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Volume 22, Issue 5

30 BEYOND THE PAR

Golf destinations with spectacular mountain views.

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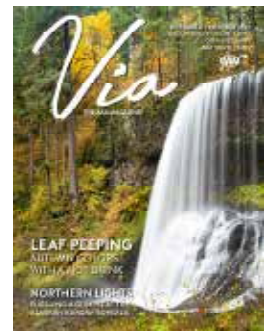
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ON THE COVER

Experience colors of the season at Silver Falls State Park, Oregon.

Photo by Tim Giraudier

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It's a Wonderful Life

Setting a course for your dreams might lead you down the path you envision, or it might lead you to something even better. Life can be a little unpredictable, and we understand and appreciate that more than ever these past few years. You can count on us to guide you with thoughtful intention and mindful strategies as we help you navigate the journey for your very best future.

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ON THE MOVE



As advanced vehicle technologies become more common, AAA is honored to share our groundbreaking research with government officials, the automotive industry and the public to keep safety top of mind.

In a new AAA survey, 77% of drivers favor improvements to current driver assistance systems like automatic emergency braking and lane-keeping assistance, over self-driving cars. A whopping 85% of Americans say that they would be unsure about riding in a vehicle without a traditional steering wheel and pedals.

Automated vehicles and driver assistance technologies have the potential to prevent crashes and save lives, but we're not there yet.

Our research underscores the importance of improving new vehicle technologies. During recent AAA testing, three vehicles with an active driving system that controls acceleration, braking and steering (also known as Level 2 systems as defined by the Society of Automotive Engineers) failed to consistently avoid collisions with oncoming vehicles and bicyclists that crossed their path. A foam car and a crash test dummy on a bicycle were used for the testing.

The test vehicles avoided striking the bicycle and a foam car from behind. However, a head-on collision with an approaching foam test vehicle that had crossed the center line occurred during all 15 tests. When the test bicycle crossed in front of the approaching cars, a potentially life-threatening crash occurred 33% of the time.

When you purchase a vehicle, please learn about the driver assistance systems, including their limitations. Previous AAA research suggests that some technologies

have names that make them appear to be more autonomous than they really are. Please remember that no vehicle that is currently available can take the place of an engaged driver.

In addition to the amazing potential of fully autonomous vehicles—which may not be widely available for decades—innovation is changing the mobility landscape in many other ways. AAA favors a “Complete Streets” approach, where the transportation system is thoughtfully designed to support the driving, mass transit, rideshare, ride-hailing, bicycling and walking that are all part of safely and efficiently getting from Point A to Point B.

How do you feel about new vehicle technologies, and how do you like to get around? Please email me at President@AAAOregonIdaho.com, or write to me at 600 SW Market St., Portland, OR 97201 or 7155 W. Denton St., Boise ID 83704.

Your fellow AAA member,

Tim Morgan, President and CEO



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PREPARING FOR THE REAL WORLD

Heading off to college or moving away from home can be an exciting time for high school graduates. If a student is living in a dorm, valuable possessions such as computers and electronics could be covered by a guardian's renter or homeowner policy. Another helpful way to ensure the safety of personal possessions is to purchase renter's insurance if the student plans to live off campus. Of course, there are other things to do for peace of mind during these transitional periods: make a "dorm inventory" of valuables, and safeguard those items by locking doors and never leaving belongings unattended in public places on campus. It's always best to leave unnecessary—but precious—items like expensive jewelry at home. See [AAA.com/insurance](https://www.aaa.com/insurance).

ECONOMIC ELECTRONICS

BACK TO SCHOOL WITH DELL

It's the perfect time to invest in a new computer or electronic device to ensure you or a student you know will have a successful school year. AAA

members can find savings on Dell computers and then receive an additional 10 percent off on Dell branded laptops, electronics and accessories. See [AAA.com/dell](https://www.aaa.com/dell).

INTRODUCING TRIP CANVAS

The urge to travel and explore seems to be at an all-time high. Trip Canvas is all you need before setting out on your next adventure. AAA's new vacation planning tool lets you customize your trip by filtering experiences, purposes of the trip and destination. Search for trending vacation packages, or find destination inspiration while reading relevant articles. Once you've found a destination, Trip Canvas creates a board of activities, packages, hotels and more, fully curated for you. See [AAA.com/tripcanvas](https://www.aaa.com/tripcanvas).



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GAS-SAVING

FUEL CONSERVING TIPS

Driving habits are often overlooked when it comes to conserving fuel. AAA studies show that improving everyday driving behaviors can help save on the next journey to the gas station. For example, avoid prolonged idling for more than sixty seconds and avoid sudden starts and stops to decrease fuel consumption. Unnecessary heavy objects like unused bike racks add weight, ultimately costing more to accelerate the vehicle.

TIP FUEL EFFICIENT DRIVING

Keeping tires properly inflated reduces the toll on fuel economy, and ultimately decreases the chances of tires overheating and blowing out. Driving the speed limit not only keeps you safe, but minimizes aerodynamic drag, which drains fuel use when traveling over fifty miles per hour. When driving, an open window can suffice in place of air conditioning which significantly reduces the fuel economy used to power the cooling unit's compressor. See AAA.com/gasprices.

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AAA at the AmazingCre Portland Classic

The AmazingCre Portland Classic brings top women professional golfers to the Northwest for the fifty-first year. This event is the LPGA Tour's longest running non-major tournament, and the stop in Portland takes place September 15-18. AAA members can witness the talent and history that this event brings by showing their membership card for free admission on September 15. See portlandclassic.com.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED



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It's never too early to start thinking about the future. September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, a good reminder of why purchasing a policy is a smart option for everyone. In life, the unexpected can happen. Life insurance is the reliable way to ensure loved ones have the support they need with mortgage payments and medical bills. After purchasing a policy, you pay a premium to keep it active. If you pass away, the insurance provider will pay out the death benefits to your beneficiaries. Different types of life insurance will provide security to ease burdens such as funeral costs and income loss. Some policies can be used for your family's living costs, debts and charitable contributions. See AAA.com/life.

