

#### Welcome to the USA

The great American experience is about so many things: blues and beaches, grand canyons and jagged mountains, restaurant-loving cities and big open skies. Magic castles, honky-tonk bars and movie stars make appearances, too.

The USA is the birthplace of Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago, Miami and New York City – each a brimming metropolis whose name alone conjures a million different notions of culture, cuisine and entertainment. Then there's the eclectic music scene of Austin, the magnificent waterfront of San Francisco and the captivating French Quarter of jazz-loving New Orleans, all adding their unique style to the grand urban patchwork.

This is also a country of road trips and wide skies, where four million miles of highways lead past redrock deserts, below towering mountain peaks, and through fertile fields that roll off toward the horizon.

On one evening in the US, thick barbecue ribs come piping hot at a Texas roadhouse, while chefs blend organic produce with Asian accents at award-winning West Coast restaurants. Locals get their fix of bagels and lox at a century-old deli in Manhattan's Upper West Side and, several states away, plump pancakes and fried eggs disappear under the clatter of cutlery at a 1950s-style diner. Oysters and champagne from a California wine bar, tangy Cuban sandwiches at a Miami market, decadent deep-dish slices at a Chicago pizzeria – these are just a few ways to dine à la Americana.

The great American experience is about so many things...



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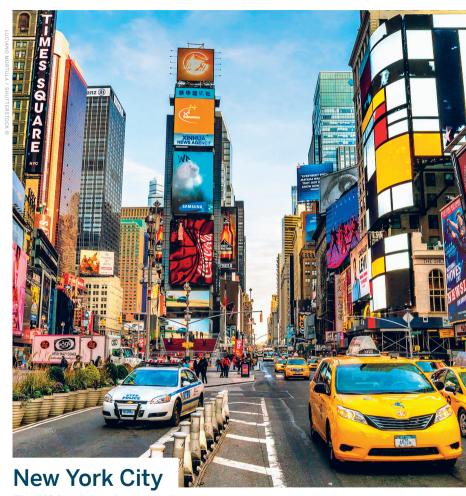
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Maggie Daley Park (p131), Chicago F11PHOTO / SHUTTERSTOCK ©

# **Plan Your Trip**

## **USA's Top 12**



#### The USA's dynamic mega city

Home to striving artists, hedge-fund moguls and immigrants from every corner of the globe, New York City (p34) is constantly reinventing itself. A staggering number of museums, parks and ethnic neighborhoods are scattered through the five boroughs. Do as locals do and hit the streets. Every block reflects the character and history of this dizzying kaleidoscope, and on even a short walk you can cross continents. Left: Times Square (p67); Right: High Line (p48)





