

# welcome to Eastern USA



## Mighty Metropolises

New York, New York is top of the heap, as Frank Sinatra famously crooned. Brimming with 8.3 million people, the megalopolis looms like an alien mother-ship over the East, offering a mind-blowing array of culture, cuisine and entertainment. Cloud-poking Chicago; power-brokering Washington, DC; and fiery, Latin-fused Miami rise up close on its heels as one-of-a-kind cityscapes. Look deeper, and you'll find the captivating old quarters of New Orleans, still rising up from waterlogged ashes, and raw-edged Detroit, where young do-it-yourselfers are flocking to transform the abandoned city.

## Beaches & Back Roads

The East Coast is where America gets its beach on, from the wild dunes and whale-rich waters of Cape Cod, to the taffy-shop-lined boardwalks of Ocean City, to the coral reefs of the Florida Keys. Inland, nature puts on a show in the swampy Florida Everglades, wolf-howling Boundary Waters, mist-tipped Appalachian Mountains and, in New England's forests which blaze red, orange and yellow each autumn. Slowpoke byways unfurl throughout so you can soak up the landscapes, along with historic Civil War battlefields and kitschy roadside attractions of the giant fiberglass-spaceman ilk.



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*Flanked by mega-cities  
New York City and Chicago;  
landscaped with dune-  
backed beaches, smoky  
mountains and gator  
swamps; and steeped in  
musical roots, the East rolls  
out a sweet trip.*

(left) Times Square (p71), New York City  
(below) Fall foliage, New Hampshire (p214)



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## Chowhounds' Smorgasbord

Good eatin' reaches epic proportions in the region, and belt loosening becomes a necessity. On the menu: hulking steamed lobsters with melted butter in Maine's seafood shacks, bagels and lox in Manhattan's delis, saucy barbecue ribs in Memphis' road-houses, butter-smothered biscuits in North Carolina's diners, hot-spiced gumbo in New Orleans' cafes and – for dessert – thick slices of berry pie in the Midwest's supper clubs. You'll certainly work up a thirst. That's when the region's sweet white wines, microbrewed beers and home-grown bourbon do their slaking.

## Cultural Cradle

The museums here are the nation's greatest hits – the Smithsonian, housing everything but the kitchen sink; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a city-state of treasures; and the Art Institute of Chicago, hanging Impressionists by the roomful. Musically speaking, the Eastern USA birthed the blues, jazz and rock and roll. Explore the roots at Sun Studio in Memphis, where Elvis got his groove on; Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, for artifacts like Jimi Hendrix' Stratocaster; and the juke joints of Clarksdale, where the blues' slide guitar first pierced the air. For sky-high designs, Chicago and New York are drawing boards for the modern era's great architects.