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Cruise the Cape Verde Islands
The ultimate cruise experience takes you around the pristine waters of the Atlantic Ocean. From Praia, witness landmarks such as the towering volcano on Fogo Island and the dramatic peaks and valleys of San Antão on this eight-day excursion at sea.
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Hike, Bike, Raft and Zipline
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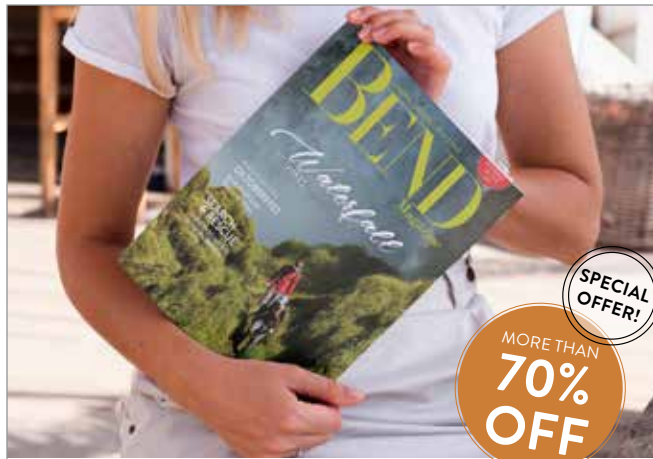
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{ ON THE ROAD }



GOURD REGATTA

Want to really spice up pumpkin season this year? The annual West Coast Giant Pumpkin Regatta returns this October to Tualatin, Oregon, 13 miles southwest of downtown Portland. Come Saturday, October 15 for Pumpkins and Pints at Tualatin's Stickmen Brewing Company, where the Pacific Giant Vegetable Growers will host a weigh-off of some of the region's largest pumpkins and other vegetables. On Sunday, the real festivities begin at Tualatin Commons, where brave, costumed racers will take to the water inside their 1,000-pound gourd boats, paddling through a course on the shallow Tualatin Commons lake. Back on land, festivities include a giant pumpkin parade, costume contest, live music, a pie-eating contest and pumpkin golf. See tualatinoregon.gov.



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- 9 Nine Inch Nails with Yves Tumor
- 14 Flume with Kareem Ali and Quiet Bison
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- 20 Wilco + Kamikaze Palm Tree
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COME THRU MARKET

Get a sampling of what Black and Indigenous farmers and makers are growing and creating at Come Thru Market, a market supporting BIPOC vendors, in Portland this fall. The market at the Redd on Salmon Street kicked off in the spring and continues on first and third Mondays from 3 to 7 p.m. through October. See comethrux.org.



TOUR

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

This Halloween season, venture into the world of paranormal activity at the Old Idaho Penitentiary, known as one of the most haunted destinations in the state. Big River Paranormal leads guided visits to the penitentiary throughout the year, with upcoming outings planned for September 24 and October 22. The group uses unique equipment to attempt to connect with prisoners and guards of the past at this spooky spot in Boise. See history.idaho.gov.

MOVIES

FALL FILMS

Film festivals take place around Oregon each fall, with options in Eastern Oregon, Portland and Central Oregon, to name a few. The Portland Latin American Film Festival kicks off September 28 at Portland's Hollywood Theatre, continues through October's Hispanic Heritage Month and wraps up at the end of December. The festival celebrates Latin

American culture through short films, documentaries and feature length pieces. The BendFilm Festival in Central Oregon includes an in-person festival October 6 to 9, followed by a virtual festival experience from October 10 to 23. The Eastern Oregon Film Festival takes place October 20 to 22 in La Grande, with a diverse selection of independent films.

CULTURE

TRAILING OF THE SHEEP

Whether you're curious about the world of sheepherding or looking for a reason to visit Idaho's Wood River Valley, the Trailing of the Sheep Festival is worthy of a spot on your calendar this fall. More than 50,000 people are expected to flock to Ketchum for the twenty-sixth annual event, which shines a spotlight on the history and culture of sheepherding in Idaho and the West. From October 5 to 9 this year, the festival includes the Sheep Folklife Fair in Hailey, which offers sheep shearing, spinning and weaving demonstrations, kids crafts and more than eighty vendors selling unique arts and crafts. The festival is a community-wide event that includes lamb meal specials around town, cooking classes and farm-to-table dinners. See trailingofthesheep.org.



TOP PHOTO KELLY CHAMELEON | BOTTOM PHOTO CAROL WALLER, COURTESY OF TRAILING OF THE SHEEP FESTIVAL

HERITAGE



SALMON ON THE COAST

Native American and Coquille tribal culture converge (along with a whole lot of salmon) at the annual Mill-Luck Salmon Celebration along the Southern Oregon coast each September. This year's event takes place Saturday and Sunday, September 10 and 11, with a full weekend of festivities. Attendees can watch tribal canoe races, browse through a selection of tribal vendors with crafts for sale, see demonstrations and experience hands-on activities. Live music and authentic Native American dancing, drumming and flute playing will take place along with a traditional salmon bake meal for all. The free festival takes place in the Mill Casino parking lot in North Bend. See themillcasino.com.

EVENT



CRANBERRY CELEBRATION

Feel a little ocean spray on the Oregon coast during the seventy-sixth annual Bandon Cranberry Festival, a time-honored tradition in a community that loves its cranberries. Celebrate the local cranberry farmers of Bandon September 9 to 11 with a parade, pageant, live music, classic cars and farm equipment plus the annual cranberry eating contest. Activities also include a competition among cranberry cooks vying to be crowned Queen of the Kitchen. See bandon.com.

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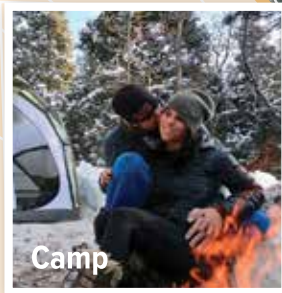
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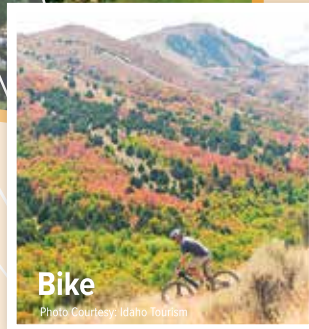
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Color and Coffee

PAIR THESE LEAF-PEEPING DESTINATIONS WITH A CUP OF LOCAL COFFEE THIS FALL

WRITTEN BY DAN SHRYOCK

Fallen leaves scent the cool breeze and crackle underfoot. It's time to do some leaf peeping—otherwise known as viewing colorful fall foliage. Here are five places to enjoy the view, paired with five shops to get a warm drink afterward. Pumpkin spice latte, anyone?

Silver Falls State Park, **OREGON**

Silver Falls State Park, 30 miles east of Salem, is the largest Oregon state park. Look for the massive bigleaf maple tree at the South Falls viewpoint that frames autumn colors against the iconic South Falls. This may be the most accessible, picturesque spot in the park. Take in more leaves while stretching your legs along the Trail of Ten Falls. A nearby bike path and nature trail provide wider views. Then, follow Highway 214 through the trees to Silverton and the Silverton Coffee Station, an old gas station turned charming destination for tea and coffee. See stateparks.oregon.gov.

