

PREP YOUR RIG FOR SPRING / **EXPLORE** PETOSKEY BAY HARBOR / **PLANT** AN RV HERB GARDEN

I RVing

13 QUIRKY
VACATION
DESTINATIONS

**THE BEST
VAN BUILDS**

*PLUS, the Best Products to
Build Out Your Own Van*

+Go Inside

Space-Saving Toys
to Maximize Your
Outdoor Fun



SPRING INTO RVING 2025

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Spring Into RVing

VOLUME 5 / ISSUE 1 / SPRING 2025

JUMP TO YOUR FAVORITE SECTION—JUST CLICK!



05 Mirror Check

A Brief Look at the RV News and Community

Catch up on the RV news, events, and people, and tune into our spring RV playlist.

10 American Vista

Vantage Points of American Beauty

Spring is a great time for fun and adventure. Join us as we visit favorite spring hotspots.



21 Road Abode

Improving Life on the Go

Discover the advantages of an RV herb garden. Plus tips on getting your RV road ready.

38 Top Level

RV Tech and Tradecraft

Class B motorhomes are all the rage! Explore some of the most popular models of 2025.



49 Edge of the Map

From the Highway to the Campground

13 Quirky vacation destinations that will create unforgettable RV memories.

54 RVX

Camping, Adventure, and the RV Experience

Maximize your space and fun with RV-friendly portable adventure gear.



W Creating Lasting RV Memories

Embrace technology with these great game apps that are fun for the whole family.

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I HEART RVING GLOBAL CAMPGROUND.
PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT
EXTINGUISH ALL FIRES
SORRY FOR WHAT I SAID WHEN I
WAS TRYING TO PARK THE RV**

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Explore Van Life!

Hello, Fellow RVers!

When my son graduated, many of his friends were gearing up for college, choosing career paths, and savoring one last carefree summer before “adulthood.” Ahh, to be young again.

One of his friends, however, had a different idea. After diligently saving throughout high school, she converted an old van into a home on wheels, spending months designing and building it, preparing for what she imagined would be a magical year (or more!) of van life.

Her gap-year adventures took her across the country. It also gave her time to think about the future. At one point, her phone died, and with it, her connection to home, leaving her feeling utterly alone. While the journey was worthwhile and created amazing memories, it wasn't as picture-perfect as she had imagined. Some days, it was downright difficult. The van now waits for the next adventure as she attends college.

Another couple I know fully embraced van life for five+ years. They cherished the freedom, adventure, and minimalism and discovered how little they needed to be happy. They're now onto a new, more “traditional” chapter.

Van life has its undeniable upsides; it also comes with challenges. It's an intriguing lifestyle, but it's not for everyone, or



perhaps, for always. That's why it's so important to research, plan, and test before diving in—just as previous generations have discovered.

Indeed, van life is nothing new. The 1960s hippie culture popularized the idea with VW buses. The movement resurged in the 2010s with digital nomads in beautifully converted vans. Then came the pandemic boom with the rise of socially distanced travel, remote work, and alternative housing.

Today, van life has become fully mainstream. Major brands design products specifically for van builds, and RV manufacturers are rolling out compact camper vans—offering more maneuverability and affordability.

Whether you're curious about van life or fully committed to this lifestyle, we've got you covered with must-have products for a custom build and great choices for those who want to grab a set of keys and go. And, of course, there are plenty of articles to make life on the road better—including remarkable travel destinations—for RVers of every strip.

Enjoy!

Sue Mosebar

Sue Mosebar



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IN THE NEWS



RV Industry: Is it Going to Be a Bumpy Ride?

If you've been keeping an eye on the RV industry, you may have noticed some turbulence. Since the pandemic boom, when everyone and their neighbor decided RVing was the ultimate escape, the market faced a bit of a slowdown. In the last year or so, that started to turn around. But between new trade tariffs, continuing supply chain struggles, and chilling consumer confidence combined with a shift toward budget-friendly models, manufacturers are once again feeling the pressure. Let's break down what's

happening—and whether there might be an upside.

TARIFFS, SUPPLY CHAIN WOES, AND SLUGGISH SALES

First, let's talk about the elephant in the room: rising costs. The RV Industry Association recently raised concerns about new tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico, which could make it more expensive to manufacture RVs here in the U.S. (And guess who ultimately foots that bill? Yep—buyers.)

On top of that, supply chain headaches haven't

gone away. While things have improved since the peak of pandemic-related shortages, manufacturers are still grappling with delays on key materials and components.

The result? Higher production costs, longer lead times, and an overall squeeze on profits. That explains why we're seeing major manufacturers report losses this year.

THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT OWN AN RV:

11.2M

For instance, Thor Industries (which makes Airstreams, Jayco, and Dutchmen, among other brands) took a hit, posting an unexpected loss of \$0.01 per share, while revenue dropped nearly 9% year over year to \$2.02 billion. That's a big shift for a company that rode high during the pandemic RV boom to now calling

it a “challenging economic environment” due to the “continued macroeconomic headwinds.”

Winnebago saw an even bigger dip, with revenue down 18% as buyers leaned toward more affordable models. In fact, they posted their first adjusted loss since 2020—not exactly the news they (or we) were hoping for.

And this trend isn't limited to just these two companies—industry-wide, RV makers are seeing softer demand as consumers feel the pinch of higher interest rates and increasing inflation.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RV BUYERS

The big question: Will RV prices go up or down?

It's a bit of a mixed bag. On one hand, rising production costs and supply chain issues could push prices higher. But on the other, slowing demand means manufacturers may start offering better deals and discounts to entice buyers.

If you're in the market for an RV, now may be the time to shop around. Some brands may be willing to negotiate on price, offer better financing options, or even throw in extra perks to close a sale. That's especially true for

higher-end models, which are facing stiffer resistance from buyers.

A SILVER LINING?

While many are preparing for more turbulence, there may be some bright spots on the horizon:

RV Industry Association (RVIA) released their forecast, showing RV shipments are projected to climb 5% in 2025. That's not a huge leap, but it does suggest that demand could be ready to stabilize, given the right conditions.

Fueled by their love of the great outdoors, younger buyers (i.e., Millennials and

Gen Z) are getting into RVing more than ever before. That said, they're looking for smaller, more affordable, more maneuverable rigs. This could push the industry to develop new, innovative models that better fit their lifestyles, budgets, and expectations.

Tech-forward RVs are also on the rise. AI-powered smart homes on wheels, fully electric travel trailers, and innovative off-grid features are making RVing more appealing to a whole new audience. Expect more sustainable, high-tech options in the coming years.

There's no doubt that the RV industry is going through changes. Prices might fluctuate, manufacturers are adjusting, and buyers are being a little more cautious. But that doesn't mean RVing is losing its spark. Quite the opposite. A growing number of new people are poised to enter the market. With

Get Involved! The NEW I ❤️ RVing Community Forum

Whether you're a full-time RVer, a weekend road warrior, or just dreaming of hitting the open road, you've found your people!

The I ❤️ RV Community is more than just another online forum—it's your home on the road for connecting with fellow travelers, swapping stories, and sharing the best tips, tricks, and destinations.

IT'S A PLACE TO:

- Ask questions and get real advice from experienced RVers
- Share your latest adventure (photos encouraged!)
- Talk gear, upgrades, and hacks to make life on the road smoother
- Discover new destinations and

new tech, fresh designs, and a growing audience of adventure-seekers, the industry is bound to evolve in exciting ways.

If you've been dreaming of hitting the road, keep an eye on deals, stay informed, and maybe—just maybe—this could be the perfect time to score a great buy.

Hello RVing Community!

Great to see this new forum to connect with others in the community! 🎉



hidden gems

- Join the conversation on everything from campfire recipes to boondocking best practices

We'll also be dropping in exclusive updates, industry news, and event announcements—so you'll always be in the know about what's happening in the RV world and where to meetup in person with your new RVing community.

Most importantly, this is your space—a positive, supportive community built around a shared love for the road. We can't wait for you to join the ride!

Spring RV Events

Jubilee Hot Air Balloon Classic

Dates: May 24 - 25, 2025

Location: Decatur, Alabama

There are so many amazing events throughout the US.





One unique, unforgettable stop to add to the list is the Jubilee Hot Air Balloon Classic in Decatur, Alabama. This charming event may be smaller than some balloon festivals, but that's part of the appeal—fewer crowds, up-close views, and a relaxed atmosphere.

With around 60 colorful balloons lifting off into the sky, it's a mesmerizing experience, whether you're watching from the ground or snapping photos at sunrise. Beyond the balloons, the event also features balloon races, antique vehicle displays, live entertainment, and family-friendly activities to keep the fun going all weekend long.

Better yet, Decatur is an easy drive for nearly half the U.S. population. So, it's a convenient stop for RVers. While onsite camping isn't available, nearby Point Mallard Park offers a fantastic RV-friendly campground, complete with full hookups and access to the park's

walking trails, golf course, and even a water park to cool off after a day of balloon-spotting.

