and desserts and the resort's famous Sunday morning breakfast buffet. For incidentals that you may have forgotten, stop by the country store. Meet new friends on the miniature golf course. End your day at the nightly campfire, where you can toast your marshmallows to just the right amount of doneness.

Bass Lake Resort is conveniently located just 25 miles north of Syracuse and 40 minutes south of Watertown and is easily accessible by Interstates 90 and 81.

For a great day trip from the resort, travel 35 minutes northwest to Oswego, New York, and Lake Ontario—the 14th largest lake in the world. The city of Oswego features many interesting museums and historic sites. The harbor hosts many special events.



RESORT PROFILES



RESORT TYPE
Coast Classic

LOCATION
Pollock Pines, California

SEASON
Year-round

WEBSITE
www.coloradoriveradventures.com

Ghost Mountain Ranch

From TV set to gorgeous camping resort

Set high in the Sierra Mountains nestled among tall pines, Ghost Mountain Ranch is the gateway to South Lake Tahoe. Originally designed by Paramount Pictures, this resort was once the set of the popular TV series "The Virginian" and perfectly captures the pure essence of Old West life.

To add to the Old West life, saddle up your horses because Ghost Mountain Ranch has safe and clean corals on the property as well as miles of trails to explore. Or if you prefer, practice your tricks or teach your new riders in the Rodeo Arena. The area surrounding the 350-acre campground has dozens of trails and literally hundreds of square miles to explore by horseback. Hiking in the Sierras is a trail hikers dream come true. El Dorado National Forest has hundreds of miles of beautiful hiking trails all located nearby.

Once onsite, you'll love visiting the vintage ghost town complete with a saloon, ice cream parlor, and general

store with spacious campsites and rental cabins nearby. Don't forget to pack your fishing poles, tackle and bait because it's time for you to reel in the big one at the resort's very own stocked fishing pond. If you need more water fun, swim in the crystal-clear swimming pool with a seasonal snack bar.

Fill your days with activities at the pool, fishing at the pond, or hiking in the woods. Then spend your evening visiting South Lake Tahoe, where you can enjoy dining, skiing, boating, bike trails, casino gambling, or ice skating.

Ghost Mountain Ranch is conveniently located halfway between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe. If you're a history buff, the area around the resort is rich in Native American, Gold Rush, and Pony Express history. Located nearby are casinos, wineries, golf courses, white water rafting, and much more to explore.



RESORT PROFILES

**RESORT TYPE**

Coast Premier

LOCATION

West Branch, Michigan

SEASON

May 1 – October 6

WEBSITEwww.outdooradventuresinc.com

Lake of the North Resort

Back to nature at Lake George

Outdoor Adventure's Lake of the North Resort is located on beautiful Lake George near the historic city of West Branch, Michigan. The quiet, back-to-nature atmosphere of Lake of the North is perfect for those who love camping in the peaceful outdoors. Nearby, you can enjoy outlet shopping, antiquing, arts & crafts, festivals, a summer music series, two 18-hole public golf courses, fishing, hunting, and much more.

But you don't need to go offsite to have a wonderful stay at Lake of the North Resort. Whatever you want to pursue, you can find it here. Set up your lounge chairs on your spacious site and chill, or take advantage of beautiful Lake George, an all-sports lake. Rent a boat, go fishing, take a swim, or sit on the resort's private beach and enjoy the fun and the sun.

Of course, if you want to mix with your fellow RVers, join in one or more of the resort's planned activities. Meet your fellow campers and the activity staff for a community

bonfire. Make new friends and more memories. And the s'mores are pretty awesome, too. Take your family to the onsite putt-putt course or play horseshoes or volleyball. Stop in the resort store for some forgotten items or for a snack.

Check out what's happening at the pavilion. You might find tie-dying outside, someone playing video games inside, or a song on the jukebox. Don't hesitate to join in the fun.

Offsite, hike or bike on the 13.6-mile Ogemaw Hills Pathway through the AuSable Forest. If you're an off-road vehicle (ORV) enthusiast, then Ogemaw County has something for you—an ordinance that allows ORV riders to ride on streets and highways to and from the extensive trail system near the resort. Nearby, the historic city of West Branch is home to many great attractions including a Victorian shopping district, beautiful Iron's Park, and Victorian Park.

**RESORT PROFILES**

FOR DELUXE & PREMIER MEMBERS ONLY



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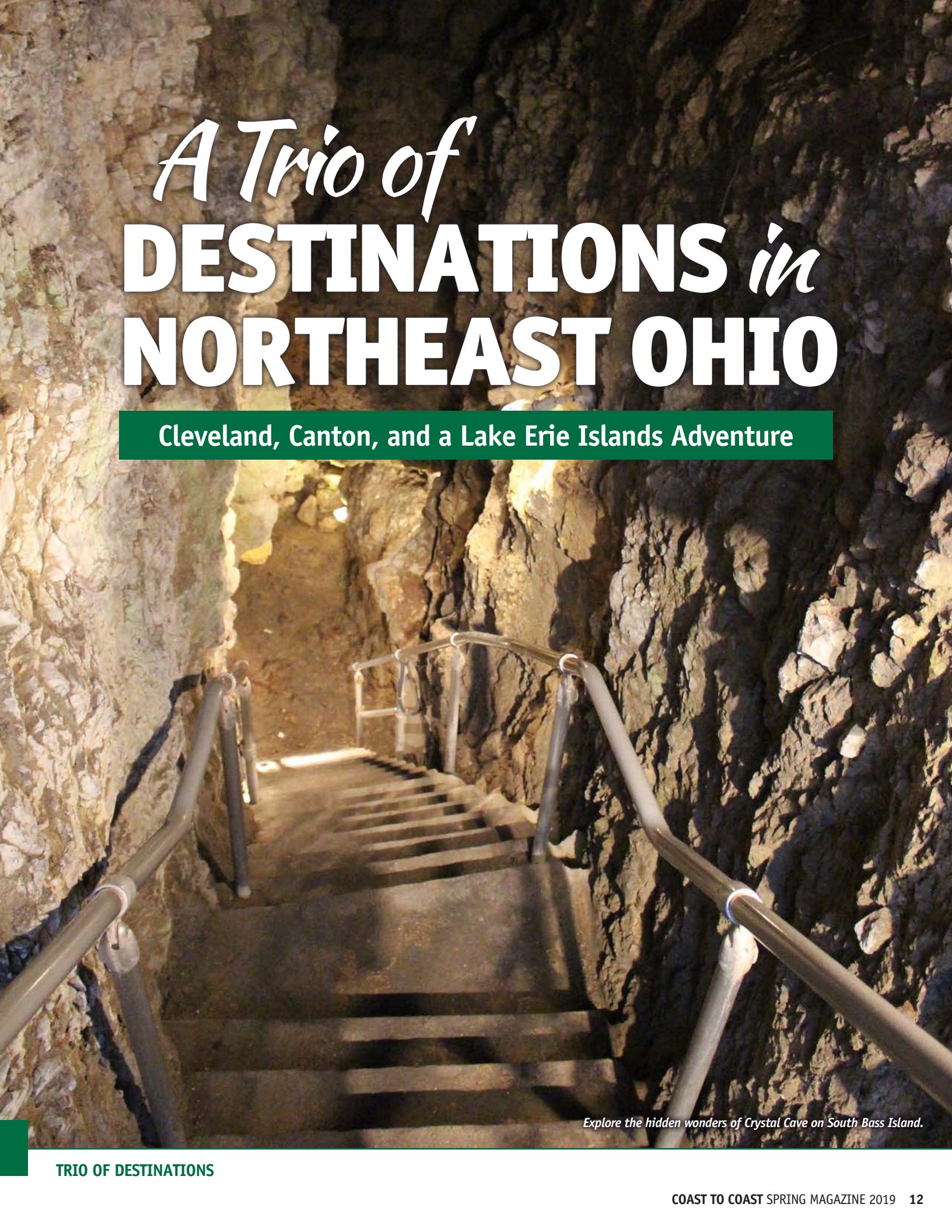
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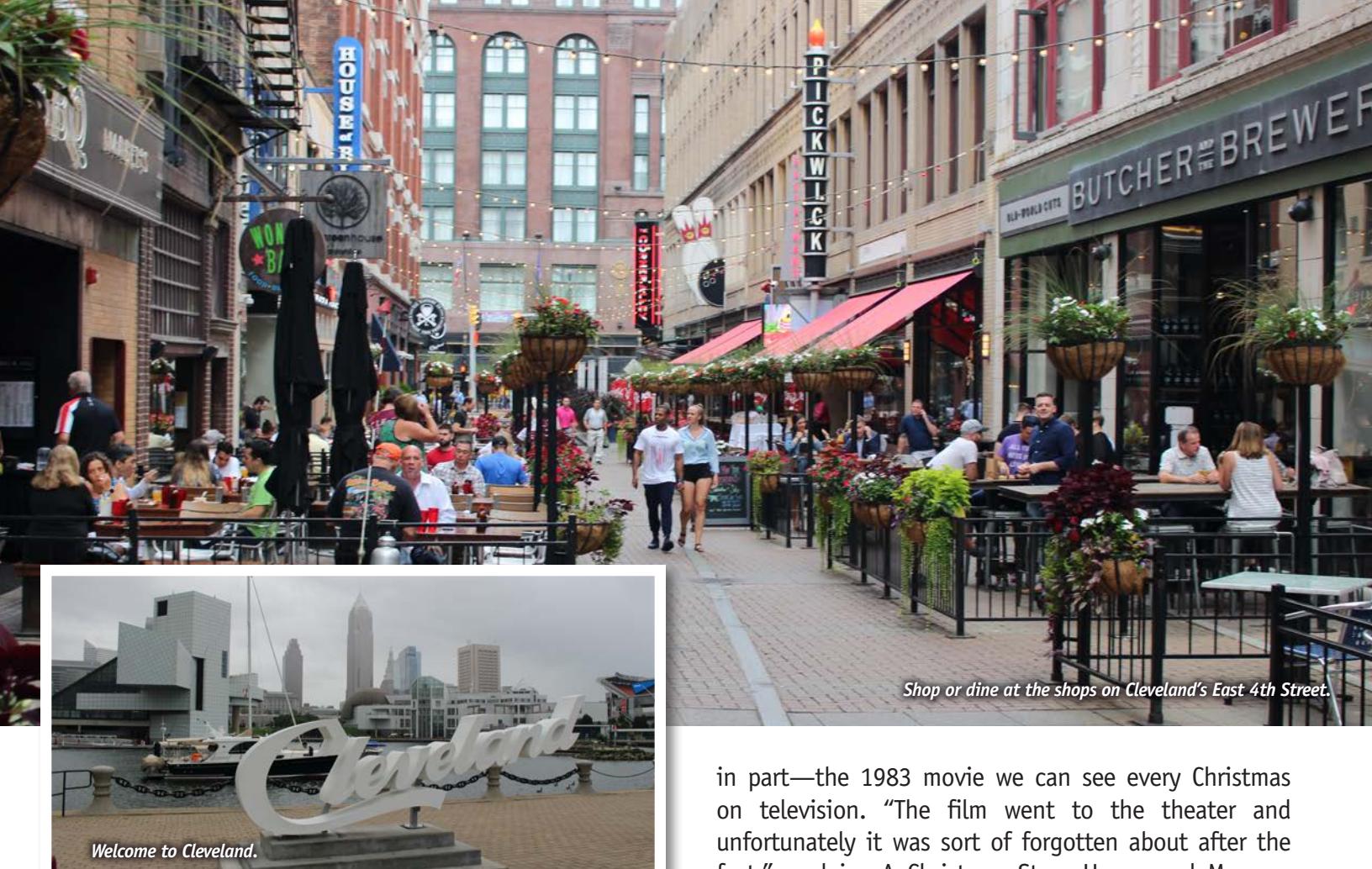
Log into www.CoastResorts.com, under Benefits, click on Hopaway Holiday.



