

**CRUISE** Into New Mexico's  
Secret RV Oasis

**SHOP** The Perfect Solar  
Power Setup

**IGNITE** Your Galley with  
3 Spicy New Recipes

# I ♥ RVing

## BLAZING WINTER'S DESERT ROAD

*YOUR SEARCH FOR  
A SEASONAL SIESTA  
JUST WARMED UP*

p. 40

### **+Go Inside**

**A Fish House  
Parked Atop  
a Foot of Ice**



**Winter 2023**

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## BUILT READY TO BLAZE NEW TRAILS

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Ember was formed out of a desire to build a better RV by building a better RV company. To us, that means we'll blaze an uncharted path by crafting innovative products backed by an unparalleled warranty, all with the experience and expertise that customers deserve.

Our trailers are proudly built in the USA. Their construction begins with a stronger foundation: Ember's exclusive Trailblazer™ Off-Road Chassis, featuring the award-winning CURT® Independent Suspension System for improved off-road performance and durability, Goodyear® Wrangler® tires, and our VersaCoupler™



Hitching System, which provides owners more adjustability and customization, easily allowing for upgrades like an articulating hitch. Then we pair it with ample holding tank and LP capacities, standard and upgradeable solar power, and plenty of space for factory-installed Battle Born™ batteries to help you stay off-grid longer. With all these features built right in, your options for where to camp are limitless.

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12/22 05 25 HOK



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# Winter

FEATURES

VOLUME 2 / ISSUE 3 / WINTER 2023



## 26

### The 4 Million+ View Man

Over 4 million views is a big number for any YouTube video. Which begs the question: What is it about? See the story behind an inventor, his custom trailer, and the search for human connection.

*By Mark Settle*

## 46

### Winter's Cool Kids

Snowbirds arriving at Corpus Christi and the Tropic Island Resort can expect to be expected. You see, the Winter Texans are a breath of fresh air, and everyone knows that this is their time in the sun.

*By Mark Settle*

## 60

### Fishing the Big Freeze

Up North, there's a different breed of camper: the ice fisherman. Amid Winter's icy freeze, they park on frozen lakes, drill through the ice, and drop lines into the watery world below. See why they do it.

*By Marc Acton*

## 65

### Brinkley RV's Big Debut

Some RVs, like the Entegra Cornerstone, have made their name by exceeding our every expectation. Others defy expectation altogether. Brinkley RV's out-of-nowhere debut simply floored us. We expect it will floor you too.

# Departments

## 7 CHANGING THE EQUATION

## 8 MIRROR CHECK

*A Brief Look at the RV News and Community*  
Catch up on RV news and highlights, dust off a soundtrack for your desert trek, and see how much you know about solar power.

## 15 AMERICAN VISTA

*Vantage Points of American Beauty*  
Loop as far south as the Texas border goes and see the Rio Grande cutting through the mighty limestone canyons.

## 23 ROAD ABODE

*Improving Life on the Go*  
24 Road Games the Kids Will Love  
26 The Man with 4.4 Million Views  
35 Spicing Things Up

## 39 EDGE OF THE MAP

*From the Highway to the Campground*  
40 Snowbirding the Southwest  
43 Finding the Right Solar Kit  
46 A Warm Welcome for Winter Texans  
53 Florida's Best Snowbird Nests  
54 Getaway Plans for Spring

## 55 RVX

*Camping, Adventure, and the RV Experience*  
56 Panama City Winter Guide  
58 New Mexico's Secret RV Oasis  
60 Parking It on the Ice

## 65 TOP LEVEL

*RV Tech and Tradecraft*  
66 Inside the Entegra Cornerstone  
68 Brinkley RV's Big Debut  
71 The Power of the Pink Stuff  
73 Pump Up Your Water System  
76 The Commander Firepit Tool

## 77 FIRESIDES

*Final Toasts and Last Roasts for the Road*  
77 One Last Moment of Warmth  
78 Puzzles

### Campground Finder

46 Tropic Island Resort, Port Aransas, TX

53 Destin RV Beach Resort, Miramar Beach, FL  
Bickley RV Park, Seminole, FL  
Cypress Trail RV Resort, Fort Myers, FL  
Aztec RV Resort, Margate, FL

54 Mounthaven Resort, Ashford, WA  
J&J RV Park, Hot Springs, AR  
Woodside Lake Park, Streetsboro, OH  
Rutledge Lake RV Park, Fletcher, NC

56 Camper's Inn Inc., Panama City, FL

57 Edgewater Beach and Golf Resort, Panama City Beach, FL



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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US AT THE  
I HEART RVING VIRTUAL GLOBAL CAMPGROUND.  
PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT  
EXTINGUISH ALL FIRES  
SORRY FOR WHAT I SAID WHEN I  
WAS TRYING TO PARK THE RV  
PLEASE RECYCLE THIS MAGAZINE  
(OR, PREFERABLY, GIVE IT TO A FRIEND!)



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## Toward a better state of mind.

Recently, I read about an interesting concept that scientists have come up with. They call it (super-duper officially) the Three-Component Model of Emotions. At its most basic level, it claims that there are three components that make up your emotional state. There are your thoughts. There are your feelings. And your behaviors. Seems pretty simple.

But one of the most compelling things that they've learned is that changing just one component can lead to an emotional advantage. Change a single component and you impact the others. For example, choosing to exercise (a behavior) might help lift your mood if you've got the blues (a feeling). Some experts have even gone further to propose a fourth component: your surroundings. In other words, if you change your surroundings, it could alter your entire emotional landscape.

Now, I may not be a scientist, but check this out. RVing is a behavior that more and more Americans are choosing every day. And it takes campers of every kind and experience level to new surroundings. (Hello, third and fourth component.) True, it's often hard to put into words what is so powerful about RVing. It's not an activity for everyone. And it's not always easy. For some, it's no more than casual weekend fun. But for each and every camper, it provides something more profound—a way to escape the daily grind and move toward something new.

Clearly, RVing moves us all toward a better state of mind.



**“So, wherever you are, and whatever life is throwing at you, you always have a route to somewhere different.”**

We talk a lot about how using an RV means moving from here to there. (Kinda hard not to, right?) There's a lot of fun between here and there. And comfort too. In movement, we can escape from those tired surroundings to a place where we can reshape our mood, our family dynamics, and our perspective. It can be a vehicle for better mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

So, wherever you are, and whatever life is throwing at you, you always have a route to somewhere different.

Take it. If there are bumps along the way, so what? You'll end up somewhere new. And you just might have changed everything for the better—by just having taken the journey.

Love ya, mean it.

*Marc.*

**Marc Acton**  
Publisher

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE RV NEWS AND COMMUNITY



IN THE NEWS

## New Reality TV Show Has RVers Compete

**REALITY TV HAS A LONG AND WILD HISTORY** of giving us some awesome viewertainment. We've seen amazing races and insane challenges. We've seen strangers push themselves to their outermost limits. Strangely enough, what we haven't seen a lot of is RVs. Well—like a producer's timely plot twist—that's all about to change.

This March, the National RV Training Academy (NRVTA) is releasing the first ever RV reality show: "RV Unplugged." And from what we can tell so far, it has everything. Eight RV teams will go head-to-head in

competition, putting their survivor skills to the test in trial after trial for a cash prize of \$10,000. (We don't know yet whether there will be alliances or tribunals, but we're eager to find out.)

Airing on the RV Unplugged YouTube channel, the series will have nine full episodes. Tony Flammia, NRVTA's sales and marketing director, says, "We are really excited to see people tune into the series [and] learn what kind of fun and adventures people enjoy with the RV lifestyle." If those viewers are new to RVing—whew—they're in for a wild ride.



Watch the one-minute trailer to preview this action-packed new show.

## SNOWBIRDS DUCK THE WINTER CAMPING SURGE

► Over 1.3 million more households plan on going camping this winter—a 19 percent jump from last year, according to KOA. Even so, snowbirds shouldn't panic over their parking spots. The uptick in winter camping hasn't driven up snowbird numbers, which are expected to dip about eight percent this season.

1.3M

NEW HOUSEHOLDS PLANNING TO CAMP THIS WINTER

8%

FEWER SNOWBIRDS EXPECTED THIS WINTER

## Jeep Goes Overland into New Terrain

• With 60 years of off-road industry experience, the Utah-based company ADDAX Overland is now partnering with Jeep to tackle new territory, according to Globe Newswire. Clocking in at a lean 850 pounds, the new Jeep-branded Edition ADDAX Overland Trailer is as lightweight as it is rugged. With a military-grade steel chassis seamlessly bent with a 14-gauge steel body, the trailer is designed for durability. "[It] can follow a Jeep Trail-Rated vehicle anywhere," says Jim Morrison, senior VP and head of Jeep North America. "Adventurers can now enjoy the most beautiful and remote places on Earth even longer." Well, Jim Morrison, you're certainly singing our tune.

Get your first look at [AddaxOverland.com/jeep](http://AddaxOverland.com/jeep).



## Female Inmates Train as RV Techs

• Rehabilitation is a passion for Mark Munday, reports the Gatesville Messenger. After 24 years of working for private industry, the resident of Gatesville, Texas has found a new calling with the RV Technical Institute: teaching female inmates how to be RV technicians. "If they can get

a job [after completing their sentence], it's definitely a win-win situation," Munday says. "Taxpayers pay for their education, but once they start making an income, they give back by paying taxes." Female inmates at the Linda Woodman State jail serve shorter sentences, enabling them to use their RV repair skills relatively quickly. So, Munday has it right indeed: It's a total win-win.

Learn more about program at [GatesvilleMessenger.com](http://GatesvilleMessenger.com).



## Hershey's Sweet Sales and Scavenger Hunt

• Last September, the 53rd annual edition of America's Largest RV Show in Hershey, PA welcomed over 51,000 visitors—and over 1,500 RVs. The show saw big sales for manufacturers but also offered seminars by RV pros on purchasing, maintenance, and travel tips. Visitors were even able to experience the Show's first-ever scavenger hunt—with prizes ranging from a Ninja Woodfire™ to a \$250 Visa gift card.

Read more about America's Largest RV Show at [LargestRVShow.com](http://LargestRVShow.com).

## Starlink's Big Mobile Connectivity Leap

• SpaceX is obviously into motion—be that cross-coun-

try or interplanetary. And it is now accepting orders for its new Flat High Performance dish, which complements the Starlink RV service announced in May 2022. The new dish has a hefty price tag, \$2,500, but represents a qualitative leap for RVers looking to connect to the internet on the go. The Flat High Performance dish gives off-gridders enhanced GPS services, improved weather resistance, and—of course—high-speed, low-latency internet. All of which is a future we like to imagine.

See what the future of off-grid internetting holds at [Starlink.com/RV](http://Starlink.com/RV).

## Looking for a Campsite? Your Park Could Text You

• No one likes the last-minute campsite scramble. And officials at the Shenandoah National Park want to put an end to it with a new text-alert system. The text-message channel will convey availability and notify campers about unoccupied campsites in simple language ("Plenty" or "Full") for the park's five campgrounds. Alerts will go out on weekends in the afternoon.

Try out the new system and snag your next site! Text [Shencamp to 888777](tel:888777) to sign up.



## Spread the News

Help keep us posted on what's coming down the pike. Share the news stories you're excited about with the entire I Heart RVing community at [editorial@IHeartRVing.com](mailto:editorial@IHeartRVing.com).

## Desert Tracks

EVERY SONG YOU NEED TO RIDE OFF INTO THE SUNSET.



### Hacienda Brothers, "Son of Saguario"

Heading Southwest has long been a dream set in the American spirit. And the Hacienda Brothers—with their guitars that saunter across a barren soundscape—set a tone for blazing trails through the mesquite.



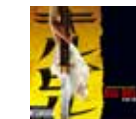
### Twila Paris, "Cry for the Desert"

Maybe it's the bareness of existence, but something spiritual happens in the desert. With its eerie 80s-esque vocals, this track captures the moment when you feel your soul stripped as naked as the terrain.



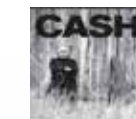
### Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, "Into the Great Wide Open"

We love planning a perfect road trip (see Page 40), but in our heart, we want a wide-open life where we can be a "rebel without a clue." So, yeah, Tom Petty gets us.



### Santa Esmeralda, "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood"

Life on the border has a different rhythm—with Latin guitars strumming, rapid hand-clapping, and heartfelt singing. If you get swept away, don't worry: We understand.



### Johnny Cash, "I've Been Everywhere"

Have we seen a road with so much dust and sand? Oh, yes. Because, like Johnny Cash, we've been everywhere, man—traveling "every road in this here land."



Saddle up at our audio watering hole on Spotify. Click the ♥ on our Desert Tracks playlist to ramble on with Sturgill Simpson, Willie Nelson, and more.

## YOUR ACE-HIGH ON SPOTIFY



Photo: Shutterstock/Vintage Images/Rebekah Zemansky

Photo: Shutterstock/Zyn Chakrapong/Album covers/Spotify



# One Red-Hot Handle

TALKING WITH THE CAMPERS WE LOVE AND FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

→ Once upon a time, Hutch and Shari were educators living that university life. But when Hutch came home one day, he learned that Shari had already bought a trailer. Laughing, he says her message was clear: “I’m leaving, and you’re invited.” So began their great solar adventure, launching a life with way more freedom and a lot less stuff. Dubbing their canned ham camper “Hamlet,” @freedom.in.a.can was born. Ten years later, from the Alaskan North to the Arizona desert, they’re educating campers to live freer on solar everywhere.



Get all their sage advice on going solar at [FreedomInACan.com](https://freedominacan.com) and on YouTube.

## Opening the #CanLife

Together, we remodeled our trailer, downsized our home, rented it out, and gave or sold most of our stuff and hit the road. We thought it would be for a year. Or a year and a half. Now we’ve just had our tenth nomadiversary!

## How Hamlet Came to Be

We bought him on eBay in 2010. He’s a 1957 Sportcraft Camper. Canned ham is the vintage style. He’s all of 72 square feet inside and about 15 feet



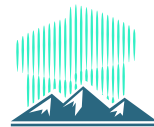
long. He’s a very small, lightweight trailer that can park anywhere. The character of this quirky trailer is our own—with a nice ‘50ish vibe to it, like the black-and-white checkered floor. The size helps us live more outside. And that’s intentional. We also wanted something small enough that we could easily run on solar.

## Making the Most of Solar

We have been on solar the whole ten years. All of our electronics fit under one of our dinette seats. Our 12V fridge actually runs off our alternator. One of our biggest bits of advice is figuring out what it is that you need. Can you do something in a different way? Like using your stove instead of a microwave. Streaming shows off your laptop instead of a flatscreen. Using a French press instead of a coffee maker. You rely on a few simple things to serve multiple functions. It doesn’t mean going without.

## Northern Highlights from Alaska

While we were at Glacier Bay National Park, we saw more aquatic mammals than we’d seen anywhere in our life— whales and seals coming in very close to the shore where we were camping. We had a humpback whale come up for breath within 20 feet from our boat. We were the only ones around!



## Favorite Desert Oasis

We love this little mountain range to the east of Phoenix called the Superstition Mountains. It’s the best little secret. Very close to a major metropolitan area, but it feels a million miles away. There’s great hiking, opportunities for paddling, and fishing. It’s just a beautiful, stunning dry desert place to get away.

Photos courtesy of [freedominacan.com](https://freedominacan.com)

# Scrolling the Virtual Campground

► @GEORGIE\_THECORGI\_

**WHY WE HEART IT**  
Because corgis—like RVs—can go all-in on all-weather. From Big Bend to Jackson Hole, Georgie has seen it all.



▼ @DESTINWESTRV

**WHY WE HEART IT**  
Who doesn’t like the idea of warm air and bright beaches in winter? Also, parking at Destin West RV Resort means you have RV ninjas—like Berry—on call.



▼ @FISHHOUSE360

**WHY WE HEART IT**  
Parking on frozen lakes, drilling through ice, and yanking up giant fish may not be for all of us, but it’s undeniably awesome.



# Most Played TikTok

▼ FISHHOUSE360

“Moving in #icefish #wintercamping #CatOnALeash #coolthings” @fishhouse360



Watch this fish house go into action! (And see even more on Page 60!)



# KEEP UP THE CHATTER

You know us: Always ready for a game of “Would you rather?” So, here it comes ... would you rather camp by a lake or a mountain?

Joan M.

By a lake, at or near a mountain. 😊😊

JM

Come on, Joan! You gotta choose! Because ... you know ... rules!

Janey S.

Says who!!! I choose both!

JS

Mike T.

Mountain because I’ve already done the lake. Bam 🌟 Life goals

MT

Harry A.

As long as you are camping it doesn’t matter!!!!

HA

Roger R.

A lake, because you can’t fish a mountain.

RR

Roger that. We can get behind that kind of logic.

More deals like this one coming!



Share More with Us

The tips, the jokes, and the deals never end. Join us on social as we share everything RV. We’ll save you a spot at @IHeartRVing on Facebook and @IHeartRVing over on Instagram.



# Separate Solar Fact from Fiction

See if that super brain is powered by the sun.

No. 1

**Solar panels with photovoltaic (PV) cells catch photons with ...**

- A. Electromagnetic coils.
- B. Tiny baseball gloves.
- C. Semiconducting materials like silicone.
- D. Mirrors that redirect thermal energy.

