

QUICK TRIPS



BY KATIE VAUGHN

It doesn't get much easier than traveling from the Dane County Regional Airport. The Prairie-style terminal has a serene atmosphere, and you can even sip an Ancora coffee or Great Dane brew before takeoff. Continue the easy, breezy vibe with a direct flight to a distinctive destination.





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SOUTHERN COMFORT

Atlanta

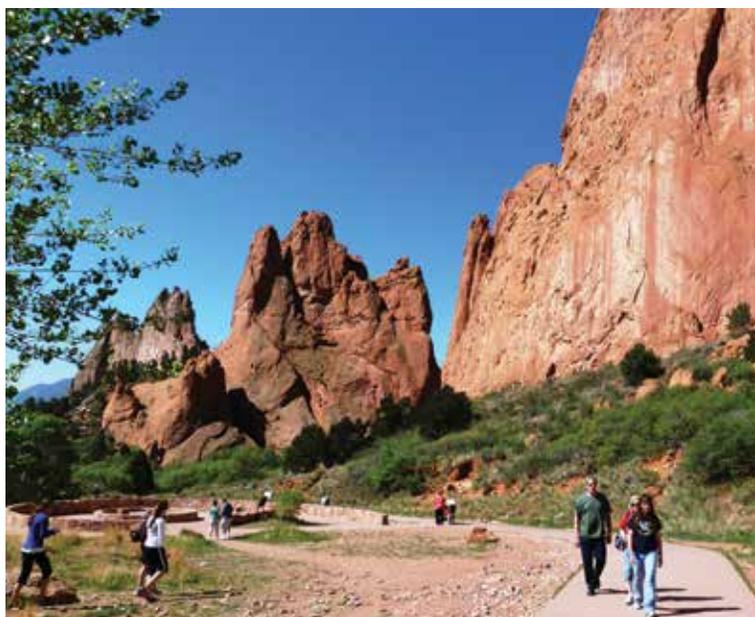
Considered one of the South's great cities, Atlanta offers a compelling trinity: history, sports and food. Start a trek into the past at the Atlanta History Center, and continue on to the Civil War Museum, the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and the newly opened Center for Civil and Human Rights. Bookworms might enjoy the Margaret Mitchell House, where the author lived and wrote *Gone with the Wind*, while sports fans should stop at the College Football Hall of Fame, which just opened in August. Depending on the time of year, it's game on with the Hawks and the Dream at Philips Arena, the Braves at Turner Field or the Falcons at the Georgia Dome. When it's time to eat, find Southern-style cuisine carried out in upscale, "down home" and all interpretations in between. For a scenic introduction to the city, cruise Peachtree Street. Atlanta's main thoroughfare takes you from downtown, the city's financial and governmental center, to culturally appointed Midtown to posh Buckhead. And at Little Five Points to the east, hipster, boho and alternative cultures play out in bookstores, coffee shops and unique festivals.



THE HIGH LIFE

Denver

You know how a beer tastes especially good after a day on the bike trail or ski slopes? Denver sure does, and the city's dedication to active lifestyles and quality brews is unparalleled. The 16th Street Mall is a mile-long pedestrian promenade with restaurants and shops, while the Mile High City also has one of the most expansive biking trail systems in the country and is the perfect gateway to fun in the Rocky Mountains—skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking and more. Denver boasts roughly fifty breweries, and if you expand geographically to the Denver Beer Triangle between the city, Boulder and Fort Collins, more than five dozen spots to drink a locally made brew pop up. What's more, the Denver Beer Festival comes each fall with three-hundred-plus suds events, and the Great American Beer Festival, the country's biggest beer bash, is held, you guessed it, right here. Cheers to that.



PHOTOS: VISIT DENVER (TOP & LEFT)



PHOTOS: VISIT ORLANDO



A FAIRY TALE GETAWAY

Orlando

If you're hesitant to visit the land of Mickey and Minnie, you probably have no idea how wholeheartedly fun Orlando is for kids and adults alike. The Magic Kingdom is classic Disney, from Cinderella's grand castle to the attractions you dreamed about as a child—the "it's a small world" boat ride, the Swiss Family Treehouse, the creepy Haunted Mansion and the futuristic Space Mountain roller coaster. Over at Universal Studios, hang out with Shrek, the Simpsons and the Despicable Me minions, or step into Diagon Alley and the enchanted world of Harry Potter. But if cartoon characters and theme park rides just aren't your thing, find your own fun in Orlando's many gardens and parks, art museums or flea markets.



PHOTO: DOUGLAS PULSIPHER

Salt Lake City

ONE-TRACK TRIPS

If you're wondering what to see in some additional destinations, consider these recommendations a start.

Cincinnati

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood is one of the nation's largest urban historic districts. It's home to Findlay Market, Ohio's oldest continuously operating open-air market, running since 1855, as well as shops, restaurants and beautiful Italianate architecture.

Dallas

The Dallas Arts District is the country's largest urban arts district. Set along nineteen blocks in the city center, it features the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Crow Collection of Asian Art, the AT&T Performing Arts Center and the Meyerson Symphony Center, plus the new five-acre Klyde Warren Park.