A Trio of **DESTINATIONS *in*** **NORTHEAST OHIO**

Cleveland, Canton, and a Lake Erie Islands Adventure

Explore the hidden wonders of Crystal Cave on South Bass Island.



Shop or dine at the shops on Cleveland's East 4th Street.

A TRIO OF DESTINATIONS

Story and photos by Richard Varr

Cleveland

At first glance, it looks like any typical neighborhood home with a mustard-yellow façade, trimmed hedges and a shaded porch where I could easily pass the time enjoying a gentle summer breeze. But with a closer look, I realize I've seen this house before—not in person, but on television—over and over again.

All of a sudden, scenes of a famous Christmas movie come vividly to mind. "You'll shoot your eye out kid," says Santa to young Ralphie Parker who squeamishly asks him for a Red Ryder BB gun. Inside, I see the shapely leg lamp draped by a fishnet stocking that Ralphie's father gloats over in an awkward family moment. And around back is the door where a pack of hungry dogs escapes the father's ire after devouring the Christmas turkey.

This house in Cleveland's blue-collar Tremont neighborhood is where *A Christmas Story* was filmed

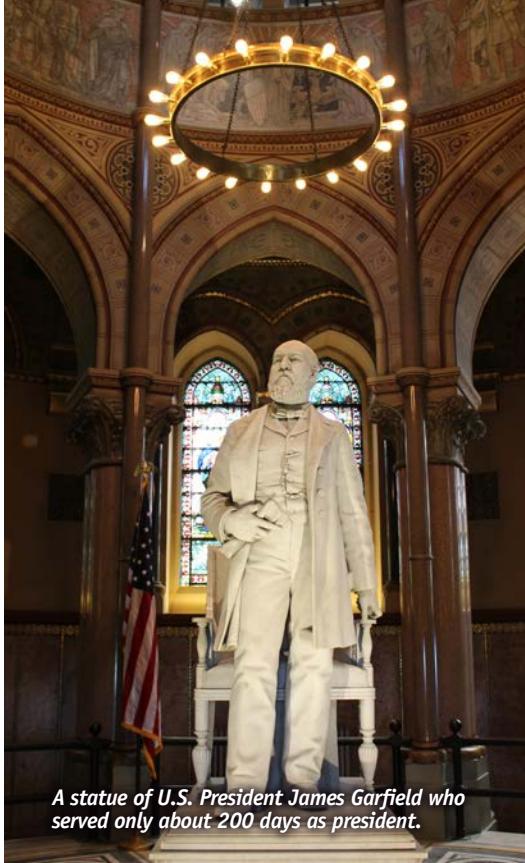
in part—the 1983 movie we can see every Christmas on television. "The film went to the theater and unfortunately it was sort of forgotten about after the fact," explains *A Christmas Story* House and Museum tour guide Addie Wallo. "But in 1997, we can mark the debut of the Christmas-Eve-into-Christmas-Day, 24-hour TV marathon that I'm sure we all watch every single year and that's why we're all here right now," she quips.

The house is one highlight of my trip to northeastern Ohio, where I visit Cleveland's historic squares, bustling markets, and revitalized neighborhoods and, needless to say, the iconic Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In Canton, I'll stop in another Hall of Fame dedicated to pro football, and I'll learn about one of the country's pivotal battles while visiting the two most popular Lake Erie Islands. I'll also see the mausoleums—both notable architectural achievements—of two assassinated U.S. presidents.

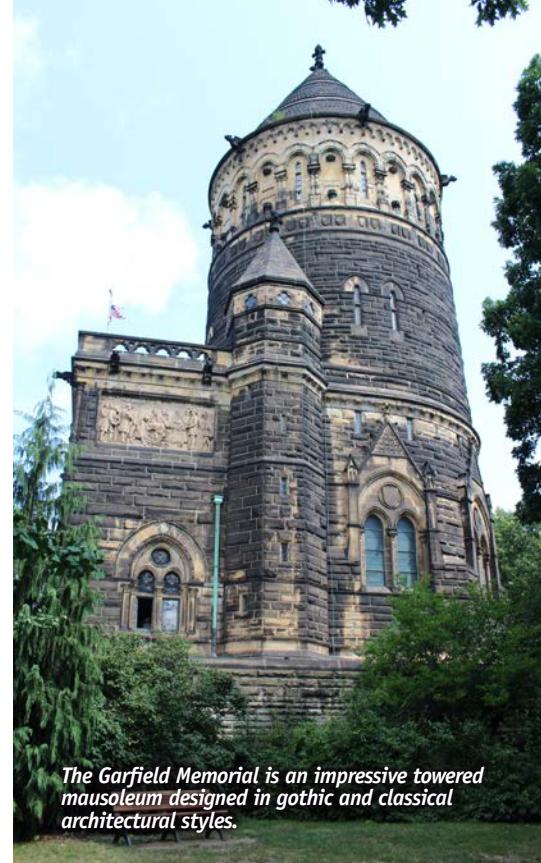
My first stop is downtown Cleveland's pyramid-shaped, scintillating glass and steel Rock and Roll Hall of Fame along a boat-filled harbor on the Lake Erie shoreline. Collections include everything a rock and roller might dream about—from Elvis Presley's 1968 glittering gold suit and John Lennon's 1964 Rickenbacker guitar, to the band Kiss' drum set and the dress Tina Turner wore in her "Private Dancer" video. Exhibits span seven



Severance Hall is regarded by many music-lovers as one of the world's most beautiful concert halls.



A statue of U.S. President James Garfield who served only about 200 days as president.



The Garfield Memorial is an impressive towered mausoleum designed in gothic and classical architectural styles.

floors with continuous music echoing within the “Rock Hall’s” atrium. The term rock and roll, in fact, was first mentioned in Cleveland in 1951 by local disc jockey Alan Freed to describe the rhythm and blues records he played.

Downtown is an architectural potpourri, from the stately neoclassical architecture of the Cleveland Public Library and the Public Auditorium, to the Tower City retail and hotel complex’s Beaux-Arts Terminal Tower, the country’s tallest building outside New York City until the mid 1960s. Public Square is home to the Romanesque 1855 Old Stone Church with its elongated steeple, and the four-sided Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument showcasing sculptures depicting Civil War battles. The 57-story modern Key Tower is Ohio’s tallest skyscraper.

A short walk leads to pedestrian-packed East 4th street, where on many nights you’ll find crowds swelled within its trendy bistros and cafes. Downtown’s streets stretch into Cleveland’s diverse neighborhoods, with some communities defined along historic ethnic lines—Slavic Village and Little Italy, for example. The craft beer sought-after Ohio City neighborhood—once a separate municipality—is awash in colorful street art murals and is anchored by the city’s popular West Side Market with its 137-foot clock tower, a Cleveland landmark. Inside,

sprawling deli counters also reflect the city’s ethnicity roots with foods like Slovenian sausage, Hungarian kielbasa, Italian pirogues, and Dutch Edam cheeses.

With a strong manufacturing base, Cleveland became the nation’s seventh largest city during the turn of the 19th to 20th century due in part to John D. Rockefeller founding Standard Oil.

“Cleveland having been a port city with the connection to the St. Lawrence Seaway and to the Atlantic Ocean, is what led to significant expansion during the industrial age,” explains Emily Lauer, director of Public Relations and Communications with Destination Cleveland. Lagging railroad and steel industries led to economic collapse in the 1970s and ‘80s, but in recent years Cleveland has earned the reputation as a “Comeback City” with renewed energy, revitalization, and growth. Today, it’s home to nationally-known Progressive Insurance, Sherwin-Williams, and the Cleveland Clinic.

The city’s thriving arts and culture scene sits within University Circle, with world-class museums, educational institutions and performing arts venues packed within a square mile. They include the Cleveland Orchestra’s domed neoclassical and art deco Severance Hall, the Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland History Center and



Tina Turner wore this red dress in her "Private Dancer" video.



The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's exhibits span seven floors with continuous music echoing.

Case Western Reserve University. Centered by green and treed Wade Oval, it's where the stately façade of the Cleveland Museum of Art reflects off the still waters of scenic Wade Lagoon.

My last Cleveland stop is Lake View Cemetery, the final resting place for such notables as John D. Rockefeller, FBI organized crime fighter Eliot Ness, and U.S. President James Garfield. The Garfield Memorial is an impressive towered mausoleum designed in gothic and classical architectural styles. Relief carvings decorate its outside façade, while a 12-foot statue of the bearded 20th president stands within the tower's ornate domed interior.

"This is a grand monument to one of the poorest president's in U.S. history," notes guide Bob Hook. Garfield was shot in Washington in 1888, serving only about 200 days as president.

Canton

Just over an hour's drive from Cleveland on Interstate 77 South, Canton's greatest attraction is yet another impressive presidential mausoleum—the domed William McKinley National Memorial. The 25th president died eight days after he was shot while attending the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901. The granite

memorial's imposing exterior reaches 95 feet high. Halfway up the 108-step stairwell stands a statue of McKinley, a Canton native.