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, **IDAHO**

Venture north to the Idaho Panhandle where the golden needle-like leaves of the larch trees glow across the slopes of the Selkirk and Purcell mountains. A 4.5-mile auto tour through the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge shows off the 2,774-acre sanctuary where there's much more to see than trees; for instance, 300 wildlife species. Sip a cup of Red Rooster Coffee Company's brew at the eclectic Under the Sun bistro, gift store and coffee shop at Bonners Ferry. Once the town hardware store, that vibe lingers today. See fws.gov.



Silver Falls State Park

PHOTO: TM GRAUDIER





Upper Klamath Lake, OREGON

Consider paddling your way past the fall foliage. The Upper Klamath Canoe Trail stretches for nearly ten miles adjacent to the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway near Rocky Point. Here the changing aspen leaves are super striking against a big, beautiful backdrop of pine-green. Not interested in kayaking? Enjoy vibrant colors on a drive from Klamath Falls north on Highway 140. Visit Brevada in Klamath Falls for their signature coffee, the Brevada, made with coconut oil and butter. See recreation.gov.

Lake Crescent, WASHINGTON

A drive to Lake Crescent is beautiful any time of year; the lake especially shines when red alders and bigleaf maples turn each autumn, contrasting against Douglas firs, spruces, cedars and the blue water. Don't expect reds and browns. Look for variations of greens and yellows. Follow

Highway 101 from Port Angeles or walk along the lush, paved Olympic Discovery Trail. At the Great Northern Coffee Bar in downtown Port Angeles, try the Haywire—dark roast coffee with a shot of espresso. See nps.gov.

Eagle Island State Park, IDAHO

Cottonwood and oak trees dominate this 545-acre park wedged between the north and south channels of the Boise River northwest of the capital city. Walk or bike across the park and beside the water and look for Russian olive leaves changing from green to yellow to brown in early October when viewing is best. Warm up with a pour over coffee at Push & Pour, located downtown in Garden City. See parksandrecreation.idaho.gov.

CLOCKWISE: Blue water at Upper Klamath Lake contrasts with warm colors of fall, Larch trees turn golden yellow at Deep Creek Trail in Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Crescent surrounded by a warm palette of foliage.

SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest—but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it for our *Sedona Turquoise Collection*. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique,



one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for **just \$99**.

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The supply of Arizona turquoise is limited, don't miss your chance to own the Southwest's brilliant blue treasure. Call today!

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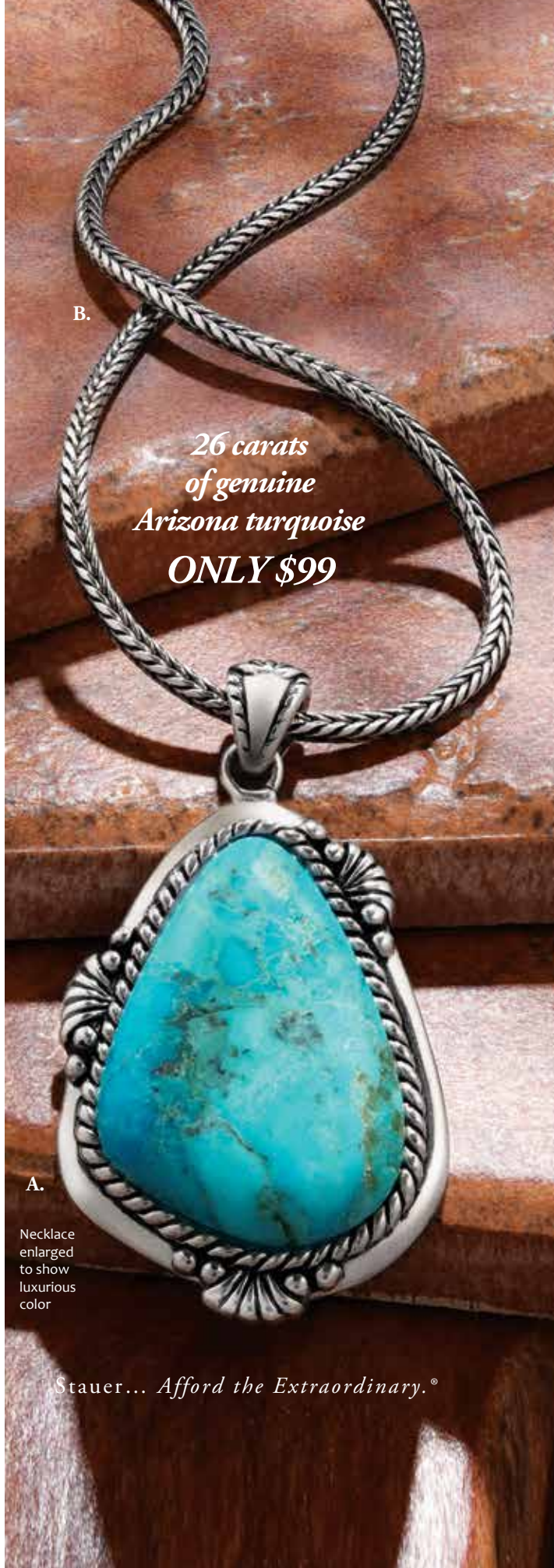
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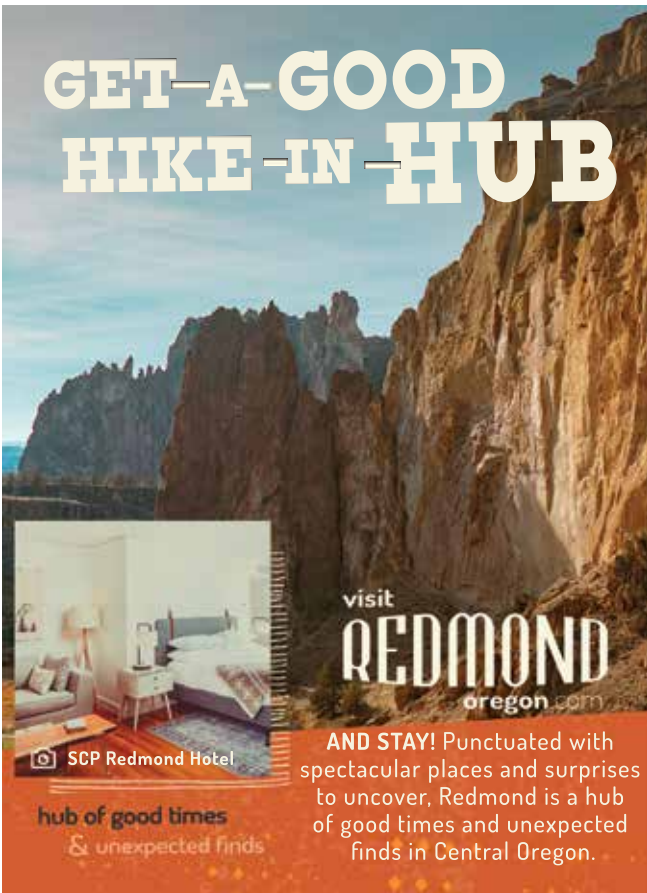
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COLLEGE TOWN VIBES IN MOSCOW, IDAHO