Newark

It may be part of the metro New York City region, but the Garden State's largest city has its own identity—and several noteworthy parks. Liberty State Park is a greenspace with the Manhattan skyline and the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop, while the 360-acre Branch Brook Park has the largest collection of cherry blossoms in the nation; each April, a festival highlights more than 4,300 trees in bloom.

Salt Lake City

While the Wasatch Mountains and Great Salt Lake add drama to the landscape, Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City is equally impressive. The world headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints includes the Salt Lake Temple, a pilgrimage destination for Mormons, as well as the Tabernacle, the uniquely shaped home of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir that's open for tours and recitals.



PHOTO: THINKSTOCK.COM (TOP);
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CULTURAL CAPITAL

New York City

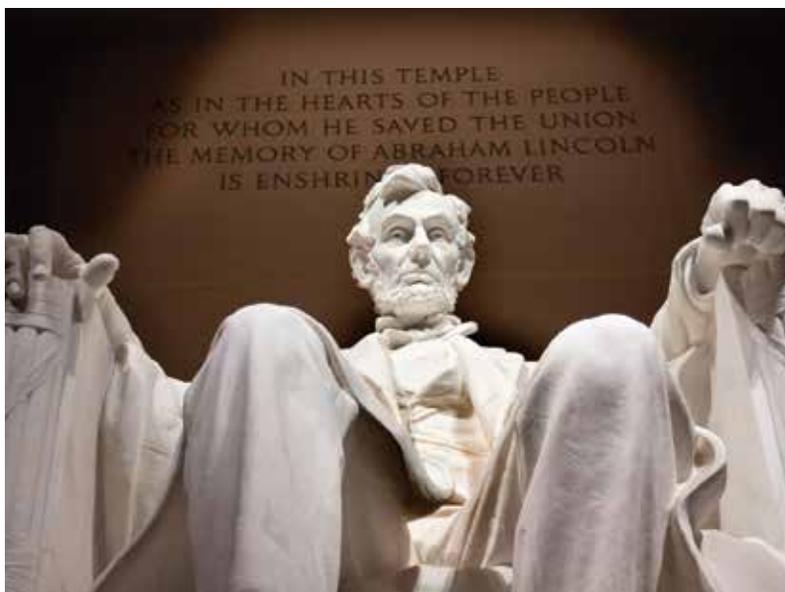
There's never a bad time to visit New York City—and that's partly because there's always so much going on! From arts to fashion to dining, the Big Apple is simply one of the most exciting cities in the world. You could spend an entire visit tackling the tourist sites—the Statue of Liberty, Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building—but how about exploring other sides of the city? Start with the Museum Mile and make stops at the Africa Center, El Museo del Barrio, the Jewish Museum, Neue Galerie, the Guggenheim and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. And don't forget the Museum of Modern Art and the countless galleries tucked across the five boroughs. Fashionistas flock to the dazzling storefronts on Fifth Avenue and major labels on Madison Avenue, as well as the shops of SoHo. And each February and September, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week makes Manhattan the place to see and be seen—in your sartorial best, of course. And the food? *Fuhgeddaboutit*. From humble bagels and deli fare to the culinary creations of the most celebrated chefs, New York is the place where you can, quite literally, get whatever you want whenever you want it.



A MONUMENTAL TRIP

Washington, D.C.

If hit shows like *Scandal* and *House of Cards* have you wanting to get up close to the nation's political action, hightail it to D.C. While you might not make it into the Oval Office, you'll encounter more than you can probably fit into one visit. There's the Washington Monument and Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., World War II and Vietnam Veterans memorials—and that's just at the National Mall. History buffs won't want to miss the National Geographic Museum, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Newseum or the iconic Smithsonian. And can you leave the nation's capital without visiting the actual U.S. Capitol, or the Supreme Court or the Pentagon? All this walking through history is sure to make you hungry, so take comfort in knowing the city's restaurants have evolved beyond traditional Beltway power lunches and now highlight rock-star chefs, ethnic eats and the latest foodie trends.



PHOTOS: DESTINATION DC

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PHOTO: VITO PALMISANO

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Sure, you could drive to these nearby metropolises. But hop a flight and you'll probably have more time to play.

Chicago

The buzz of Michigan Avenue and the Loop is infectious. But exploring beyond the downtown allows for some exciting discoveries. New hotels constantly crop up in the River North neighborhood, and some of the best food finds are discovered there and in Wicker Park and Lincoln Park to the north and Hyde Park to the south. Culture junkies won't want to miss the venerable Art Institute of Chicago, Steppenwolf Theatre or one of the city's authentic blues clubs.

Detroit

Cars and sports, right? Heck yes, and Detroit does both right. Home to the Lions, Tigers, Pistons and Red Wings, it's no wonder *USA TODAY* named Detroit the best sports city in the United States last year. And while the auto industry has seen better days, this is still a car mecca, with annual events like Autopalooza, a celebration filled with races and shows. But Motor City also has a strong cultural side, from its architecture and history to its live music scene.

Minneapolis

Yep, it's cold in Minneapolis. But a genius system of glass-enclosed skyways allows visitors to traverse more than seven miles of the city without bundling up. There's plenty to see here—and some of it might surprise you. While more under-the-radar than some cities, Minneapolis has a robust theater community, and it's hard to leave without raving about the thriving and eclectic food scene. Balance an urban adventure with a stop along nearly two hundred miles of walking, biking and cross-country ski trails.