"He is best known for leading the country through the Spanish American War in 1898, which established the U.S. as a global power for the first time in our history," says Christopher Kenney, education director for the adjacent McKinley Presidential Library and Museum. Inside, I'm amazed at the talking mannequin likenesses of McKinley and wife Ida standing among some of his original furniture during his life as a soldier, congressman, governor, and then president. They include a baby grand piano, his law office desk, and front porch wooden-ribbed rocking chair. There's also Ida's diamond tiara that was featured on the reality TV show "Pawn Stars," and a period revolver of the same model used to shoot McKinley.

Aviation history steps up to a new level at the Canton area's extraordinary MAPS Air Museum. From the primitive stick-like and wood-paneled design of the historic 1908 Martin Glider, to a World War II B-26 Bomber and a late 20th century "Tomcat" fighter jet, the museum is home to more than 50 aircraft housed in a former military hanger and 130 historical displays in two galleries. Particularly noteworthy exhibits include



Canton's MAPS Air Museum is home to more than 50 aircraft housed in a former military hanger.



This Blue Angels jet is one of more than 130 historical displays in two galleries at the MAPS Air Museum.



Canton is home to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.



A bronze bust of football great Jim Thorpe, just one of the many featured football greats.

a sliver of the *USS Arizona* salvaged from the wreck at Pearl Harbor and a flag signed by Amelia Earhart in a plaque that was once auctioned off to raise money for the Olympics. There's also a piece of charred metal from the Hindenburg zeppelin from its 1937 fiery crash in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

Canton is also home to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, tracing the game's beginning when the American Professional Football Association was founded in Canton in 1920. It was later renamed the National Football League. Housed in an impressive glass-and-steel-fronted building, the attraction traces football's roots from legendary Jim Thorpe, when protective gear was only simple pads, to the latest Super Bowl winners in their emblem-emblazoned colors and helmets.

A particular highlight is the striking rows of bronze busts of the game's best through the years, from the Chicago Bears' Mike Ditka and Dallas Cowboys coach Tom Landry to Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw, to name only a few. New York Jets quarterback Joe Namath comes to life in a hologram presentation.

Lake Erie Islands

Sandusky—a gateway to the Lake Erie Islands—is also just over an hour from Cleveland on Interstate 80/

Interstate 90 West. From there we catch a ferry, first stopping at the colossal Cedar Point Amusement Park, sometimes referred to as the "Roller Coaster Capital of the World"—and for good reason. It's a cityscape of super-sized roller coasters, their twisting tracks looping up high above the waterline. Located on the tip of a skinny Sandusky peninsula, the park features more than 150 rides, shows and attractions, including 18 world-class roller coasters.

When arriving on South Bass Island, I can't help but notice golf carts crisscrossing island streets as the main means of transportation. And driving them is all part of the fun. Visitors quickly snatch up some of the 1,500 available golf cart rentals—yet trying to find one during busy summer weekends can be a challenge.

"On a Tuesday there are two for everybody, and on a Saturday there's not enough for anybody," jokes South Bass Island Ambassador Peter Huston with the Put-in-Bay Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.

Put-in-Bay—South Bass' main village, often used synonymously as the island's name—is centered with DeRivera Park, named after Joseph DeRivera St. Jurgo, the island's original owner. It's a grassy and shaded lakeside stretch of green space with a gazebo and picnic



Golf carts provide the best way to navigate the Lake Erie Islands.



Colorful signs point the way to various island venues and city destinations.



Weekends mean wall-to-wall golf carts.



Travel to the islands means a comfortable trip on a ferry.

areas. Restaurants and shops line the park's adjacent street, with parked golf carts bumper-to-bumper along curbsides.

Cannonballs in the park mark the original gravesites of six officers—three American and three British—from the pivotal 1813 Battle of Lake Erie. Those graves were later transferred to the island's most spectacular site, the Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial. Topped by an 11-ton bronze urn, the imposing granite Doric column soars 352 feet high and dominates the view along flat South Bass Island. The monument commemorates the Battle of Lake Erie, a key victory for the Americans in the War of 1812 against the British, British Canada, and their Indian allies. Views from the top stretch across South Bass to Middle and North Bass islands and beyond.

A Visitor Center diorama showcases how the Americans captured an entire British fleet, despite Admiral Oliver Hazard Perry's flagship *USS Lawrence* taking a beating. That's when Perry signaled "Don't give up the ship" and transferred the battle flag to the *USS Niagara* to continue the fight. When the two largest British ships collided, the Niagara broke through the British line leading to victory. "We have met the enemy and they are ours," Perry later wrote. "The magnitude of being a hero was

unequaled—other than George Washington in his time," says Huston. The *U.S. Brig Niagara* is a replica and sits berthed along Put-in-Bay's shoreline, where visitors can walk its sturdy wooden decks amidst its replica cannons, curled sails and stringed rope ladders.

South Bass Island is also home to Crystal Cave with quartz-like Celestine crystals—the largest Celestine geode in the world. On the grounds of Heineman Winery, the cave opened to the public in 1900. "My great-grandfather was digging a well for the winery and accidentally broke into the Crystal Cave," says owner Edward Heineman. Some weigh 200-300 pounds, he says, adding that some crystals from the cave are on display at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington D.C.

My next stop is Kelleys Island, just a short ferry ride away toward the mainland. "We always tell people, if you want to be entertained, go to Put-in Bay. But if you want to entertain yourself and get back in touch with nature and family values, come to Kelleys Island," says Jeni Hammond, office manager for Portside Marina and Missy Magoo's, an old-fashioned candy shop that still sells bubble gum cigarettes that I haven't seen since childhood.

Golf carts are again the way to travel Kelleys Island's



While visiting South Bass Island, be sure to visit the U.S. Brig Niagara replica.



On Sandusky peninsula is Cedar Point Amusement Park, sometimes referred to as the "Roller Coaster Capital of the World."

rustic neighborhoods, where streets seem to weave in and around pastures and forestland with more hiking and biking trails than any other American island in Lake Erie. The island's must-see attraction, however, is the Glacial Grooves Geological Preserve, where a great ice sheath 18,000 years ago carved out long, smooth tracks through sedimentary rock and limestone creating some of the world's largest glacial grooves.

But most come here to relax, recalling what Jeni Hammond told me earlier. "Go to a beach campfire, sit down with your family, and play games," she said. "That's what Kelleys Island is all about."

While most visitors use passenger ferries, RVers who want to bring their vehicles to Put-in-Bay should use Miller Ferries (millerferry.com), and for Kelleys Island, Kelleys Island Ferry (kelleysislandferry.com).



See some of the world's largest glacial grooves on Kelleys Island.



Special ferries are designed to transport RVs to the islands.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

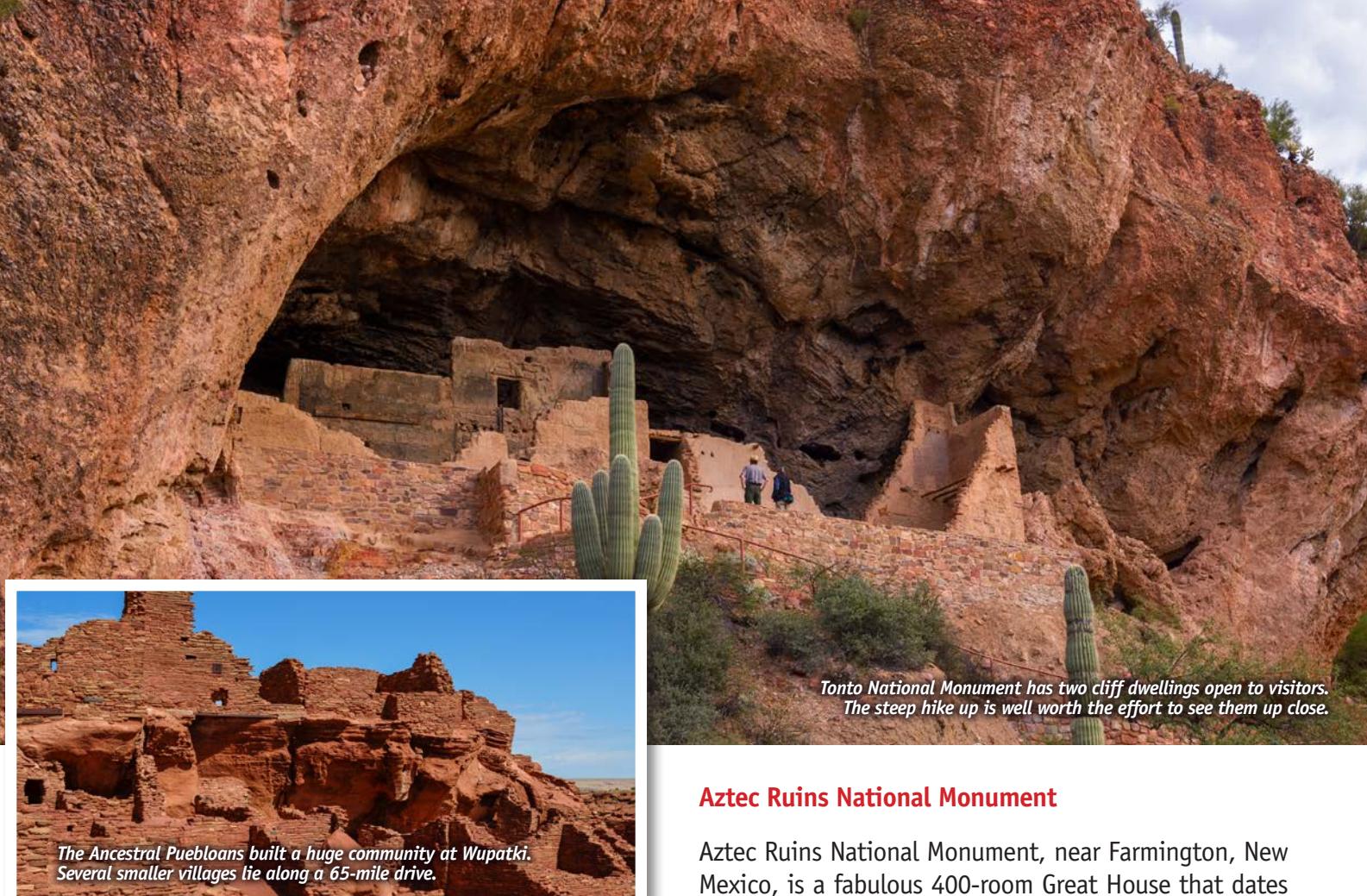
www.thisiscleveland.com • www.visitcanton.com
www.shoresandislands.com

WHISPERS FROM THE ANCIENTS

Tour these Southwest ruins and
walk where they walked



The sunsets in the southwest are spectacular.