WRITTEN BY ADAM SAWYER



The charming college town of Moscow sits in the north central Idaho Panhandle near the Washington border. Named by a settler who established a trading post here in 1871 and gave the place the same moniker of his hometown back in Russia, today the idyllic city is home to the University of Idaho and roughly 25,000 residents. That modest population belies a thriving art and culinary scene rivaling many larger Northwest cities. Combined with lodging, shopping and outdoor recreation opportunities that also play above their weight, Moscow makes for a desirable weekend destination.

gorgeous in any season, visit the **University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden**, which displays more than 17,000 plant species, a xeriscape garden and numerous trails.

Moscow is located in the heart of Palouse country, home to the Appaloosa horse. The **Appaloosa Museum & Heritage Center** was established to collect, preserve, study and exhibit objects and information that detail the history of the renowned local breed that was an integral part of the Nez Perce culture.

Editor's note: In this era of the COVID-19 pandemic and frequent wildfires, travel conditions can change quickly. Before you go, please confirm the road access, open status and hours of any place you plan to visit.

LEFT: Drinking wine at Colter's Creek Winery.

RIGHT: Wandering the paths at Idler's Rest Nature Preserve.

Sights

The **Farmers Market** is a beloved Moscow institution and a must-visit from May through October. The Saturday morning event features local farmers, artists, craftspeople and musicians who help set the tone for the weekend. Also,

Outdoors

The **Bill Chipman Palouse Trail** is a 7-mile paved pathway between Pullman and Moscow ideal for walking, running, biking and skating. If you prefer exploring on two wheels, **Paradise Creek Bicycles** offers rentals and biking and skating. For family-friendly hiking close to town that feels farther afield, try **Idler's Rest Nature Preserve**; a conservatory of peaceful woods adjacent to



pastoral Palouse farmlands just northeast of Moscow. More ambitious hikers will want to head to the **Elk Creek Falls Recreation Area**, 50 miles east of Moscow. The **National Recreation Trail** visits three separate, unique waterfalls that plunge a combined 140 feet through a rugged canyon.

themselves. The tasting room sits in the historic Hattabaugh building downtown and offers wine tasting at the bar or an interior patio.

LEFT: Inside the local shop *Intrigue*.

TOP RIGHT: Dishing up pizzas at *Maialina Pizzeria Napoletana*.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Picking out local greens at the farmers market.

Eats

Hunga Dunga Brewing Company is a standout brewpub offering a broad swath of beer styles alongside a commensurately eclectic food menu. To experience one of the cornerstones of the Moscow culinary scene, try **Maialina Pizzeria Napoletana**, producing authentic Neapolitan pizza and rustic Italian fare with local and seasonal ingredients since 2013. A stellar option for New American cuisine is the **Nectar**; a prime spot for a smart cocktail or a glass of wine pre- or post-night on the town.

Speaking of wine, Idaho has come to be a recognized vineyard and wine producing region. **The Colter's Creek Winery Tasting Room** in Moscow allows visitors to sample and see for

Shops

Essential Art Gallery & Fine Gifts offers remarkable works from more than 100 different American and Canadian artists; the perfect spot for a locally sourced gift or art piece. If you're in the market for something more exotic, the items found at **Intrigue** are hand-selected from artisans worldwide.

Sleeps

Monarch Motel is a lovingly renovated former roadside motel that now sports modern mid-century style with thoughtful touches and updates. Locally owned and operated, the Monarch still feels like old-time Moscow, with a dash of metro. Downtown, the **Hattabaugh Hotel** is located above the Colter's Creek tasting room. The four-room hotel provides luxury with eco-friendly accents. 🌿

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Beyond THE PAR

MIX A GREAT GAME WITH MOUNTAIN
VIEWS AT PICTURESQUE GOLF RESORTS

WRITTEN BY MAGGY LEHMICKE



Head professional, Cody Hasten, hitting out of the bunker on the second hole at Haymaker Golf Course.

PHOTO: NOAH WETZEL



Driving into Steamboat Springs, Colorado seemed like driving into the Swiss Alps with the views of rolling hills and valleys dotted with rustic ranches and herds of dairy cows. We rounded a corner 10 miles outside of town and were struck by 180-degree views of Lake Catamount and the infinite evergreens that make up Routt National Forest. As a Colorado native, my husband chose this location for his birthday weekend, and it wasn't hard to understand why.

After grabbing a quick lunch at Salt & Lime, one of the most celebrated taco joints in town, we immediately set out to Haymaker Golf Course. The 233-acre marvel is located in the midst of Yampa Valley and only a seven-minute drive from downtown Steamboat. As soon as we pulled into the parking lot, we were greeted by what appeared to be a resident hawk watching us from a nearby flagpole—an ode to the course's distinction as a cooperative sanctuary by Audubon International. Our visit during shoulder season meant fewer encounters with people and more with local fauna.

It was abundantly clear that Haymaker—much like the rest of Steamboat Springs—caters to those with a great appreciation for the outdoors. The traditional, Scottish links-style course seamlessly melds with the topography, featuring undulating greens and views of Mount Werner at every turn. Native wetlands, a St. Andrews replica bridge and the occasional roaming coyote were the primary obstacles. It was around hole number 11—"The Watering Hole"—that I was most taken aback; the fairway served as a red carpet for the tranquil pond and seemingly endless mountain range in the distance.

Views of Mount Werner flowing into pastoral land surround Haymaker Clubhouse.



Playing from 5,059 to 7,308 yards, the 18-hole championship course has at least four sets of tees per hole and caters to a range of abilities from novice to professional. Beyond the course itself, Haymaker's lodge-like clubhouse and expansive outdoor patio were the perfect pit stop between plays, offering burgers and blistered shishito peppers paired with views of the high Rocky Mountains. It also touts a family-friendly practice facility with a driving range and putting green.

