



of the  
BEST

## LESS-VISITED CITIES

For a US city break without the crowds,  
**Laura French** rounds up some top options

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hile a city break to the Big Apple will never get old, the US is seriously vast, and beyond the likes of New York, LA, Washington DC and San Francisco, there are a wealth of under-the-radar spots that don't always get the attention they deserve (and that might just offer a little more bang for your buck too).

We've picked out some of the best for anyone looking to go a little off-piste and escape the crowds – from cultural San Antonio to foodie Sacramento via Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Williamsburg and beyond.



### PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Small-town charm and a laid-back pace meet all the lures of a big-time city in historic Philly, the former home of Benjamin Franklin and the site of the Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence and US Constitution were signed. Franklin's legacy lives on in the museums and monuments that scatter the streets (the Benjamin Franklin Museum is especially unmissable), rubbing shoulders with a vibrant art, music and culture scene. Pay a visit to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, famous for the Rocky Steps, featured in the namesake film; wander the streets of Fishtown, known for its colourful murals; and head to Reading Terminal Market for some of the best street food in the city.

**Book it:** America As You Like it offers four nights' room-only at the Wyndham Philadelphia Historic District from £895 per person, based on two sharing a room in low season, including flights and car hire. [americaasyoulikeit.com](http://americaasyoulikeit.com)

PICTURE: Shutterstock/f11 photo

# DESTINATIONS

## THE US | CITIES

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### SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

From the Day of the Dead River Parade in October, when neon-lit barges light up the water, to the Alamo – a former Spanish mission church and the site of a 13-day siege during the Texas Revolution – San Antonio isn't short on things to see and do. The canals of the River Walk are worth a wander at any time of year, with pedestrianised pathways flanked by leafy gardens and cafes, while the San Antonio Botanical Garden offers up plenty of green space. Culinary enthusiasts won't be short-changed either, with some of the country's best Tex-Mex chefs found here. Don't miss Domingo, serving tacos, quesadillas and other Mexican dishes right on the River Walk; and Mixtli, which offers a 12-course tasting menu with plenty of artsy twists.

**Book it:** Gold Medal offers four nights' room-only at the Comfort Suites Alamo Riverwalk from £849 per person, including flights on October 26. [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk)

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### CINCINNATI, OHIO

Set on the banks of the Ohio River, Cincinnati is well worth a visit for anyone interested in history. The 'Queen of the West' played a major role in the abolitionist movement and was a key point on the Underground Railroad, the network of routes used by people escaping from slavery. Anyone interested in finding out more should visit the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Other must-see spots include the Cincinnati Museum Center, whose art deco, mural-covered interiors inspired DC Comics' Hall of Justice; Eden Park, offering sweeping views over the Ohio River; and the Great American Ball Park, home of the Cincinnati Reds, one of the oldest professional baseball teams in the US.

**Book it:** Premier Holidays offers a 10-night self-drive combining Cincinnati with Louisville, Memphis, Nashville and beyond from £1,799 per person, including flights, car hire and accommodation. [premierholidays.co.uk](http://premierholidays.co.uk)

PICTURES: Shutterstock/RDNichols, Sean Pavone







**SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

The capital of the Golden State, Sacramento is often overshadowed by its glitzier Californian siblings – but those who make the effort find ample reward, from an exceptional culinary offering to an abundance of outdoor adventures around nearby Lake Tahoe and Yosemite. In the city, wander the cobbled streets of Old Sacramento to see Gold Rush-era buildings; take a ride along the waterfront in a horse-drawn carriage; tour the elegant State Capitol building; or explore a thriving farm-to-fork scene in the city’s many restaurants and enjoy a craft beer at one of its buzzy breweries.

**Book it:** North America Travel Service offers tailor-made itineraries to Sacramento, including direct flights from Heathrow and four nights at the four-star Citizen Hotel. Prices start at £1,399 per person, based on two adults sharing, travelling in March 2024. [northamericatravelservice.co.uk](http://northamericatravelservice.co.uk)



**WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA**

A living museum that played a key role in the American Revolution and was Britain’s largest colony in the New World, Williamsburg offers a snapshot into the country’s past. At its heart is Colonial Williamsburg – a restored historic district where well-preserved buildings, including the Governor’s Palace and Capitol (*pictured*), line cobbled streets and costumed actors recreate 18th-century life. Elsewhere, visitors can tour the Williamsburg Winery for tastings amid 16 hectares of vineyards, explore the craft breweries and distilleries of the Williamsburg Tasting Trail, or get active in the nearby York River State Park.

**Book it:** Trafalgar visits Williamsburg on its eight-day Historic Highlights tour, from £2,426 including accommodation, transport, guide and activities. [trafalgar.com](http://trafalgar.com)



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### TUCSON, ARIZONA

Arizona isn't short on far-out towns befitting of Western movie sets, but for one of the most underrated, look to Tucson. Set in the heart of the Sonoran Desert, this atmospheric city makes an excellent base for explorations in the wilderness, with mountains stretching off in every direction, and hiking and biking in abundance. There's plenty to do within its borders too: delve into the stars at the Kitt Peak National Observatory; eyeball towering cacti at the Tucson Botanical Gardens; and explore the city's cultural attractions – including the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and the Pima Air & Space Museum – while indulging in classic cuisine with all the hospitality you'd expect from the American Southwest.

**Book it:** Inspiring Travel offers a week at Hacienda Del Sol Guest Ranch Resort from £2,119 per person, including flights from Heathrow on June 7, 2024.

[inspiringtravel.co.uk](https://inspiringtravel.co.uk)



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### MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Culture lovers might not think of Minneapolis as a go-to art destination, but in its Walker Art Center and Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, you'll find a collection of contemporary works and sculptures up there with the best the country has to offer – as well as a rooftop 10-hole mini-golf course featuring artist-designed holes. Not to be outdone, the city's Institute of Art boasts an equally impressive 90,000-strong collection, while Frank Gehry's striking Frederick R Weisman Museum of Art is home to some of the country's best Indigenous American pottery (and it's free to enter). There's plenty for outdoor fans too, including the Minnehaha Regional Park and Chain of Lakes Regional Park, where nearly 15 miles of trails connect the shorelines of five lakes.

**Book it:** Audley Travel's 11-day tailor-made trip to the Midwest features three nights in Minneapolis. Prices start at £3,100 per person, based on two travelling, including accommodation, flights, car hire and excursions. [audleytravel.com](https://audleytravel.com)

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Janson George, Sie Lane, Sean Pavone





**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

Visitors to Memphis often breeze in and out on a bus tour to Graceland – but as the home of blues, soul and rock’n’roll, there’s plenty more to see here beyond the realms of the King. Unsurprisingly, most attractions are focused on music, including Sun Studio, the Rock ‘n’ Soul Museum, Blues Hall of Fame and Stax Museum of American Soul Music. But there are several other must-visits, such as the National Civil Rights Museum, the First Baptist Beale Street (the first brick-constructed, multistorey church in the US, built for African Americans) and America’s very own Great Pyramid.

**Book it:** Riviera Travel visits Memphis on its 13-night Deep South USA Plus Texas, which starts at £3,999 per person. The price includes flights from London or Manchester on March 13, 2024, B&B accommodation in three or four-star properties, transfers, excursions and the services of a tour manager.

[rivieratravel.co.uk](http://rivieratravel.co.uk)

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