The Ancestral Puebloans built a huge community at Wupatki. Several smaller villages lie along a 65-mile drive.

SOUTHWEST RUINS

Story by Emily Fagan

Photos by Emily and Mark Fagan

Today, Arizona and New Mexico are beloved by RV travelers for their beautiful scenery and exciting outdoor adventures. Back in the 1100s to 1500s, this part of the continent was just as popular among the ancient peoples for farming, making pottery and tools, and living in tight-knit settlements built into cliffs and constructed from hewn stone. These people later abandoned their communities, and they left behind enticing fragments of their homes and crafts that provide some clues as to who they were and how they lived. For those of us fascinated with the mysteries of the ancient people that came before us 500 to 900 years ago, there are several places in the American southwest where you can wander through the rooms they built and even see their fingerprints in the adobe walls.

Aztec Ruins National Monument

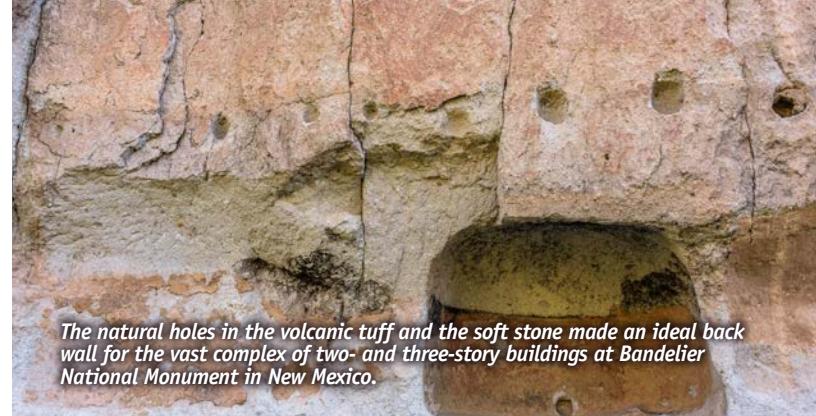
Aztec Ruins National Monument, near Farmington, New Mexico, is a fabulous 400-room Great House that dates back about 900 years. The ruins were named by the early Americans who first explored it, and the name is a misnomer because these buildings were actually built by the Ancestral Puebloans, also known as the Anasazi, and not by the Aztecs. The Aztecs lived much further south and had their stronghold just outside of modern-day Mexico City.

The ruins consist of a huge maze of masonry stone walls with occasional tree limb rafters and floor joists remaining. We were enchanted as we wandered freely from room to room. Archaeologists theorize that many of the rooms were used for food storage, and a few may have been used as living quarters. While some doorways are standing height even today, we had to stoop to pass through others. We were intrigued that several doorways are "T" shaped like the doors the Mayans built into their structures 600 years prior and thousands of miles south.

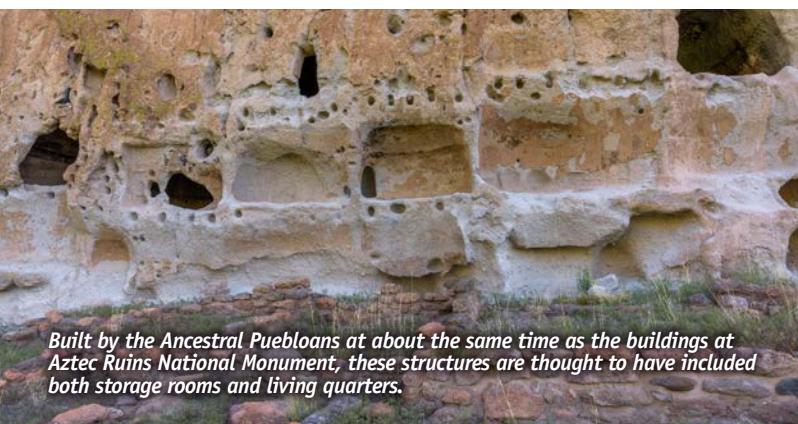
Like other Ancestral Puebloan communities in the Four Corners region of the Southwest, there are many Kivas in these ruins. These circular rooms may have been used as gathering places for meetings or ceremonies. The Great



At Bandelier National Monument the ancients built mortared brick walls up against a towering rock wall.



The natural holes in the volcanic tuff and the soft stone made an ideal back wall for the vast complex of two- and three-story buildings at Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico.



Built by the Ancestral Puebloans at about the same time as the buildings at Aztec Ruins National Monument, these structures are thought to have included both storage rooms and living quarters.



The side and front walls were constructed of bricks made from the volcanic tuff.

Kiva at the entrance to the monument has been fully restored to include a roof and, as we passed through it, Indian music played softly over speakers, evoking a haunting feeling of how this room might have sounded in its day.

Bandelier National Monument

While the pueblo community at Aztec Ruins National Monument was built on open plains, the settlement 170 miles away at Bandelier National Monument, near modern day Los Alamos, New Mexico, includes not only a maze of stone masonry buildings but also a fascinating cliff face that was once the anchoring wall of a huge community of two- and three-story "cliff dwellings." Built by the Ancestral Puebloans at about the same time as the buildings at Aztec Ruins National Monument, these structures are thought to have included both storage rooms and living quarters.

The best thing about Bandelier National Monument is that timber ladders have been placed outside many of the alcoves, and visitors are encouraged to climb up and have a look. These ladders are a blast for kids and for people like us that are kids at heart. Scampering up and down these ladders made our heads spin with questions and imaginative musings about how these ancient

people lived.

Bandelier National Monument is so popular that a mandatory free shuttle bus takes visitors into the monument during peak times because there is very little parking available. We went to the monument just as it was opening so we could be among the few allowed to park their own vehicle in the parking lot. This put us on the hiking trail half an hour before the busloads of tourists began to arrive and gave us a chance to explore the ruins without any crowds. The Main Loop Trail took us past the 250-room masonry settlement of Tyuonyi built on the open plains and then on to the Long House cliff dwelling. Most of what remains of Long House is the towering cliff wall that formed the back side of the multi-story pueblo community.

The area around Bandelier National Monument is the sidewall of an enormous caldera—a vast depression in the land created by a volcano that exploded and then imploded into itself a million years ago. The cliffs are made of soft volcanic tuff that is pockmarked with thousands of closet-sized holes. The ancient people used these holes to create the back wall or back room of their buildings. The side and front walls were constructed of bricks made from the volcanic tuff. Timber rafters and floor joists were held in place by boring a hole in the



Reaching the Alcove House at Bandelier National Monument requires several long climbs up very steep ladders, great fun for kids and kids at heart.



A trip to the Alcove House at Bandelier National Monument requires several long climbs up very steep ladders.

cliff to support one end of each beam and resting the other end on the opposite stone wall. The cliff dwellings stood two and three stories high, and timber ladders were used to climb from one story to another.

The rooms along the Long House cliff seem to go on forever, with rows of divots showing where the roof timbers were held in place. The ruins of the stone walls present a floor plan of the original structures. In a few places the entire wall and roof structure has been stabilized and recreated to show what the community looked like when it was intact.

Most fascinating to us was the discovery that not only were these ancient people fine potters and craftsmen, but they liked to decorate the interior walls of their homes. In a few places a kind of painted plaster is visible on the cliff walls. One alcove in particular sports a painted geometric pattern that is bright red. Petroglyphs adorn the cliffs outside the pueblo homes as well. Further down the trail we visited Alcove House, which is a huge cave perched high up on a cliff face accessed by a series of very long ladders. Although there was little to see in the cave besides a covered kiva that is currently being reconstructed, the view was beautiful.

While there has been a lot of stabilizing and reconstruction

work at both Aztec Ruins and Bandelier to give visitors a sense of what the ruins looked like hundreds of years ago, at Tsankawi Ruins just a few miles from Bandelier we felt like archaeologists ourselves because no rebuilding has occurred at all. Outlines of foundations are hard to make out in the grass, and painted pottery shards with matching patterns were scattered on the ground here and there.

Tonto National Monument

In the late 1800s, Swiss born scholar Adolph Bandelier explored many ancient ruins of the Southwest, and the evocative cliff dwellings at Bandelier National Monument bear his name because he was the first person to study them. We were intrigued to learn that he also spent a lot of time studying the cliff dwellings that were built by the Salado People 460 miles to the southwest at Tonto National Monument outside of Phoenix, Arizona.

Whereas the pueblo communities at Bandelier and Aztec Ruins were both built in the early 1100s, the people at Bandelier thrived until about 1550 while those at Aztec Ruins abandoned their community after just a century, around 1250. It is unknown exactly where these people moved, but it is intriguing that just when Aztec Ruins was abandoned around 1250 another group of people



Hiking up to the cliff dwellings at Tonto National Monument the views become more and more dramatic.



Room with a view: The ancient community at Tonto National Monument has a stunning view of Roosevelt Lake



The ancients built a community into a deep cliff high on a mountain at Tonto National Monument near Phoenix, Arizona.



There are fascinating paths dug into the soft stone at Tsankawi ruins.

began building the cliff dwellings that are now preserved at Tonto National Monument. Those people have long been referred to as the Salado People because they lived along the Salt River (Rio Salado in Spanish) in Arizona. However, it is now thought that they may have had roots among both the Ancestral Puebloan people and in the Sonoran Desert people (or Hohokam people) who built sophisticated irrigation systems to farm the baking hot desert lands around Phoenix.

There are two cliff dwellings open to the public at Tonto National Monument, and both involve some steep grades on the hike to reach them. The Lower Cliff Dwellings are open to anyone willing to huff and puff up the paved path to get to them. The views over Roosevelt Lake become ever more stunning on the hike up, and the thick stands of noble saguaro cactus, many of which pre-date the modern discovery of these ruins, make this hike especially scenic. The cliff dwellings are built into a massive cave that offered natural protection from hot sun and rain. Many of the tiny rooms have soot on the cave walls from ancient fires.