www.alabamajubilee.net

Reno Boat and RV Show – Reno Expo

Dates: March 27 - 30, 2025

Location: Reno-Sparks Convention Center

renoboatsportandrshow.com

Louisiana Sportsman Show

Date: March 28 - 30, 2025

Location: St. John the Baptist Community Center

louisianasportsmanshow.com

Washington State

Evergreen Spring RV Show

Dates: April 4 - 6, 2025

Location: Evergreen State Fairgrounds

Monroe, WA

evergreenspringrvshow.com

Wildwood RV Show

Dates: April 4 - 6, 2025

Location: Wildwood Convention Center

Wildwood, NJ

wwwrvshow.com

Vacationland RV & Camping Show

Dates: April 5 - 6, 2025

Location: Norway Savings Bank Arena

Auburn, ME

campmaine.com/maine-rv-camping-show/

Spring Hall of Fame RV Show

Dates: April 28 - May 1, 2025

Location: RV Hall of Fame & Museum

Elkhart County, IN

eventalways.com/hall-of-fame-rv-show

Wyoming Outdoor Weekend & Expo

Dates: May 16 - 17, 2025

Lander Community and Convention Center

Lander, WY

wyomingoutdoorweekend.com

Overland Expo West 2025

Dates: May 16 - 18, 2025

Fort Tutthill County Park
Flagstaff, AZ

overlandexpo.com/west/



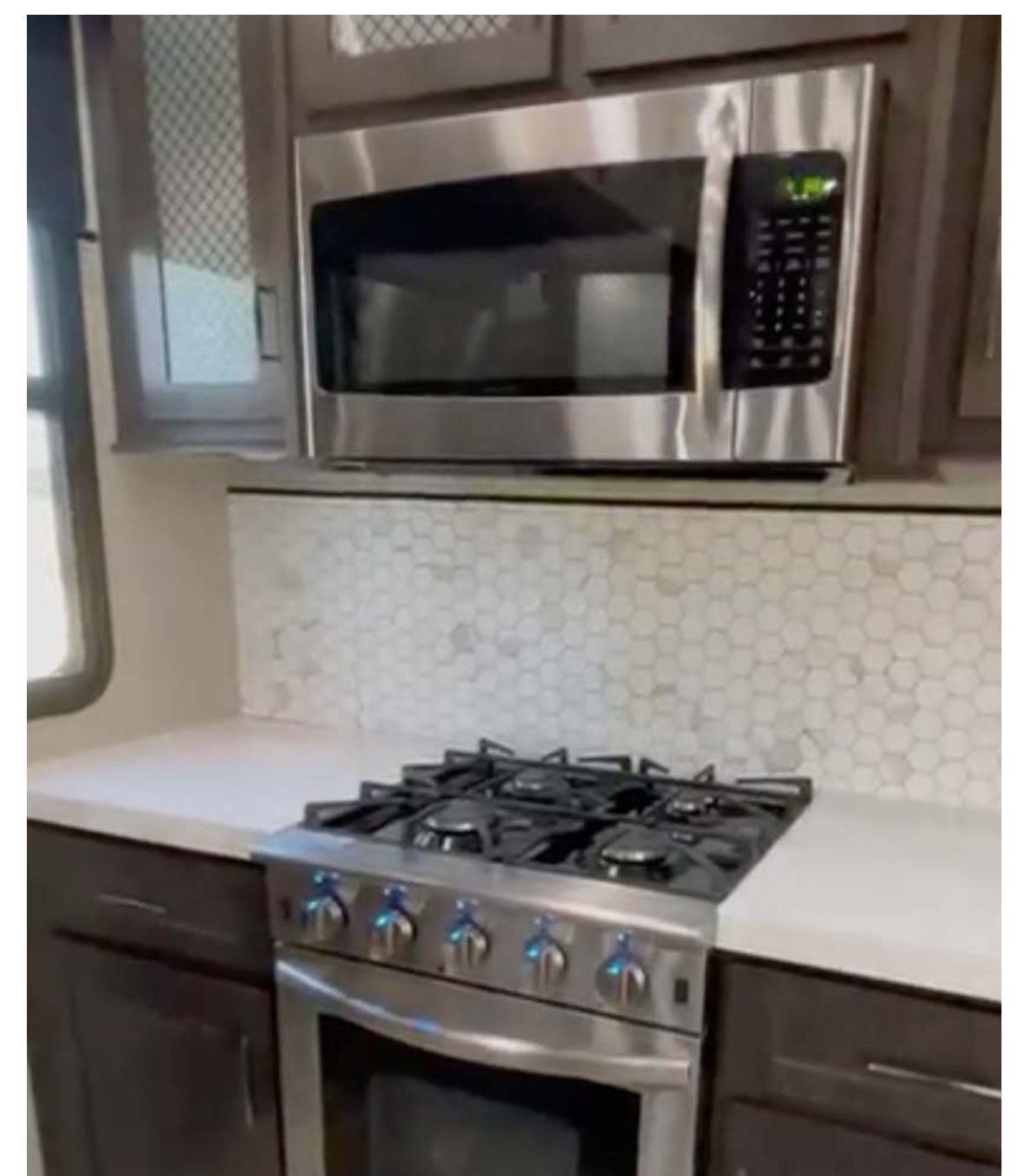
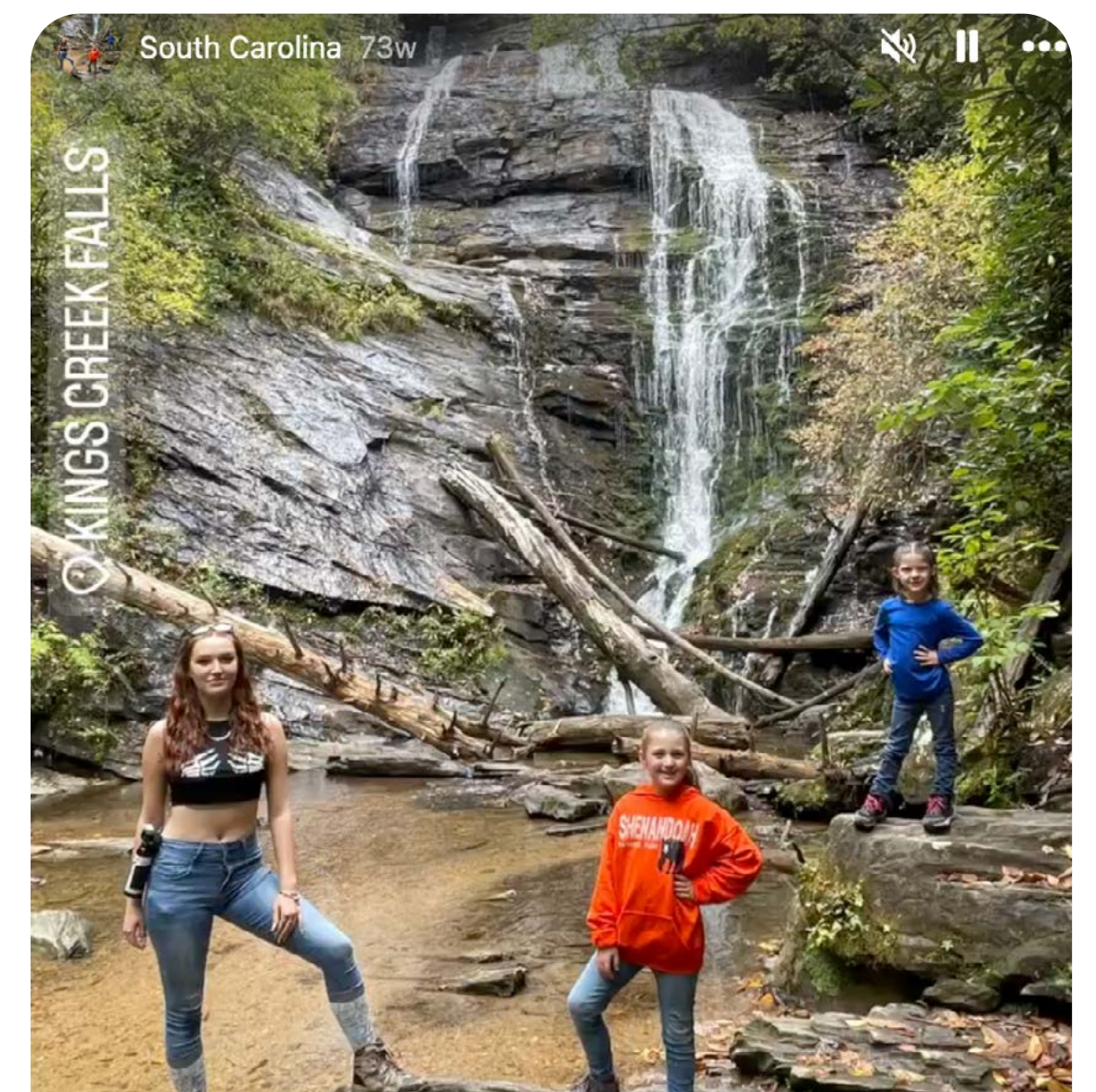
THE PERFECT PLAYLIST FOR YOUR NEXT SPRINGTIME RV ADVENTURE

SPRING IS IN THE AIR, THE OPEN ROAD IS CALLING, AND THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO SET THE MOOD THAN WITH THE PERFECT PLAYLIST. EXPECT FEEL-GOOD CLASSICS, BREEZY INDIE TUNES, AND ROAD TRIP ANTHEMS THAT BRING OUT THAT EASYGOING, WINDOWS-DOWN, SUN-ON-YOUR-FACE KIND OF VIBE. THERE'S A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE—WHETHER YOU LOVE UPBEAT SINGALONGS, CHILL FOLK TRACKS, OR A HINT OF NOSTALGIA TO PAIR WITH THE MILES AHEAD. SO, HIT PLAY, ROLL DOWN THE WINDOWS, AND LET THE MUSIC CARRY YOU INTO YOUR NEXT GREAT ADVENTURE.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

@wildrvlife

Why We Heart It —When they aren't embarking on fun adventures, they're providing repair tips and tricks. 🙌

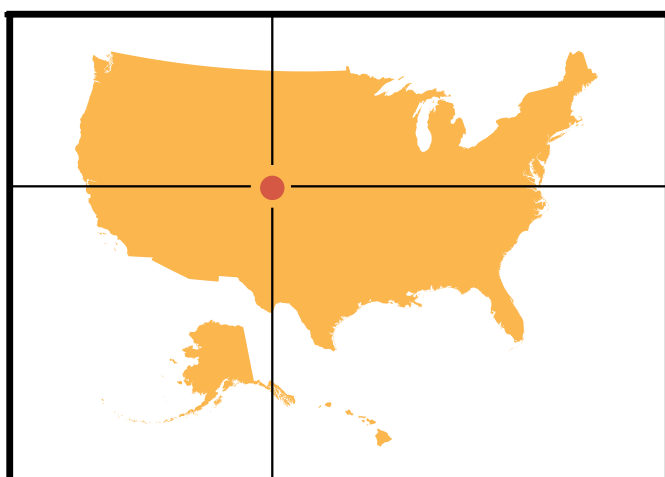


@monstersonthemove

Why We Heart It —This full-time RV family shares great videos and have a way of making you feel like you're there with them! 🙌

American

VANTAGE POINTS OF AMERICAN BEAUTY



- ▶ 40.485° N, 106.832° W
- ▶ STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO
- ▶ WWW.STEAMBOATSPRINGS.NET

Vista

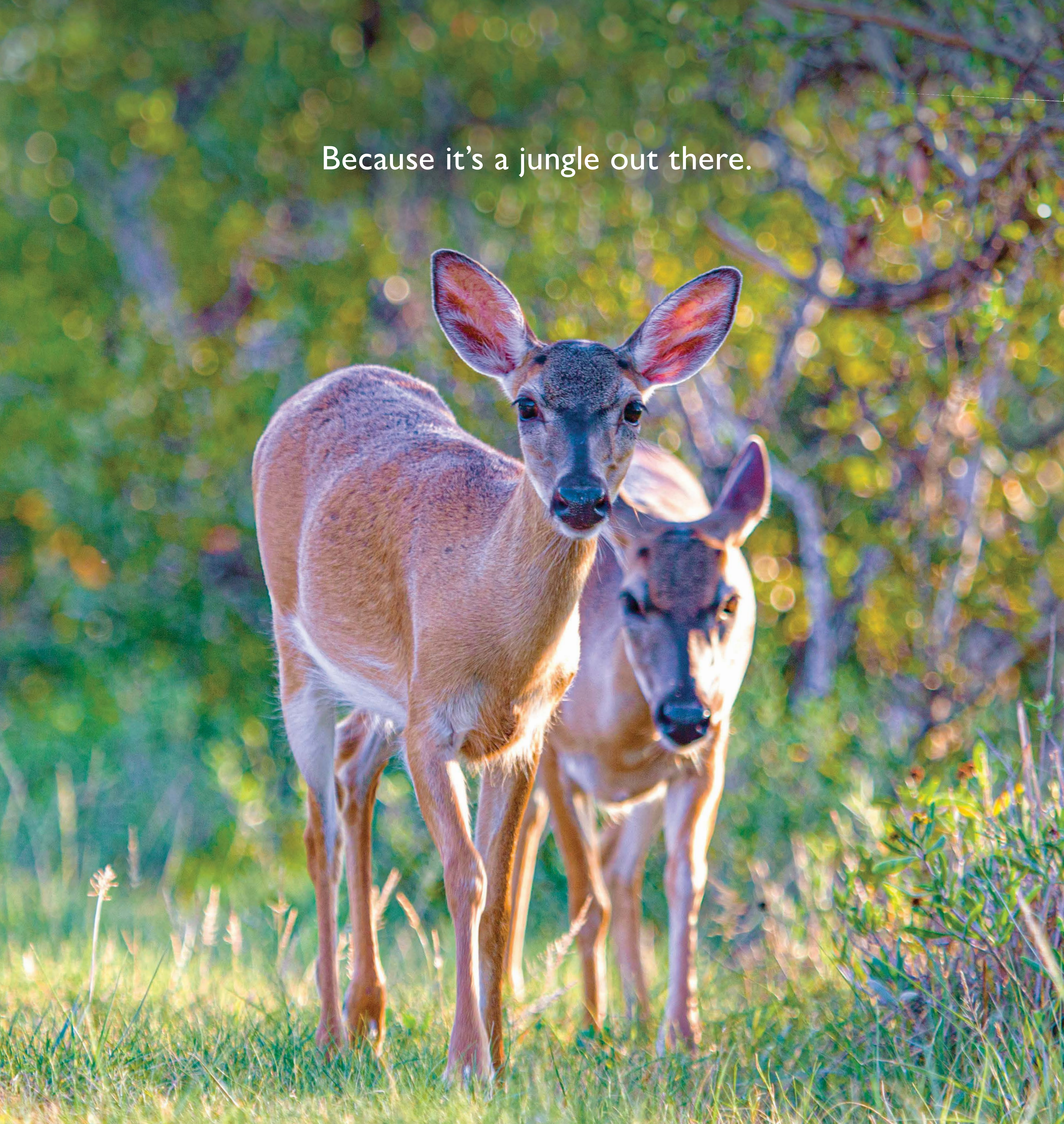


AMERICAN VISTA: SPRING ADVENTURES!

As much of the country shakes off winter chills, spring provides the perfect excuse to hit the road and chase adventure. The rivers run high with fresh snowmelt, forests burst into vibrant greens, and trails beckon with the promise of new discoveries. In short, this season is all about embracing the great outdoors—from the towering peaks of the Rockies to the sun-drenched deserts of California.

As the snowmelt rushes down from the Rockies, the Yampa River transforms into a tubing paradise. Steamboat Springs, Colorado, offers a sweet mixture of adventure and relaxation as you float past scenic mountain views and lively riverbanks. With outfitters providing tube rentals and shuttle services, all you need to do is sit back, soak up the sun, and enjoy the ride!

Because it's a jungle out there.



Florida's Lower Keys are home to two wildlife refuges, epic ocean views, miles of unspoiled wilderness and an array of outdoor accommodations ranging from rustic campsites to lavish RV parks. From Big Pine to Stock Island, you'll never run out of extraordinary places to step off the treadmill and watch the world go by.