Answer: C. Tiny baseball gloves may be the answer of our heart, but they're out when it comes to converting photons to electrons. Silicone, on the other hand, does. Bonus: Unlike PV cells, (CSP) systems use mirrors concentrating solar-thermal power.

No. 2

**A standard solar system includes solar panels, a battery, a charge controller, a power inverter, and ...**

- A. A giant, green gas planet.
- B. A gateway to the RV multiverse.
- C. A Kryptonian photonucleic amplifier.
- D. A power converter and transfer switch.

Answer: D. As much fun as it would be to say the answer is Uranus or something more Marvelous, it ain't that is, unless you think shortening battery charge times and safely separating AC power sources is super. (Like us.)

No. 3

**Solar systems generate less power in colder weather.**

- A. True.
- B. False.

Answer: B. Light is the key here, not heat. And strangely enough, cold climates are weirdly awesome for solar energy production efficiency—so long as they aren't covered in snow. (You won't have that problem at any of our favorite spots on Page 53.)

No. 4

**RV solar installs provide power in the daytime and at night.**

- A. True.
- B. False.

Answer: A. Just because the sunlight shuts off doesn't mean your power does. Your RV battery is kind of like a gas tank. So long as it has enough amp hours, you're good to go.

No. 5

**Lithium batteries are required for solar installation.**

- A. True.
- B. False.

Answer: B. Sure, we love the enhanced efficiency that lithium batteries provide. But while they may be the gold standard, other (cheaper) options might fit your energy needs just fine.

No. 6

**The function of a battery charge controller is to ...**

- A. Prevent overcharging.
- B. Convert DC input to AC output.
- C. Preserve the life of your battery.
- D. A and C.

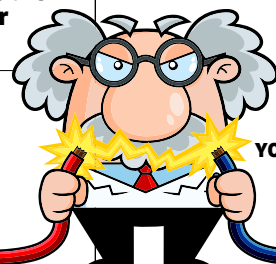
Answer: D. Using either a PWM (pulse width modulated) or a MPPT (maximum power point tracking) controller will not only keep your solar panels from overcharging your battery, it will also help recharge a low battery faster. (Option B is what a power inverter does.)

No. 7

**When you're plugging into the grid or using sensitive medical equipment like a CPAP, you need to use a ...**

- A. Pure sine wave inverter.
- B. Modified sine wave inverter.

Answer: A. Pure sine wave inverters provide a higher quality of electric current, similar to what you get just turning on a water pump or charging a phone, you'll be fine with a modified sine wave inverter.



**START FIGURING OUT WATT YOU NEED ON PAGE 43.**

Photo: Shutterstock/Voyagerix

# Ask NATE



**NATE KENNEDY IS MANY THINGS.** Seasoned camper. Range Rover enthusiast. Wayne Knight look-alike. He's done it all—from leading luxury camping tours in Puerto Rico to sharing cabin space with a tortoise (his name's Sebastian).

But best of all, Nate's an RVer you can level with. And he's going coast-to-coast and north-to-south with I Heart RVing to review the best RV gear and share the best hacks, to hear your wackiest stories and answer your toughest questions—all on video to make your camping experience more immersive, more convenient, and more fun!

So, if you have a burning question (we know you do), a friendly camper debate you need to settle (there's always one), or a new piece of gear you want to spy before you buy (very smart), you know what to do: Ask Nate!



## SEND NATE YOUR QUESTION

Fire off an email to AskNate@IHeartRVing.com with your question or mention #AskNate on social media. Nate will answer the very best ones on YouTube and social media.



Scan to email Nate your question

# Ask Nate

Camper Q&A, Gear Reviews, and More

## START WATCHING NATE'S GEAR REVIEWS

Now, as much as we love you, Nate's not just waiting around to get rolling. Watch his very first gear reviews on our brand-new I Heart RVing YouTube channel. He tests out Beyond the Black Stump's kitchen utensil organizer. And he turns up the heat on Pit Command's new fire-pit tool (full review on Page 76). Every review gives you know-how to level-up your outdoor experience.



## SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Haven't subscribed to the I Heart RVing YouTube channel?! Well, it's better Nate than never. Subscribe today to laugh and learn with us.

# ECLIPSE

## MPPT SOLAR SERIES



Compatible with Wired for Solar RVs and travel trailers, the new Eclipse MPPT Solar series keeps your batteries charged anytime the sun shines.



### FAST CHARGE

Charge your batteries faster with MPPT solar charging power.



### EASY TO INSTALL

Easy to install, and fully expandable, these kits pair perfectly with Go Power! inverters for maximum off-grid power.



### OPTIONS

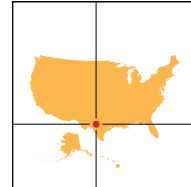
Choose from a rigid, aluminum framed 190-watt kit, or a 190-watt SolarFlex kit.



[gopowersolar.com](http://gopowersolar.com)

# American

VANTAGE POINTS OF AMERICAN BEAUTY



▶ BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
▶ WEST TEXAS  
▶ 29°16'13"N 103°18'02"W  
▶ NPS.GOV/BIBE

# Vista



**THROUGH WATER-CARVED CANYONS** The Rio Grande cuts its way like a steady mud-green snake, patient and strong. The river's work speaks for itself. Big Bend National Park hosts some of the country's most iconic landscapes. The red flanks of the Chisos mountains are covered with green cacti, agave, and Ponderosa pine. Limestone canyons scowl with mighty rock faces carved by shallow rivers. And you won't easily find a sunset or night sky that compares with Big Bend—whether you're driving the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive or tent camping on the mesa.

Photo: Shutterstock.com/Anne08



**Stargazing at  
Balanced Rock.**

Let's be clear about two things. First, the drive up the gravelly trail of Grapevine Hills is as slow as it is uncomfortable. Second, your magnificent view of the Milky Way above Balanced Rock will be worth it. Easily.

**Nearest  
Parking Lot  
Coordinate**

29° 24' 38" N  
103° 12' 27" W



**Magnificent Views from the Chisos.**

Some of the most arresting views in Big Bend National Park are looking up, down, and around the mighty Chisos Mountains. The Basin Loop Trail is perfect to take them on. It will give you the elevated pictures you're looking for, but it's relatively easy and only takes an hour to hike.

**Nearest Parking Lot Coordinate**

29° 16' 12" N  
103° 18' 04" W



**Ruins of the Mariscal Mine.**

Once the wellspring of nearly a quarter of the nation's mercury production, the mine closed in 1943. Even so, it's still a lot of fun to walk around, see, and imagine what the grueling work there must have been like.

**Nearest Parking Lot Coordinate**

29° 05' 50" N  
103° 11' 05" W



**Kick up red dust as you go on- and off-road along the Texas border.**

Over a 30-mile stretch, the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive provides scenic vistas that surpass expectation. But as you approach Chisos Basin Road, be advised: The park does not recommend this road for trailers longer than 20 feet or RVs over 24 feet, due to sharp curves and grades as much as 15 percent. More than likely, you won't need a lot of incentive to get out of the vehicle and hike into the rugged landscape—or kayak through it. There are more than 200 miles of trails to blaze and lots of wildlife to encounter. Don't be surprised if you see bats, jackrabbits, coyotes, Mexican black bears, and greater roadrunners hustling about. (If you're lucky, you may even spot a Colima warbler.)

**SHARING A FEW SECRETS**

Hutch and Shari say that over the last decade that the national park campsites have been harder to book. But within a short drive, there's the state park—which is much less crowded and closer to the river.

**“It was one of the very first western national parks that we visited in 2012. ... We recently went back last year in the late Winter and explored even more of it!”**

– Shari G

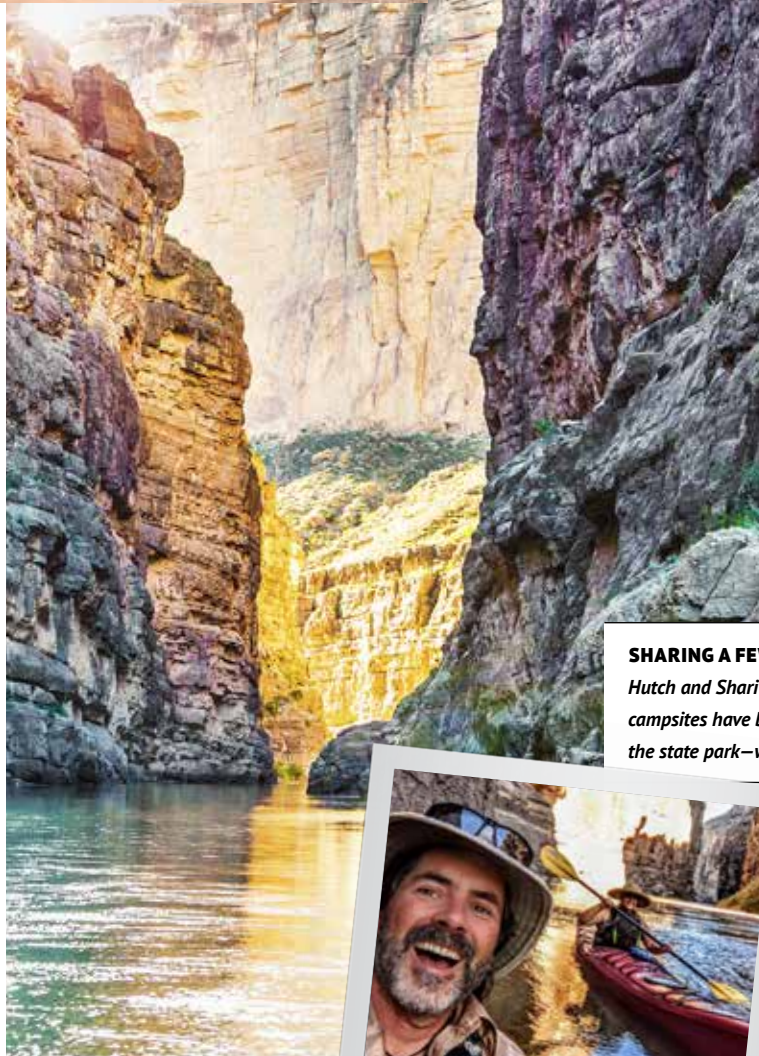


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Photo courtesy of Tom Burick

# Road Abode

IMPROVING LIFE ON THE GO



INSIDE: 3 spicy recipes to heat up your galley. Page 35

## The Man with 4.4 Million Views

**OVER 4 MILLION VIEWS** is a big number for any YouTube video. Which begs the question: What is it about? Tom Burick, the creator of the Tiny Side of Tiny YouTube channel, thinks he knows. And his answer is big. On Page 26, see how connection is driving Tom's tiny trailer further and further into the mystical backyards of Arizona.



# 4 Timeless Road Games

THE CLASSICS ARE CLASSICS FOR A REASON: KIDS LOVE THEM.

Kids live in a world of opposites—all too happily we might add. For one, they are little crazy convo generators that make us shake with laughter. You simply can't predict them. Well, unless you can. Because, two, they are also brutal masters of mindless, *completely predictable* repetition. And as you enter your RV (with all those road hours ahead of you), you may not be sure which fork in the road they're going to take.

There is one thing you can do though to take control of the situation: Hand them your phone.

Oh, we got you! (Just *kidding* around here.) But seriously, the best device-free thing to do is play a road game. No need to reinvent the wheel here. These classics have been around for a long time for a reason—they fuel interactive, family fun with your kids so you can enjoy more wild hilarity and hear a lot less, "Are we there yet?"



## I SPY

One of the best things about "I Spy" is that it's easy (you don't have to burn too many neurons on this one) and anyone can participate (if your child can talk, they can play). At its core, it is a game about observation and description. Which means that you can even use it to introduce new vocab (with the bonus being that they think—correctly—that you're super smart). The older and more advanced your kids are, the more adjectives you can work in.

## LICENSE PLATE GAME

There are lots of versions of this game (so don't get upset if we didn't pick yours), but the one we like best goes like this: Everyone in the car is on a team, and we're trying to spot a license plate from every state. This game is a particularly good slow burn. It will start fast (as you rapidly identify nearby states), but it can continue for days (or even the entirety of the trip). You will also need an official state recorder (whom you can also cruelly quiz about capitals).

## MAD LIBS

You can play the license plate game almost the second you pull out of the drive. And "I Spy" works the first few times you play but doesn't do well with overuse. Which means you wanna keep a few printed Mad Libs in reserve (or even add in the fun of letting the kids run into Walmart or a gas station to grab a book during a rest stop). What makes Mad Libs timeless good fun is that it allows your kids to put their absurd twist on perfectly unsuspecting sentences.

## SQUIGGLE

This is the king of road games for kids who love to draw (and parents who like quiet). The rules are simple. Turn a sheet of paper into a giant tic-tac-toe then let the first player draw a simple squiggle line in one of the squares. (A "simple" line doesn't include 15 loops.) The second player then takes the sheet and has to turn the first player's squiggle into a drawing. On completion, the roles switch and when the paper is full, mom (aka the judge) declares a winner.

Photo: Shutterstock.com/MNSStudio



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# The Quest for Connection by Mark Settle

*A retired inventor. A tiny trailer. And a quest through the Arizona desert.*

**M**ankind's greatest stories have always involved a journey. In our hearts, we're searching for something. So, instinctively, we understand the gravity of a quest. Like Odysseus, we too have been driven far away—and returned greatly changed. Like Bilbo, we have ventured there and back again. Like Arthur's knights in search of the Holy Grail, we have felt the desire to pursue something worthy, beautiful, and lasting.



Tom Burick's life has followed a similar path. The retired inventor living in the Arizona desert was looking for something. And when he built a tiny trailer from scratch, he had no idea that it would be the very conduit to his greatest desire: the joy of human connection.

Photo: Shutterstock.com/Zhukova Valenyna



# The Inventor in the Desert

Quite frankly, Tom cannot remember a time in his life when he wasn't interested in robotics. The problem was that his family was not a family of means. There was not a lot of food at home. Not a lot of clothes. No hope of college. But then something happened.

Tom remembers, "When I started becoming interested in robotics, I had some people in the community that saw that passion, and they supported me—when I had no support from any other area of my life." Listening to Tom, you can hear the emotional emphasis in his voice. "I remember how that changed my life. It fundamentally changed my life."

Teaching himself robotics from discarded textbooks, Tom forged his own path. Earning several technology patents. Founding a multinational robotics company. Winning awards, going on television, and rubbing shoulders with the giants of Big Tech. He lived that dream for over 10 years. But when that phase of his life came to a close, he became consumed with a new desire. Tom says, "It was really important for me to bring opportunity where there would otherwise be none." And that desire led him to the Arizona desert where he began work as a teacher for kids diagnosed with special needs.

Paying it forward became Tom's new passion.



## Demystifying the Impossible

As a special needs school teacher in Gilbert, Arizona, Tom teaches a camping club on Friday. And one day, he had an idea: "Wouldn't it be great if I could just throw together some cheap little foam trailer, drag it into school with the Vespa [his Italian scooter]? The kids would love that, and then they could just bang around on it for a while at camping club. And then I would just crumple it up and throw it away."

Tom called in support from his friends—Rob, to get the basic shape down; Lucy, to help with poor man's fiberglass; Jesse, to weld the aluminum frame. Tom was modeling the trailer after a 1947 cabin car. He loves all things from the 1940s and 1950s. He notes, "There's a comfort in the past. Because it has already happened. It's predictable. And for me that predictability is a source of, almost, comfort."

Photos courtesy of Tom Burick

It didn't take long for other folks to share Tom's interest in the peculiar project.

"We start assembling this," Tom remembers, "and the garage door is open the whole time we're working. And the people in the neighborhood would walk past. And it would stop people dead in their tracks, and they would approach us with smiles and questions." Tom still floods his speech with emotion as he recalls the revelation, "At one point, Lucy and I looked at each other, and we were like, 'This is so much more.'"

At that moment, he realized that this trailer was something special: It was a conduit of human joy and connection. So he started putting more thought into it. And more effort to build it in a way that was more permanent.

It took about two and half months. Everyone was into it, captivated by it. The trailer was as unique as its color—the same Max Meyer Blu 21 as the 50-year-old Vespa scooter meant to tow it. However, the Vespa itself presented its complications. "When you're pulling something with a 50-year-old scooter, things like weight and drag become paramount." The Vespa was never designed to tow anything. But Tom knew it was intended to hold a passenger. So factoring a very human weight of 170 pounds, he set that as the trailer's benchmark. Which led to some incredible solutions.

Tom and his team constructed the entire frame from aluminum and covered it with poor man's fiberglass—incredibly durable, incredibly light, and watertight. The living space was 8 feet long and 40 inches wide.

Of course, all this came with limitations. But even that to Tom is a matter of perspective, because he knows that creation benefits from a boundary. "The things that some people see as limitations I see as opportunity. Because those limitations can fundamentally change the project in really profound ways."

*"At one point, Lucy and I looked at each other, and we were like, 'This is so much more.'"*



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In fact, few things excite Tom more than that idea, “I like doing impossible things with seemingly incapable machines. That brings me tremendous joy, because that makes me realize—and I hope it makes other people realize—that you don’t have to be rich, and you don’t have to have a lot of resources. Sometimes you can take little more than air and turn it into a great life experience.”

Speed and range are among the trailer’s limitations. The Vespa motor, after all, is only 4.5 HP. Tom laughs, “There’s not a ton of power. The top-speed of the bike when I’m towing is about 45 mph,

*“Sometimes you can take little more than air and turn it into a great life experience.”*



best-case scenario. That limits me to where I can go and how far I can go.” But even that has its advantages, because incredible experiences can be within a few miles of your house.