Less crowded hiking trails, easy accessibility to the city's best restaurants and brisk, 60-degree weather that's perfect for taking a dip in Strawberry Park Hot Springs are just a few perks of visiting outside of peak season. It was the course that drew us to Steamboat Springs, but we knew the mountains and surrounding wilderness would keep us coming back. See haymakergolf.com.

MORE GOLF RESORTS WITH MOUNTAIN VIEWS TO ADD TO YOUR BUCKET LIST:

Old Works Golf Course

ANACONDA, MONTANA

Touting a newly remodeled clubhouse that reopened this past spring, this historic, Jack Nicklaus-designed course is nestled in southwest Montana's Anaconda Range, offering views of Garrity Mountain, Table Mountain and other

peaks. The course has a unique backstory built on the area's rich mining history and copper smelting sites; what was once a Superfund cleanup site is now a world-class golf course. While the town of Anaconda is relatively small, the surrounding region attracts outdoor adventure junkies of all types. Ziplining, horseback riding and backwoods ATV tours are just a few popular activities. Those who'd like to delve even deeper into the area's mining legacy can also tour Granite Ghost Town State Park and the Anaconda Smelter Stack. See playoldworks.com.

Anchorage Golf Course

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Located on a hillside overlooking the city, players at Anchorage Golf Course enjoy expansive views not only of the Chugach Mountains, but of the granddaddy mount Denali itself. Beautiful tree-lined greens, 6,660 yards of golfing terrain and the opportunity to play under the midnight sun contribute to this growing attraction. The spectacular location isn't the only thing putting this place on the map, as the course hosted the state's first United States Golf Association (USGA) championship this past summer. Visitors can also indulge in the city's growing food scene, participate in a Salmon Berry Tour or stop by the Alaska Native Heritage Center for cultural immersion. See anchoragegolfcourse.com.

The Coeur d'Alene Resort Golf Course

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO

This bucket-list course has a lot to offer, but is known primarily for one thing: a floating green. The famous 14th hole is located on a moveable island in Lake Coeur d'Alene that can be played anywhere from 90 to 220 yards and is commemorated with a quick shuttle ride in the resort's "putter" boat. Serious golfers can also consider one of the resort's stay-and-play packages, featuring luxury lakeside accommodations, a forecaddie service, lake shuttle transportation and more. While it's known for golf, the lakeside location and dramatic mountain backdrop make the resort a great kickoff point for outdoor activities including paddleboarding, kayaking and skiing. See cdaresort.com.



Access the 14th hole at the Coeur d'Alene Resort Golf Course by "putter" boat.



Play golf in Coeur d'Alene with lake and mountain views.

Four championship golf courses await players at Silvies Valley Ranch.



Goats act as caddies at Silvies Valley Ranch.

Silvies Valley Ranch

SENECA, OREGON

Located halfway between Bend and Boise, 140,000-acre Silvies Valley Ranch is home to four championship golf courses—one of which is reversible, meaning the direction and layout are switched each day. Though the courses alone are enough to attract avid golfers, the ranch's charming goat caddie program sets it apart, as well as the newly introduced winter golf option featuring high-loft clubs and tennis balls that can be spotted easily in the snow. Beyond golf, Western-inspired activities such as cattle roundups, wagon rides, cave tours and horseback treks are all popular pastimes. Silvies is also home to a spa with extensive amenities, including a large lap pool and indoor climbing wall. See silvies.us.

Maggy Lehmicke is a freelance writer based in North Bend, WA who covers travel and food throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. When she's not writing, you can find her traversing the Snoqualmie Valley with her dogs or seeking out the best local ramen joint with her husband.



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The Road Trip LOCAVORE

How to turn your next vacation
into a food lover's adventure

WRITTEN BY KELLY CLARKE



Food truck pavilion called The Lot in Bend, Oregon.

When the global pandemic struck, avid travelers Tim Carson and his wife, Marissa Fry, made a big leap: they rented out their California home, converted to remote work schedules and hit the pavement in their Ford F-150 with their two young children. They embarked on an epic, months-long road trip, traveling through Bend, Oregon, Victor, Idaho, Washington’s lush Olympic National Park and beyond.

Carson said they quickly found an essential ingredient to road trip success is where you choose to eat. “Wherever we go, we try to eat as local as possible,” he said, noting that dining at mom-and-pop restaurants is a cheat sheet for feeling at home while you’re on the road. “It helps support [the town you’re visiting] and to boot—those spots are usually pretty great!”

Carson’s maxim holds true for vacations of any duration: sure, some of the appeal of a road trip is

spur-of-the-moment discovery, but as the miles zip by, intrepid adventurers can quickly turn into hangry zombies. Amazing food experiences are often left in the rearview mirror in favor of convenient drive thru burgers and personality-free chain restaurants.

With a little forethought and sleuthing, any traveler can become a road trip locavore by dining at farm-to-table restaurants and small-town hidden gems that deepen the experience of your vacation with every bite. Here’s how to seek out the freshest, most authentic local foods on your next road travel trip.

FOLLOW THE INTERNET BREADCRUMBS

“I travel for food. And when you’re researching trips, the internet is your best friend!” said Michelle Bergey, who runs Oregon food tour company Lost Plate Portland, specializing in tours of chef-run and under-the-radar



eateries. However, she admits the internet is a big place, and it can be daunting to know where to start finding information about a new city and its foods.

First Step: Map your route and familiarize yourself with towns you'll pass on your way to your ultimate destination. For instance, if you're planning a trip from Portland, Oregon to Southern Idaho, jot down the names of the little burgs you'll pass as you make your way through the Columbia River Gorge, along the Snake River and through bigger cities such as Hood River, Boise and Twin Falls.

Next, get Googling. Start broad by searching cities' names plus general keywords like "top restaurants," "signature dishes" or "farm to table." Each search will reveal stories and posts noting specific food and recurring restaurant names to jot down and cross-reference as you continue your research.

Shortcut Alert: The Food Network's site hosts a "Fifty States of Must-Try Food" list (Idaho's is a baked potato and Oregon reps a Marionberry pie). Meanwhile, Thrillist regularly posts their own solid lists like "The One Must-Eat Food in Every State."

If you get overwhelmed, you can always simply pair city names with the term "foodie." Googling for that theoretical Oregon-to-Idaho road trip may lead you to food blogger The Hangry Backpacker's. The blog features an amazing rundown of rural Eastern Oregon town Baker City's food scene, from restaurants decorated with elk heads to a family-run steakhouse that boasts an Oregon Trail-style Conestoga wagon salad bar in the middle of its dining room.