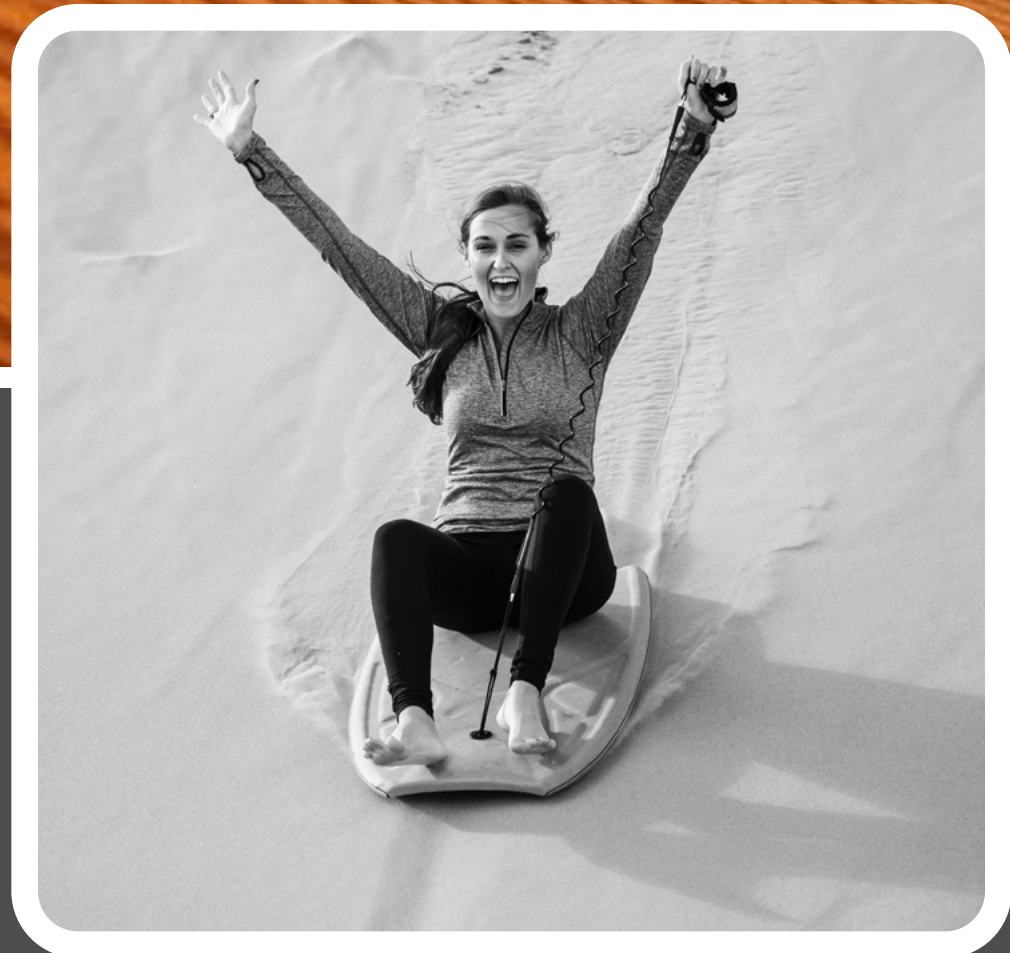
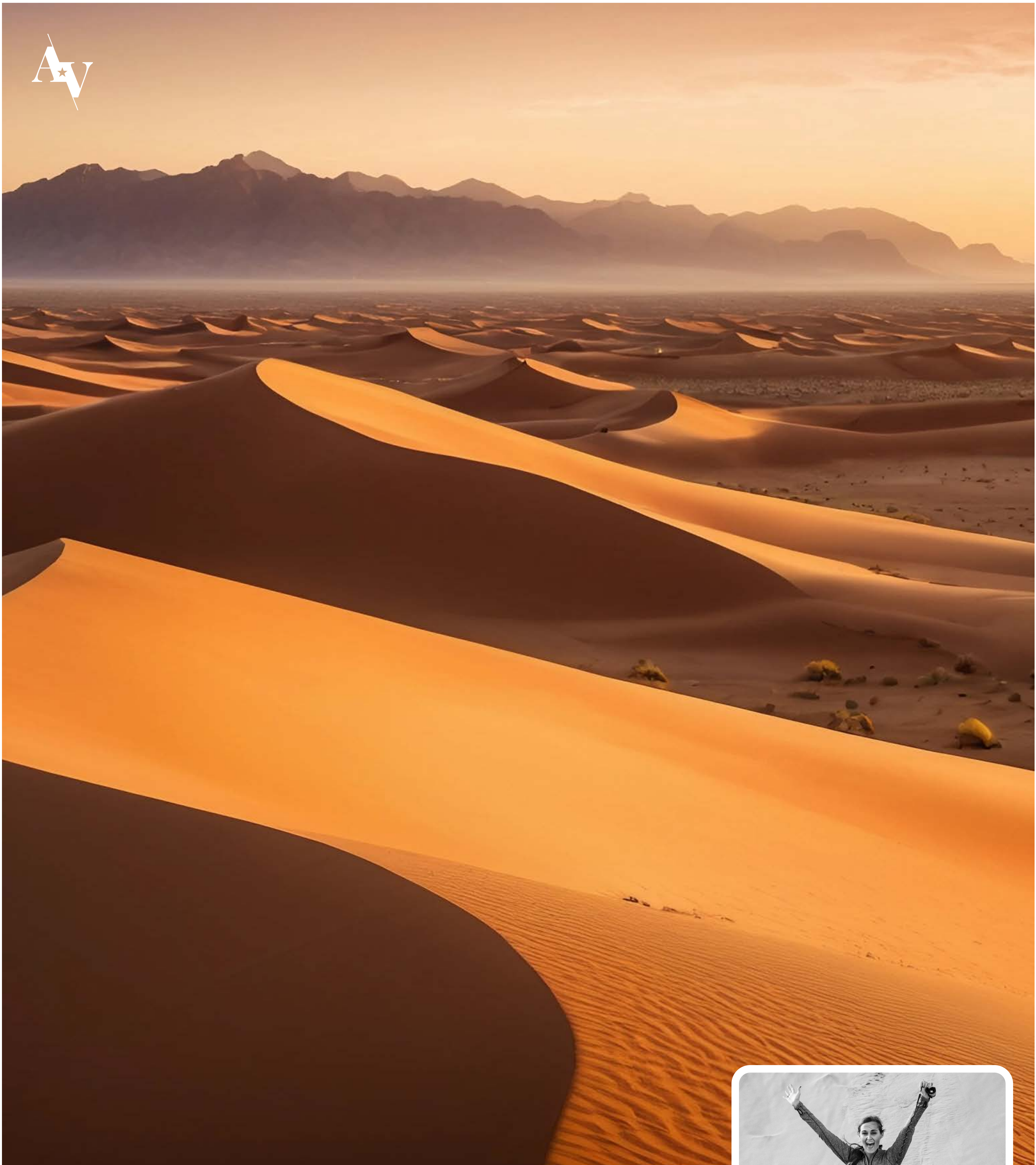
fla-keys.com/lowerkeys 1.800.872.3722





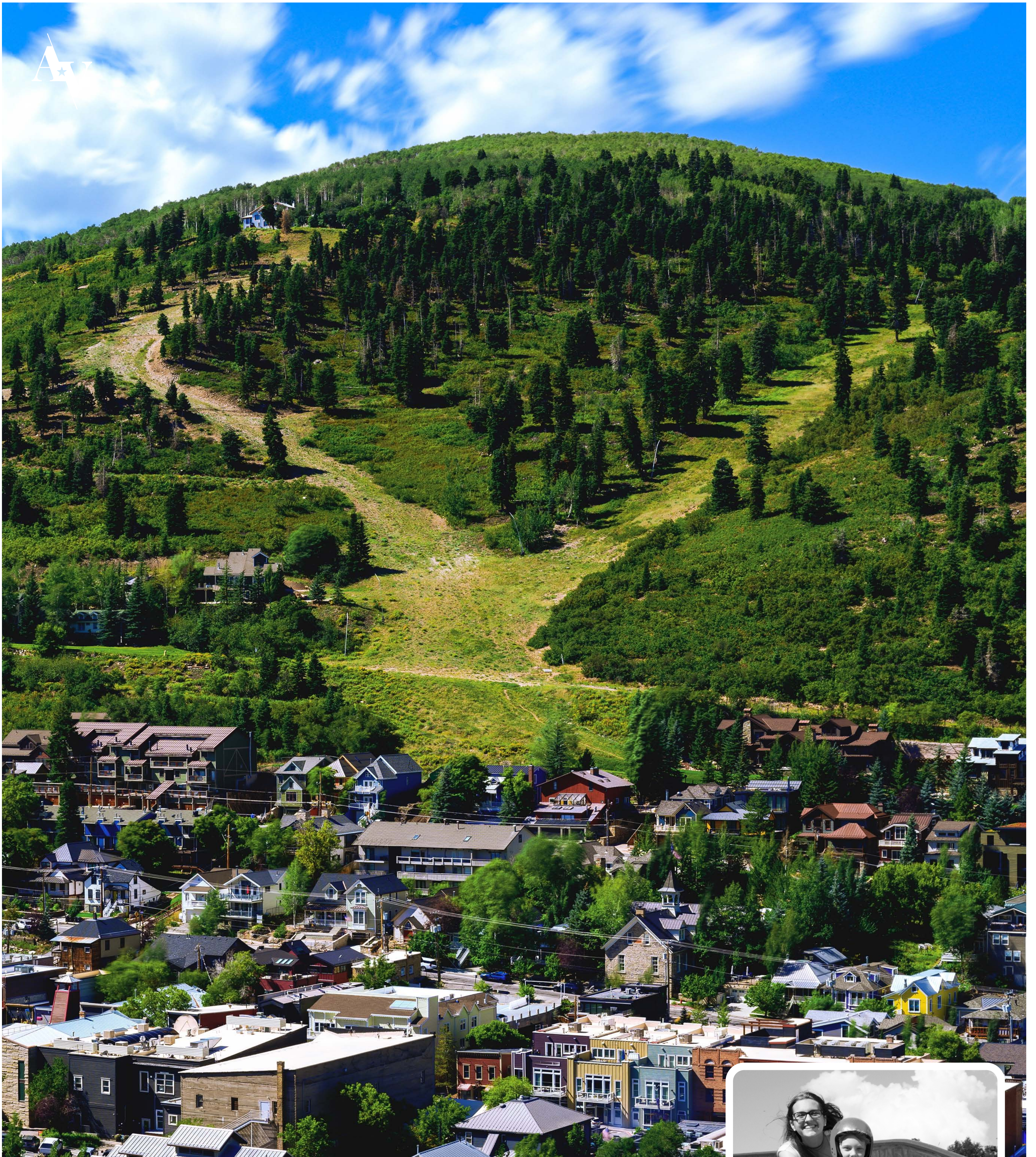
Spring brings Codorus State Park to life, with thick forests bursting into vibrant greens dotted with wildflowers. This Pennsylvania gem is home to miles of scenic hiking paths, where you can wander beneath towering trees, listen to the sounds of birds returning for the season, and take in views of Lake Marburg. It's a perfect stop for nature lovers looking for a peaceful escape.





Who says spring adventures need snow? At the Imperial Sand Dunes (Glamis, California), you can trade your snowboard for a sandboard and carve down golden waves of soft desert sand. This surreal landscape stretches for miles, offering a thrilling playground for RVers looking to embrace the warmth of the California sun.





Springtime in Park City, Utah, brings a unique mix of adventure and history. At the Mountain Village, the Alpine Slide lets you zoom down winding tracks while taking in stunning views of the town's historic downtown. With wildflowers starting to bloom and the crisp mountain air keeping things cool, it's an unforgettable way to welcome the new season.





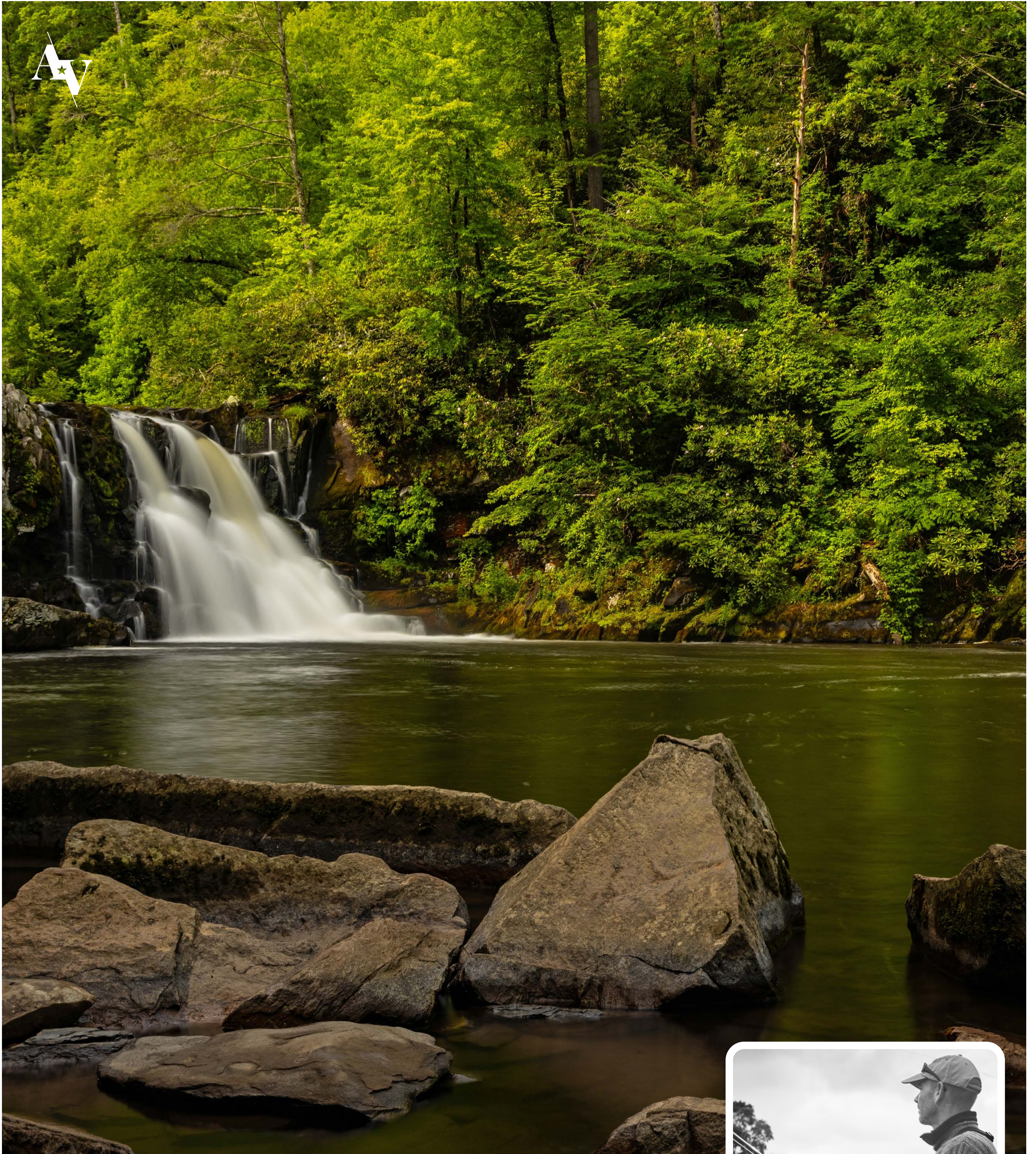
Oakridge, Oregon, is a bucket-list destination for mountain bikers, and spring is when the trails are at their best—lush, green, and packed with adventure. Whether you're shredding down Alpine Trail, taking on the technical switchbacks of Hardesty, or flowing through mossy forests on Dead Mountain, this Oregon hotspot offers a thrilling ride for all skill levels.