“Here in the U.S., we’re all caught up in this bigger-better-faster-more mentality. You see these triple-axle fifth wheels pulled by some giant diesel truck, and they’re going across the country.” Tom happily acknowledges, “Those journeys have their place, and they can be wonderful—and I took a lot of journeys like that—but there are [also] these incredible adventures in your backyard.”



Tom shares lots of meals on the road, yet another way his trailer connects him with the people around him. The trailer has a full outdoor galley and a tiny kitchenette for cooking inside. He cooks a lot from scratch, which means he has to buy local food at places like the farmers’ market. Which—you might have guessed it—creates new connections. Even at a farmers’ market, Tom’s trailer creates conversation.

Cooking also gives Tom a chance to practice what he learned in the Boy Scouts. He says, “I was a passionate scout. I don’t think my channel would be as high quality as it is if I didn’t have that foundation in scouting.” You can certainly see what he means when you watch his Thanksgiving video (which now has over 4 million views) on his YouTube channel: The Tiny Side of Tiny. As he prepares to cook a hen for Thanksgiving dinner, he realizes he forgot the roasting bag and aluminum foil. As you might expect from Tom, he improvises.



*Saving Thanksgiving Dinner. After forgetting the foil, Tom finds a new way to cook his hen.*



But when asked about one of his favorite memories with the trailer, Tom has no problem relating the first that comes to mind.

“Red dragonflies,” he says decisively. “We were on the Tonto Natural Bridge in Payson, and I was filming the [YouTube] episode. You have to walk down into the natural bridge, and it’s a giant hole that’s carved into the earth—and you can walk over the top of it. It’s a bridge, the largest natural bridge in the world. Then there’s a little waterfall that comes down off the bridge. It looks like something out of some beautiful fantasy movie. So you go down, down, down. You gotta hike, and it’s a really long way to get to the bottom where the stream is.

“And I get down there, and I didn’t expect to see much of anything in terms of life. There were fish, and there were squirrels. And there was beautiful wildlife. But the air was abuzz with these beautiful red dragonflies. They were completely red:

*Meeting an Artist in the Lemon Grove. See one of Tom’s favorite chance meetings.*



## Lemon Groves and Red Dragonflies

As it turns out, the Vespa trailer’s limited range also drove Tom into other folks’ backyards. Spotting local places on HipCamp, he found lots of lovely camping sites right near home, from little farms to lemon groves. Serendipitously, it has led to Tom’s most beautiful and unique interactions—many of which are like little vignettes.

“I camped in a lemon grove farm in Lavinia, Arizona,” Tom remembers, recalling one of his favorite moments. “And it’s just gorgeous, gorgeous, lush green. Everywhere I looked—beautiful green in the middle of the desert. The

area that they had set aside for me was smack in the middle of a lemon grove. It was so picturesque—almost cartoonish in a way. Bright lemons everywhere. It was lovely.”

In the grove, Tom spotted another traveler. The man was lying there in the bare grass sleeping. After Tom cooked a meal, he invited the man over. His name was Jeremiah, a traveling artist. And after sharing dinner, he showed Tom some of his beautiful illustrations. This, of course, is just one of Tom’s memorable interactions in his trailer. There are many others.

*Photo courtesy of Tom Burick*

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the eyes, the body, the wings—they were completely red dragonflies. And they filled the air. It took my breath away. And I think when I'm 90-years old in a rocking chair, I don't think that memory will ever leave me."



Where Dragonflies Fill the Air. Follow Tom's magical descent to the stream.



## The Art of Finding Joy

Some of Tom's YouTube videos with his tiny trailer have millions of views. Others just have thousands. Which, frankly, is peculiar when you watch your first video and realize there is no voiceover narration, only captions. No eye contact with the camera, only candid moments. When asked what he thinks might be drawing all the views, Tom says he has an idea.

"There are a few things that resonate with people. The comments section is connection to me. And I reply to every single person that leaves a comment." He confesses, "I will compromise my time in other parts of my day to make sure I give people kind and personal replies. ... Even more, in an overly complicated and divisive world, these [videos] are little moments of simplicity and serenity and kindness. More than ever, I think people are looking for those quiet moments."

## "More than ever, I think people are looking for those quiet moments."

His approach is influenced by Japanese camping videos. There's a quietness about them. There's a reserve that is attractive. Tom notes he even loves the translation in those videos, "The translation [in Japanese camping videos] becomes so often oddly poetic. And I've tried to capture that. You notice that the way that I write things isn't very straight forward. My captions and subtitles are in that style."

Tom's also very deliberate and cognizant of his movement within the camera frame. He localizes the image on extremities, like the wear spots on his Vespa or a key being placed in the ignition. "I think that that adds so much texture to the story and pulls people in," He contemplates for a second. "Those shots create an intimacy."



That intimacy is always close to the center of what Tom is looking for and trying to share—even with his YouTube channel. "I want to share experiences with people. And I want them to have input in it. I want it to be our experience."

Tom pauses, "When I'm on the road with the Vespa, the joy is very, very external. It's a permeating joy." And when you have that kind of joy, you want to share it. Because connection isn't one-sided. Tom sees that when people approach his trailer with a smile. They are immediately disarmed. And in this age of division, that joy is something worthy, beautiful, and lasting. Elusive as it is to find, finding a place of lasting joy just might be our Holy Grail. ❤️



Photo courtesy of Tom's YouTube channel: [RtHfz9e9w9lppichsomsaard](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRtHfz9e9w9lppichsomsaard)

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# Get Hot in the Galley

Spice things up with these three easy Southwestern recipes. *by Marc Acton*

**I** **IN THE WORDS OF OUR FAVORITE '90S POP BAND**, "People of the world: Spice up your life." These three recipes do just that. And just to be clear: They also reject the idea of spice for spice's sake. Instead, these easy to make dishes embrace taste-factor above all else. They're a perfect Southwestern balance of palate-tantalizing flavor and taste-bud-testing heat.



## Parked Next to Street Tacos

It's always Taco Tuesday somewhere. This one-pan recipe is ultrasimple but hits all the important taste notes. They have a feisty protein, a smorgasbord of texture and veggie-driven depth, some acid-based tang, and just the right amount of delicious dairy to round out the complete package. But while it's as simple as the road is long, these tacos absolutely crush the flavor units-per-prep time records.



### Ingredients

*Sliced chicken tenderloins - 1 per desired serving*

*Avocados - 1 per person, sliced*

*Corn - 1 small can*

*Roma tomatoes - 2, diced*

*Cilantro - ½ bunch, stems removed*

*Red onion - ¼ of a small red onion, sliced*

*Red pepper - ½, sliced into strips*

*Lime - ½, cut into wedges*

*Olive oil - ½ tablespoon*

*Seasoning - Equal parts cumin, garlic powder, smoked paprika, oregano, salt, pepper*

*Chipotle chili powder - to taste (a little goes a long way)*

*Vinegar - ¼ cup for a quick pickle*

➔ Prep your peppers, tomatoes, and cilantro ahead of time (but not your avocados). Marinade your diced onion in a Ziploc bag with vinegar for at least two to four hours to add a quick pickle.

Heat oil in a frying pan to medium-high heat. While the pan is heating, pat chicken dry then liberally season, letting the meat rest outside the fridge until room temperature.

Drop your seasoned chicken into the pan when the pan is completely heated, and the oil has just started smoking. After about two minutes, add red pepper (wait up to four minutes if you prefer your peppers crunchy). Sauté together until the chicken has been cooking for about seven minutes and is fully cooked.

Remove chicken from heat to rest for at least two to three minutes. For pro-level taste, grill your taco shells while waiting. If a grill is not available, lightly brown your tortillas in a second frying pan on medium heat by rubbing just a little bit of oil on the pan side of the tortillas and lightly browning just on one side.

Fill your tortillas with chicken and peppers. Top with pickled onions, sliced avocado, tomatoes, corn, and cilantro. Squeeze a healthy squirt of lime juice on top to finish.

For a sneaky-tasty treat, switch out the homemade pickled onions for sliced spicy okra pickles, which add sweetness and heat, but also bushels of flavor.

Photo: Shutterstock/Katarzyna Hurewa



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# Crockpot White Chicken Chili

Chili is the ultimate easy mode, but this creamy, chickeny version feels more like a special occasion than the same old same old beef and bean rehash. And this literally couldn't be easier to make: Put stuff in the pot. Turn on the pot. Eat your heart out eight hours later.

As if that weren't enough to make this the ideal road meal, it's also perfect for prepping ahead of time (and cooking and freezing if you'd prefer). And if you happen to have leftovers, they'll almost certainly last long enough for multiple re-eatings throughout your weekend away (three to four days in the fridge at least).



Add all ingredients except the cream cheese and heavy cream to your crockpot. Stir. Cook on low for eight hours, or on high for three to four hours, ensuring chicken is completely cooked through.

Add cream cheese and heavy cream, cooking for another 15 minutes, and stirring until fully incorporated. Top with your favorite chili toppings, including tortilla strips and sliced avocados for an extra southwest vibe, and serve, preferably with a side of margarita.

## Ingredients

- Boneless, skinless chicken breasts cut into bite-sized chunks*

---

- 2 garlic cloves sliced or 1 tablespoon prepared garlic*

---

- 24 oz. vegetable stock*

---

- 1 teaspoon salt*

---

- 1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper*

---

- 1 red onion, diced*

---

- 1 can Del Monte southwest corn with poblano and red peppers*

---

- ½ teaspoon oregano*

---

- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika*

---

- 1 teaspoon cumin*

---

- 4 dashes (around ½ teaspoon) red wine vinegar*

---

- 2 15-oz. cans Great Northern beans*

---

- ½ package of cream cheese (4 oz. total)*

---

- 2 tablespoons butter*

---

- ¼ cup heavy cream*

---

- 1 4-oz. can green chiles (or 2 if you're feeling extra spicy)*

# White Chicken Chilichiladas

There's no better use for your leftover white chicken chili than enchiladas. You've done the hard work of cooking, now all that's left is translating your leftovers into baked gold.



Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Drain any excess liquid out of leftover chili. Assemble enchiladas by filling as many soft tortillas (corn or flour will do) as you'd like to eat with the chicken chili, and a healthy crumble of queso fresco. Hint: If your tortillas are too cold to be convenient to roll, microwave them for 10 seconds at a time until soft. Wrap the enchiladas tightly and squeeze them seam side down in a baking dish. Pour ¼ cup of enchilada sauce on top—we like the way red sauce mingles with the white sauce of the chili, but green works great too. Top liberally with your favorite shredded cheese. Bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees until the cheese is bubbling and just starting to brown.

**Hint:** If the cheese isn't brown after 20 minutes, increase heat to 400 degrees until browned, watching closely to avoid the dreaded burnt cheese. Top with any leftover ingredients from chili night and serve with a side of Uncle Ben's Spanish Style Ready Rice. Consider spritzing with a squirt of sriracha for extra peppery heat.

## Ingredients

- 2 cups of leftover white chicken chili*
- 4-8 tortillas, fajita size are perfect, but the smaller taco or larger burrito sizes work just as well*

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- 1 package queso fresco*

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- 1 can enchilada sauce (red or green)*

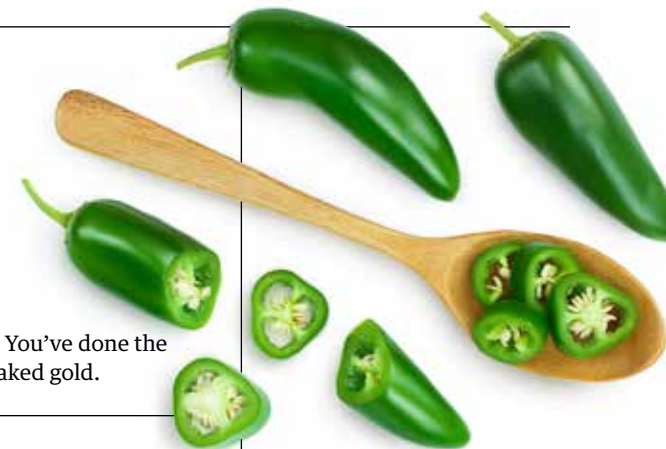


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# EDGE OF THE MAP

FROM THE HIGHWAY TO THE CAMPGROUND

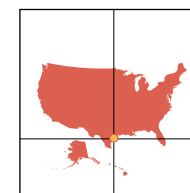


INSIDE: Shedding some light on the right solar setup for you. Page 43



## A FRESH BREATH OF WINTER AIR

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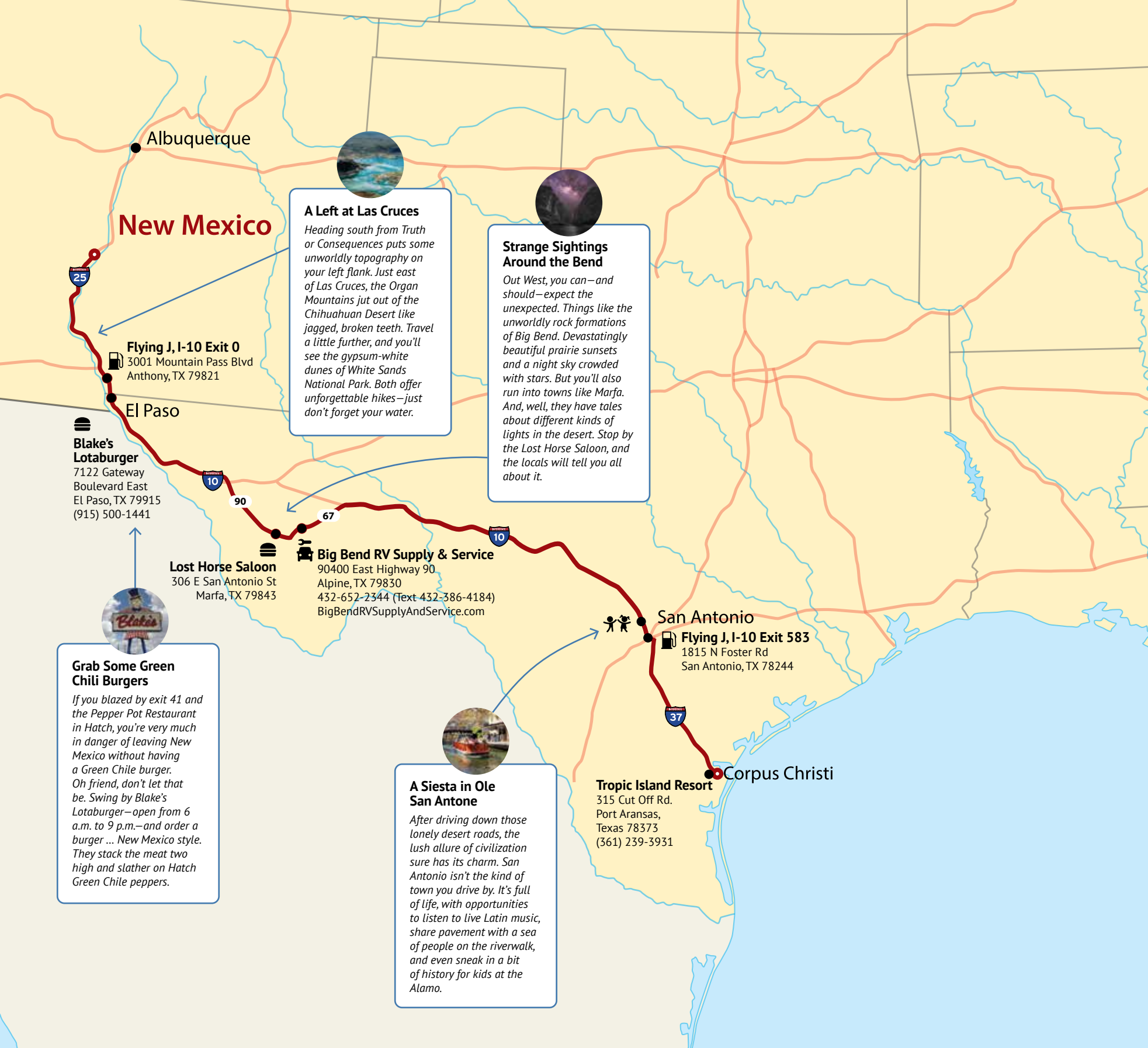


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# Snowbirding the Southwest

Journey from the warm desert sands of New Mexico to the bright beaches of Texas.

**THAT STRANGER APPEARING ON THE HORIZON**, the one with sharp hawk eyes dismounting a trusty steed ... well, out here, that's you. Naturally, you are on the run—from Winter. And the sands of the Southwest certainly offer a new beginning for snowbirds, be that the sun-drenched desert or the warm Gulf-water shores of a beachy paradise. With the region's elevated heat index, there are a lot of hot spots to nestle into and out of during the colder months.

As you might have guessed, snowbirding satisfaction comes down to what drives you, stranger. (A good thing to ponder while listening to our Desert Tracks playlist on Page 9). Looking to stay active this Winter? There's New Mexico's secret oasis, Truth or Consequences with golf, hot mineral baths, fishing, and water sports (Page 58). Want a sweet beach spot in a state not named Florida? We have a recommendation (Page 46). The point is: You don't even have to choose. Go wherever the sun takes you, stranger.

