

AFAR

52 Places to Travel in the U.S. This Year

By Nicholas DeRenzo

AFAR

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A coast-to-coast guide to the coolest experiences happening in all 50 states (plus Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C.) right now



Clockwise from Top Left: Courtesy of Lafayette Hotel; Courtesy of West Virginia State Parks; Genesis Azaria; Courtesy of Hawaii Tourism/Tommy Lundberg; Courtesy of Neng Jr.'s; David Walter Banks; Courtesy of Tippet Rise Art Center; Rita Harper

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This story is part of Afar's America 250 coverage, which includes articles, podcasts, and social media storytelling.

In celebration of America's 250th birthday in 2026, we've searched the country for the boldest, artsiest, buzziest, friendliest, tastiest, booziest things going on right now. Indigenous art galleries, immigrant-owned barbecue joints, revitalized rivers made for whitewater rafting, new expedition cruise routes, Nordic-themed sauna road trips, retro beach hotels: Here are 52 unique places and experiences that have us ready to book a flight and go explore.

POLSKIN
ARTS

The West



Alaska's Aleutian Islands are one of the most far-flung places you can cruise to in North America.
Photo by Catie Bergman Photography

Montana: Walk among eye-catching contemporary art

Set on a 12,500-acre ranch just north of [Yellowstone](#), [Tippet Rise Art Center](#) features a collection of monumental sculptures by the likes of Alexander Calder and [Ai Weiwei](#). Last August, the campus debuted an open-air music venue, the Geode, comprising four triangular structures that reflect the music played within them as audiences take in views of the Beartooth Mountains. Those who don't snag a seat through the ticket drawing can still hike or bike through the art-filled landscape. Also new is Ursula von Rydingsvard's *Bronze Bowl with Lace*, and codirector Lindsey Hinmon is excited for visitors to "see firsthand how the sculpture's patina and hued texture reflects and merges with the surrounding grasses, sage, soil, and rocks." —*JG*

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