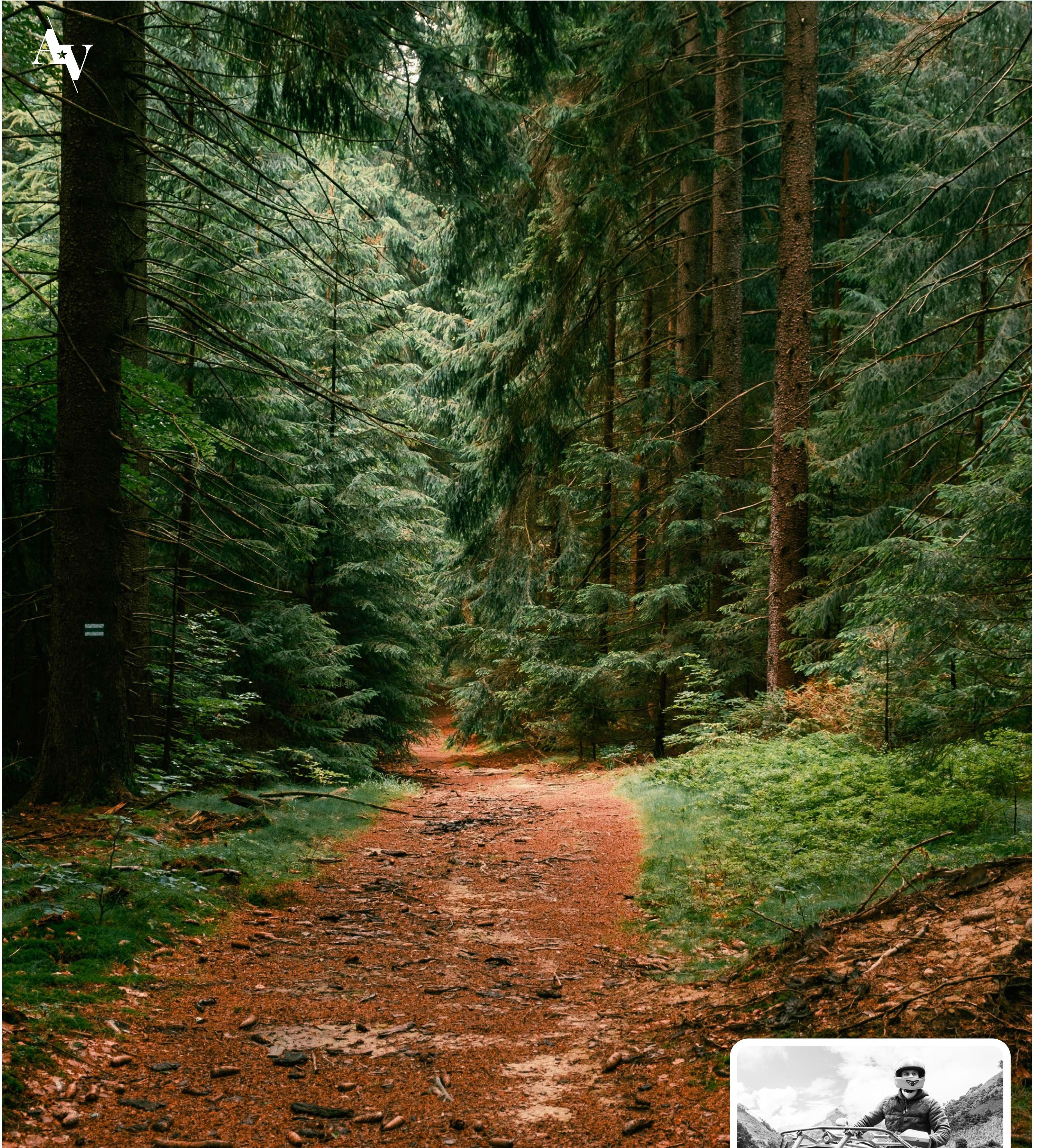
Few adventures rival the excitement of rafting through the Grand Canyon, especially in the spring when the river runs strong. Paddling through towering canyon walls, navigating thrilling rapids, and taking in the sheer grandeur of this natural wonder is an experience every RVer should have at least once.





Abrams Falls is one of the most picturesque spots in the Smokies, and it also happens to be a great place to cast a line. Whether you're fly fishing for trout or just soaking in the peaceful surroundings, this spring-fed stream is the ideal setting to slow down and enjoy the great outdoors.





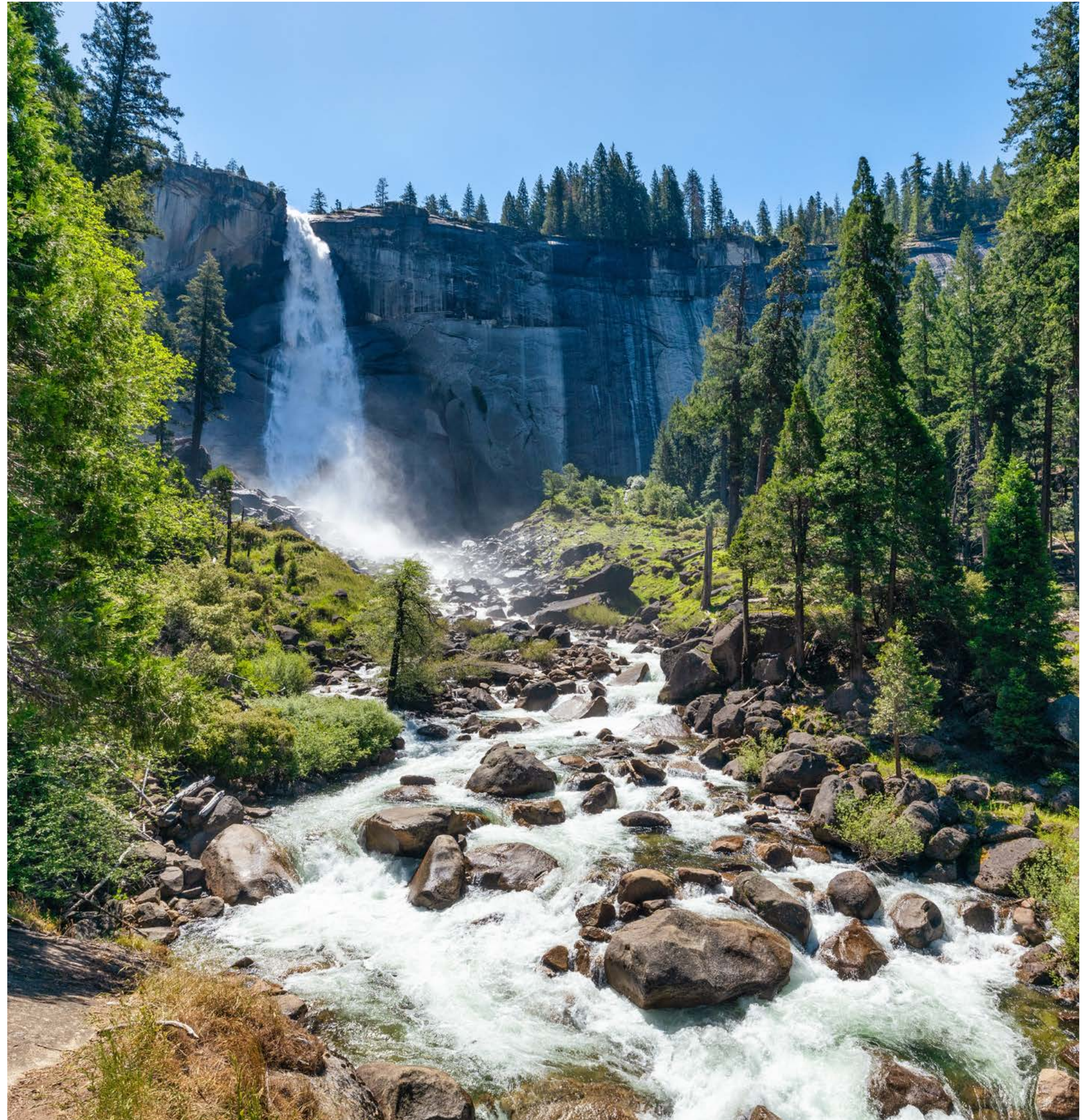
Just outside Yellowstone National Park, the forests of Montana take on an almost mystical quality in spring. Fog rolls through the towering pines, rivers and creeks swell with fresh snowmelt, and wildlife emerges from winter hibernation. It's the perfect time to get outdoors, take stunning photographs, and experience nature's raw beauty.





The Mist Trail, one of Yosemite's most famous hikes, is at its most breathtaking in spring. With the Nevada and Vernal Falls rushing at full force, mist sprays the trail, creating rainbows in the sunlight.

Spring is the season of fast-moving water, making it a prime time for whitewater kayaking. With stunning backdrops and refreshing splashes, it's a true adventure.





Who says ski season is over in spring? At higher-elevation resorts, you can still hit the slopes while enjoying blue skies and mild temperatures. But if you prefer something a little more relaxed, grab a tube and cruise down the last of the snow-covered hills before the warm weather fully takes over.



Telluride is a showstopper in any season, but spring brings out its full charm. Waterfalls begin to flow, wildflowers peek through the melting snow, and the mountains create a dramatic backdrop for hiking, biking, or simply taking in the views.



Road Aboode

IMPROVING LIFE ON THE GO



A well-traveled road deserves a well-loved home on wheels. This season, refresh your RV with smart spring cleaning and organization tips for a smooth takeoff. Bring some fresh flavors on board with an easy-to-grow herb garden. And add a dash of adventure with quirky, can't-miss destinations—because sometimes, the best stops are the unexpected ones.

OTHERWORLDLY NOISE REDUCTION

The Onan QG 4000i

Enjoy epic peace and quiet with the Onan QG 4000i. With over 100 years of generator experience, Cummins brings you one of the quietest RV generators today. Its EFI variable-speed engine automatically adjusts speed to match the power needed which greatly reduces noise and vibration— even when you're driving between destinations. Discover the generator that everybody will be talking about but few will hear.



Learn more at cummins.com/generators/onan-qg-4000i



RV-FRIENDLY Herb Garden

FRESH FLAVORS WHEREVER YOU ROAM

For many RVers, convenience is the name of the game when it comes to meal prep. Premade, quick meals you can pull out and eat. No muss, no fuss. But if you love flavorful meals, delicious scents, and the ultimate convenience, you may want to add an RV-friendly herb garden to your list of must-haves.

Having fresh herbs on hand is a game-changer for meals, health, and even the overall coziness of your space. That said, whether you're living in your RV full-time or are more of a weekend warrior, space is always at a premium. That means you'll need to be selective and strategic about how you grow your herbs.

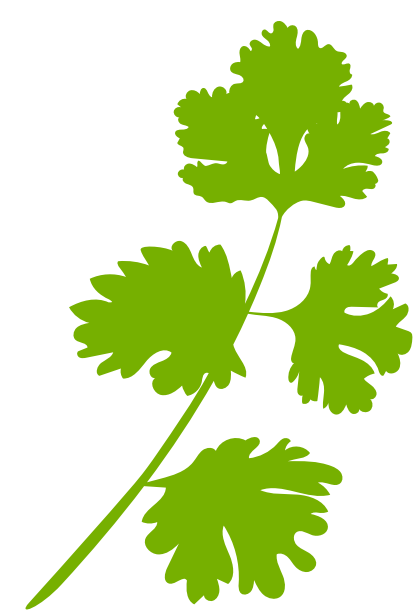
The good news? With a few smart solutions, you can cultivate a thriving herb garden no matter where you journey!



Basil

Why an Herb Garden Is a Good Idea

An herb garden is one of the easiest ways to elevate your RV lifestyle! Having fresh herbs on hand means no more relying on store-bought dried herbs or searching for fresh ones at every stop. Even the simplest meals can taste gourmet with the addition of basil, rosemary, or thyme, turning a basic dish into something special.



Coriander

Beyond flavor, herbs offer incredible health benefits—mint, oregano, and thyme, for example, appear to have antimicrobial properties and aid digestion. Plus, they're packed with antioxidants.



Arugula

Growing your own herbs can also save you big money. Fresh store-bought herbs can be so expensive. And they so often wilt before you've had a chance to use them all.

Caring for plants, even small ones, is also a fantastic stress reliever, providing a sense of calm and connection to

nature. And let's not forget the aesthetic benefit—having a few green plants in your RV instantly makes the space feel more inviting and homier. A little greenery goes a long way!

Choosing the Best Herbs for an RV Garden

Some herbs thrive better in an RV setup than others. Here are the best picks:

Low-Maintenance Herbs: Basil, thyme, rosemary, oregano, chives, mint (keep in its own container), parsley.

Multi-Use Herbs: Cilantro (for salsa), dill (for fish and pickling), lavender (for scent and tea).