LEFT Marionberry pie is a must-try food in Oregon.

MIDDLE Learn how to make seafood paella at The Basque Market in Boise, Idaho.

RIGHT Trust host Guy Fieri of "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives" for off-the-radar eats like Westside Drive In of Boise, Idaho.

BELOW On the waterfront of the Columbia River in The Dalles, the Bargeway Pub makes a great stop for fresh air.





PHOTOS TOP LEFT ISTOCK.COM/ MEGANBETZ | TOP MIDDLE ANDREW WOMACK | TOP RIGHT PNW FOODBLOGGY | BELOW COURTESY OF TRAVEL OREGON

Don't be afraid to crawl down a few internet rabbit holes. An example: Do you follow the James Beard Awards (the food world equivalent of the Oscars)? A quick search of James Beard plus Destination City may yield far more than you may expect. It turns out that the chef at Boise's high-end Basque tapas restaurant, Ansots, was nominated for a James Beard award in 2022.

A quick secondary search of Basque food plus Boise reveals that Idaho has been a hotbed of cuisine for more than a century thanks to an influx of Basque sheep farmers who immigrated to the area in the 1800s.

ENLIST THE EXPERTS, OLD AND NEW

Next, narrow down your quest for culinary greatness by enlisting experts. Try searching town names and keywords paired with brands and experts you trust as well as social media influencers.

"Local food bloggers and foodies on Instagram are a great resource," said Bergey. "I look at their photos and reviews and see what matches up with the [kinds of] food I want to eat."

Long-haul road-tripper Tim Carson said he calls friends and family who previously visited a destination for insider info on the local food scene; however, his first research step is always to consult "Triple D"—the Food Network's longtime road trip show "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives."

"Did [host] Guy Fieri find a place [along our route] that we can go eat at? Seriously, that's where we start," said Carson with a laugh. "We watch the episode and if Fieri really liked it, we say, 'okay, let's go!' It's always good." Visit foodnetwork.com to search featured "Triple D" restaurants by state, such as Boise's Bar Gernika Basque Pub or Portland's nearly century old Otto's Sausage Kitchen.

The biggest influencers are locals themselves. It's a time-tested fact that most humans are happy to share their opinions on food. Before you head out, take time to call local tourism bureaus for recommendations. You'll be surprised how often staffers will be excited to talk to you. Once you're en route, Carson reminds fellow travelers to ask restaurant servers or local shop owners where they love to eat. "We get a ton of great recommendations that way," he said.

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

Your tasty research doesn't have to end at a restaurant table either. "Everywhere I travel, I try to find a neighborhood



Learn about a new city though its farmers market.

farmers market to go visit. They are different and unique in every city,” said Ali Nicole Noyer, Oregon culinary tour guide. “You get true local flavors at a farmers market, because they are using ingredients that are in season. You can just walk around, have a coffee and pastry, and see what the farmers have.”

Noyer hosts Farm 2 Fork tours featuring sustainable or regenerative Willamette Valley farms from cheesemakers to Oregon Coast oyster operations—all in an effort to connect people with “where their food comes from.” She reminds travelers that many farmers also host their own tours of their property. “It’s the kind of unique experience you won’t get anywhere else,” she said.

In general, it’s useful to check out any guided food tour options. Michelle Bergey hosts a Portland tour wholly focused on coffee and donuts—a true local passion. Bergey said if you can’t fit a tour into your trip itinerary, scan a company’s website for lists of food destinations and recommendations.

Ready to really get your hands dirty? Take a cooking class or embark on your own guided food adventure; learn to make seafood paella at Boise culinary stalwart the Basque Market; join a chartered fishing expedition in the Columbia River Gorge or go kayak crabbing on the Oregon Coast.

Delicious experiences may be just a few minutes’ worth of research away. Or, you could just fuel up on rest stop

peanuts and coffee during your next blacktop odyssey. A road trip is always a choose-your-own-adventure.

GO TO THE SOURCE: AAA

Seasoned traveler Jae Tauber, who road trips from her home in Southwest Portland to Minnesota each year, said she leaned on AAA for suggestions for decades. “We used to go to the AAA office, get maps and trip books and see what people had to say about the restaurants [along our route],” she said. “Now times are changing, so we go to AAA online!”

Download the digital editions of AAA’s time-tested tour books at tourbook.aaa.com, or plug in your destination on AAA’s TripTik Planner app for plenty of AAA-inspected restaurant recommendations capturing the vibe of the towns on your route, especially in lesser-known areas. Tip: Look for spots rated “Three Diamonds” for sure bets. 🍀

Kelly Clarke is the former Editor-in-Chief of Portland Monthly magazine. She now splits time between Oregon and Thailand, writing about delicious regional food, culture and under-the-radar travel experiences.

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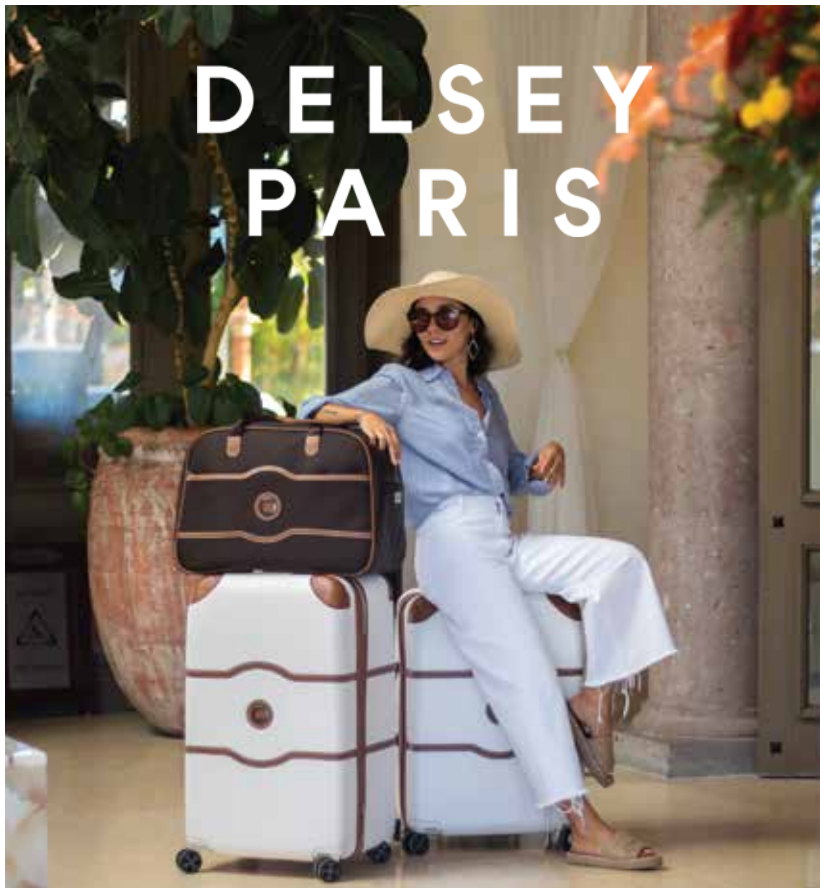
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Adventures in traveling to see the
Alaskan aurora borealis