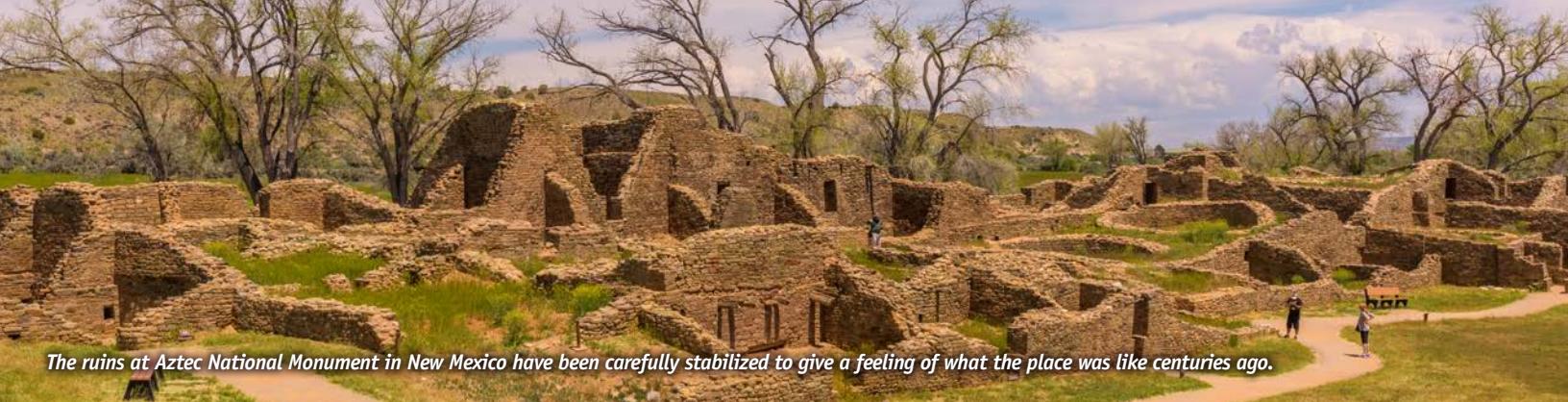
The Upper Cliff Dwellings can be seen only on guided tours with a ranger, but the thrill on these tours is seeing true evidence of life lived here 700 years ago. Ancient corn husks are visible in the mud walls and can be seen

scattered about the grounds, and grinding stones are still in place. The juniper branch ceilings are fully intact and, with the guide's vivid commentary, it's easy for us to imagine what life was like so long ago and at such a height.

Wupatki National Monument

One hundred-seventy-five miles north of Tonto National Monument, outside of Flagstaff, Arizona, the Ancestral Puebloans built several small communities that resemble the masonry buildings of Aztec Ruins National Monument. These are now part of Wupatki National Monument. Built by a group of Ancestral Puebloans that archaeologists call the "Sinagua" people (a Spanish concatenation of sin agua meaning without water), these building were also constructed in the 1100s and feature round kivas and stone walls.

Wupatki National Monument encompasses several pueblo ruins along a 65-mile drive. Wupatki is the largest ruin and was home to perhaps 100 people and features a big kiva, while Wukoki, Lomaki, Nalakihu and others are smaller stone structures that were built into box canyons and on the plains. Nearby Sunset Crater is the remains of a huge volcano that erupted 100 years prior to this ancient construction boom. The eruption



The ruins at Aztec National Monument in New Mexico have been carefully stabilized to give a feeling of what the place was like centuries ago.



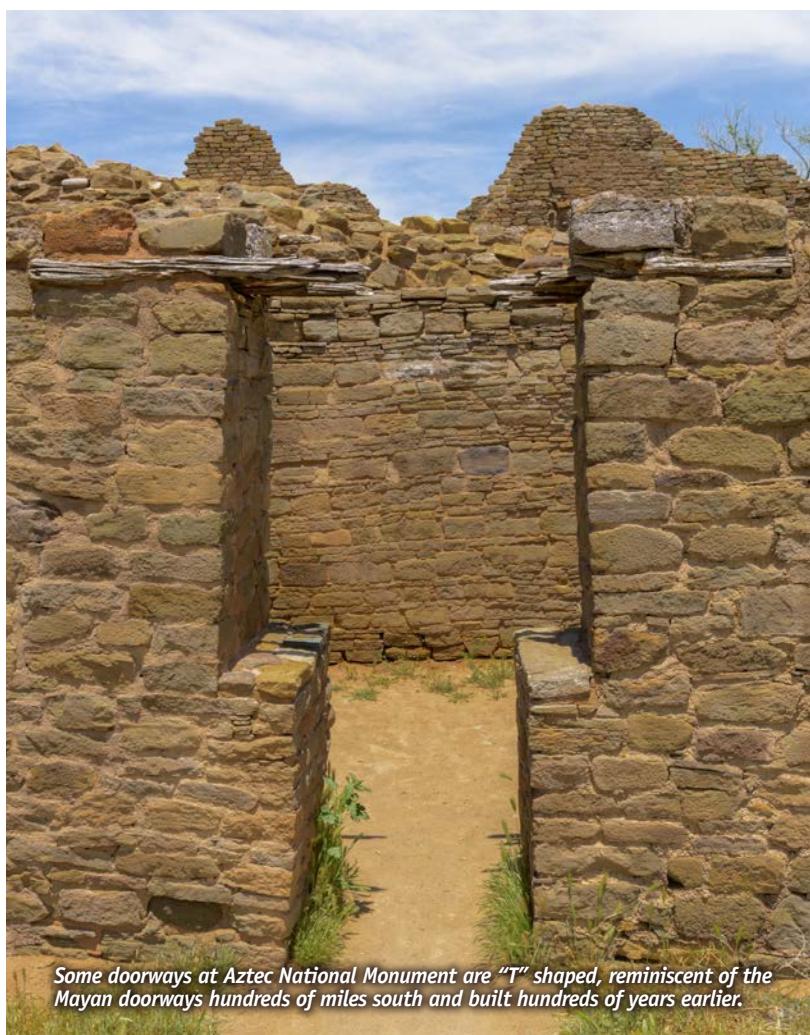
The circular Kivas may have been used for meetings or ceremonies.



Little visited Aztec National Monument has endless small adjoining rooms that housed both food storage and living quarters.

deposited a layer of volcanic ash across the plains, and it is thought that it helped hold the moisture in this dry land, making it possible for the ancients to farm successfully. However, like their brethren at Tonto and Aztec Ruins National Monuments, the people of Wupatki also abandoned their homes after just a century, around 1250, possibly because of a massive drought.

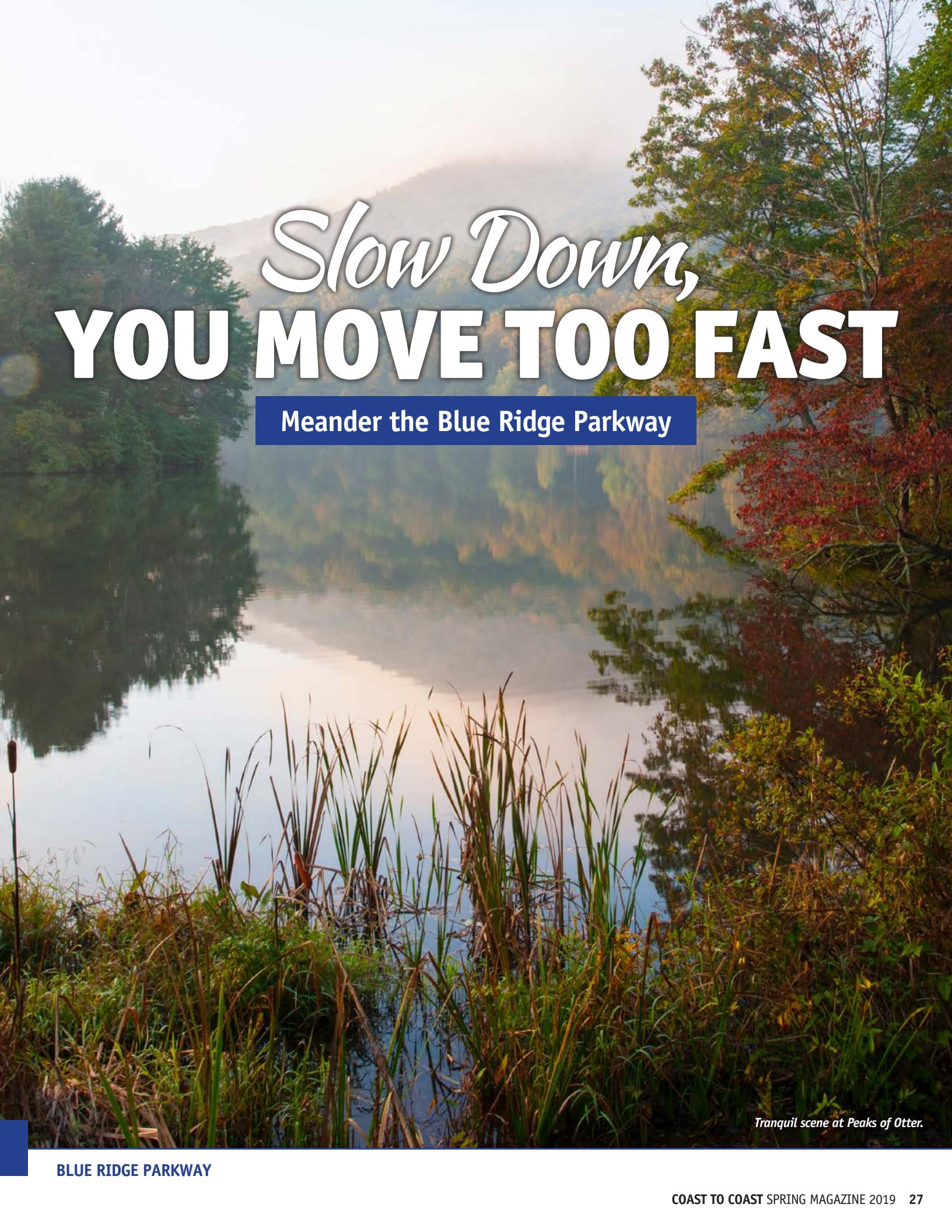
All of these ancient ruins are fun to visit and there are many places to stay in an RV nearby. If you are heading to the Southwest and want to take a few walks far back in time, these four National Monuments are a must see!



Some doorways at Aztec National Monument are "T" shaped, reminiscent of the Mayan doorways hundreds of miles south and built hundreds of years earlier.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.nps.gov/azru • www.nps.gov/band
www.nps.gov/band/planyourvisit/tsankawi • www.nps.gov/tont
www.nps.gov/wupa • Here is a link to a map showing the locations of these ruins:<https://goo.gl/maps/UVtRraJBuvB2>



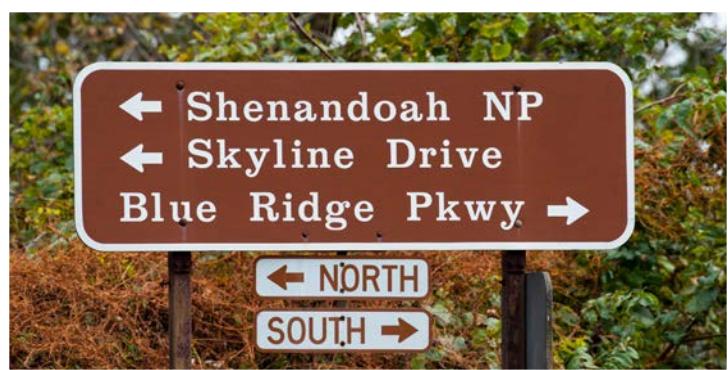
Slow Down, **YOU MOVE TOO FAST**

Meander the Blue Ridge Parkway

Tranquil scene at Peaks of Otter.