Best Perennials vs. Annuals: Perennials like rosemary, thyme, and oregano last year-round, while basil and cilantro will need regular replanting.

Once you have gotten into the routine of having an herbal garden, feel free to play around with other favorite herbs.





Marjoram



Bay leaves



Dill



Chives



Tarragon

Top Tips for a Successful RV Herb Garden

Creating an RV herb garden doesn't have to be complicated. With a little planning and the right setup, you can enjoy fresh herbs without taking up too much space. From compact planters to vertical systems, there's a way to make it work in your RV.

Here are some smart tips to help you get started and keep your herbs thriving on the road:

Choose Compact Containers: Small pots, stackable planters, or wall-mounted options save space.

Go Vertical: Hanging planters, magnetic spice tins with soil, or tiered plant racks use minimal counter space.

Employ Window Space: Suction cup herb holders or a small window box inside (or outside if you'll be parked for a bit) keep herbs happy.

Secure for Travel: Use non-slip mats, Velcro strips, or travel-proof hanging planters to keep herbs safe on the move.

Go Hydroponic: A small hydroponic system is a mess-free, space-saving alternative for herb gardening in an RV.

Use Multi-Purpose Containers: Reuse mason jars, repurposed spice containers, or even old-school coffee cans for a vintage and eco-friendly touch.



Depending on your available space and travel style, consider these planter options:

Magnetic Spice Tins: Stick them to a metal surface for a tiny but effective herb garden.

Hanging Fabric Planters: Perfect for vertical gardening on walls or the back of cabinet doors.

Self-Watering Pots: Help regulate moisture levels, reducing the need for constant watering.

Over-the-Sink Planters: Make use of otherwise unused space while ensuring proper drainage.

Foldable or Collapsible Planters: Ideal for storing away on travel days.



Sage

Keeping your herbs safe while on the move is crucial. Here are some top tips:

Use Velcro Strips or Bungee Cords:

Secure planters to shelves or walls to prevent them from tipping.

Place Herbs in the Sink on Travel Days:

A quick and easy way to keep them from toppling.

Use Hanging Organizers: Pocket shoe organizers can hold small herb pots.

Opt for a Roll-Up Fabric Planter: Easy to move and store when needed.



Rosemary



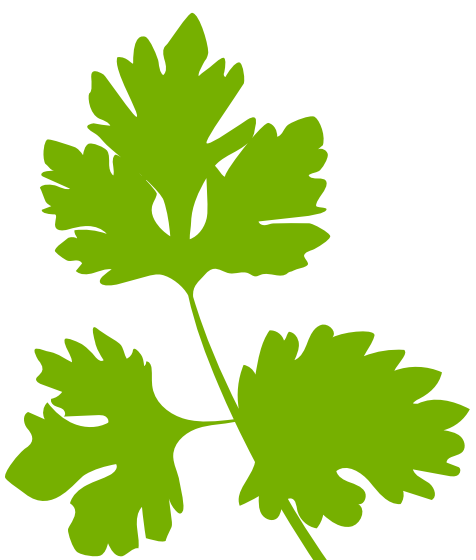
Oregano

Best Combinations for Small Spaces

Choosing the right herb combinations not only saves space but also ensures your plants thrive together. Some herbs have similar water and sunlight needs, making them perfect companions.

For a Mediterranean mix, consider pairing rosemary, thyme, and oregano, as they all prefer drier soil and plenty of sunlight.

If you love Italian cuisine, basil, parsley, and oregano make an excellent trio, adding fresh flavor to pasta, pizzas, and sauces.

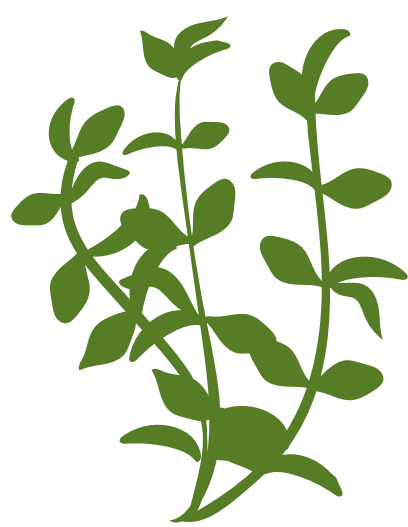


Parsley

CHOOSING THE RIGHT HERB COMBINATIONS NOT ONLY SAVES SPACE BUT ALSO ENSURES YOUR PLANTS THRIVE TOGETHER.

For those who enjoy soothing teas, a combination of mint, chamomile, and lavender creates a fragrant and relaxing blend—just be sure to keep mint in its own container as it tends to spread aggressively.

If you're a fan of Mexican flavors, cilantro, oregano, and chives are fantastic choices, ideal for spicing up tacos, salsas, and guacamole. By thoughtfully pairing herbs that complement each other in both growth habits and culinary use, you can maximize your RV garden's potential without taking up extra space.



Thyme



Chervil



Savory



Mint



Caring for Your RV Herb Garden

Taking care of your RV herb garden is simple with a few mindful practices. Since RVs have limited space and often experience temperature fluctuations, ensuring your herbs get the right amount of sunlight is key. Position them near a window for natural light or supplement with LED grow lights if needed.

Watering is another crucial factor—RVs can dry out plants faster due to airflow and heating, so regularly check soil moisture to keep herbs hydrated without overwatering. Regular pruning and harvesting will encourage growth and prevent your plants from becoming too leggy or overgrown.

Finally, securing taller herbs with soft ties or small stakes will help prevent

damage from movement while driving.

With these simple care techniques, your RV-friendly herb garden will stay fresh, vibrant, and ready to enhance your meals no matter where you travel.

The Joy of Herb Gardening Takeaways

Even a small herb garden can elevate your RV experience, making meals tastier and your space feel more like home.

Start with just a few easy-to-grow herbs and experiment with creative storage solutions. Before long, you'll be snipping fresh basil for pasta, rosemary for roasted potatoes, and mint for tea—all without stepping outside your RV! ❤️



POWER UP

SPRING CLEANING FOR A SMOOTH TAKEOFF

Time to get excited! Spring is the time to dust off the cobwebs, clear the clutter, and get ready to hit the road. But before you set off on your first adventure of the season, taking the time to declutter, deep clean, and organize your RV can make a world of difference. A fresh, streamlined RV means less frustration, safer travels, and more time spent enjoying your trip—not searching for that one item you swore was in the top cabinet.

From clearing out what you don't need to optimizing your storage space, here's how

to get your RV road-ready for a smooth and stress-free season.

DECLUTTER—WHAT DIDN'T YOU USE, NEED, OR LOVE?

The first step to a clean and organized RV is getting rid of the clutter that accumulated over the past season. That could mean unused kitchen gadgets, clothes you never wore, or tools gathering dust. Whatever it is, clearing out the excess will make everything easier to find and give you back much-needed space.

It may seem tedious, but taking the time to systematically go through every space is well worth the effort. Start with one area and work through your entire RV, including:

- Cabinets & drawers
- Under-bed storage
- Kitchen & fridge
- Bathroom shelves
- Outdoor compartments

To help determine what you need, it's helpful to ask yourself some simple questions:

1. *Did I use this last season?*
2. *Do I really love this item, or is it just taking up space?*
3. *Does this serve a real purpose, or is it redundant?*

Some items you'll likely want to ditch include:

Expired pantry items, old spices, and half-used condiments, especially if they've been left in storage for several months.

Clothes that don't fit your RV lifestyle or, for that matter, you. Even if you spent good money on these items, if you didn't reach for them last season, they don't need to take up your precious storage space.

Duplicate tools or kitchen gadgets. After all, how many spatulas do you really need?

Bulky or awkwardly shaped items that never seem to have a home or tend to bounce around.

You can give gently used items a second life by donating them to local shelters, thrift stores, or RV parks with community swaps. You may even be able to recoup some cash by selling any high-quality gear you no longer need.

And, of course, there are items that have seen their useful life and may need to be recycled or otherwise responsibly disposed of.

“

TAKING TIME TO
SYSTEMATICALLY
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SPACE IS WELL WORTH
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”



THE DEEP CLEAN—A FRESH START FOR YOUR RV

Once you've cleared out the clutter, it's time for a deep clean. After months of storage (or heavy use), dust, grime, and forgotten crumbs can take over. A good scrubbing will refresh your space and make your RV feel brand new. Again, work through your RV systematically so no surface is left untouched:

Kitchen & Fridge

- Toss expired food and clean shelves.
- Wipe down cabinets, counters, and appliances.
- Reevaluate food storage—consider stackable bins to save space.

Bathroom Refresh

- Discard old toiletries and restock essentials.
- Deep clean sinks, showers, and toilets.
- Check for leaks or needed repairs.

Living Areas

- Wash rugs, curtains, and bedding.
- Vacuum and mop all floors.
- Wipe down windows to let in more natural light.

While you're cleaning, watch for signs of unwanted guests, like insects or rodents, that may have snuck in during winter storage.

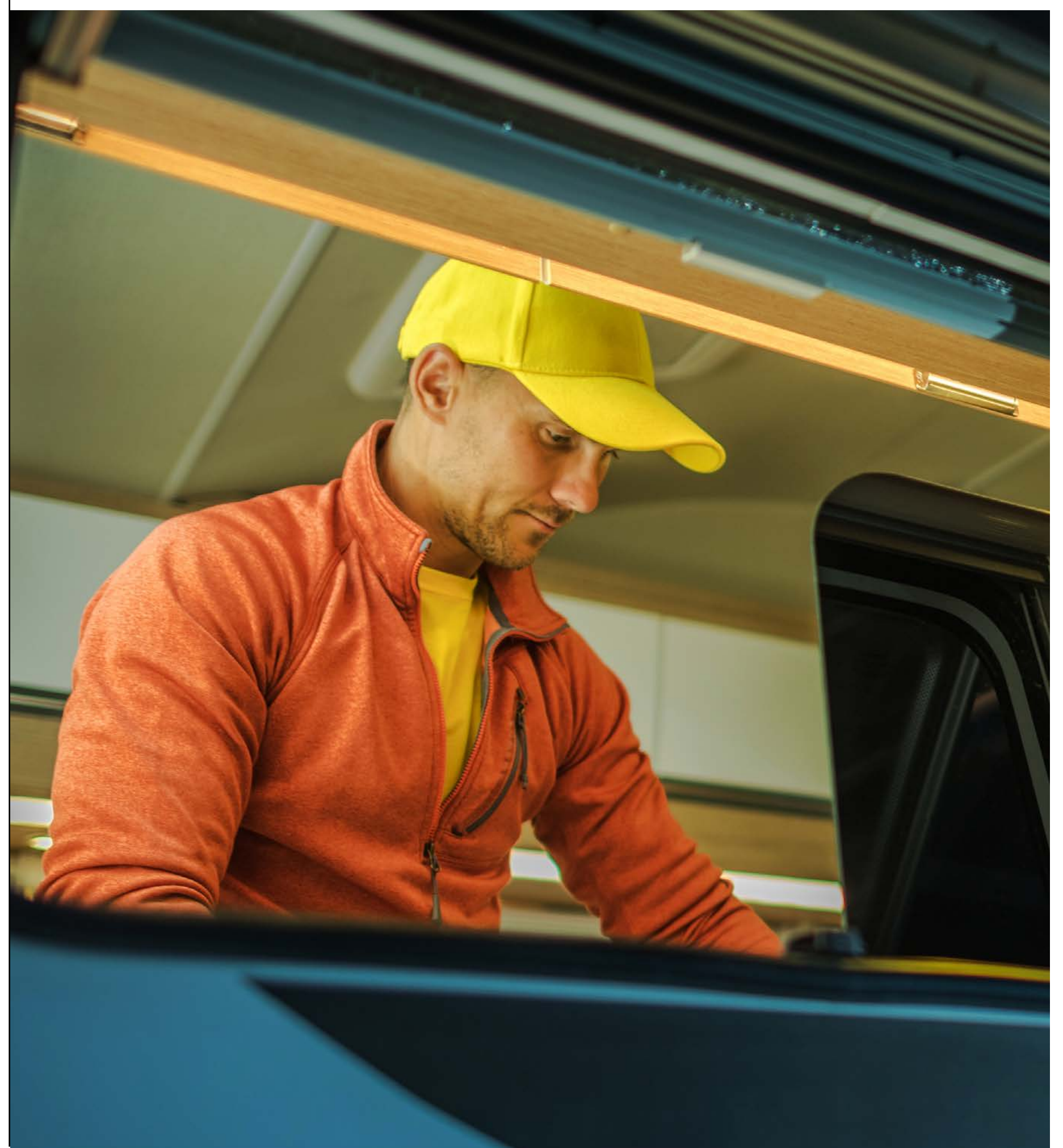
ORGANIZE: EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

Now that your RV is clean and clutter-free, it's time to organize for efficiency. A well-organized

RV means less time searching and more time adventuring. Set yourself up with smart storage solutions, such as:

- Clear bins for food, gear, and small items so you can see what's inside at a glance—no more digging or pulling everything out!
- Label everything to make finding essentials quick and easy.
- Invest in drawer dividers to keep utensils, tools, and other small items in order.
- Hang frequently used items on hooks or pegboards to free up drawer space.

As you pack for your next adventure, keep easy access top of mind. For instance, keep your most-used items within reach, not buried in a drawer. Consider installing hanging organizers for toiletries, shoes, or kitchen supplies. You can store seasonal or backup items in harder-to-reach areas.