WRITTEN BY MATT WASTRADOWSKI



Fairbanks, Alaska

When my girlfriend and I booked a vacation to see the aurora borealis in Alaska, we figured we'd enjoy dazzling displays every night. We'd booked our trip for mid-March—one of the best times of year to see the northern lights. As long as forecasts were favorable, I assumed the sky would pop with dancing waves of brilliant green, purple and pink light every night. On our flight's descent into Anchorage, outside our cabin near Fairbanks, basically, whenever the sun went down, we'd see the famous northern lights.

Yet, there we were on our first night in Fairbanks, anxiously awaiting the show to begin from inside Aurora Pointe. My girlfriend and I joined a few dozen travelers at the cozy hilltop viewing shelter, where the plan was to stay warm inside while waiting for the lights to appear outside. I was so sure of the aurora's imminent arrival, I briefly considered leaving my parka on so I could sprint outside as soon as the first flicker of light appeared above the horizon.

As we settled in, pouring coffee at the self-serve station to steel ourselves for a long night of viewing, a knowledgeable speaker debriefed us on the aurora—what it is, how it happens and why a display was unlikely that night. The starry night skies, he informed us, would most likely remain just that.

This bad news—and my own ignorance—took me by surprise. *What do you mean the aurora won't come out tonight? Doesn't it come out whenever the skies are clear?*

As it turns out: No. The aurora does not, in fact, appear whenever the skies are clear. As I learned that evening, a clear sky is just one of many factors that have to line up for the natural phenomenon to make an appearance, most importantly, the location of the ever-moving aurora oval. Even if conditions are right, there's no guarantee a display of the kind captivating humankind since time immemorial will materialize on any given night.

So there I sat for four hours, anxiously watching a webcam livestream that showed nearby night skies in between games of Uno with my far more patient girlfriend. Every so often, I'd stretch my legs with a quick walk outside, peering into the darkness and wishing for even the slightest glimpse. Occasionally, I'd check my phone to see if *this* reading or *that* measurement had changed since I last looked five minutes ago. But at 2 a.m., with Aurora Pointe closing for the night, my girlfriend and I threw on our parkas, walked to our car, and reminded each other that we still had several more days in Alaska.

Alas, the northern lights never materialized on our trip. I can't paint a dramatic picture of what it's like to stand under the soul-stirring aurora borealis. Still, I can offer a few tips for giving yourself the best chance to see the natural phenomenon, and recommendations for where to enjoy the rest of your time in Anchorage and Fairbanks, the state's most popular aurora destinations.



LEFT Alaska Photo Treks tour company takes visitors on photo expeditions outside Anchorage.

BELOW The Alaska Railroad is outfitted with transparent ceilings to allow on-board aurora viewing.



AURORA BOREALIS 101

What is the aurora, anyway? According to Don Hampton, research associate professor with the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the aurora borealis begins when particles from the sun enter the Earth's atmosphere. As soon as that happens, our planet's magnetic field directs those particles to Earth's north and south magnetic poles—where the sun's particles collide with oxygen and nitrogen in our planet's atmosphere, gaining energy. Ultimately, the particles release that energy as light—creating the dazzling effects of the aurora borealis in the north. Aurora displays can be more or less vibrant due to a number of factors: how fast the solar wind arrives in our atmosphere, the density of those particles and so forth.

More or less, “aurora season” is whenever it's dark enough at night to see the lights. The best viewing months are typically September, October and March, while cloudy skies render December and January some of the worst viewing months. Then on a given night, Hampton says the dramatic green lights are most active between 1:30 a.m. and 3 a.m.—so dress warm.

Much of Alaska, including Fairbanks, sits under what's called the aurora oval—a halo around the geomagnetic poles, always expanding and contracting—that essentially determines whether you might see a display.

You'll likely fly into Anchorage or Fairbanks and make one of those cities your base camp for viewing. If you'd like to split your time between the cities, expect an eight-hour drive each way along the George Parks Highway. If you have time, consider traveling between Anchorage and Fairbanks aboard the famed Alaska Railroad; trains run all winter long, are outfitted with transparent ceilings and are scheduled to allow for on-board aurora viewing.

Mother Nature runs the show so plan your vacation for when it's most convenient, not necessarily when you think the northern lights might appear. Carl Johnson, owner of the Alaska Photo Treks tour company in Anchorage, said that he enjoyed visible displays every night he took a group out in December 2021, while he struck out multiple times the following March, when conditions are usually optimal.

A few resources can help you plan a successful viewing experience. The Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks runs an aurora forecast website that shows the location of the aurora oval, activity levels and predictions for up to twenty-seven days. Explore Fairbanks, the city's destination marketing organization, offers a real-time tracker that covers conditions at various viewpoints, forecasts and more.

PLANNING AN ANCHORAGE VIEWING

The state's largest city sits along Cook Inlet and at the foot of the Chugach Mountains. A handful of tour companies offer outings around Anchorage when conditions are right. Johnson's Alaska Photo Tours company, for instance, may visit up to three locations on a given tour, with each destination chosen on the fly to account for photo-worthy backdrops and the intensity of that night's display. If it's a clear night with little wind and an especially bright display, for instance, Johnson might take visitors to a viewpoint along Cook Inlet for scenic reflective shots.

Our scheduled outing with Johnson was sidelined by cloud cover, but we found plenty to love about the city. Here are a few ideas for making the most of your time in town while not watching the skies.

STAY: The Lakefront Anchorage sits on the shore of Lake Spenard; it offers quick access to Point Woronzof Overlook, where wide-open views to the north afford excellent viewing opportunities, and the Glen Alps Trailhead and Viewpoint in Chugach State Park (one of the most popular viewing spots around Anchorage).

PLAY: The Anchorage Museum hosts four floors stuffed with fascinating exhibits on Alaska's industrial past, Indigenous communities and more. If you're looking to get outdoors, hit the 11-mile Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, which runs along the Cook Inlet; fat tire e-bike rentals are available from Pablo's Bicycle Rentals in downtown, a short ride to the trailhead.