Linn Cove Viaduct in fall. Credit: National Park Service



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

**Story by Dee Litten Whited
Photos by Warren Litten**

More than 50 years before Maverick, aka Tom Cruise, said “I feel the need—the need for speed” in the movie Top Gun, President Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized the “need to slow down.” The growth of automobiles meant more traffic, with the majority of drivers going as fast as they could to get to their destination. Although Simon and Garfunkel recorded their “slow down” song in 1966, Roosevelt was ahead of his time when he approved the construction of a 450-plus-mile scenic motor way with a top speed of 45 miles per hour. The road would link two new parks—the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains national parks. The speed limit discouraged motorists whose only interest was getting from point A to point B in the fastest way possible. Instead, their trip would become a long, slow, and beautiful drive, famous for long-range vistas and close-up views of the rugged mountains and pastoral landscapes of the Appalachian Highlands.

History

Roosevelt didn’t arrive at this decision without inspiration. Earlier, the president had visited workers at Virginia’s first Civilian Conservation Corps camp who were working on the Skyline Drive through the Shenandoah National Park. Inspired by this beautiful drive with a top speed of 35 miles per hour, work began in 1935 on the road that would follow the crest of the southern Appalachian Mountains through Virginia and North Carolina and become the Blue Ridge Parkway. Although the parkway differs from the usual national parks in its narrow land holdings (at times shrinking to a width of only 200 feet), it is still managed like any site in the National Park Service.

In addition to providing visitors a “slow-down” roadway among amazing vistas, jobs were needed. Trained engineers, architects, and landscape architects were left unemployed by the Great Depression, and thousands of mountain families were verging on poverty. The recent openings of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Shenandoah National Park were attracting tourists to the naturally beautiful but financially poor area, and the increasing availability of the automobile foresaw a new generation of motoring vacations.



Progress was slow. No maps, reluctant landowners, extreme weather conditions, rocky terrain, and snakes were only a few of obstacles. According to Stanley Abbott, Chief Landscape Architect for the Parkway, "The idea is to fit the parkway into the mountains as if nature has put it there." Easier said than done.

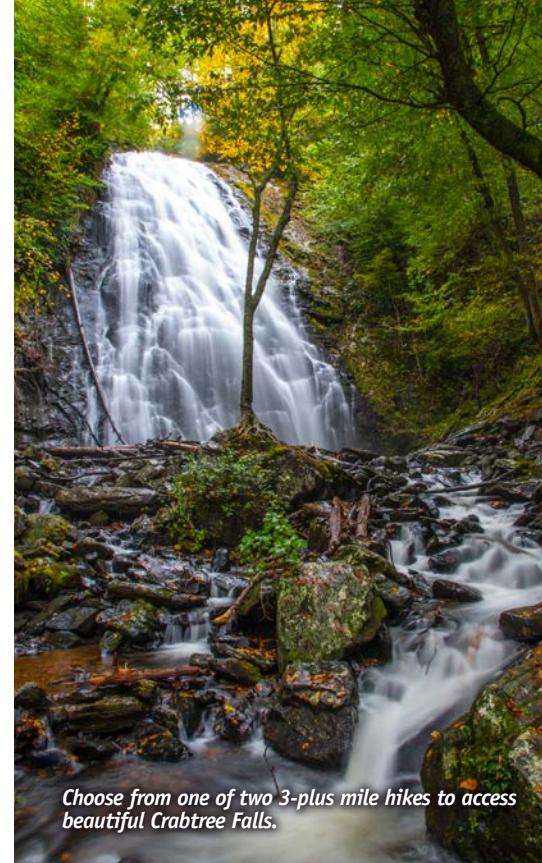
In the mid-1950s, the National Park Service launched a ten-year development program, called Mission 66, to mark the 50th anniversary of the agency's creation. The plan included an accelerated effort to complete construction of the parkway by 1966. This initiative succeeded finishing all the parkway's construction with the exception of 7.7 miles at Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina.

Probably the most frustrating section of the parkway to be completed was that section at the base of Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina. At 5,946 feet, it's the highest peak on the eastern escarpment of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Grandfather Mountain and its rocks reveal a long history of rock formation and mountain-building that dates back to 1.1 billion years ago.

It was named "Grandfather" by pioneers who recognized the face of an old man in one of the cliffs. Many vantage points reveal different faces, so there is no one official



Overall, some 26 tunnels were blasted through the mountain ridge.



Choose from one of two 3-plus mile hikes to access beautiful Crabtree Falls.

profile of the mountain, but the most popular can be seen from the community of Foscoe, seven miles north of Linville and 10 miles south of Boone on N.C. 105.

In 1968, Hugh McRae Morton became the sole owner of Grandfather Mountain and objected to the proposed construction at Grandfather, citing the fragility of the mountain's ecology. An agreement was reached, and the ensuing Linn Cove Viaduct was a peak of parkway engineering and environmental protection. Completed in 1983 at a cost of almost \$10 million, the Linn Cove Viaduct is 1,243 feet long and contains 153 segments weighing 50 tons each. Engineers were faced with a serious question: How do you build a road at an elevation of 4,100 feet without damaging one of the world's oldest mountains?

The only construction that occurred at ground level was the drilling of foundations for the seven permanent piers, on which the viaduct rests. Exposed rock was covered to prevent staining from concrete, epoxy, or grout. Tinted with iron oxide, the concrete blends in with the existing rock outcroppings. The only trees cut were those directly beneath the superstructure.

The 469.1-mile Blue Ridge Parkway was officially dedicated on September 11, 1987, 52 years after the

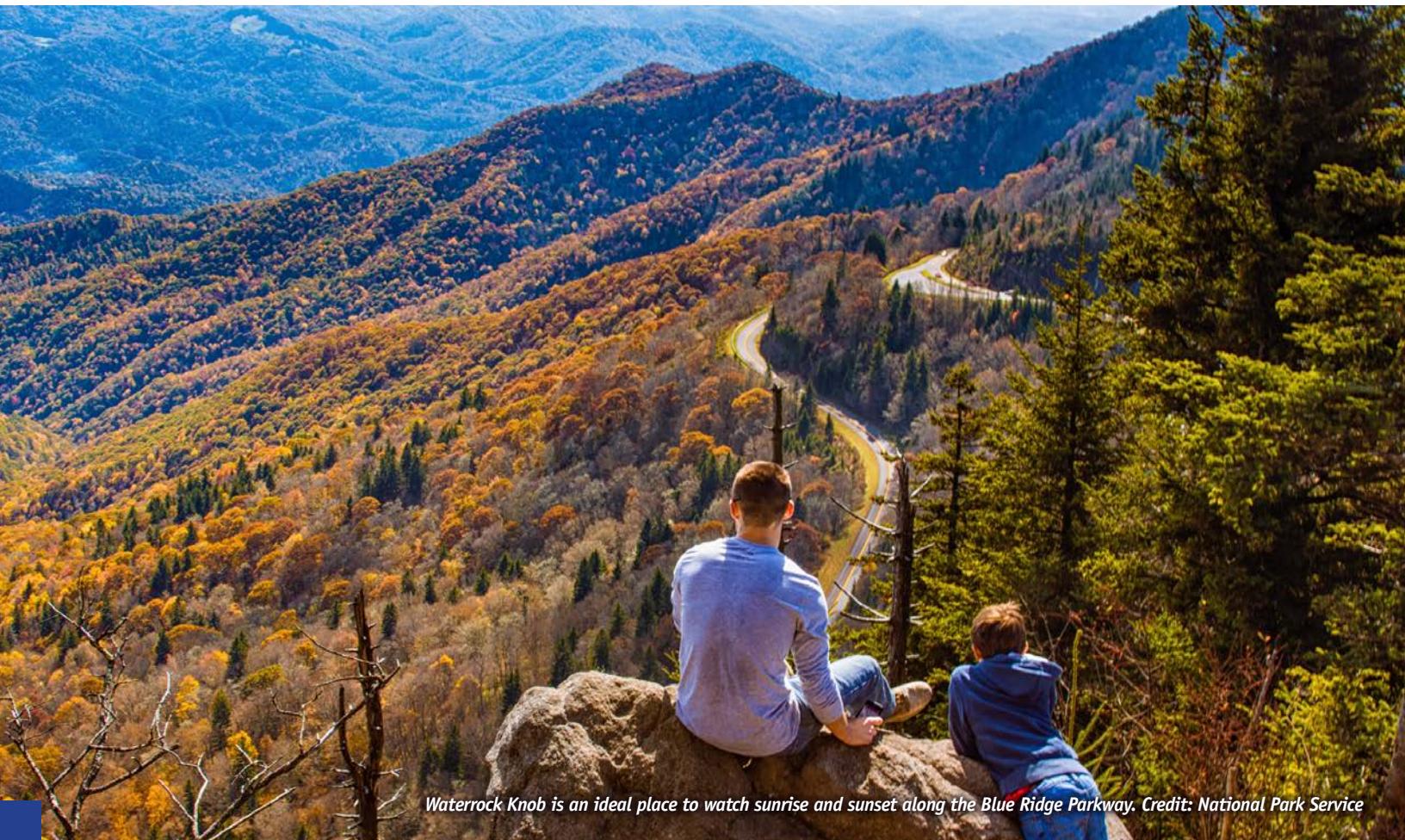
groundbreaking, although various sections had been in use for decades. Overall, some 26 tunnels were blasted through the mountain ridge, with dozens of bridges needed to make rivers and creeks passable. More than 200 parking areas, overlooks, and developed areas were incorporated into the design so that motorists could enjoy a leisurely ride through the mountains. The road itself ascends to more than 6,000 feet at the Richland Balsam overlook in North Carolina and descends to just over 600 feet at the James River in Virginia.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is many things:

- It is the longest road planned as a single unit in the United States.
- It is an elongated park, protecting significant mountain landscapes far beyond the shoulders of the road itself.
- It is a series of parks providing the visitor access to high mountain passes, a continuous series of panoramic views, the boundaries of its limited right-of-way rarely apparent and miles of the adjacent countryside seemingly a part of the protected scene.
- It is a "museum of the managed American countryside," preserving the roughhewn log cabin of the mountain pioneer, the summer home of a textile magnate, and



Craggy Gardens provides one of the best places to see rhododendron in bloom. Credit Pavel Petrushenko



Waterrock Knob is an ideal place to watch sunrise and sunset along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Credit: National Park Service



Follow the James River Canal Trail to see a restored lock, built between 1845-51.