“
 A FEW EXTRA STEPS CAN
 HELP ENSURE YOUR FIRST
 TRIP OF THE SEASON GOES
 OFF WITHOUT A HITCH
 ”

One of the best things you can do for your future self is to dedicate a spot for emergency tools and first-aid kits so you can grab them quickly when you need them.

Next, head outside and make sure you're organized to quickly set up camp. For example, neatly pack hoses, leveling blocks, and camp chairs so they're easy to grab without rummaging through a chaotic storage bin.

BONUS TIPS FOR A SMOOTH TAKEOFF

Now that your RV is decluttered, cleaned, and organized, it's time to put the finishing touches on your spring prep. A few extra steps can help ensure your first trip of the season goes off without a hitch. From testing out your setup to restocking essentials, these simple checks will save you time, hassle, and last-minute scrambling when it's time to hit the road.

1. ***Restock Essentials:*** Check your first-aid kit, batteries, fire extinguisher, and must-have pantry staples.
2. ***Inspect Your Gear:*** Make sure awnings, kitchen appliances, outdoor accessories, etc.,

are in good working order before you hit the road.

3. ***Do a Dry Run:*** Spend a night in your RV before your first big trip to ensure everything is where it needs to be.

HIT THE ROAD FEELING LIGHTER AND MORE ORGANIZED

It may not be the way you want to spend the weekend (we'd all rather hit the road for the first adventure!). But spending a weekend decluttering, deep cleaning, and organizing your RV now will pay off in the long run. Not only will your space feel lighter, fresher, and more functional, but you'll enjoy stress-free travels where everything is easy to find. No more digging through drawers for your favorite sauce, hunting for a screwdriver, or realizing too late that your base layers are buried at the bottom of a bin.

By making spring cleaning an annual tradition, you'll set yourself up for happier, more relaxed adventures all season long. So, grab your cleaning supplies, put on your favorite playlist, and get ready for a smoother ride ahead! ❤️



Plan Your
Road Trip to
the Unusual

13

Quirky

vacation destinations



Sure, national parks and scenic coastal drives are incredible. No argument there. These are some of our favorite destinations! But, sometimes, the most memorable moments come from stumbling upon the wonderfully weird.

Across the U.S., there are thousands of quirky roadside attractions waiting to be discovered. If you're ready to embrace the unusual, join us on this cross-country road trip to 13 of the strangest, most delightful stops you'll ever visit. We also included some, let's say, typically more traditional stops nearby if you want to linger in each area a little longer.

Quirky Destinations for an Epic RV Road Trip

1

Santa's Land

(Cherokee, NC)

This throwback to a bygone era of roadside attractions has been spreading Christmas cheer since the 1960s. The kitschy amusement park features a zoo with exotic creatures like lemurs and bears, retro rides, games, and even Santa himself for fun for the entire family!

While You're There:

Explore waterfalls, hiking trails, and scenic drives through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Blue Ridge Parkway is a must-see for stunning vistas and winding roads.



2

The Mystery Spot

(Santa Cruz, CA)

Step into a world where gravity seems to have taken a break. The Mystery Spot is a classic optical illusion attraction where balls appear to roll uphill, people seem to change height, and your sense of balance is put to the test. Be prepared to be stunned as the laws of physics and gravity come into question.

While You're There:

Enjoy a classic seaside amusement park with vintage rides at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Don't miss Big Basin Redwoods State Park—home to towering ancient redwoods and scenic trails.

3

Bigfoot Discovery Museum

(Felton, CA)

You don't have to be a believer to enjoy the Bigfoot Discovery Museum. Packed with footprint casts, eyewitness reports, legends, theories, and all things Sasquatch-related—even skeptics may be entertained (and perhaps more open-minded?).

While You're There:

Take a peaceful walk through stunning redwood groves in Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park.

Let someone else take the wheel for an hour and enjoy a historic steam train ride through the mountains on the Roaring Camp Railroad.



4

Salton Sea

(Southern California)

Once one of the most beloved tourist attractions in California, catastrophic decline and environmental disaster have left the Salton Sea a surreal landscape with abandoned towns and eerie beauty. Start at the visitor center in Mecca to discover the fascinating history and geologic and volcanic features before grabbing binoculars for spectacular birdwatching.

While You're There:

If you've ever wanted to visit a museum dedicated entirely to bananas, here's your chance! With its world-record collection of over 25,000 banana-related artifacts, banana-themed snacks, and banana-flavored

treats, The International Banana Museum is bursting with yellow-themed fun.

Another off-the-beaten-path destination, Borrego Springs is surrounded by a state park. It's an International Dark Sky Community that celebrates stargazing nearly every night. Most of all, you'll want to keep your eye out for a wide variety of local art, including meticulously crafted metal creatures.

Joshua Tree National Park is a dreamlike desert destination for hiking and rock climbing. A true bucket list destination.

Goldfield is now a living history museum with a Wild West feel. Watch gunfight reenactments, ride the narrow-gauge railroad, pan for gold, or explore the old mines. For a bit of spooky fun, take a walking ghost tour and learn about the local legends, spirits, and curses that share this town with visitors.

While You're There:

The Superstition Mountains are a nearby ancient geological formation boasting legendary tales of lost gold and steeped in mystery. Home to the Apache and Yavapai people for thousands of years, the area now offers hiking, camping, and rock-climbing opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy beautiful deserts.

Explore Arizona's rugged terrain in Lost Dutchman State Park—a great place to set up camp and enjoy the desert scenery.

5

Goldfield Ghost Town

(Apache Junction, AZ)

Once a booming mining town,





6

The Enchanted Highway

(Regent, ND)

Drive down a 32-mile stretch of road lined with towering metal sculptures of giant grasshoppers, cowboys, geese in flight, and more in an open-air art gallery. It begins at Exit 72 on I-92 and ends in the small town of Regent, where you can find a small gift shop with miniatures of your favorite statues.

While You're There:

Located within the Badlands of North Dakota, Medora, ND, is a charming cowboy town offering live performances, historical sites, and family fun—including amazing hiking trails and road biking opportunities.

Visit Theodore Roosevelt National Park to spot wild bison, explore the North

Dakota badlands, and honor a past president who wanted to preserve our beautiful natural wonders for future generations by greatly expanding our national parks system.

7

Carhenge

(Alliance, NE)

What happens when a farmer with a creative streak decides to recreate England's Stonehenge using old cars? Carhenge! A bizarre yet impressive roadside attraction that has stood since 1987. This to-scale replica of England's Stonehenge is open year-round and invites visitors from around the world to enjoy a truly unique experience.

While You're There:

Walk among prehistoric fossils and scenic grasslands in Agate Fossil Beds National Monument.

If you're a history buff, take some time out to visit Chimney Rock National Historic Site, a landmark for pioneers on the Oregon Trail.

8

World's Largest Ball of Twine

(Cawker City, KS)

A small-town treasure that keeps growing! Visitors are encouraged to add their own twine to this massive ball, which has been a work in progress since 1953.

While You're There:

Enjoy boating, fishing, camping, and other recreation opportunities at Kansas' largest lake in Milford State Park.

Explore enormous, naturally-formed spherical boulders in Rock City.

9

Rockmen
Guardians*(Rockford, IL)*

These towering rock sculptures look like ancient warriors guarding the Illinois landscape. Created by artist Terese Agnew, they stand as a tribute to the region's geological history and the power of nature.

While You're There:

Take time out for peace and tranquility in the beautifully landscaped Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford.

Say hello to Jane, one of the most complete juvenile T. rex fossils ever found, at Burpee Museum of Natural History.

10

The Corn Palace

(Mitchell, SD)

A palace made entirely of corn? You betcha! The Corn Palace, the world's only, is a tribute to agricultural art, with murals created from thousands of ears of corn. The 100+-year-old attraction draws in some 500,000 tourists every year to see uniquely designed corn murals, made from 12 different colors of corn and redesigned every October.

While You're There:

Enjoy stunning rock formations and wide-open landscapes in Badlands National Park.

Slow your roll and spend some time in the Black Hills to enjoy Mount Rushmore or Crazy Horse Memorial, discover prehistoric wonders, view wildlife in their natural habitats, go caving, and so much more.

11

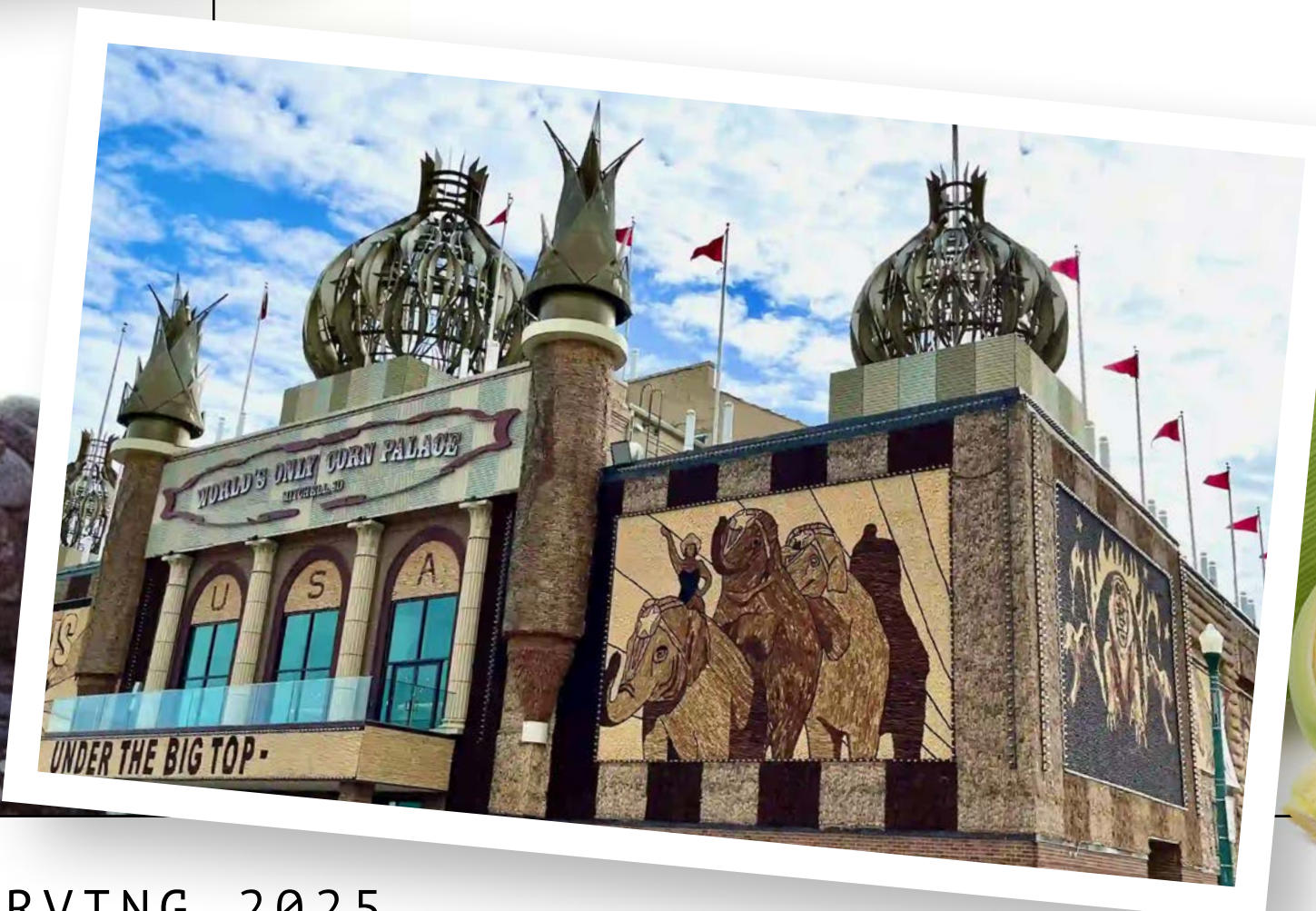
The Museum
of the Weird*(Austin, TX)*

A little bit horror, a little bit circus sideshow, and a whole lot of weird. This Austin attraction includes shrunken heads, mummies, and oddities galore.

**While You're There:**

Cool your heels in Barton Springs Pool, a popular natural spring swimming hole in Austin.

Take a free tour of the historic Texas State Capitol building.



12

Foamhenge

(Centreville, VA)

Yes, it's another Stonehenge replica—but this one is made entirely of foam! Originally built as an April Fool's joke, this full-size and surprisingly legit-looking replica has since become a beloved attraction, especially since being moved to its new, permanent location.

While You're There:

Enjoy a scenic drive through Virginia's mountains on the breathtaking Blue Ridge Parkway.

Pause at Natural Bridge State Park, a stunning rock formation steeped in history.

13

The Unclaimed Baggage Center

(Scottsboro, AL)

Ever wonder what happens to lost airline luggage? This massive store is where unclaimed bags end up. You'll find everything from designer clothes to high-end jewelry to electronic devices to bizarre treasures—all at amazing prices.

While You're There:

Get back into nature with a visit to Little River Canyon National Preserve, where you can hike and enjoy beautiful waterfalls.

Find space on Earth at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL, and discover NASA artifacts while immersing yourself in space exploration history.

Quirky Destinations Takeaways

Whether you're wandering through a ghost town, admiring a giant ball of twine, or hunting for Bigfoot, these quirky destinations prove that sometimes, the best RV trips happen when you take the road less traveled—and even a little bizarre.