EAT: Snow City Cafe is a popular brunch and lunch spot when you need a pick-me-up after a late night of aurora chasing. The busy diner serves breakfast classics with an Alaskan twist, like smoked salmon cakes and benedicts made with fresh snow crab.

TOP The Lakefront Anchorage deck provides views of float planes landing on Lake Spenard.

MIDDLE Rent bicycles and explore the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, a short ride from downtown.

BOTTOM Lunch at the Snow City Cafe includes classics served with an Alaskan twist.





Salmon Berry Travel & Tours



Visit Museum of the North



Aurora Borealis Lodge

PLANNING A FAIRBANKS VIEWING

Fairbanks may be the land of the midnight sun in summer, but come winter, it's the aurora capital of Alaska. Socked away in Alaska's interior, Fairbanks enjoys a mix of clear nights and close proximity to the aurora oval, both factors that make it a go-to destination for aurora chasers.

Naturally, a variety of outfitters and outposts work to help visitors see the natural phenomenon. For instance, the Alaskan-owned-and-operated Salmon Berry Travel & Tours offers guided tours between December and March; each includes a breakdown of the science behind the northern lights and their importance to Indigenous Alaska Native peoples. Stories vary among Indigenous groups, but many view the lights as the spirits of the dead or spirits of the animals they hunted. Of course, visitors who'd rather skip a guided outing can purchase tickets to Aurora Pointe, just 20 minutes northeast of Fairbanks, where they can keep warm inside a heated hut while waiting for the lights to appear.

Even though sunny skies and clear nights didn't translate into electric aurora displays, we threw ourselves into Fairbanks' many attractions. If you're looking to stay busy during the day, here's how to enjoy your time around Fairbanks.

STAY: Most local hotels will call your room if the northern lights appear, while some cater specifically to aurora chasers: Aurora Borealis Lodge, open between mid-August and mid-April, offers four private rooms with north-facing windows (for the best views) and a log home with a 15-foot-tall viewing platform in the front yard.

PLAY: The Museum of the North at the University of Alaska Fairbanks goes in-depth on the state's biggest ecological regions through interpretive panels, animal displays and more.

EAT: Around town, you'll find more than a dozen Thai restaurants, including a few drive-thru spots. Fairbanks' love affair with Thai food began in 1989 with Thai House Restaurant, which remains a community stalwart three decades later. 🍜

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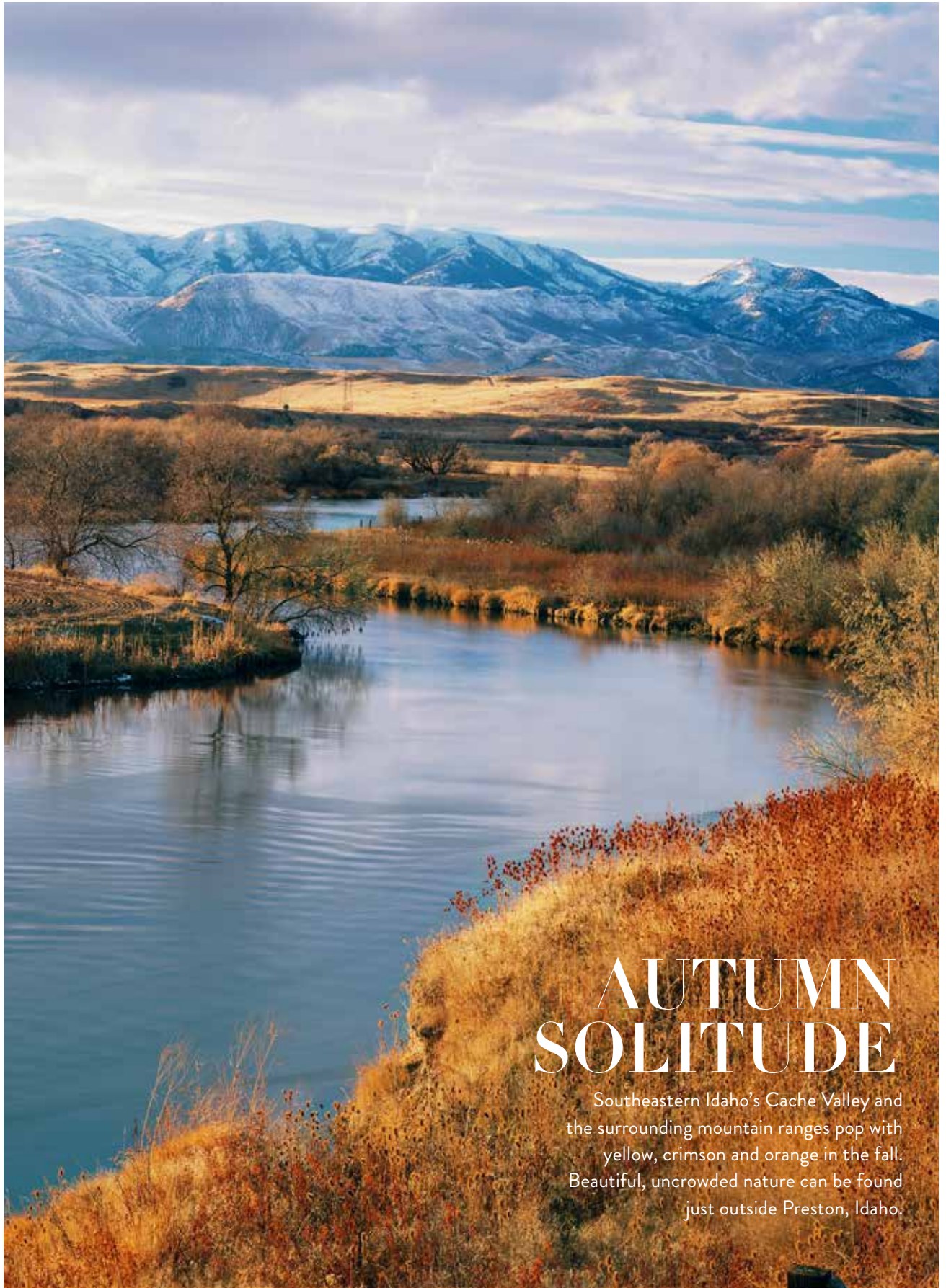
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AUTUMN SOLITUDE

Southeastern Idaho's Cache Valley and the surrounding mountain ranges pop with yellow, crimson and orange in the fall. Beautiful, uncrowded nature can be found just outside Preston, Idaho.

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