The wide James River is the parkway's lowest elevation.

traces of early industries such as logging, railways, and an old canal.

- It is the product of a series of major public works projects that provided a boost to the travel and tourism industry and helped the Appalachian region climb out of the depths of the Great Depression.
- Stretching almost 500 miles along the crest of the Blue Ridge mountains through North Carolina and Virginia, it encompasses some of the oldest settlements of both pre-historic and early European settlement.

Plan your visit

As a scenic byway that sometimes traverses deep into the mountainous forests of Virginia and North Carolina, the Blue Ridge Parkway as a journey is unique. GPS isn't reliable on the parkway, though the experience of stunning views is. Cell reception can be spotty, but you have resources for navigating your parkway adventure in confidence—whether you're planning in advance or on the road now.

The Blue Ridge Parkway Travel Planner mobile app works even without a cell signal. No connectivity is no problem. You'll find helpful information on natural resources and culture, favorites you can save and customize, and maps

and services arranged by region and community. The app is a free download.

When all else fails, the print Blue Ridge Parkway Map, the Blue Ridge Parkway Directory & Travel Planner, and the Camping—Blue Ridge Parkway brochure are there for you. Pick them up when you need them on the fly along the road or request a copy to start planning your trip now.

If the thought of moving slowly for 469 miles seems a daunting task, it's easy to access the parkway at numerous places. Interstate 81 parallels the parkway beginning at the northern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway at mile post (MP) 0 near Waynesboro, Virginia, and stays relatively parallel until the North Carolina border. It's easy to keep track of progress on the parkway by noting mile markers alongside the roadway.

If you're planning to camp along the way, the parkway's eight campgrounds are open from May through late October, weather permitting on a first-come, first-served basis. The eight are Otter Creek, MP 60.8; Peaks of Otter, 85.9; Rocky Knob, 167.1; Doughton Park, 239.2; Julian Price, 297.0; Linville Falls, 316.4; Crabtree Falls, 339.5; and Mount Pisgah, 408.8.

If you require more stimulation than what you can view



Many statues at the National D-Day Memorial recall the horrors and heroes of war.



out the windows of your vehicle, parkway information suggests dozens of popular destinations along the route. Inquire at one of the 15 visitors' centers for more input.

Favorite Stops

My nephew Warren Litten recently traveled the entirety of the parkway and has photographed his favorite destinations. Many of his amazing photos are included in this feature. "The Blue Ridge Parkway is a great weekend trip," he said. "There's plenty of history and sights to see along the 469 miles. After a day of exploring there are plenty of places to camp for the evening. If you're not into camping, there's lodging in nearby towns just off the parkway. It's well worth the trip. Just be sure to bring your camera because you never know what you might see."

James River MP 63.7 is the parkway's lowest elevation (650 feet above sea level) and a historic transportation route through the mountains. The river represents a major geological (water gap) and cultural component of the Blue Ridge section of Virginia.

The 3.5-mile Otter Creek Trail follows the creek from the Otter Creek Campground down to the James River Visitor Center. The trail can also be accessed from overlooks at MP 61.4, 62.5 and 63.1.

At the visitor center, the James River Canal Trail will take you to the restored James River and Kanawha Canal Lock that was built between 1845-51. When completed, the canal had 90 locks and went from Richmond to Buchanan, Virginia. Area hikes include: Trail of Trees, Otter Creek, Otter Lake Loop, and James River Canal Trails.

Peaks of Otter: Explore the three mountain peaks that are Peaks of Otter at MP 85.9 overlooking the town of Bedford. They include Sharp Top (altitude 3,875 feet); Flat Top (4,004 feet) and Harkening Hill (3,375 feet). It's all here from a leisurely stroll around Abbott Lake to a challenging hike up Sharp Top Mountain, to night skies viewing and special events. There is something for everyone at Peaks and the surrounding regions. Not everyone can hike a nearly 4,000-foot mountain, but it would be a shame to deny anyone the view. Transportation is provided to within 1,500 feet of the scenic summit.

National D-Day Memorial: Nearby the Peaks of Otter, veer off the parkway to Bedford, Virginia, and visit the National D-Day Memorial. On June 6, 1944, United States soldiers, in one of the most pivotal battles of World War II, invaded the French coastline in order to propel German soldiers out of Western Europe and



Mabry Mill is one of the most photographed destinations on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

lead the way for victory against the tyrants of that era. Dedicated on June 6th, 2001, by President George W. Bush, the National D-Day Memorial was constructed in honor of those who died that day, fighting in one of the most significant battles in our nation's history.

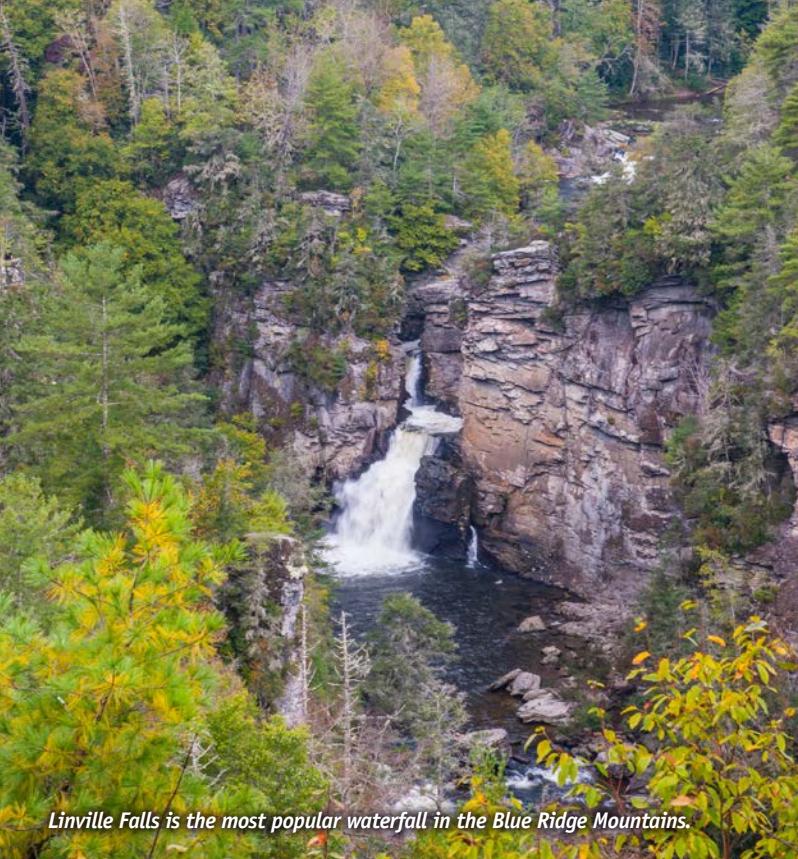
At its center stands a monumental 44-foot tall arch, embellished by the military name, "Overlord," that was given to the crucial operation. The arch is highlighted by a reflecting pool that surrounds a scene that is symbolic of the arduous trudge soldiers made onto the blood-stained beaches of Normandy, France. The National D-Day Memorial creates a solemn atmosphere for veterans and visitors alike to gain insight and learn more about the events that shaped our nation's and our world's history.

Rocky Knob and Mabry Mill: One of the most photographed stops at MP 161.1-176.3 is the picturesque Rocky Knob and Mabry Mill. Experience live milling demonstrations, as this gristmill still grinds flour more than a century since original construction. National Park Service staff conducts demonstrations on blacksmithing, carding, spinning, basket making, and other traditional Appalachian crafts. The gristmill and sawmill have been restored by park naturalists, so visitors might see live exhibits, a real mill, and a working miller to demonstrate

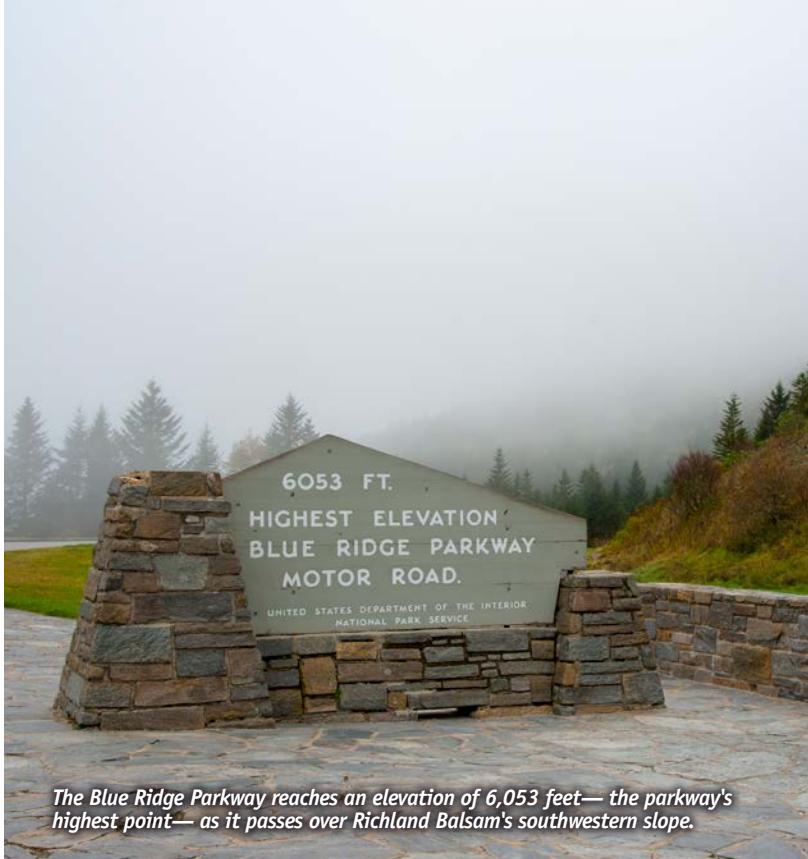
the milling process. The grounds of the mill include other interpretive media all designed to tell about mountain industry. The Matthews Cabin is an outstanding example of mountain architecture and workmanship and offers an intriguing look into the tanning and shoe making crafts. There is also a whiskey still, a sorghum mill, and a working blacksmith shop.