So, which weird stop(s) will you add to your next road trip? ❤️





THE LATEST VAN BUILDS FOR LIFE ON THE ROAD

Van life is no longer just a trend—it’s a full-fledged movement as numerous RVers downsize to vans for the freedom, flexibility, and efficiency these smaller rigs offer. Whether you’re an adventurer looking for an off-grid rig, a weekend traveler, or a luxury-seeker, there’s a van build for you.

WINNEBAGO TRAVATO

One of the most well-known Class B RVs, the Winnebago Travato is a great balance of comfort, efficiency, and reliability. Built on the Ram ProMaster® chassis, it offers freedom to roam and includes versatile floorplans to ensure you'll enjoy the road.

PROS:

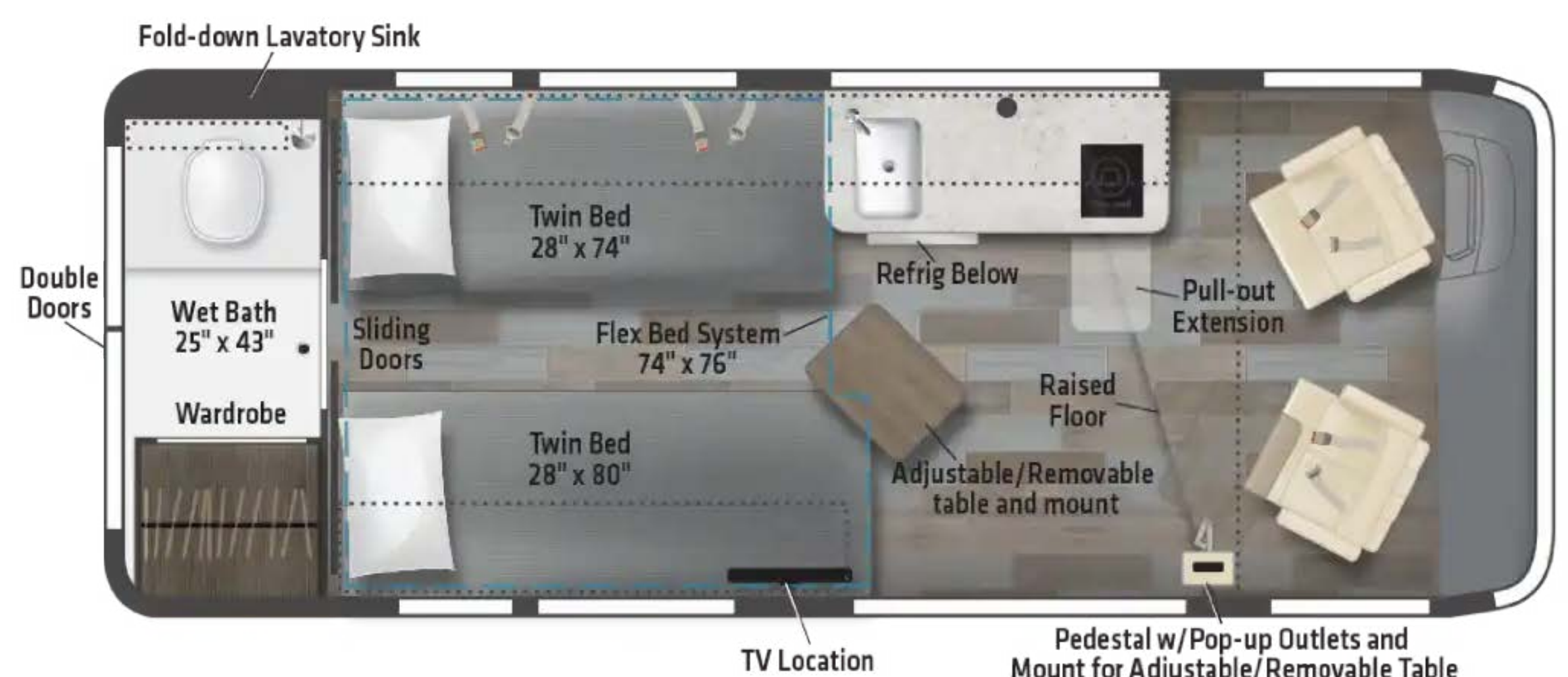
- Fuel-efficient and reliable ProMaster chassis
- Well-equipped kitchen and bath for a van
- Available in gas and lithium-powered models
- Relatively easy to service

CONS:

- Not as rugged as 4x4 models
- Higher price point than DIY or budget options
- Limited interior space compared to larger Class B+ models

SPECS:

- ▶ CHASSIS: RAM PROMASTER 3500
- ▶ EXT LENGTH: 21'
- ▶ EXT HEIGHT: 9'4"
- ▶ EXT WIDTH: 6'9"
- ▶ SLEEPS: 2
- ▶ BATHROOM: WET BATH
- ▶ POWER: GAS ENGINE OR LITHIUM OPTIONS
- ▶ FRESH/GREY/BLACK: 18/12-14/11-12



 **THOR TELLARO**

The Thor Tellaro offers solid amenities and features you love in an RV in a small, easy-to-drive van. Plus, it's more budget friendly than many other Class B vans, making it an excellent entry point into van life.

PROS:

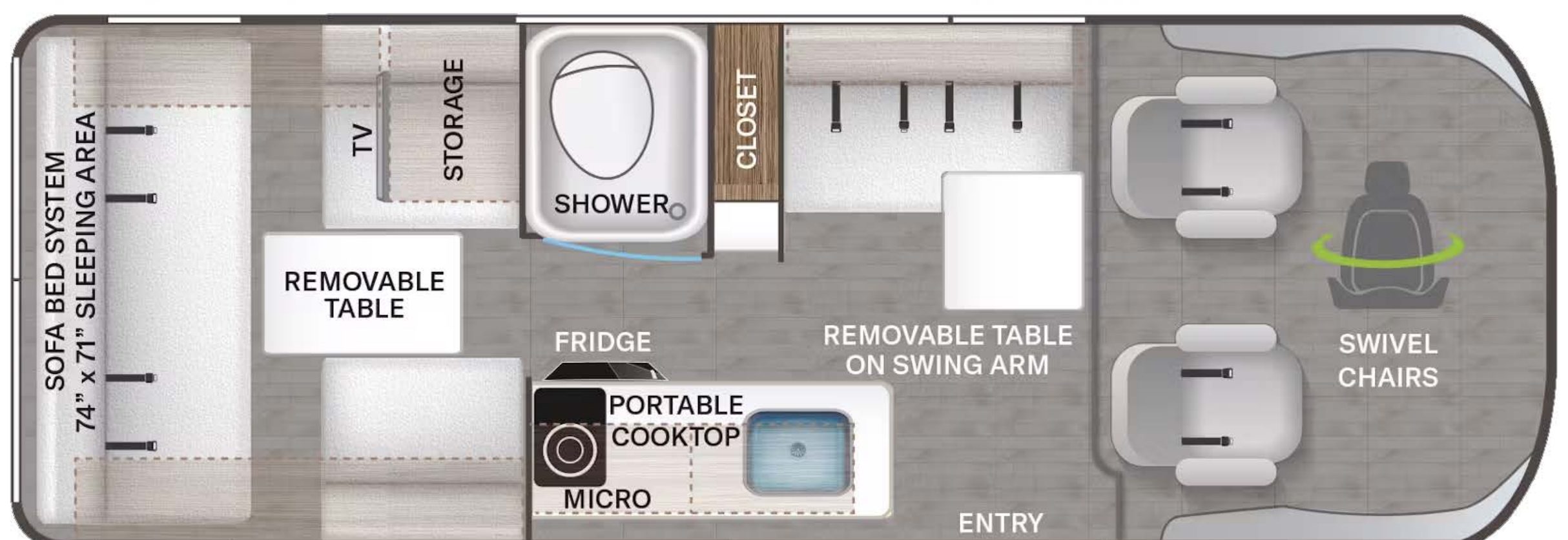
- More budget-friendly than premium Class B vans
- Well-insulated with a quiet interior
- Solar panel and lithium battery options for off-grid travel

CONS:

- Lacks 4x4 for serious off-road travel
- Wet bath instead of a full shower
- Interior materials are not as high-end as luxury models

SPECS:

- ▶ CHASSIS: RAM PROMASTER 3500
- ▶ EXT LENGTH: 21' 1"
- ▶ EXT HEIGHT: 9' 5"
- ▶ GVWR: 9,350 POUNDS
- ▶ SLEEPS: 2 - 3
- ▶ BATHROOM: WET BATH



→ AIRSTREAM INTERSTATE 24X

If you want top-tier comfort, a roomy ride, and cutting-edge amenities on the road, the Airstream Interstate 24X delivers with high-end finishes and a 4x4 Sprinter chassis.

PROS:

- Premium materials and craftsmanship
- 4x4 capability for all-terrain travel
- Advanced tech features and high-end entertainment system
- Spacious interior for a van

CONS:

- One of the most expensive Class B vans
- Heavier and less fuel-efficient
- Limited availability due to high demand

SPECS:

Chassis: High-performance Mercedes-Benz® Sprinter 3,500 Extended AWD

- ▶ VGWR/GCWR: 11,030/15,250 LBS
- ▶ EXT LENGTH: 24' 6"
- ▶ EXT HEIGHT: 9' 9"
- ▶ EXT WEIGHT: 6' 7.5"
- ▶ SLEEPS: 2, SEATS UP TO 6
- ▶ BATHROOM: WET BATH WITH LUXURY FINISHES
- ▶ POWER: 2.0L 4-CYLINDER HIGH-OUTPUT DIESEL ENGINE WITH LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SYSTEM



→ STORYTELLER OVERLAND MODE LT

Built for adventurers on the Ford Transit, the Storyteller Overland MODE LT is an AWD van designed for rugged travel and off-grid living to take you wherever you want to go.

PROS:

- All-wheel drive (AWD) for all-terrain capability
- Modular interior with a GrooveLounge convertible seating system
- Off-grid power system with Lithium-ion Volta energy
- Strong community and aftermarket support

CONS:

- Higher cost compared to standard Class B vans
- No dedicated indoor shower (outdoor shower only)
- Limited storage space due to modular design

SPECS:

- ▶ CHASSIS: FORD TRANSIT AWD
- ▶ EXT LENGTH: 19'4"
- ▶ EXT HEIGHT: 10'3"
- ▶ EXT WIDTH: 8'2"
- ▶ GCWR: 9,500 LBS
- ▶ SLEEPS: 2 - 3
- ▶ BATHROOM: CASSETTE TOILET & OUTDOOR SHOWER
- ▶ FRESH / GREY: 21/24
- ▶ POWER: ECOBOOST GAS ENGINE WITH VOLTA POWER SYSTEM



→ OUTSIDE VAN CUSTOM BUILDS

For those who want to design their own one-of-a-kind van or select the right model van for their adventures, Outside Van offers fully customized builds based on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter.

PROS:

- Completely customizable—layouts, features, tech, and materials
- Can be designed for extreme off-grid or full-time living
- Premium craftsmanship and innovative designs

CONS:

- More expensive (custom builds often exceed \$200K)
- Long wait times for builds
- Requires a lot of planning and decision-making



SPECS:

▶ CHASSIS: MERCEDES-BENZ
SPRINTER 2500/3500
(4X4 AVAILABLE)

▶ LENGTH: VARIES



WHICH VAN BUILD IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Van life isn't one-size-fits-all. Whether you want affordability, off-grid capability, luxury, or full customization, there's a van for every type of traveler. Which one fits your road trip dreams? ❤️

Time to Dewinterize!



Wake Up Your RV from a Long Winter's Nap

Winter is beginning to fade, the days are getting longer, and we're no longer just dreaming of getting back on the road; we're getting road-ready. That starts with properly dewinterizing your RV and ensuring everything is running not only smoothly but safely as well.

From checking for winter damage (and making needed repairs) to flushing out the antifreeze to cleaning out the cobwebs, here's how to bring your RV out of hibernation.

Shake Off the Sleep: Must-Do Steps to Dewinterize Your RV

Starting from the outside in, let's ensure your rig is safe, functional, and comfortable for travel.

Step 1:

Take a Morning Stretch—Inspect the Exterior

Winter weather can be harsh on RVs. Cold, dry weather can cause cracks, leaks, or damage to seals, windows, and even the roof. So, give yourself some time to walk around your RV and check for any cracks, leaks, and especially any signs of water damage. Don't forget to inspect the roof and look at all the seams, windows, and even storage compartments. Make sure there are no gaps.

You'll also want to inspect your tires. Do you see any cracks? How

does the tread look? If your RV has been parked for a while, check for any dry rot. Is it time to replace the tires? Or can you just inflate them to the proper PSI and safely hit the road?

Step 2:

Jumpstart the Heart—Check and Recharge the Batteries

Colder temperatures can drain batteries. If combined with improper storage, their lifespan may also be reduced.

If you removed the batteries at the end of last season to store them, you'll need to reinstall them. Check the voltage levels and ensure they're fully charged. And if you have lead-acid batteries, top them off with distilled water. Finally, clean the battery terminals and ensure the connections are secure.

Step 3:

Out with the Old—Flush and Sanitize the Water System

Antifreeze is essential for winter storage. However, your water system needs a fresh start for the new season. Start by draining and flushing out the antifreeze by running fresh water through ALL your faucets. Ensure the water heater bypass valve is open as well.

You'll also want to sanitize the system.

Add a diluted bleach solution (1/4 cup bleach per 15 gallons of water).

Let this solution sit in the system for several hours. Then, flush the system again.