## The Desert Trail to the Sea

Starting at that desert town with the titillating title, head west out of Truth or Consequences and merge onto I-25 South. In just over an hour, you'll reach Las Cruces where I-25 S meets I-10 East and reaches El Paso after another hour, putting you right next to the Mexican Border and the town of Ciudad Juarez. Cruising another 120 miles east, you'll take exit 140A onto US-90 E, which will intersect with US-385 S after two hours. That road will take you down to Big Bend, and you can take it all the way back up to I-10 E.

Back on I-10 E, you're now four hours out from San Antonio. At exit 158, you can merge onto I-35 S toward Corpus Christi. A couple more hours steering south will put the taste of salt-water in the air as you approach the Gulf of Mexico. Take US-181

North across the water and follow the signs toward Port Aransas—where a ferry will take you across the water to the Tropic Island Resort.

## Repair Deputies and Supply Necessities

It stands to reason that if the West is basically Appaloosa, you should get to be Ed Harris. (Your word is law in your rig, right?) But before you marshal your RV down the road, it bears remembrance that even ole Ed Harris needed backup sometimes. Especially near the border. As you make your Southwestern travel plans, research mobile RV repair services around the area to deputize in an emergency. Off US-90, Big Bend RV Supply & Service is a great option. No matter what, you always wanna pack more water in the desert (at least a gallon a day per person).

**A Left at Las Cruces**  
 Heading south from Truth or Consequences puts some unworldly topography on your left flank. Just east of Las Cruces, the Organ Mountains jut out of the Chihuahuan Desert like jagged, broken teeth. Travel a little further, and you'll see the gypsum-white dunes of White Sands National Park. Both offer unforgettable hikes—just don't forget your water.

**Strange Sightings Around the Bend**  
 Out West, you can—and should—expect the unexpected. Things like the unworldly rock formations of Big Bend. Devastatingly beautiful prairie sunsets and a night sky crowded with stars. But you'll also run into towns like Marfa. And, well, they have tales about different kinds of lights in the desert. Stop by the Lost Horse Saloon, and the locals will tell you all about it.

**A Siesta in Ole San Antonio**  
 After driving down those lonely desert roads, the lush allure of civilization sure has its charm. San Antonio isn't the kind of town you drive by. It's full of life, with opportunities to listen to live Latin music, share pavement with a sea of people on the riverwalk, and even sneak in a bit of history for kids at the Alamo.

**Grab Some Green Chili Burgers**  
 If you blazed by exit 41 and the Pepper Pot Restaurant in Hatch, you're very much in danger of leaving New Mexico without having a Green Chile burger. Oh friend, don't let that be. Swing by Blake's Lotaburger—open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.—and order a burger ... New Mexico style. They stack the meat two high and slather on Hatch Green Chile peppers.

**Flying J, I-10 Exit 0**  
 3001 Mountain Pass Blvd  
 Anthony, TX 79821

**Blake's Lotaburger**  
 7122 Gateway Boulevard East  
 El Paso, TX 79915  
 (915) 500-1441

**Lost Horse Saloon**  
 306 E San Antonio St  
 Marfa, TX 79843

**Big Bend RV Supply & Service**  
 90400 East Highway 90  
 Alpine, TX 79830  
 432-652-2344 (Text 432-386-4184)  
 BigBendRVSupplyAndService.com

**San Antonio**  
**Flying J, I-10 Exit 583**  
 1815 N Foster Rd  
 San Antonio, TX 78244

**Tropic Island Resort**  
 315 Cut Off Rd.  
 Port Aransas, Texas 78373  
 (361) 239-3931

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# Finding Your Place in the Sun


How to determine which solar kit is the right fit for you.

by Eva Mitic

**M**ore and more RVers are going further off-grid as full-service campsites become more scarce. Which means there's an unprecedented demand for off-grid power. So it makes sense that we're seeing more and more manufacturers add solar prep to more and more units—and more and more campers putting solar at the top of their wish list.

But for folks looking to add solar to their rigs for the first time, this multitude of options can actually make choosing your solar kit less easy, less simple, and less clear. Because the real question is: "How do I figure out which solar solution is right for me?" Well, we're glad you asked, and we have a few tips on how to find your place in the sun.

## An Easy Introduction: Portable Solar Kits

 Forgive the pun, but it's true: Portable solar systems offer first-time users a warm handshake. They're optimized for size and weight. Panels come in a variety of forms—from small "suitcase" units to larger ones that are stand-alone or hung from the RV. Quite simply, their reduced footprint offers a lot of advantages.



**FLEXIBLE PARKING.** With portable systems, you don't have to park in a location that optimizes the sunlight on rooftop solar panels. Instead, you can park in the shade or in a spot that affords the most scenic views—all while charging your RV batteries with a portable panel placed in the sun.

**OPTIMAL SUNLIGHT.** Portable means just that: They're easy to move ... without moving your RV. Panels can be moved throughout the day to maximize exposure to the sun, keeping the best possible charge coming in.

**EASE OF USE.** No drilling holes. No mounting your panels on the roof. No running cables through the RV. None of that. You can also move the panel from one RV to another without much hassle should you choose to go for an upgrade.

**NO INSTALLATION COST.** Portable panels can be just as expensive as their rooftop counterparts (even more so), but they can also save you cash by removing the need for a costly installation.

**FAST START.** RV owners who aren't ready to go all-in and install a fixed solution can begin reaping the benefits of solar with an entry-level portable solar kit. You'll learn quickly what you like, dislike, and need from solar.

**Expand Your Solar Horizon**

Kits like the Go Power! DuraLite 100-watt Portable Solar Kit are expandable, increasing your flexibility for a lightweight, portable solar solution.

**Go Power! DuraLite 100-watt Portable Solar Kit**



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## Raise the Roof: Fixed-Roof Solar Solutions



While portable systems have many positives, they aren't ideal

for every RVer. In some cases, traditional rooftop systems may be a better fit. For RVers looking to streamline their solar setup, fixed-roof solar panels offer other unique advantages.

**STORAGE SAVINGS.** Storage can become more challenging as your power requirements (and the number of panels) grow. With space at a premium in RVs, that portable panels must be stowed safely when not used should not be forgotten.

**SIMPLER SETUP.** RVers looking to simplify campsite setup may prefer the convenience of fixed-panel rooftop solutions. Portable systems require setup and tear down at each location, adding time and work to every stop.

**MOBILE CHARGING.** RVers with fixed solar systems can enjoy charging their batteries anytime it's light out—even while traveling! Portable systems don't offer the same convenience and can only be used when you are parked.

**POWER SCALE.** Many RVs and trailers can have up to 1,000 watts of solar panels on their roof, but few of us want to set up (and store) an equivalent number of portable panels. Flat out: Fixed systems accommodate more power more easily.

**BETTER SECURITY.** Fixed rooftop panels are relatively safe and durable. Portable panels can be dropped, knocked over, or even stolen if left unattended.

## Where Lifestyle Meets Sundial

Are you a weekend camper? Portable systems easily meet the requirements of those who only need solar for a few days at a time. Most campers can usually get away with 100 to 200 watts of solar to keep their battery charged.

Full-time road warriors who regularly overnight in parking lots or rest areas often choose fixed solar solutions for security. Adventurous RVers who prefer remote locations often opt for portable systems if power requirements aren't too extreme. Adding 300 or more watts and a robust battery bank would be a great place to start for this type of traveler.

Heavy power users who want all the conveniences of home will likely need to opt for a robust rooftop solar installation. Even the best portable systems won't meet those needs. However, these campers could benefit from a smaller rooftop system supplemented by a portable panel to boost charging power when required. For power users, 600 or more watts of solar and a substantial battery bank is recommended.

The bottom line is that choosing between portable and fixed RV solar systems (or even a hybrid solution) requires some homework. And the first step is understanding how and where you intend to camp, current and future power requirements, and—of course—budget. Because not everyone is ready to invest thousands of dollars, especially with so many one-size-fits-most solar kits available. But no matter what your needs look like, there's a place in the sun for you.

Photo courtesy of GoPower! / Shutterstock.com RoMieg

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# WINTER'S

# COOL

CORPUS CHRISTI IS MORE THAN A FAVORITE HOTSPOT FOR SNOWBIRDS. AT THE TROPIC ISLAND RESORT, THEY'RE WELCOMED LIKE FAMILY.

# KIDS

**THEY CALL THEM WINTER TEXANS.** And that's a term of affection in Corpus Christi. You see, after the bewildering pace of the summer season on the Gulf Coast beachfront—where the rush of vacationers and partygoers spin an ever-revolving door of guests—the arrival of the snowbirds is more than just a sign of the season. It's more than just a nice change of pace. When those RVs begin to glide into view, swooping down from their northern habitat like a breath of fresh air, the

locals know exactly what it means: The cool kids have arrived. Ornithologists (bird scientists that we imagine have very white coats) tell us that Winter Texans are from a family of snowbirds with a wide variety of species. Each Winter in Corpus Christi, they descend in droves from Alaska and Canada; from Iowa and Kentucky; from Dakotas both North and South. The reasons for their migration are as simple—and powerful—as forces of nature. Many are retirees, with lives rich with achieve-

ment, full of hard-earned wisdom and the good sense to enjoy their second youth. Other southbound guests are simply hitting reset, escaping the cold for a season of R&R in the warm air of the Texas coast. When the time comes, they'll mount back north renewed and reenergized. Whatever the motivation for migration, the locals have noticed that their Winter Texans share a common trait: They're fun to be around. Which is why their arrival every winter is the best time of the year—for guest and resort alike.

Photo: Shutterstock.com/raupixel.com/ Monkey Business Images

## LIVING THAT MUSTANG ISLAND LIFE

Just east of Corpus Christi Bay, Mustang Island runs north to south like a long privacy fence between the bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Now, there are two ways onto the island. There's the JFK Causeway connecting to North Padre Island just to the south. That's the first (and lesser) option. The second is much more memorable—and it drops you right into Port Aransas, where you'll find the Tropic Island Resort.

Riding the ferry is something like a rite of passage—and a lot of fun. (It's also free, takes just ten minutes, and operates 24/7.) During your ten-minute voyage, you can get out and walk on board to watch dolphins play in the wake of the ferry. You'll see pelicans dip into the waves for a catch, taste saltwater spray in the warm breeze, and feel absolute confidence in your snowbird instincts. In a single movement, the old, cruel cold of the North has been separated by a warm body of Gulf-stream water. And if, like Keats' Stout Cortez, a new planet feels as though it were swimming into your ken, please resist any urge to burn the boat. (You'll need it to get back next Spring.)

Landing at Robert's Point Park on the north tip of the island, you're a quarter mile away from the Tropic Island Resort. Once you get off the ferry, you come to the first light, and you take a right. On the left-hand side, just a mile from the beach, there's the Tropic Island Resort. Behind the blue sign, there's an unmistakable two-story, antebellum-style home with white columns and a broad circular drive. This is the main office of the North Campus. The manager of the resort, Ashley Huff, calls it "the big house." Ashley has been at the Tropic Island Resort for seven years. She's basically the mayor of the park. She knows the names and faces all around the resort. She says that the establishment was built in the 1950s. First, it was just a little hotel that added some RV sites. Then it added a few more. And it has grown more and more since, adding an additional 200 sites and another campus to the south last year.



Book your spot as a Winter Texan at [TropicIslandResort.com](http://TropicIslandResort.com) or call at (361) 239-3860.



Up till last year, the resort was family run, but even now, it has that "mom-and-pop" feel. Ashley laughs, "Most of my staff has been here for forever. We don't do a lot of turnover. Everybody knows us. We've had the same guests for years." She notes, "We are always getting new ones, but the faces are constant around here."

It doesn't take too long to figure out why staff members stay and seasonal guests return. There's the warm reception, where guests are given a cable box, parking pass, a map, and then escorted in person to help pick their site. There's the general store stocked with necessities, goodies, ice, and contact info for things like repair. And yes, there's the large pool, heated to 90-92°

F year-round. And hot tubs, luxury bathhouses, laundry rooms, poolside ice cream, and a special-made Winter agenda for their seasonal guests.

Oh, and there's also one other thing: The entire island is 100 percent golf-cart friendly. Explaining how that's possible, she says, "Most RV parks are out on major highways, but this one is original to the town." So, the resort has an onsite golf cart rental company, Peyton's Beach Carts, to get everyone in on the fun. Without shame, Ashley happily confesses, "I personally have not driven a car in six months!"

You see, in island life, things move at a more leisurely pace. Even so, there's plenty to do under the Corpus Christi sun. And it just so happens that Winter Texans are around long enough to soak it all in.

## CRUISING THE TEXAS RIVIERA

Corpus Christi is a different kind of cool. The jewel of the Texas Riviera eschews Winter's wicked bluster with warm air, a red-hot Latin music scene, sunny seaside explorations, and a dizzying array of great food. And for the snowbird looking for a cozy nest outside Florida's crowd-covered coastline, it offers vistas and experiences that are definitively unique.

Photos courtesy of Tropic Island Resort

**“EVERYBODY KNOWS US. WE’VE HAD THE SAME GUESTS FOR YEARS. WE ARE ALWAYS GETTING NEW ONES, BUT THE FACES ARE CONSTANT AROUND HERE.”**

Just off the edge of the city's eastern shore lies the U.S.S. Lexington, a retired aircraft carrier. Decked with memories from deep-sea World War II battles like the Philippine Sea and Leyte Gulf, the Lexington's massive muscular bulk towers over the shallows. Now, with its embattled past decades behind it, it's getting some R&R of its own as a museum. Visitors can walk its giant deck and hear stories that would defy belief were they not part of the historical record.

See What's on Deck at the LEX



Here's a hint: It ain't all history. There's an Escape Room, a flight simulator, overnight camping, and more.

A short walk down the beach will take you to the Texas State Aquarium, where you can see sandbar sharks, meet bottlenose dolphins, and gawk at a bunch of weird and wonderful and colorful sea creatures. There's even a splash park, if you're bringing some tiny humans along. Head a little further south into the city and there's the Mirador de la Flor—an achingly beautiful, seaside monument to the murdered Tejano singer, Selena, in the city of her birth.

Circling back to Port Aransas on Mustang Island, there's plenty to explore in less than a mile radius from the resort. (Great golf cart distances.) Turn south

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down Ross Avenue past the resort's southern campus, and you'll discover the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center with a 750-foot-long boardwalk overlooking the bird-rich wetlands. (You also get a chance to see Boots, the local 14-foot alligator, who is distinctly not shy.) Out on the water, you can fish—sheepshead and snapper are big catches in the Winter—and back at the resort there's a dedicated fish house to clean and stock up for the year. (A bit warmer than the one on Page 60.) East of the resort, follow Cotter Avenue and there's

the Amos Rehabilitation Keep (aka the ARK), where injured marine animals, like seas turtles, are rehabilitated and released back into the wild—a sentiment snowbirds can certainly relate to.

### CHILLING WITH THE HAPPY HOUR CREW

There's very little that's cooler than knowing what you want out of life. And life experience is a good way to figure that out. Like the U.S.S. Lexington, snowbirds have experience in spades. They come from all over—from the Great Lakes of Michigan and Minnesota, from the plains of Kansas and the fields of Iowa. Ashley knows some that even go border to border, "We get a lot of Canadians that are passing through on their way to Mexico, because we are Passport America friendly."

Wherever they come from, they like what they find in Corpus Christi and the Tropic Island Resort. Maybe it's the climate. Or possibly the ice cream social every Saturday night. "We have so much going on," Ashley points out. "We try to keep our Winter Texans very active, having fun. We do line dancing and bingo and water aerobics. We have a pancake breakfast every month"

That pancake breakfast is something else. It's something special. It's full-on mom-and-pop treatment. "My husband and I cook—free to our guests—eggs, bacon, sausage. We have a fruit platter. I think I did up 10 pounds of pancake batter. We cook all morning long and feed everybody that comes through. We serve orange juice and coffee." Ashley's voice lilts as she talks about the best part, "It's a great way for new guests to meet returning guests."

And those new guests know a good thing when they see it. "We have a family from Alaska right now. They came to stay for a couple days and extended for a month after the pancake breakfast."

Community is what matters at the Tropic Island Resort. The newest

**“ I HAVE SOME SNOWBIRDS THAT HAVE BEEN COMING TO THIS PROPERTY EVERY WINTER FOR 25 YEARS. IT'S KIND OF LIKE A BIG FAMILY. ”**



Winter Texans tell Ashley that no matter how new they are, everyone makes them feel so welcome and so part of the family. That's saying a lot because the resort family is tight. "I have some snowbirds that have been coming to this property every winter for 25 years. It's kind of like a big family. In fact, some guests have actually watched my kids grow up."

Ashley jokes that quite a few guests stay here even longer than they're at their homes up north. There's one group of Winter Texans that Ashley calls the "happy hour crew." They love to come down, laugh over drinks in the marina, watch the boats come in, and tell stories to whoever will believe them. (Ashley's dad affectionately calls them the "Liars Club.") From their cozy perch, the happy hour crew can see the ships come and go, including the daily pirate cruises firing their cannons and staging mock sword fights. The commentary is lively. The Liar's Club is good company to keep. At least, until they're released back into the wild. Because once they go, everyone at the Tropic Island Resort starts looking ahead again—just waiting for that Winter day when the cool kids will roll back in. ❤️

### No Restaurant Chains, No Problem

Ashley says, "One of the most awesome things about this island is that we are not overrun with corporate chains." Here are a few of the best local spots.

➤ **BLUEWATER COWBOY SALOON & MERCHANTILE**  
229 Beach St,  
Port Aransas, TX 78373  
Tip: Go to the second floor for sushi!