Mt. Airy, North Carolina: Exit parkway at Milepost 199.5, Highway 52 South and visit Mt. Airy, North Carolina, Andy Griffith's hometown and inspiration for the fictional town of "Mayberry." Visit the Andy Griffith Collection, squad car tours, historic downtown, Pilot Mountain State Park, historic homes, and the world's largest open-face granite quarry.

Blue Ridge Music Center: Music is a natural part of these mountains. Traditional folk music and dance has been created and kept alive in this region over the decades. At the Blue Ridge Music Center MP 213, visitors can explore the interactive Roots of American Music Museum and enjoy live music daily from May through October. The Music Center hosts a summer Roots of American Music Concert Series. Concerts take place in the beautiful outdoor amphitheater (capacity 2,500) at the base of Fisher Peak. Local, regional, and national touring performers and bands are featured, and



Linville Falls is the most popular waterfall in the Blue Ridge Mountains.



The Blue Ridge Parkway reaches an elevation of 6,053 feet—the parkway's highest point—as it passes over Richland Balsam's southwestern slope.

are presented most Saturday evenings from late May through September.

Linville Falls: The Linville River flows from its headwaters high on the steep slopes of Grandfather Mountain and cascades through two falls (Linville Falls MP 316.4) as it begins a nearly 2,000-foot descent through this rugged and spectacularly beautiful gorge. Linville Falls is the most popular waterfall in the Blue Ridge Mountains because of its accessibility to the Blue Ridge Parkway. It's a spectacular three-tiered waterfall plunging into Linville Gorge, the "Grand Canyon of the Southern Appalachians." Two main hiking trails lead to views of Linville falls. Both begin at the Linville Falls Visitor Center and pass through remnants of a virgin hemlock forest mixed with other familiar tree species such as white pine, oaks, hickory, and birch. A colorful and varied display of wildflowers decorates the trails in spring. Red and golden leaves in fall beautifully contrast with the soothing green of hemlocks. The Linville Falls trails range in difficulty from moderate to strenuous.

Crabtree Falls is located at Milepost 339.5 on the Blue Ridge Parkway (about 45 miles north of Asheville) and is accessed by a woodland hiking trail with two options: an easier 3-mile hike to and from on the same trail, with a steady descent and return climb; or a more strenuous

3.5-mile loop trail that climbs a ridge above the falls. It's a beautiful hike, complete with plenty of wildflowers in the early summer. The 70-foot waterfall is definitely worth the trek.

Craggy Gardens: Twisted, jagged, rocky "crags" give Craggy Gardens MP 364 its name, but these high elevation summits are home to the most spectacular floral display along the 469-mile Blue Ridge Parkway corridor. For generations, visitors have headed for the Craggies in June, typically the prime time for viewing the pink and purple blooms of Catawba rhododendrons that blanket the area.

Don't despair if you miss the peak bloom of the rhododendron. Violets, blackberry, May-apple, and Turkscap lily burst onto the scene with color in this high-altitude portion of the parkway. The Craggy Gardens Visitor Center is located at Milepost 364.4, with the spur to Craggy Gardens trails and picnic area at 367.6.

Waterrock Knob is a must-stop along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Located at Milepost 451.2 (just 18 miles from the end of the parkway), it features the last hiking trail along the parkway as you travel toward the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This peak (6,292 ft.) is the 16th highest mountain in the Eastern United States—



All sizes of RVs take advantage of the smooth roadway and numerous campgrounds in and around the Blue Ridge Parkway.



The Supreme Commander is a full-figure, heroic-scale statue of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force (AEF).

and the 15th highest of the 40 mountains in North Carolina over 6,000 feet.

A 1.2-mile round-trip hike will take you to the top of the summit. The steep climb gains 412 feet in elevation. There are more great views along the way. The first 1/4-mile of the trail is paved, ending at a nice overlook. At the top, there are several vantage points for distant views (although it's not a 360-degree panoramic view). On a clear day, you have 50-mile views, including the highest peaks in the Smokies. Below is Maggie Valley.

Once at the end of the parkway, stop and visit beautiful Cherokee, North Carolina. A culture, a people, and a place that's actually a sovereign nation, Cherokee is located right in the heart of Western North Carolina. It's also base camp for hiking in the Great Smokies, arts and crafts shopping, native elk herd viewing, hours of fishing fun, and home to a history that spans millennia.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Blue Ridge Parkway: www.blueridgeparkway.org/

Blue Ridge Parkway Maps: www.blueridgeparkway.org/parkway-maps/

Blue Ridge Parkway Interactive Map: www.blueridgeparkway.org/parkway-map/

Blue Ridge Parkway Stories from the Road: www.blueridgeparkway.org/stories-from-the-road/



RV REVIEW

REVIEW AND PHOTOS BY HOWARD J. ELMER

2019 Airstream Nest interior

Size Matters

Four lightweight trailers that have it all

RV designers are hyper-aware of new social and market trends that will influence the next generation of trailer buyers. Frankly, they have to be. That said, the variety of units currently available from RV manufacturers is vast. This varied field of towable and motorized units tries to offer every age and demographic group what they want today and hopefully in the future. One of the new trends that manufacturers have been responding to is driven by younger buyers who are looking for something different.

Specifically, this group is looking for lightweight trailers that they can tow with today's mid-size wagons and small SUVs—not trucks. They want this trailer to be compact, as they want to tow comfortably, and when they do arrive at the campground they expect it will fit any site easily. Also, being urban dwellers, they have to consider that they have limited parking space at home. So, for these buyers—they want small and light. But this does not mean they will settle for bare bones. No, they want all the creature comforts afforded by larger RVs. And, finally, electronics, Wi-Fi connectivity and smart phone compatibility are must-haves.

Here are four units available for 2019 that fit that bill.

2019 AIRSTREAM NEST

Airstream, known for their shiny aluminum skinned trailers, has also introduced a lightweight molded fiberglass shell trailer. Called the Nest, it is billed as incorporating elements of nature into its interior design and color palettes along with a bold exterior statement featuring a two-tone premium gel coat that's incredibly durable. This trailer is 16 feet 7 inches long and has a packed GVWR of 4,000 pounds. Within its compact floorplan though it hits all the high notes—a full kitchen, full bath, places to charge your phone, and all the technology to keep you happy. The kitchen features a two-burner cooktop with a cover that creates extra counter space, plus a microwave, a refrigerator with an icebox, and a generous stainless-steel sink. The entry door lets in tons of light through its window while the LED entry handle and outside lights help guide you home after dusk. On nice days, enjoy some bug-free fresh air thanks to the sliding screen door.

JAYCO HUMMINGBIRD

The Jayco Hummingbird 16MRB is built with Stronghold VBL vacuum-bonded laminate floor and sidewalls. It also uses a one-piece fiberglass roof and its fenders are powder-coated black aluminum. These construction features net a trailer that is 19 feet long yet hits a loaded GVWR of just 3,750 pounds. Jayco emphasizes the build quality of the Hummingbird by pointing out the use of plywood bed bases and cabinets, both of which are screwed and



Jayco Hummingbird



Jayco Hummingbird interior



Forest River R-Pod



KZ Escape

glued together. Inside there are residential-style seamless countertops, a two-burner recessed cooktop and a convection microwave. The bathroom has a fully-equipped shower with a removable showerhead. All the cushions are vinyl backed and feature high-density foam. Hummingbird can be outfitted with an optional A-frame mounted two-bike carrier; it even has exterior accessed storage space.

FOREST RIVER R-POD

There are several r-pod floorplans; however, the new RP172 fits our story criteria. In fact, Forest River promotes it by saying r-pod offers affordable luxury at the lowest tow weight in its class. It's an example of form following function with its unique shape and construction. Welded aluminum sidewalls and floor are covered by a seamless fiberglass roof and an exterior two-tone gelcoated fiberglass shell. A lightweight composite panel material (used inside and out) called AZDEL adds to the strength, water resistance, and overall weight savings. This r-pod is 18 feet 4 inches long and has a total GVWR of 3,232 pounds. Inside it comes standard with a 3.7 cu-ft three-way refrigerator and two-burner recessed cooktop with flush mount glass cover. The seamless kitchen countertop has an undermount stainless steel sink. There is an E-Z Glide dinette table along with residential cabinetry, hardwood drawers and expandable cargo netting for additional storage wherever possible. On the electronics side it comes with a Furion Bluetooth Stereo w/remote & app and a Go Power Solar Charging Port.

KZ ESCAPE

Escape offers several floorplans, but the E171MB is new for 2019 and seems to touch on all the wants we've discussed here. At 19-feet long it has a max GVWR of 4,000 pounds. Within its space the Escape even offers a single slideout that houses the refrigerator and storage. The queen bed in the nose of the trailer is a Murphy-style convertible sofa that makes the available space adaptable for day or night configuration. Other standard features include a 7 cu-ft double-door refrigerator, a two-burner cooktop and microwave. Cabinets are Amish-crafted rustic maple with rail-style doors and modern handles. There are also overhead cabinets, and lighting is LED throughout. The bathroom is designed with plenty of elbow room along with a large shower, ample sink and a foot-flush toilet. Electronics include digital media stereo w/Bluetooth and 12-V dual USB Ports. There is also an omnidirectional HDTV antenna. Of note on the Escape is an optional Off-Road Package, which when ordered adds the following to your trailer:

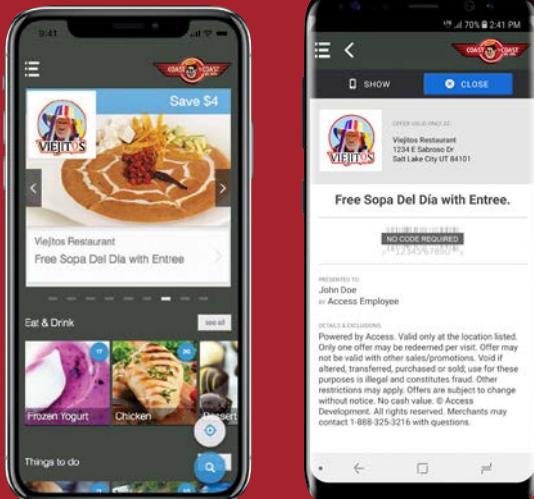
- Aluminum Rims with 15" Mud Tires
- Extra Ground Clearance
- Electronically-Controlled Heated Holding Tank
- Double Entry Step (select models)

These features will get you into even more remote locations—comfortably and lightly—and that's the idea, isn't it?



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