



red **LIFE** / TRAVEL

Office Restaurant. The menu's only dessert is fresh-baked cherry pie, because when it's *this* good, you don't need options.

WHERE TO STAY In Sister Bay, enjoy the rustic charm of the Open Hearth Lodge (from \$109) or the two pools at the family-run Somerset Inn & Suites (from \$160).

3 SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA

When the ice melts and the ski bunnies hop on home, this city turns into a water lover's paradise. Get out on the brilliant cobalt blue lake in a **pedal boat** (from \$35; South Tahoe Standup Paddle) at El Dorado Beach. Do look down—visibility here is to a depth of about 90 feet—but look up, too, for sweeping mountain views. It's a blast to marina-hop via water taxi and check out beachfront activities like **parasailing** at Round Hill Pines Marina (from \$75). For iconic views overlooking the lake, hike the **Vikingsholm Trail** at Emerald Bay. At the halfway mark of this two-mile trek is a historic home built like a Scandinavian castle

(\$10 tour). Definitely check it out! Then take a stunning bike ride on the **Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway**, a paved path that runs through a meadow, forests, and along parts of the lake (rent bikes from Shoreline of Tahoe; \$18). For dinner, do Mexican and margaritas at Azul Latin Kitchen or go to the Loft Theatre, a swanky restaurant-theater-lounge combo with a **magic show** that's hilarious, not cheesy. If only they could make extra vacation days miraculously appear.

WHERE TO STAY The outdoorsy Coachman Hotel (from \$174) has modern touches like smart TVs and Stumptown Coffee, and the Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel is an all-suite hotel with plenty of space to spread out (from \$209).

WHEN YOU NEED TO RELAX

1 PARK CITY, UT

Yes, Park City plays host to glitzy Hollywood parties during ski season, but summer turns it back into an unpretentious storybook

town. Begin your anxiety detox with a **massage** at the Westgate Resort's Serenity Spa (from \$145) and take advantage of the **hot tub, sauna, and pools**. Downtown, you can spend hours browsing **Main Street's unique shops and art galleries** and still want to pop into just one more. Snap up leather boots at Burns Cowboy Shop, admire the chic home decor at Root'd, and inspect J GO Gallery's section of "curious" art. Two surefire dining spots are Riverhorse on Main (try the halibut) and Handle, where the buffalo cauliflower will make you forget chicken wings ever existed. You can also stroll on the easy **Poison Creek Trail**, where you'll see public art (and maybe a wild moose). The **creative bars** here cater to every taste: No Name Saloon has local brews plus antiques hanging from the ceiling, while High West Distillery & Saloon serves whisky flights and an ice-cream-topped doughnut with whisky caramel sauce.

WHERE TO STAY The Newpark Resort (from \$139) has a

variety of options, including two-bedroom suites, and the Grand Summit Hotel (from \$159) puts you within walking distance of a dining and shopping area called Canyons Village.

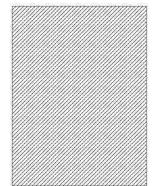
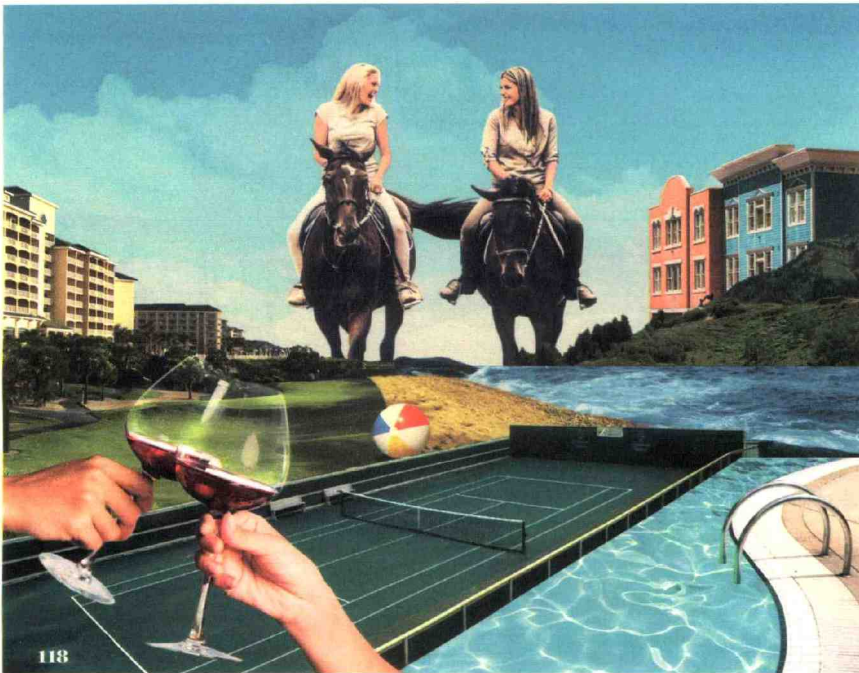
2 FINGER LAKES REGION, NY

This area's 11 lakes stretch out like jazz hands—consider that a hint of all the fun you can have here. Park yourself on the southern tip of Cayuga Lake near **Ithaca**, an artsy college town, to see a portion of this region's rolling green hills, forests, and **vineyards**. It's a wine devotee's dream, and has cideries that offer options for nondrinkers too, like Interlaken's Finger Lakes Cider House. Winery-hop on your own—there are panoramic valley views at Six Mile Creek Vineyard—or travel by boat on a Water to Wine Tour (\$89). No designated driver required! Later, grab your bathing suit and head to the base of **Buttermilk Falls**, where 500 feet of stair-step cascades flow into a freshwater pool. Can't agree on a lunch spot? Visit **Ithaca Farmers' Market** at Steamboat Landing pavilion, where you can cart your gourmet haul (samosas, crepes, and more) to a picnic table by the lake for an alfresco meal. You can also try Moosewood, a pioneer in the vegetarian food scene, or the savory Spanish tapas at Just a Taste. There's simply not a bad choice to make.