➔ **LA PLAYA MEXICAN GRILLE**  
222 Beach Ave,  
Port Aransas, TX 78373  
Tip: Anything that's the special, get it!



➡ **FINS GRILL AND ICEHOUSE**  
420 W Cotter Ave,  
Port Aransas, TX 78373  
Tip: Ask to sit on the patio by the marina.



Photo: Shutterstock.com/Laurens Haddenbagh/Rajini45/Hong Vo

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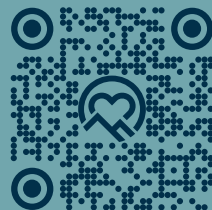
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CAMPGROUND GUIDE

## Snowbird Central

These Florida hotspots will nestle you as low as Southern heat goes.

### Destin RV Beach Resort

362 Miramar Beach Drive  
Miramar Beach, FL 32550

(850) 837-3529

**Road Trip:** Destin isn't called the "World's Luckiest Fishing Village" for no reason. Deep-sea fishing with Green Beret Charters is not to be missed, but you can actually get started with a 200-yard walk.

**The Destin RV Beach Resort** offers Private Beach Access, free parking, relaxed dining at the Surf Hut, and crowdless shores from which you can cast a line into the waves.  
*2-minute walk*

**Monthly Rate:** \$1,900  
**Camp Sites:** 36

WATER	■	STORE	■
SEWAGE	■	LAUNDRY	■
ELECTRIC	■	WI-FI	■
PROPANE	■	PET-CARE	■

**Check-In/Out:** 12 p.m./11 a.m.

[DestinRVResort.com](https://DestinRVResort.com)

### Bickley RV Park

5640 Seminole Blvd  
Seminole, FL 33772

(727) 392-3807

**Road Trip:** Snowbirds gotta think bigger than the campground—even ones as nice as Bickley RV Park. Because if you're going to be somewhere for a season, you want that place to be awesome. And the St. Petersburg and Sarasota art scene is surreal. The **Salvador Dali Museum** is only a half-hour trip away, with some weird and wonderful art worthy of any bucket list.  
*27-minute drive*

**Monthly Rate:** \$950-\$1,590  
**Camp Sites:** 185

WATER	■	STORE	■
SEWAGE	■	LAUNDRY	■
ELECTRIC	■	WI-FI	■
PROPANE	■	PET-CARE	■

**Check-In/Out:** 1 p.m./11 a.m.

[BickleyPark.com](https://BickleyPark.com)

### Cypress Trail RV Resort

5468 Tice Street  
Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 333-3246

**Road Trip:** Staying active in the winter months is a lot easier in the sunshine—with Fort Myers' 74° F average high. Cypress Trail RV resort has plenty to do (aquatics, pickleball, bocce, etc.), but you'll also wanna strike west toward **Sanibel Island**, bringing your bike along. Miles of smooth bicycle trails lace the island, providing access to hidden beaches that cars—and crowds—can't reach.  
*58-minute drive*

**Monthly Rate:** \$3,400  
**Camp Sites:** 457

WATER	■	STORE	■
SEWAGE	■	LAUNDRY	■
ELECTRIC	■	WI-FI	■
PROPANE	■	PET-CARE	■

**Check-In/Out:** 1 p.m./11 a.m.

[CypressTrailRV.com](https://CypressTrailRV.com)

### Aztec RV Resort

1 Aztec Blvd,  
Margate, FL 330686

(954) 975-6411

**Road Trip:** There's a lot to love about Fort Lauderdale: warm temps, wide beaches, and golf courses galore. This luxury 5-star RV Resort (for newer Class As only) is also slap dab in the middle of South Florida's shopping epicenter—where you can browse the **Galleria at Fort Lauderdale** and then retire to the white walls, white sands, and blue waves of Central Beach.  
*37-minute drive*

**Daily Rate:** \$177-223 + Tax  
**Camp Sites:** 646

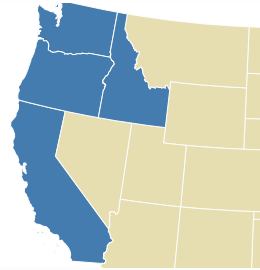
WATER	■	STORE	■
SEWAGE	■	LAUNDRY	■
ELECTRIC	■	WI-FI	■
PROPANE	■	PET-CARE	■

**Check-In/Out:** 3 p.m./11 a.m.

[AztecRVResort.com](https://AztecRVResort.com)

# Your Next Getaway Plan

Green means go! Look ahead to target these Spring getaways into nature's lush heartland.

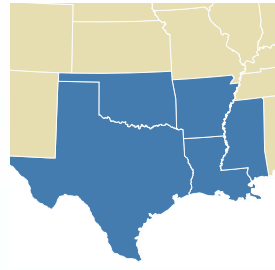


**NORTHWEST**

**Mounthaven Resort**

Ashford, WA  
MountHaven.com

- Camping under the shadow of Mount Ranier not only gives you the feeling of majesty—it puts you in an explosion of Spring biodiversity. Parking in an evergreen sea of cedar trees, you'll be immersed in nature, but at Mounthaven Resort, you can still enjoy basic comforts like the full hookup, picnic tables, firepits, and even cabins if you're interested.

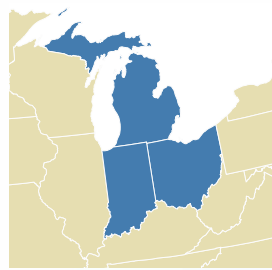


**SOUTH CENTRAL**

**J&J RV Park**

Hot Springs, AR  
JJRVPark.com

- Hot Springs can get busy this time of year, so it's nice to have a campground in your pocket that's close, clean, and not crowded. J&J RV Park fits that description exactly and keeps the outdoors close—with blossoming trees, trickling creeks, and still ponds all around. The friendly staff can also give you the inside scoop on what to do.

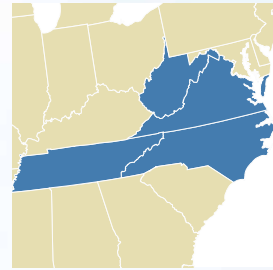


**MIDWEST**

**Woodside Lake Park**

Streetsboro, OH  
WoodsideLake.com

- Don't be fooled: Cuyahoga Valley National Park may be small (22 miles long and 5 miles wide), but it is awesome—and very family friendly. Woodside Lake Park puts you in prime position to explore its revitalized landscape and wild rock formations. It also has its own lake, which means freshwater fun for the kids is just outside your campsite.



**APPALACHIA**

**Rutledge Lake RV Park**

Fletcher, NC  
AshevilleRVPark.co

- Why choose between the mountains and a lake? Clearly you can have both. The Rutledge Lake RV Park certainly proves Joan's point (see Page 11) and offers the best of both worlds. Nestled in the rich, green mountain verdure of the Smokies, you can rest and relax with great amenities, or break out into the wild for breathtaking hikes.

**I HEART TIPS**  
The Trail of Shadows is just 14 minutes away. Just a 0.7-mile loop, it's an easy hiking warm-up with springs, meadows, and beaver marks across the treescape.

**I HEART TIPS**  
Everyone knows about the hot springs. Not everyone knows about the Arkansas Alligator Farm and Petting Zoo—but those who do get to hold baby gators!

**I HEART TIPS**  
Cleveland is like the Hall of Fame. The Rock 'N Roll Hall of Fame? Got that. The Pro Football Hall of Fame? Got that one too. So make a famous daytrip!

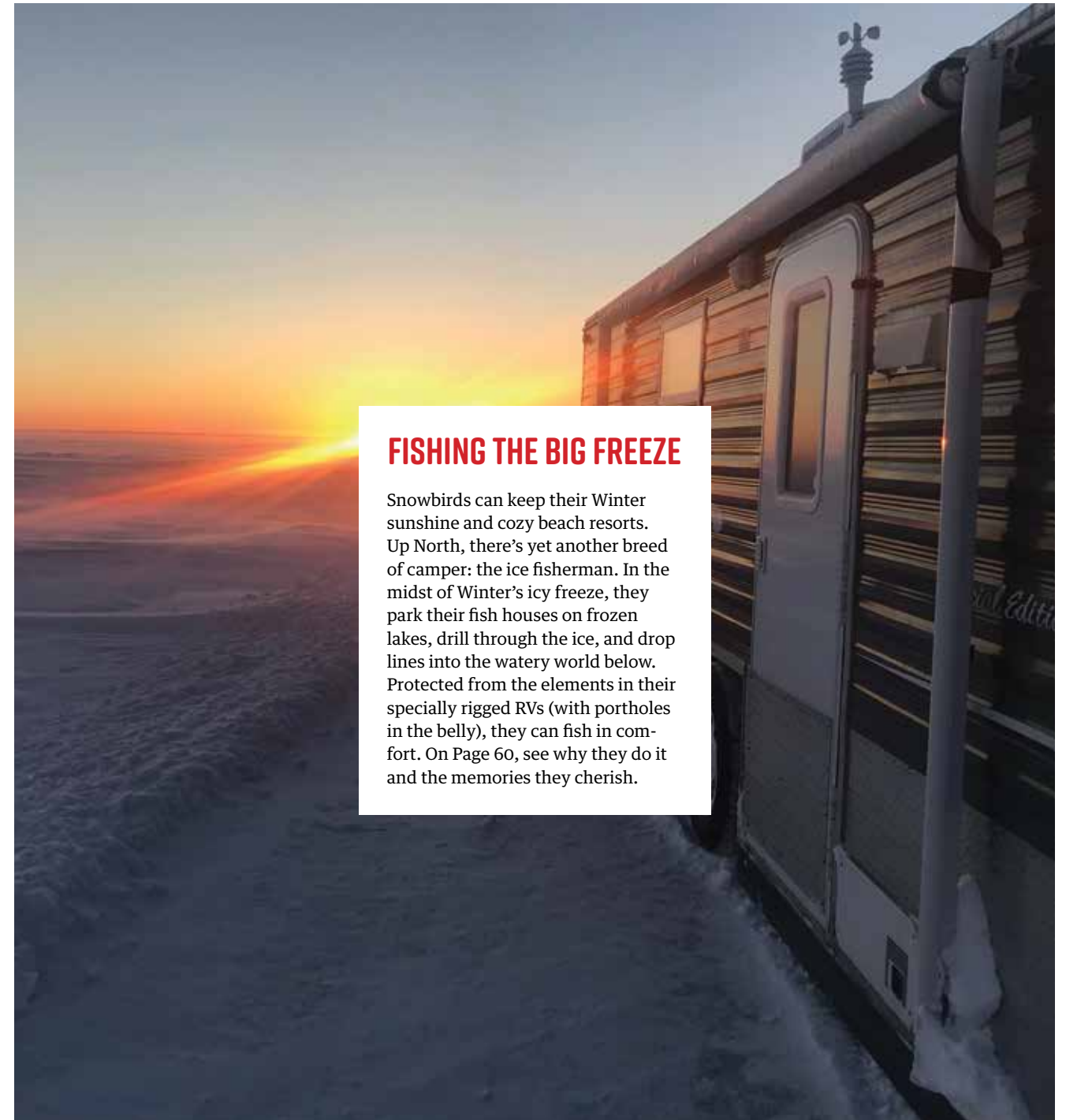
**I HEART TIPS**  
Cut through Asheville—hitting the Biltmore on the way—then swing east to Black Mountain. The "Little Town That Rocks" is loaded with great beer, rich history, and Blue Ridge trails.

# RVX



**INSIDE:**  
Discover New Mexico's secret RV oasis.  
p. 58

CAMPING, ADVENTURE, AND THE RV EXPERIENCE



**FISHING THE BIG FREEZE**

Snowbirds can keep their Winter sunshine and cozy beach resorts. Up North, there's yet another breed of camper: the ice fisherman. In the midst of Winter's icy freeze, they park their fish houses on frozen lakes, drill through the ice, and drop lines into the watery world below. Protected from the elements in their specially rigged RVs (with portholes in the belly), they can fish in comfort. On Page 60, see why they do it and the memories they cherish.

A FLORIDA WINTER: OUR GUIDE TO SNOWBIRDING IN

# PANAMA CITY



*There's more than just sun on a beach in this panhandle gem.*

Florida's weather changes dramatically from Summer to Winter, going from hot to slightly less hot. But the Sunshine State's sneaky secret, and what keeps millions migrating there, is that it's also a great parking spot for Winter. It might not be hot enough to get leathery tan on the sand, but there's plenty worth snowbirding for.

## RESORT BY THE BEACH

One of the best reasons to visit any beach along the Panhandle is the plethora of RV parks within walking distance (sometimes stone-throwing distance) from the Gulf. In the offseason, most parks will run between \$50-70 a night, even with direct beach access.

**Visit:** Camper's Inn Inc. Their rates for November 1 through February 28 are \$65 daily and \$390 weekly, with a discount if you only need a 30-amp site.

## EAT YOUR WEIGHT IN SEAFOOD

PCB (aka Panama City Beach) is not a great spot for highfalutin foodies. It's basic. Chain-driven. But the Gulf is a fantastic source for a huge variety of seafood. So just about any old joint is going to have something just off a fishing boat. What the locals know is that the right combination of a spot near water, the perfect evening glow, just-shucked oyster, warm-not-hot weather, and tasty beverage is never hard to find.

**Try:** Fresh oysters at Simply Seafood & Oyster Bar, cooking your own shrimp from Shrimp City, or Caribbean vibes right on the Gulf at FINNS Island Style Grub.



## VISIT THE NATIONAL NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM

Nicknamed "The Spirit of Naval Aviation," this museum is great for kids and kids at heart. It's packed with all forms of flying vehicles, and from a virtual aircraft carrier flight deck to an Apollo 11 virtual reality experience, the displays are as impressive as they are delightful. Time it right and you can even catch a practice (at no extra charge!) of the Blue Angels, which are typically 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

**Take Note:** At this time, the museum is only admitting current Department of Defense ID Card holders, meaning active or retired military, or civilian employees of the DoD. Each card holder can escort up to 15 non-card holders, so if you're not military, bring a friend who is. And be sure to check the museum's website for the most current admission info.

## CATCH GHOST CRABS AFTER DARK

Sure, the beach shines in the summer sun. But there are plenty of ways to enjoy it without sweating, like catching that last sliver of sun dipping under the horizon on a sunset walk. And there's fun to be had after dark, too. Bring a flashlight (a cell phone will do in a pinch, but a headlamp is perfect). Walk the sand just past the surf and look for tiny crabs darting around. When you come close, they'll bury themselves just under the sand, where they're easy to grab. Their teeny pinchers are harmless, and they're easy to pick up by hand (wash your hands after). But a beach toy sand sifter works great for an easy pickup.



Get Crab-Catching Pointers from a Kid!

**Tip:** This is a great way to get kids a little run-around exercise time before bed as crab chasing can be mini-cardio.



## GET WACKY AT A SENIOR PROM

There's no denying that when it's at its vacation-y best, Florida is a bit of a spectacle. Panama City's senior citizen center embraces that every year, putting on an annual "Senior Prom"—which is exactly what it sounds like. There's evening



wear, a dance floor, punch, and even a "winter resident prom king and queen."

**The Deets:** This year's event is on February 10 at the Edgewater Beach and Golf Resort. It's \$10 to attend and worth every penny.

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# Sharing a Southwest Secret

Truth or Consequences is New Mexico's perfect snowbird RV oasis. Just don't tell anyone.

**H**ow a town names itself Truth or Consequences and still remains a secret has to be one of life's minor mysteries, but it's not without its benefits. This little New Mexico town has a friendly but not overwhelming population around 8,000. There are RV parks galore. But best of all, there are lots of fun things to do to fill those winter months—from soaking it up in nature's very own hot tub to fishing in the desert sunshine (as opposed to whatever it is that's happening on Page 60).

WARM UP

## JUST THE RIGHT TEMP

Winters in the New Mexico desert are mild, dry, and covered in sunlight. But the local sweet spot is the perfect temperature adjuster—the hot spring. (In fact, Hot Springs used to be the name of the town, but, you know, there's more than one of those.) With temperatures from 98 to 115 degrees, the hot thermal waters here are happily stirred by snowbirds and locals alike.

PLAY

## WATER IN THE WELL

Wouldn't be much of an oasis without water, right? Well, there is water aplenty. Elephant Butte Lake (a reservoir) is 43-miles in length. And while Winter may not be the best season to take a dip (even in New Mexico), it is a great time to fish. There are three marinas, and the water is full of bass, crappie, blue gill, wall-eye, and catfish. In other words, bring your tackle box.

EXPLORE

## EPIC DESERT VISTAS

Between the mild weather and breathtaking landscape, there are lots of great places to stretch your legs. Whether that's heading south to see the eerie sandscape of White Sands National Park, or west to the mountains and mesas of the Gila National Forest, you won't be disappointed. The views in every direction are absolutely arresting—just be sure to bring lots of water.

TAKE OFF

## A PATH TO THE STARS

What if we told you that there was a place in the middle of the New Mexico desert that was closed to walk-in visitors? You'd probably say Roswell. (Which is just a little over 200 miles to the east.) But while Roswell and all of its mystery is owned by—gasp—THE GOVERNMENT, we're talking about Spaceport America, which is commercially owned and open to private tours. Take one!



