





The East

From Maine's rocky, weather-beaten shores to Florida's tropical birds and endless shades of blues and greens, the Atlantic and Appalachia defy expectations. Often overshadowed by the mighty vistas out West – even Congress didn't set about designating parks here until the 1920s – this massive swath of land is nonetheless home to some of the continent's most diverse ecosystems.

Alligators, manatees, panthers and flamingos populate the Everglades, while Biscayne and the Dry Tortugas shelter vibrant coral reefs. Over 100 species of trees can be found in the old-growth stands of the Great Smoky Mountains, which are often visited in combination with Shenandoah, linked via the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail. Near the country's northeasternmost tip is Acadia, a parcel of untamed, rugged New England coastline.