WHERE TO STAY La Tourelle (from \$200) has a terrific spa, while the Inns of Aurora's new property Wallcourt Hall (from \$250) is a half-hour scenic drive (with cute farm stands on the way) from Ithaca.

3 AMELIA ISLAND, FL

Your pal says **white-sand beaches**, you say low-key Southern charm; this place has both (so do not call the whole trip off). Just peering out at the acres of **salt marshes**—streams of





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water twisting through tall green grass—will calm your souls. Explore these mazes in kayaks, or try a nighttime meditation paddleboard session (from \$35; Kayak Amelia). **Horseback riding** is allowed on the beach here, a rare opportunity on the East Coast, so take a slow, easy ride at sunset or sunrise (\$88; Happy Trails). If you like the sound of *all* of that, The Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort (from \$349) provides many of these activities, plus **golf, tennis, fishing**, and an adults-only pool—all on a lovely property surrounded by live oaks dripping with Spanish moss. The historic downtown area of nearby **Fernandina Beach** is filled with dreamy Victorian-era architecture. While there, fill up on locally caught shrimp at the Crab Trap or smoked alligator ribs (yes, they taste like chicken) at Gilbert's Underground Kitchen. The Palace Saloon, an over-100-year-old bar, serves a sweet Pirate's Punch that's reason enough to come back yearly.

WHERE TO STAY Besides the Omni, you can get nice ocean views at Amelia Hotel at the Beach (from \$184) or Seaside Amelia Inn (from \$157).

TO SOAK UP CULTURE

1 QUEBEC CITY
 Oh, Canada. It's where you gain access to Old World European beauty without having to cross an ocean. With its cobblestoned streets, massive stone walls, and French architecture, this 408-year-old city feels straight out of a fairy tale. In the summer at 10 a.m., watch the guards of **La Citadelle** perform a shift change that involves a lively marching band. Then wander around **Old Quebec**, where you'll be surrounded by art long before you set foot in a gallery. **Château Frontenac** is



a grand castle-like structure with towers and spires, and the **Notre-Dame de Québec Basilica-Cathedral** has a golden interior that's just as dazzling. Take a snack break at Chez Ashton and share the poutine (French fries covered in gravy and cheese curds). This Canadian dish might not be elegant, but it's *good*. **The Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec**, which features work either produced in the province or made by Quebecois artists, is opening five new galleries this summer. For dinner, try any of the eye-catching dishes at bistro Le Clocher Penché or share small plates at Le Cercle. This restaurant mounts a new art exhibition every month and has a concert venue next door.

WHERE TO STAY There's a jazz bar at Hôtel Clarendon (from \$159) and free breakfast at Hôtel Champlain (from \$169), both in Old Quebec.

2 MINNEAPOLIS
 This city may have a twin (St. Paul), but it has developed a one-of-a-kind personality thanks to its Midwestern friendliness and thriving arts scene. There are about 57 museums in the metro area! You can see more than 89,000 works of art for

free at the **Minneapolis Institute of Art**; put the Chinese period rooms at the top of your list and go from there. Even during current renovations, the **Walker Art Center** is worth a visit. Art at the Center: 75 Years of Walker Art Collections, one of the present exhibitions, features its greatest hits. Then see what's playing at the **Guthrie Theater**—with three stages, you're bound to find a show that your whole group wants to see. The Freehouse is an awesome brunch spot, and Burch Steak serves, of course, steak, but also pizza with unique toppings like ahi tuna. Sip fancy cocktails at Eat Street Social, or have some old-school fun at Betty Danger's Country Club. Eat, drink, and take a spin on their huge Ferris wheel... just maybe not in that order.

WHERE TO STAY You'll dig the art deco decor at the W Minneapolis—The Foshay (from \$259) and the luxurious on-site spa at the Hotel Ivy (from \$269).

3 MEMPHIS
 Whether it's slow-cooked BBQ or dynamic soul into everything it does. There'll be time for walking in Memphis (heh), but you

should get an overview of the land with Backbeat Tours' quirky Mojo Tour (\$28). Musicians tell the city's history through live music and comedy. **The Stax Museum of American Soul Music** doesn't just show you the '60s, it takes you there. Stand in their re-creation of Studio A, where legends like Otis Redding cut records, then reenact the "Soul Train Line" on the dance floor. Reserve two hours for **Graceland**, where you can see Elvis's 14-acre estate, including the singer's cars and custom planes (tours from \$39). Next, eat! **Memphis-style BBQ** is all about the pork, and Central BBQ makes the city's best fall-off-the-bone dry-rub ribs. The open-face omelets at Brother Juniper's are also stellar. For **live music**, stop into B.B. King's Blues Club or the more intimate Mr. Handy's Blues Hall, both on Beale Street. About a mile away is Mollie Fontaine Lounge, which serves up tasty cocktails in a converted antebellum mansion.

WHERE TO STAY SpringHill Suites Memphis Downtown (from \$179) is centrally located with an outdoor pool, and Madison Hotel (from \$219) has a rooftop bar with dramatic views at sunset. **6**