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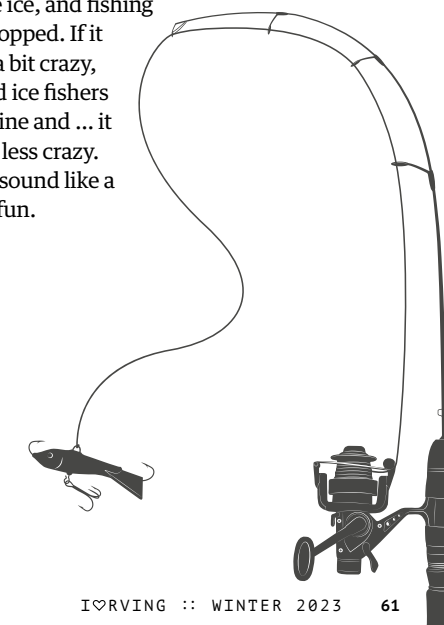
# PARK IT ON THE ICE

*PULLING FISH OUT  
OF THE BELLY OF A  
MINNESOTA FISH HOUSE.*

*by Marc Acton*



The growth of ice fishing has mirrored the RV boom, bolstered by the rise of new ice houses (aka fish houses)—specialized RVs built to sit on ice and facilitate this chilliest of pastimes. These ice houses are stripped down, ultralight RVs with holes cut in the floor. Corresponding holes are then cut into the ice, and fishing lines are dropped. If it all sounds a bit crazy, talk to rabid ice fishers like Jake Kline and ... it doesn't get less crazy. But it does sound like a little more fun.



**T**en-year-old ice fisherman Jake Kline was anything but pampered. He remembers fishing out of his grandpa's first hard-sided fish house. "It was just a plywood box with an old barrel stove in there." Like many fishermen, he has one season he'll never forget. It was the Winter of 1989, and the lake by his grandpa's house couldn't stop spitting out perch.

"It's called Egert Lake, but most know it as Jirak's lake. I shouldn't even call it a lake—it's that little. Maybe a half a mile across, if that, and super shallow. I can remember grandpa taking me back there, and we just whaled on



those perch. I think the limit was 100 a piece." The townsfolk took notice, and suddenly, the little lake was all the rage. "I remember it still to this day. [As more people heard about the fish we were pulling in] there were eventually six or seven fish houses out there, which was a ton of houses for that lake. There's never been another year since that there's ever been people out there like that."

Jake talks about ice fishing the way people in Colorado talk about hiking 14ers, folks in Nashville talk about spot-

*THERE ARE TIMES ON THE WEEKENDS WHERE IT LOOKS LIKE A LITTLE TOWN OUT ON THE LAKES. THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF HOUSES.*

ting Kid Rock singing karaoke, or locals in Fort Myers talk about the perfect sunset. It's extraordinary. But not outside the norm. Here, it's just something that happens.

Ice fishing isn't the only thing he's dedicated his life to. You'd have to call it a side passion, really, if only because he only gets three months of the year to do it. But he spends his days year-round as a hunting dog trainer in the region. He's highly sought-after and has trained over 1,000 dogs out of his JK Pine Creek Kennels. Back in 2000, his own dog, Drake, was the U.S. Open puppy flusher champion, a top national bird dog honor.

But Jake's heart is never far from fishing.

In January, the average temperature in Jake's Minnesotan hometown is three degrees. Three. But he's rarely deterred. "A lot of days through the week, the family isn't able to come out. But I'm spending four to five nights out there on the lake myself," he says.

Unlike his childhood surrounded by plywood, today Jake spends those four to five nights in relative luxury. "Grandpa's fish house you had to take the wheels off one by one to set it down on the ice. Then, my dad's was kind of

a crank system to crank it down. It wasn't so much work, and that one had a radio, a couple bunk beds, and a heater. Then I started buying my own, and each one got a little nicer."

His is a 21-foot unit from the RV line of a quality manufacturer called Legend Outdoors. The ice houses feel more like stripped down toy haulers than anything swanky. Like all ice houses, there are also several holes in the floor that can be opened to access the ice directly—along



with their weight, this feature is one that distinguishes an ice house from a regular RV. And like all fish houses, it's built to be dropped low. "Mine is on hydraulics and takes about five seconds to drop." They're dropped onto the ice because if you just cut a hole in the floor of a regular RV, you'd have two-degree wind tickling your toes. Dropping to the ice keeps you insulated from wind.

In Summer, the house doubles as a regular RV. He and his wife Angie, 16-year-old daughter Tayla, and 10-year-



## A FEW ICE HOUSE BASICS

Adding the RV into the ice fishing experience changes things. For one, you're more likely to convince the wife and kids to come along. Here are a few basics for any ice fishing newbies.

» 1

### NOT A LOT OF MANUFACTURERS MAKE THEM.

But we like the Forest River Grey Wolf, Yetti Outdoors Fish Houses, and Legend Outdoors. All mostly found up North, of course.

» 2

### CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT. YOU GOT OPTIONS.

Some say ice house. Others say fish house. Or fish shanty, bobhouse, ice hut, fish coop, or darkhouse. Just pick what you like.

» 3

### KEEPING THE WEIGHT LOW IS GOOD.

Because, you know, you're parked on top of ice. Models typically come with a galley, bathroom, and something to sleep on.

» 4

### YOU'LL NEED SOME SPECIAL GEAR.

Bring an ice auger to drill holes, an ice scoop to remove slush, a skimmer to remove ice chips, and an ice chisel to check ice density.

old son Croix use it for typical Summer activities. "Mine has an awning on it and an AC unit, so we camp out of it like a regular camper. It's kind of killing two birds with one stone, because you can use it all year long. If you buy a regular camper, you can't use it in the Winter, and a camper made just to fish, you can't use in the Summer."

Whether they're parking in a Summer forest or a dense sheet of frozen ice, it's a family affair. "We bring the ice skates, and the kids can just be kids out there on the ice. And my wife—luckily enough—really enjoys fishing. She grew up in a fishing family. All her family fishes. And she loves the tug at the end of the line just as much as me."

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Ice fishing has grown in popularity, not just as a family activity but as a community social one. “There are times on the weekends where it looks like a little town out on the lakes. There are hundreds of houses. And kids are out there driving around, making all this noise on the ice.”

For the real hardened fishermen like Jake, the middle of the night is where a lot of the catching happens. The kids are finally in bed. The teenagers with their noisy cars have finally tucked themselves in. Eventually it’s just man, line, and ice hole.

“The feel of the tug is indescribable. You set that hook, and you can tell if it’s a big one—it feels like you got hooked on a log. And that fish might just sit there. But eventually you can feel them shaking their head, trying to get that hook out of their mouths. Then you can feel them thrashing around, and you’re afraid you’re going to lose them. Sometimes they take off away from you, and you hear that ‘whizzzz’ from your line.

They’re all a little different. Sometimes [when you’ve reeled them in] they come up flat, and you can see them lying flat against the ice, and you got to try to get that head into that six-inch, eight-inch hole, which isn’t easy. But fish don’t have a reverse, so once you do that, they’re pretty much done.”

Anyone who’s felt that tug knows there’s something programmed into people. It awakens at that first line wiggle, even for the most novice of angler. It’s some primal urge that recognizes and honors the struggle on both ends of the line. Like most outdoorsmen, Jake and his buddies release most of the fish they catch, preferring that this particular struggle between man and nature doesn’t have life or death consequences.

Jake has spent every Winter for nearly his whole life staring at eight-inch ice holes, just like his father and his

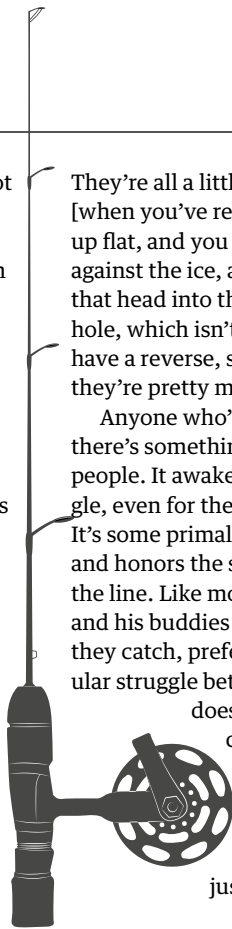
father’s father. Grandpa Kline passed away two years ago. He had spent nearly a century fighting with nature, winning more than he lost. “He made it to 94,” says Jake, “And he was fishing until dang near when he passed.”

About twenty years ago, Jake bought Grandpa Kline’s property. Today he can see Jirak’s Lake out his window. The perch haven’t stopped calling to him. Small chance they ever will. ❤️

WATCH KIDS LAND SOME ICE FISH



OK! OK! OK! We see why this is awesome.



TOP LEVEL

RV TECH AND TRADECRAFT



INSIDE: Command the fire pit like a Viking Warrior. Page 76. →



**EXPECTATION IS A THRILL.** Certain brands have made their name meeting—and exceeding—our expectations. Entegra is one of those brands who somehow always raise the Class A bar. Not sure what we mean? Turn the page and see the Cornerstone in all its diesel-pushing glory. Of course, the flip side of expectation is the unexpected. And Brinkley RV’s out-of-nowhere debut floored us. We expect it will floor you too.

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# Luxury Cuts No Cornerstone



## A Superior Vantage Point

The Entegra Cornerstone gives pilots an unrivaled view of the road from their cockpit with the Ultra-Vision® wrap-around windshield. Your dashboard is also exceptional. The integrated 360° camera and blind spot monitoring systems are displayed on a digital dash screen. As is your iGO navigation. And Bluetooth. And satellite radio. (We could go on.) Suffice it to say, everything you want to monitor and control—from your TPMS and adjustable power steering to your speakers—you can. But most importantly, the Safe View dash makes it easy to see and adjust.

## An Upscale Way of Life

After walking through the lush interior of the Entegra Cornerstone, the idea of lowering one's standard of living to an RV becomes laughable. In the kitchen, there's a Blanco single-bowl granite sink. There's a porcelain tile backsplash. The cabinetry is almond-glazed maple. In the bathroom, a frameless glass shower door opens to a teakwood shower seat. You watch your shows on a 50-inch 4K smart TV while sitting in a premium leather chair. You retire to a king-size Sleep Number® mattress. This is the standard of living at its pinnacle.

## Entegra's Vision of Class A Grandeur

*IF YOU WANNA KNOW HOW TO MAKE A STATEMENT ON WHEELS, THE ENTEGRA CORNERSTONE IS IT.*

**POWER MAKES AN IMPRESSION**, and Class A diesel pushers know it. But what sets the Entegra Cornerstone apart is its completeness—from its smooth-riding, safe-driving suspension system to its unsurpassable comforts. (Exhibit A: There are leather massaging seats in the cab.) To sit in the cockpit of the Cornerstone is to feel imperial. High above the highway with advanced controls at your fingertips, you can grasp a vision for a grander kind of life—where luxury doesn't compromise and is present wherever you park.

They say that with great power comes great responsibility.

And Entegra's design certainly takes that into account with premium safety and steering systems in place. The Cornerstone is equipped with a Reyco® Granning® passive-steer tag axle, as well as disc brakes on every axle. It also employs a three-stage engine brake collision avoidance system with collision warning, adaptive cruise control, and electronic stability control. The 22.5-inch Michelin® tires are equipped with TPMS which can be monitored from the brand-new Safe View dashboard.

Inside the cabin, the Cornerstone

possesses robust power to provide for the comfort of its passengers—regardless of where it's parked. Complete with an Onan® 12,500-watt diesel generator (with an automatic stat), a 3,000-watt pure sine wave inverter, four L16 AGM batteries (with 6V/390 amp hours each) and two 200W solar panels, it can handle every passenger's power demands. And with three 15,000-BTU AC units and an Aqua-Hot® 450D hydronic water and heating system with in-floor heat throughout, the Cornerstone puts you in firm control of the cabin climate. And with Flexfoil® insulation, the Cornerstone gets to keep the heat it generates—perfect for the Class A aiming to have it all.

Photos courtesy of Entegra



## ENTEGRA CORNERSTONE 45D MODEL FLOORPLAN

▶ CHASSIS SPARTAN K3 RAISED-RAIL	▶ EXT LENGTH 44 FT 11 IN
▶ ENGINE CUMMINS 15L 605HP	▶ EXT HEIGHT (W/AC) 12 FT 8 IN
▶ GVWR 54,000 LBS	▶ EXT WIDTH 8 FT 5 IN
▶ GCWR 74,000 LBS	▶ FRESH/GRAY/BLACK 100/62/41 GAL

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# Beyond the Brink of Desire



## Comfort That Feels Boundless

There might be a more exquisite fifth wheel bedroom out there (it's possible), but few have left us feeling so awestruck as the Model Z 3100. It's nice. Like fancy-hotel-room-for-your-anniversary nice. The queen-size bed (with a king-size option) is lightly tucked into the slide. Two swing-arm sconces provide ample reading light. A small, curtained window even allows for a little morning light to filter in. But the most stunning feature is the panel-mirrored closet that amplifies light and enhances the feeling of space in the room.



## Where Style Has Free Reign

You can describe the Model Z 3100's cabin with a single word: ravishing. True style is both striking and sleek, unencumbered by excess. Which is perfect for an RV. (We don't need any excess, right?) From the Don-Draper-esque trifold sofa to the frameless windows, the precision of the furnishings leave nothing to be desired, while the leanness of the décor gives a greater appearance of space. Quite simply, it's a place you want to be, with strong residential motifs. Even the geometries of the bathroom are shamelessly attractive and smartly save space with each rounded edge.

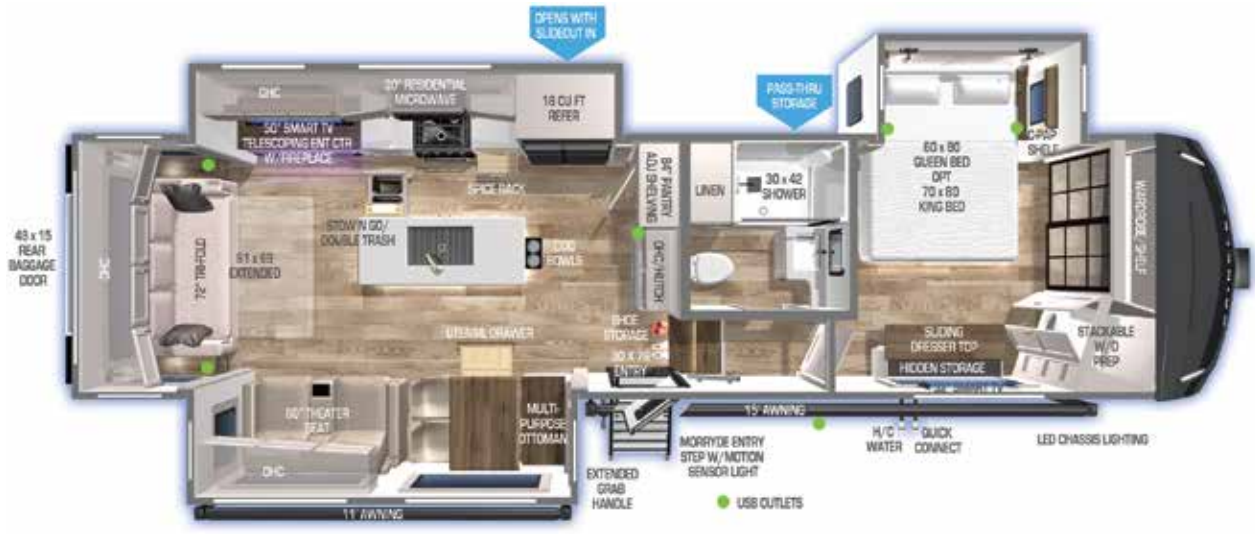
## A Fifth Wheel on the Edge of Innovation

**BRINKLEY RV ANNOUNCES THEIR DARING NEW BRAND WITH THE FEARLESS MODEL Z 3100.**

**WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW** can be as dangerous as what you don't. Especially when limits turn out to be illusions. To trust your gut and step out into the unknown takes bravery. Moxie. Call it what you will. But whatever it is, Brinkley RV certainly has it. And there's no clearer proof than their brand-defin-

ing Model Z 3100. With design that goes above and beyond industry standards, Brinkley RV captivates the eye with modern elegance and innovative brilliance. It's hard not to love an RV that turns heads everywhere it pulls in, and the Model Z 3100 is akin to a fifth wheel supermodel—with sharp, decisive lines that are both modern and timeless. But beyond being easy on the eyes, this mid-size fifth wheel is built to make things easy on its owners. The Model Z offers 130 cubic feet of exterior storage—that is pass-thru, lined with rubberized flooring, well-lit, and complete with basement access doors. There are outdoor showers on both sides of the RV, each with hot and cold water. The dump valves? Those are electric. The roof is even maintenance

free (an industry first). Elegance and sublime efficiency are hallmarks of the Model Z 3100's interior—so much so you can expect guests to gasp. The cabin is a showpiece of style, with clean neutral white and grays, accented by warm bronze fittings and camel dinette chairs and theater seats. The 84-inch pantry is spacious, and there are thoughtful little touches everywhere. Like 20 outlets, six with high-speed USB/USB-C charging stations. Or the dresser's sliding top with hidden storage. Or those modern square frameless windows. Apparently, when Brinkley RV is on the verge of something great, they just go for it—all the way and across every feature. And that has us excited about what's to come.



## MODEL Z 3100 FIFTH WHEEL FLOORPLAN

▶ LENGTH 34 FT 11 IN	▶ DRY WEIGHT 11,923 LBS
▶ HEIGHT (W/ AC) 13 FT 2 IN	▶ HITCH WEIGHT 2,142 LBS
▶ FRESH/GRAY/BLACK 75/90/45 GAL	▶ GVWR 14,495 LBS

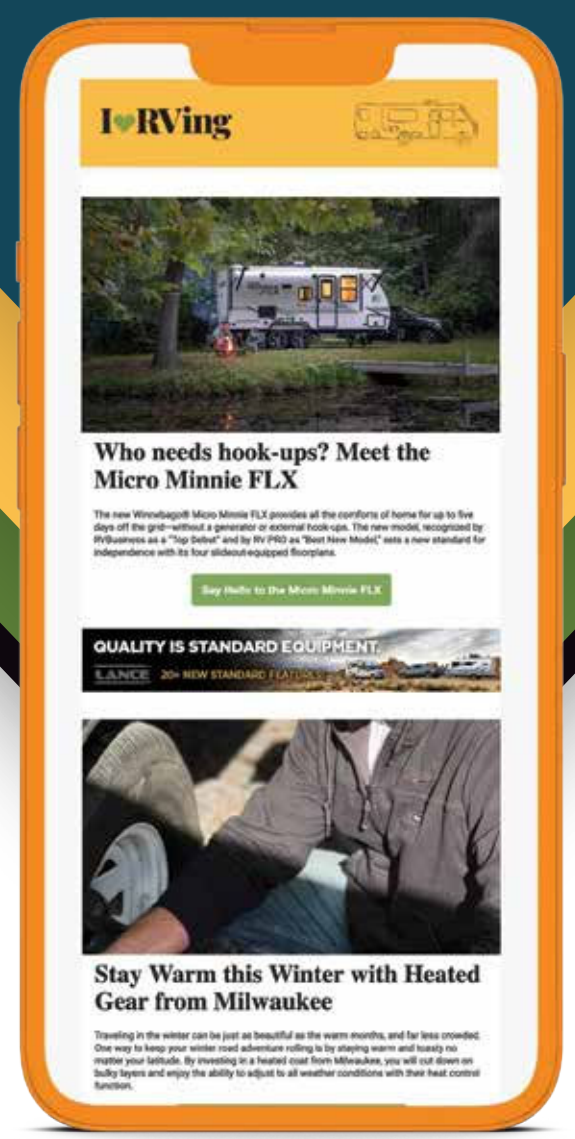
**Take your path to the brink. Visit [BrinkleyRV.com](http://BrinkleyRV.com).**

Photos courtesy of Brinkley



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# The Power of the Pink Stuff

By Sue Mosebar

Everything you need to know about RV antifreeze.

Every RVer has about three options each winter. The first is *run for it!* The second is tough it out. The third is to put those travel plans on hold and let your RV take a long winter nap. And if you're going with Option 3, you'll need to get to know a magical elixir known as "the pink stuff."

## TWO VERY DIFFERENT KINDS OF ANTIFREEZE

RV antifreeze, aka the pink stuff, has an important job to do: lower the freezing point of any water left in your RV to protect your pipes and fittings from bursting, breaking, and becoming an inconvenience. When added to the water system, RV antifreeze can lower the freezing point. This then prevents any remaining water from expanding when temperatures drop below freezing, which can damage the pipes, leading to leaks or even bursting pipes. Some types of RV antifreeze also help protect the seals, such as in faucets or toilets, by acting as a lubricant.

The pink stuff, which is nontoxic, is certainly not to be confused with car antifreeze. Auto antifreeze has a completely different purpose (helping cool the engine), is totally toxic, and should never be used anywhere near your potable water sources. Like ever. The pink stuff, however, is considered safe, nontoxic, and nonhazardous. And if you think about it, it has to be. Because it's going into your water pipes. Of course, that doesn't mean you or your pets should try it. And that's good to remember because, dogs and cats may be attracted to the sweet smell and taste of propylene glycol—and even small amounts can lead to a type of severe anemia or liver failure in cats. (Good to remember as you start winterization.)

Photo: Shutterstock/ ATTILA Barsan

## CHOOSING AN RV ANTIFREEZE OPTION

There are three common types of RV antifreeze: ethanol-based, propylene glycol-based, or (less commonly) an ethanol/propylene blend. Ethanol is an alcohol, and propylene glycol is considered a double-strength alcohol. Both types act to lower the freezing point of any water left in the tank. The type, as well as the brand, of antifreeze can determine how effective the RV antifreeze is for your uses.

In more moderate climates, a less expensive ethanol RV antifreeze may be enough. However, the most common type of RV antifreeze is propylene glycol. It's often preferred for several advantages. For example, propylene glycol-based products: are nonflammable, so they're safer than ethanol-based antifreeze; are



Camco Easy Going -50 RV Antifreeze

Star brite Winter Safe -50 RV Anti-Freeze

Walmart's Super Tech RV and Marine Antifreeze

lubricating, so they are better at protecting the seals in your plumbing system; leave less residual taste or smell than ethanol-based varieties, which can also take longer to wash out of the system; and are nontoxic to humans when used as directed, even in the freshwater system.



### A NOTE OF CAUTION: AVOID RECYCLED CHEMICAL

Propylene glycol products made from recycled chemicals should be avoided as they typically use antifreeze recycled from airports—often contaminated with other airline chemicals.

## HOW TO USE RV ANTIFREEZE

RV antifreeze can be added either alone (after pipes have been cleared of water) or combined with the remaining water after you've drained your pipes as much as possible. It can also be poured into p-traps in the sinks and shower so they don't freeze solid and get damaged. Finally, the pink stuff can be added to the gray and black tanks, so waste doesn't freeze if you're camping when winter weather arrives. That way, you can still easily dump your waste at the end of the journey even when the temperatures DROP.

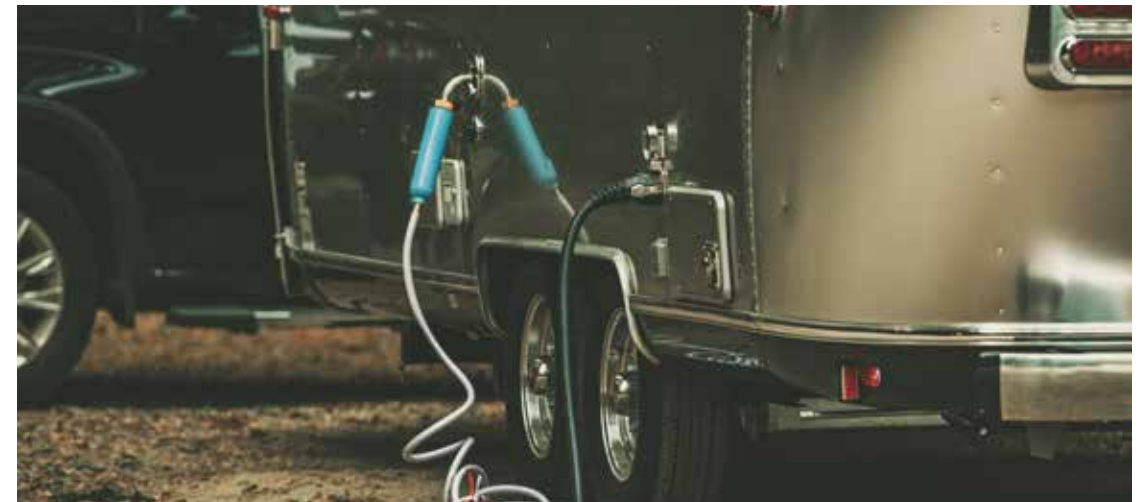
(Alternatively, you can skip the pink stuff altogether by ensuring all water is completely blown out of the plumbing system with high air pressure, perhaps adding a small amount of antifreeze to plumbing p-traps to lubricate and prevent any leftover liquid from freezing.)

Once it's time to use your RV again, you'll need to dewinterize it, which will mean flushing the freshwater tank and the entire system with fresh water before the water is okay to consume. Remember to drain it at a dump station, sewer hole, or septic tank rather than into the ground as, again, even if it's labeled as nontoxic, it's not safe for many animals and can be harmful to the environment, especially if it leaches into a water source.

## PREVENTION PUTS YOU IN THE PINK

Whichever version or method you choose, it's important to winterize your RV to protect the plumbing system. Remember, most RVs aren't designed to be well-insulated when the temperatures drop well below zero. And many have somewhat exposed plumbing systems that are more susceptible to damage from freezing temperatures.

Protecting the pipes, water pumps, p-traps, holding tanks, and water heaters is crucial. Otherwise, you're likely to uncover burst pipes, leaks, and expensive repairs to make before you can hit the road in the spring. And no one's got time—or money—for preventable repairs.



# Pump Up Your Water System

Everything you need to pick the perfect water pump for your RV.

By Sue Mosebar



"Where there is water, there is life." As campers, we know this—even if every science fiction movie hadn't told us. We wash, clean, cook, and flush with water. We drink it too. So, ensuring you have a reliable source of water is a huge quality of life issue when you're living on the road. Which makes RV water pumps either springs of life or authors of agony.

Truth be told, all too often the unit that your RV is equipped with leaves something to be desired. Maybe the pump wears out ... or is loud ... or lacks pressure or efficiency. If that's the case, it's probably time for a replacement. Sure, the different types and models can seem daunting, but knowing the basics can help take off the pressure—or, even better, get the pressure just right.

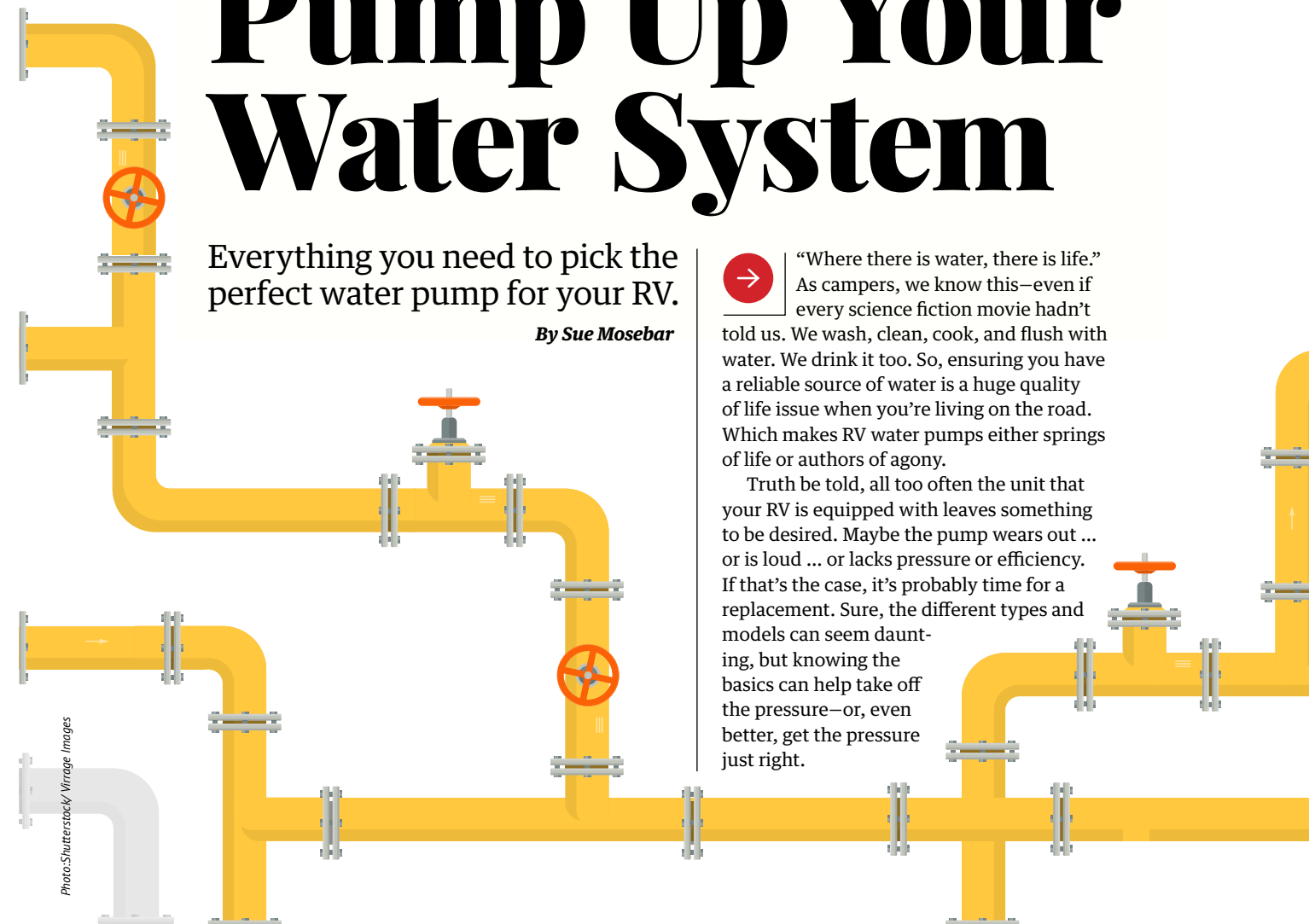


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## LEARN THE WATER PUMP BASICS

You might have guessed that an RV water pump pulls water from the freshwater tank up the pipes to the faucets. That means clean water—including its flow and pressure—is reliant on your pump. On the road, you'll come to rely on the water from your tank—especially if you take the road less traveled. Depending on the size of your RV, you'll likely have a freshwater tank that holds anywhere from 50 to 200 gallons.

Having a water pump in your camper means that you have water on demand. Just turn it on (or manually pump it). Typically, water pressure is set for around 30 PSI, though some are adjustable, so you can increase or decrease the water pressure (which is helpful if you're trying to conserve water).

Once the pump is turned on, it will pump water until you close the valves that release water (like your faucets, showerheads, or even on outside outlets), or once the water pressure has reached the set limits in the pipes. If the pressure drops, the pump will turn back on. Many modern electric water pumps have automatic shut-offs for when you turn off the faucet or water outlet. This can be helpful since you're less likely to leave a pump running, which can lead to problems like burst pipes and flooded campers. (No, thank you.)

## DETERMINE YOUR FLOW STATE

 Picking out a water pump for your RV starts with an honest assessment of your camping style—and, yes, actual is better than aspirational. Your access to water while camping has a direct relationship with how much water you want to conserve. If you like to glamp with a full hookup, you might prefer a pump that's primed for comfort.

### MANUAL RV WATER PUMPS.

Like going off the beaten path? Prefer something that's both easy to install and affordable? Then a manual freshwater pump may be for you. They're inexpensive, typically easy to install, and don't use any outside power (gas or electricity). They also help prevent wasting water, as you pump only what you need. That makes them ideal if you want to spend some time off-grid and want a quieter option.

The biggest drawback? You have to "work" for your water, though most are pretty easy to use. You may also experience lower levels of water pressure, and they may only be efficient for using in a sink (rather than a shower).

One example of a hand water pump would be the Valterra Rocket Hand Pump, but foot pumps are in the market too, although they can be a little more expensive. And you may also need to switch out your faucet or increase tubing and connections. Whale Water Pumps include a few different types that are popular.



### ELECTRIC RV WATER PUMPS.

One of the most common ways to ensure a consistent and reliable water supply is to use a simple 12-volt electric RV water pump. (This is the version that's most standard in RVs.) When combined with a hot water heater, these little units can even be installed for comfortable showers on the road. They aren't as easy to install, but they only require a few parts and a little electricity to run. The advantage is more consistent water pressure and ease of operation. Just turn the switch on and voila! Water. These pumps are typically connected to both the cold water and the hot water heater, so you can easily adjust the temperature.

Unfortunately, some of the electric water pumps can be noisy and use more electricity than expected. If you are replacing an older unit with a new RV water pump, be aware that some pumps need more electricity than others. Your newer pump may burn more (or less) battery life, depending on amperage, than your old version. So, you may need to also install new wiring if you replace an older unit.

One of the more popular units is the SHURflo 4008 due to its long-life and higher performance. It's also known for being quieter with lower vibration than other similar units, even while pumping. If you want maximal water flow and have water to spare, then the SHURflow 4048 is another popular option.

Remco also offers a variable speed unit that provides a high enough volume even if you're using more than one faucet. Other recommended brands include Flow Max, Pro-Gear, and SEAFLO.

**"TO PICK THE BEST RV WATER PUMP FOR YOU, YOU'LL WANT TO FIND ONE THAT'S SIMPLE TO INSTALL, FITS YOUR SPACE, AND HAS A QUIET MOTOR."**


To pick the best RV water pump for you, you'll want to find one that's simple to install, fits your space, and has a quiet motor.

An optional accumulator can help with a variety of pumps. This device provides a place to store pressurized water, so you can still get some water, even when the pump is turned off (like late at night when you don't want to wake family or friends). Even when using the pump, the accumulator can help smooth the flow of the water, so it's a steadier stream.

For bigger RVs, trucks, or buses, you may need increased water pressure. That's when you step up to a 24-volt water pump. These bigger units allow for higher flow to more outlets. The downside is that they're both more expensive to install and more expensive to run—both in terms of water and electric usage.

## CIRCLE POINTS OF COMPARISON



 To determine the best RV water pump for you, you'll need to be familiar with some key terms and factors that will impact your decision.

### GALLONS PER MINUTE (GPM).

That is, how many gallons (of water) per minute can your system handle? Avoid water pumps that are too powerful for your system and suck energy from your battery (as well as waste water). At the same time, you'll want to avoid a pump that doesn't have enough GPM to provide for all water outlets if you have more than one.

### POUNDS PER SQUARE INCH (PSI).

What's the recommended pounds per square inch for water pressure for your camper? You need to know before you shop. Typically, most pumps are between 40 and 70 PSI to optimize water pressure and flow. If it's over 70, you could cause damage or even burst your pipes. If it's lower than 40, then you might not have enough flow to meet your needs.

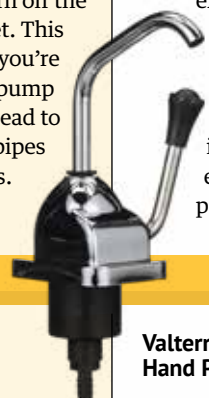
**SIZE.** Where are you mounting your RV water pump? In campers of all types, every square inch is optimized for space and storage. If you're replacing an older unit, make sure your new water pump will fit into your available space.

**NOISE.** Virtually all RV water pumps make some noise, but some can be really noisy and vibrate every time they're turned on. In a small space, that's annoying. Look for water pumps with better vibration dampening that cut down the noise.

**THERMAL PROTECTION.** If the water or motor gets too hot, water pumps with thermal protections will automatically shut off to protect the motor and reduce the risk of a fire. Which is a nice feature to have.

**REVIEWS.** Get real feedback from people you know and trust, and read up on online reviews. For the most honest answers, skim over the 1- and 5-star reviews and read through those that are in the middle (2 to 4 stars). See what folks say about the voltage, energy efficiency, and ease of installation.

Very simply: If you have running water in your RV camper, you need a water pump. Not all options will be right for your camping style or rig, so take the time to consider your needs and do your research instead of buying the first, cheapest, or shiniest one you find. Any Southwest snowbird (Page 40) could testify: It's too important to just go with the flow.



Valterra Rocket Hand Pump



Whale Tiptoe Galley Foot Pump



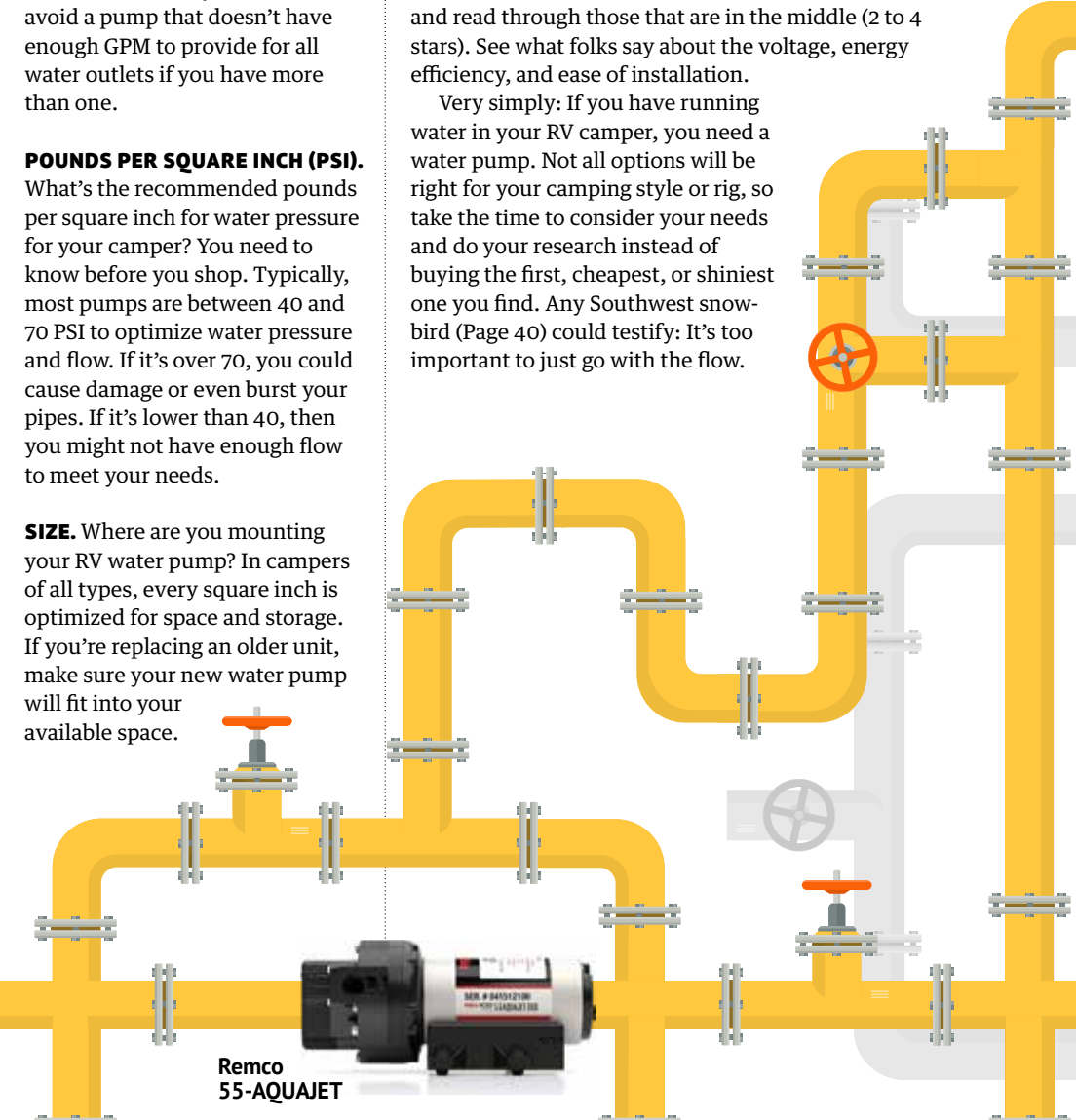
SHURflo 4008



SEAFLO 55-Series



Remco 55-AQUAJET



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Firesides

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1 FORMAL INVITATION

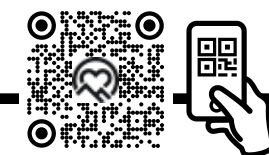
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1 CLOSING WORD

(Spicy)

RVing is so hot right now. And an RV magazine has never been hotter than this issue. Hope you loved our jaunt from the Southwest to the South Florida coast, with a couple stops in the great white north along the way. The beauty of RVing is that you're not stuck wherever you are. And thanks for taking us along for the ride. Got a favorite road buddy that needs some more RV in their life? Use this QR code to give them a gift they're sure to heart.



1 LAST LAUGH

(The Daddest Joke Around)

What did the Gulf of Mexico say to the beach? Nothing. It just waved.

(See our guide to Panama City on Page 56.)

1 FINAL INSPIRATION

(Deep Thoughts)

"A journey of a thousand miles starts with one step."

— Lao Tzu.

"And ends with one heck of a back-in parking job."

— I Heart RVing

1 SIMPLE TIP

(Go Into the Light)

Get to the campground before dark. If you're a newbie, you might not know it yet, but arriving in daytime makes camp setup roughly 1,000 times easier. Unless you're a hardened road warrior, plan to arrive at your destination at least an hour before sunset.

1 BIG TEASE INVITATION

(Don't Shed No Tears)

Next issue there will be tear-drops. These curvy little numbers have always been in style, but they seem to be popping up on the campground more than ever. They're not just pretty, either. They're easy to haul, easy to park, and easy to love, taking

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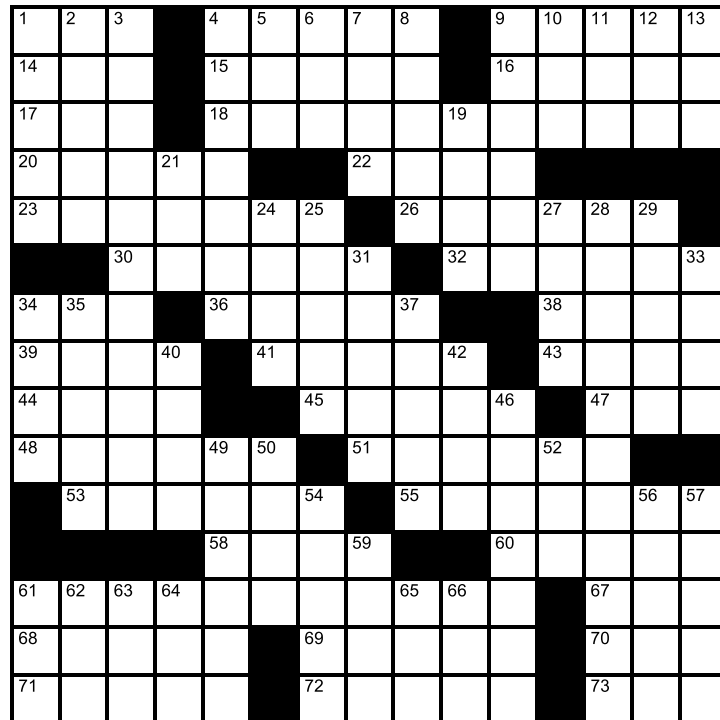


ACROSS

- 1. Cap
- 4. Change, as a clock
- 9. Chip dip
- 14. "I" problem
- 15. Similar
- 16. \_\_\_ artery
- 17. Word before and after "oh"
- 18. Hard
- 20. Intro
- 22. Cicatrix
- 23. Fish hawks
- 26. Slips
- 30. Victorian, in a way
- 32. Tenor Enrico
- 34. Addition
- 36. Between, in poetry
- 38. Allergic reaction
- 39. To put a roof on
- 41. Impolite dinner sound
- 43. Bit
- 44. Bring down
- 45. Simple chord
- 47. "\_\_\_ alive!"
- 48. Odd
- 51. Conviction
- 53. Calamitous
- 55. Abandons
- 58. Pesky insect
- 60. Speak without thinking
- 61. Magician's incantation
- 67. \_\_\_ cross
- 68. South American rodent
- 69. Summer TV offering
- 70. \_\_\_-tac-toe
- 71. Dweeb
- 72. African antelope
- 73. Breed

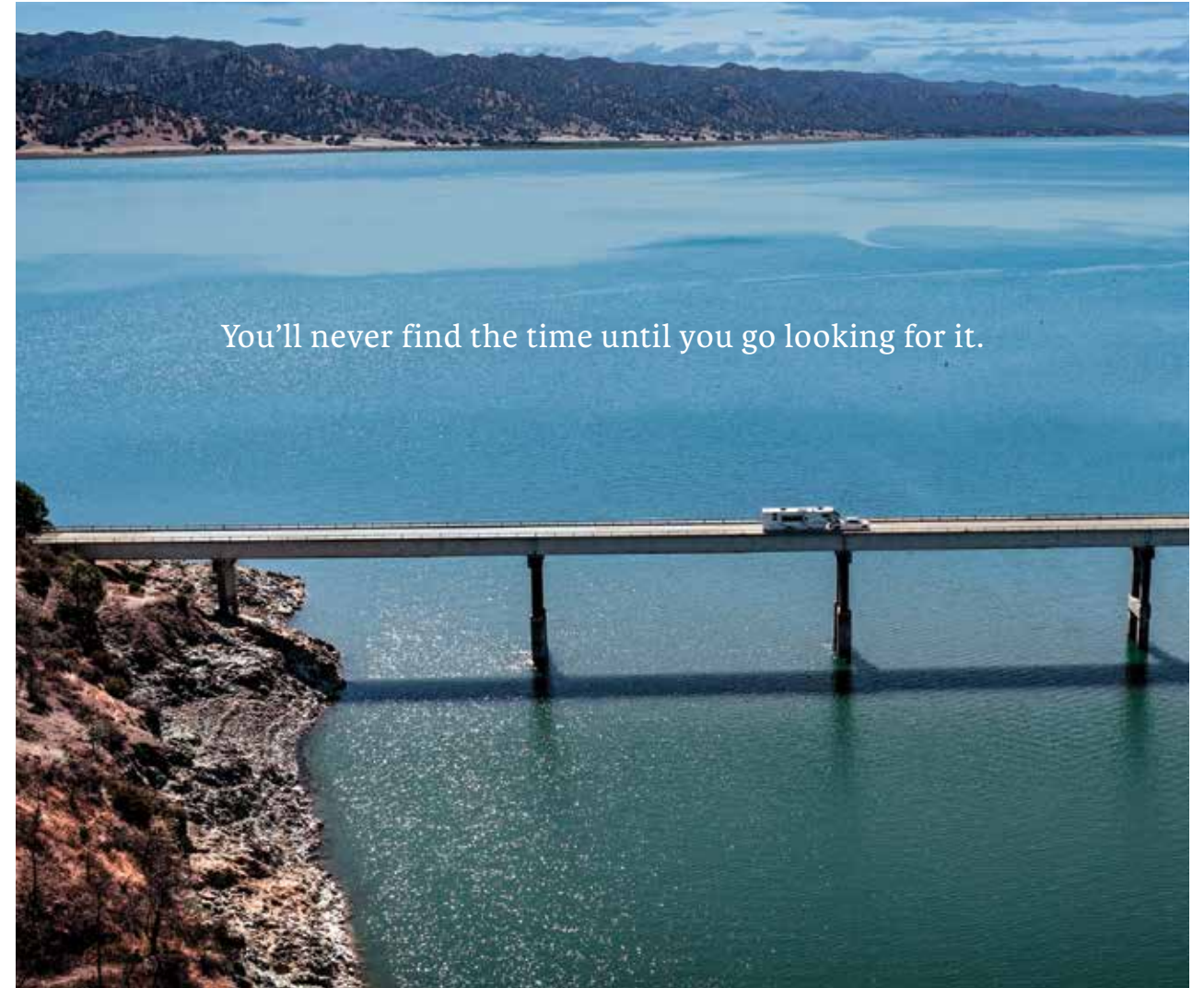
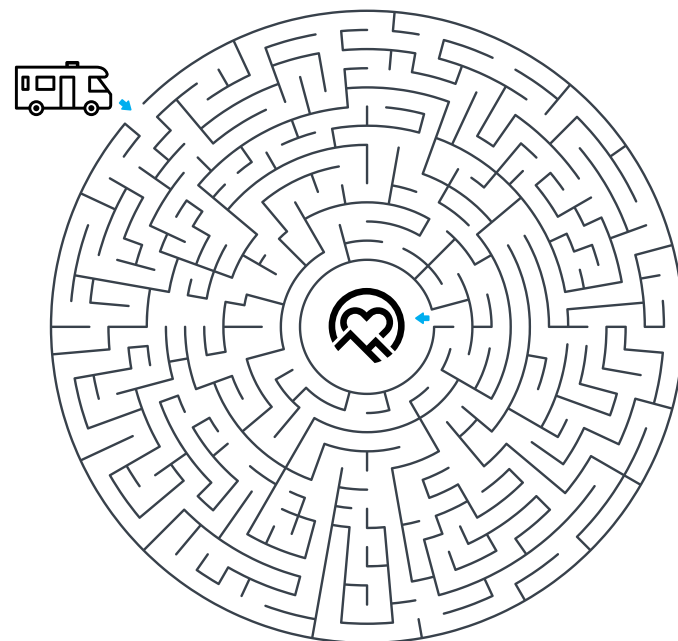
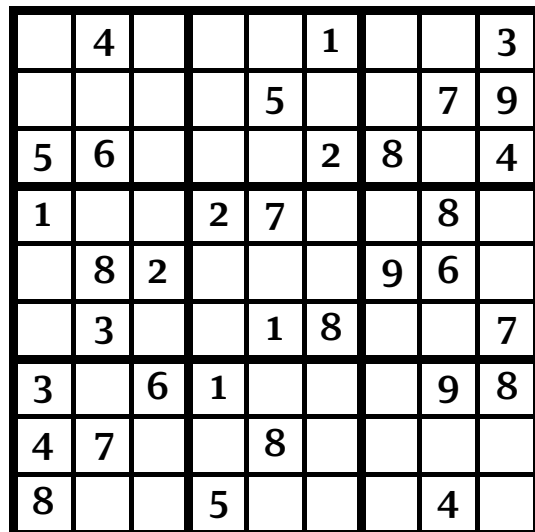
DOWN

- 1. Beat
- 2. Ice cream thickeners
- 3. Someone who has it all
- 4. Attire
- 5. Common street name
- 6. Bit of a draft
- 7. Barely gets, with "out"
- 8. Third canonical hour
- 9. Code word for "S"
- 10. \_\_\_ grecque (cooked in olive oil, lemon juice, wine, and herbs, and served cold)
- 11. Ballot abbr.
- 12. Erie Canal mule
- 13. Trick taker, often
- 19. Artist Chagall
- 21. "To \_\_\_ is human..."
- 24. Swerves at sea
- 25. Artificial leg?
- 27. "Mi chiamano Mimi," e.g.
- 28. Richard's first hit
- 29. English race place
- 31. Bedroom community
- 33. \_\_\_ law
- 34. Almond
- 35. Inclined
- 37. Put to the test
- 40. Bulgarian money
- 42. Blanched
- 46. Dissolve
- 49. Breakfast container
- 50. Ship of 1492
- 52. Moray, e.g.
- 54. Close-knit group
- 56. Bring up the rear
- 57. Baffled
- 59. Old Chinese money



- 61. Appear
- 62. Fiddle stick
- 63. Deli bread
- 64. 30-day mo.
- 65. Car accessory
- 66. Bleed

Finished up already? Whew! Look at that big, bad brain! Scan the QR code to check your answers.



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