Step 4:

Watch Out for Winter's Leftovers— Check the Plumbing for Leaks

As you're flushing out your system, it's a good time to check for any leaks. Freezing temperatures can cause sneaky cracks in pipes and connections. The last thing you want to deal with on the road is a wet surprise from a building leak or potential burst and the water damage that leads to.

So, as you're flushing the system, inspect pipes, faucets, and the water heater for any signs (no matter how small) of leaks. Don't forget to look under the sinks and in storage areas.

Step 5:

Fuel Up for Your Adventures—Refill Propane and Test Appliances

No one wants a cold shower or a non-working stove or fridge, especially when they're miles from anywhere. In many RV models, essential RV functions—including cooking, heating, and refrigeration—rely on propane.

Slowly open the propane valve and, using soapy water, check for leaks. If all looks good, light the stove burners to ensure the propane is flowing correctly. Next, test the fridge, furnace, and water heater to ensure they're all functioning properly.



Step 6:

Power Up—Test the Electrical System

Cold storage can also cause issues with wiring, connections, and fuses. Before you hit the road, make sure your RV's at full power.

If you have a generator, check the oil and ensure it starts smoothly. Plug the RV in and/or turn on the generator or solar panels and run through the outlets, lights, and appliances to ensure all are working. You're not done yet, though. Carefully inspect the circuit breaker panel and replace any blown fuses.



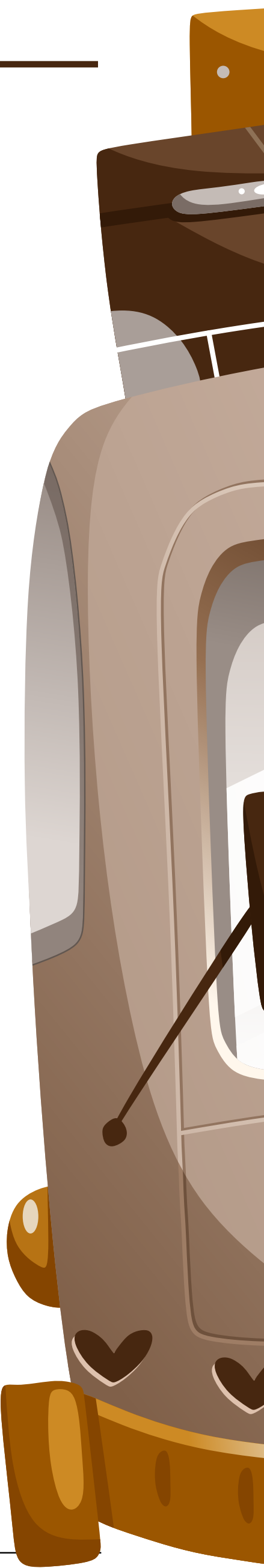
Step 7:

Wake the Beast—Check Your Engine (motorized RVs only)

Engines (as well as generators) need to be checked for proper lubrication and function long before you hit the road. This is especially true if they've been sitting unused through a long, cold winter.

To get the engine humming, take some time to check fluid levels for oil, the transmission, coolant, breaks, and windshield washer fluid, and top it off as needed. Take a look at the belts, hoses, and filters for any obvious signs of cracks or wear.

Then start the engine. Does it purr along? Or are there any unusual noises or smells that may indicate the need for a closer look?



Step 8:

Sound the Alarm—Test Safety Equipment

Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are critical for safety. Get in the habit of regularly checking (and replacing when necessary) batteries in smoke and CO detectors.

Ensure your fire extinguishers are fully charged and accessible. And restock your first-aid kit and emergency supplies that may have been depleted the previous season.

Step 9:

Check for Uninvited Guests—Inspect the Interior for Pests and Damage

Rodents and insects love to make themselves at home in RVs wherever they're stored—winter or summer. But during the winter, RVs can be even more enticing as they're looking for a nice, warm place to shelter.

As you're inspecting the RV, make sure they didn't move in. Watch for any signs of pests, such as droppings, chewed wires, or nests. Look inside cabinets, under sinks, and around bedding areas. If you've left any bedding in the RV, pull it out to ensure you don't have any stowaways.

Next, throw open the doors, windows, and vents to get some fresh air in.

Step 10:

RV Refresh—Deep Clean Your RV

RVs can get surprisingly grubby when parked. So, you'll want to grab your cleaning supplies and get to business to remove dust, grime, and any unfortunate (e.g., musty) odors. Wipe down the surfaces, vacuum the floors and cushions, and clean the floors.

If You Have Time... Advanced Morning Routine

While the above steps are essential before you hit the road, these steps are good additions if you have the time and inclination, as they can help extend your RV's lifespan and make your travels more pleasant:



- » *Check your hitch and tow equipment: Ensure everything's lubricated and check for any rust or signs of excess wear.*

- » *Wash and wax the exterior: To protect your RV's paint and provide extra protection from the sun.*

- » *Lubricate slide-outs and hinges to prevent squeaking and sticking.*

- » *Inspect the awning for any tears, weather damage, or mold, and repair as needed.*

- » *Test the A/C and fans to ensure they're up and running before the summer heat hits.*

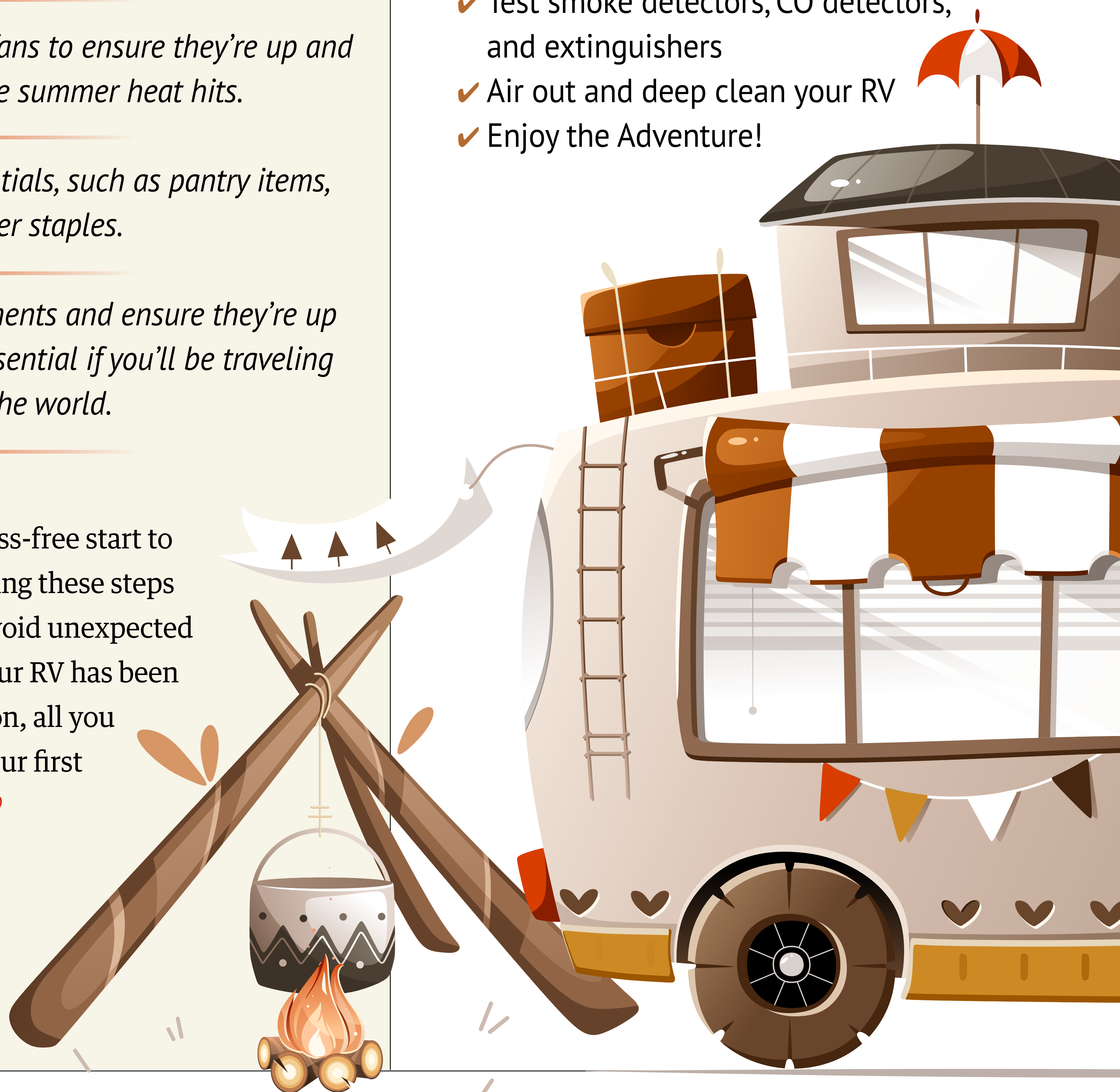
- » *Stock up on essentials, such as pantry items, toiletries, and other staples.*

- » *Check your documents and ensure they're up to date. This is essential if you'll be traveling to other parts of the world.*

For a smooth, stress-free start to the RV season, tackling these steps now will help you avoid unexpected issues later. Once your RV has been revived for the season, all you need to do is plan your first trip of the season. ❤️

RV Checklist

- ✓ Inspect exterior for cracks, leaks, and tire condition
- ✓ Check and recharge batteries
- ✓ Flush and sanitize the water system
- ✓ Check plumbing for leaks
- ✓ Refill propane or plugin and test appliances
- ✓ Test electrical system, lights, and outlets
- ✓ Check engine, generator, and fluid levels (if your RV is motorized)
- ✓ Inspect the interior for moisture, pests, and damage
- ✓ Test smoke detectors, CO detectors, and extinguishers
- ✓ Air out and deep clean your RV
- ✓ Enjoy the Adventure!



FROM THE

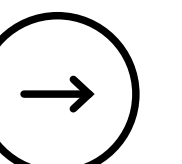
EDGE OF THE MAP

TO THE

FROM THE HIGHWAY TO THE CAMPGROUND



*INSIDE: Visit Petoskey
Bary Harbor, Michigan*



Often, RVing is all about the journey—the open roads, spontaneous detours, and unforgettable pitstops.

But every once in a while, the real magic is the destination. A place so special you'll want to stop and stay for a bit. One such destination is Sun Outdoors Petoskey Bay Harbor in northern Michigan. Nestled along the sparkling waters of Little Travers Bay, this idyllic campground offers a blend of natural beauty, luxury, and endless opportunities for the entire family.

Petoskey Bay Harbor





“The area is surrounded by stunning views of Lake Michigan and some of the best outdoor recreation in the Midwest.”

A Gem of an RV Resort

With spacious RV sites and upscale amenities, Petoskey Bay Harbor captures the charm of the northern Michigan coastline. The area is surrounded by stunning views of Lake Michigan and some of the best outdoor recreation in the Midwest. The campground itself stands out for its well-manicured grounds and resort-style amenities.

This history of the area dates to the 19th century, and the laid-back luxury and quaint small-town feel can still be



experienced today. Enjoy afternoons exploring the vibrant downtown and a wide range of activities, followed by quiet evenings by the bay.

Activities and Amenities Galore

Well beyond the “average” campground, Petoskey Bay Harbor offers a long list of activities and

amenities designed for a most enjoyable stay. That includes:

Waterfront fun, such as kayaking, paddleboarding, or simply enjoying the view. The water's calm surface is inviting for beginners and seasoned paddlers alike.

A heated, resort-style pool and hot tub provide the opportunity to splash around or kick back poolside with a good book to soak up some sun and allow your body and mind to fully relax.

Pet-friendly dog parks and other areas make the campground welcoming to pets and their companions.

Stay active with fun sports and games, like pickleball, basketball, horseshoes, and more. They even have a nine-hole putting green to stay in practice. Got kids? There are plenty of activities for them to burn off extra energy when you're not out exploring. Or meet up in the game room for some fun and laughter.

In addition, you'll find numerous conveniences onsite, from a welcoming camp store that carries the essentials you need to laundry facilities to a fitness center. You'll even find a movie theatre.

Plus, the campground provides Wi-Fi and cable TV access, recycling facilities, showers, and more. You can even purchase (and have delivered) firewood for relaxing at your own campsite.

Out and About the Petoskey Area

While there's plenty to keep you entertained at the campground, the area also has a lot to offer. For instance, stroll through downtown Petoskey, including the historic Gaslight District, to discover boutique shops, restaurants, breweries, wineries, and art galleries. Other nearby towns to experience include Charlevoix, Boyne City, and, right across the bay, Harbor Springs.

“... soak up some sun and allow your body and mind to fully relax.”

Nature lovers can find nearby hiking at Petoskey State Park or enjoy beachcombing on the shores of Lake Michigan. You may even come across some Petoskey stones, a unique

fossilized coral found in the area.

Just an hour's drive and ferry ride away, you can visit Mackinac Island, known for its horse-drawn carriages, bicycles, historic sites, and yummy fudge shops. Car-free for over 100 years, this island is a world apart. It won't take you any time to realize why it's consistently voted a top summer travel destination.

When Should You Visit?

The beauty of Petoskey Bay Harbor changes with the seasons, and it becomes a winter wonderland with skiing, snowshoeing, and other winter activities. That said, the resort is not open year-round, so to take advantage of the amenities at Petoskey Bay Harbor, you'll want to plan your visit in the spring, summer, or fall. (Open season is April 25 - October 31 in 2025.)

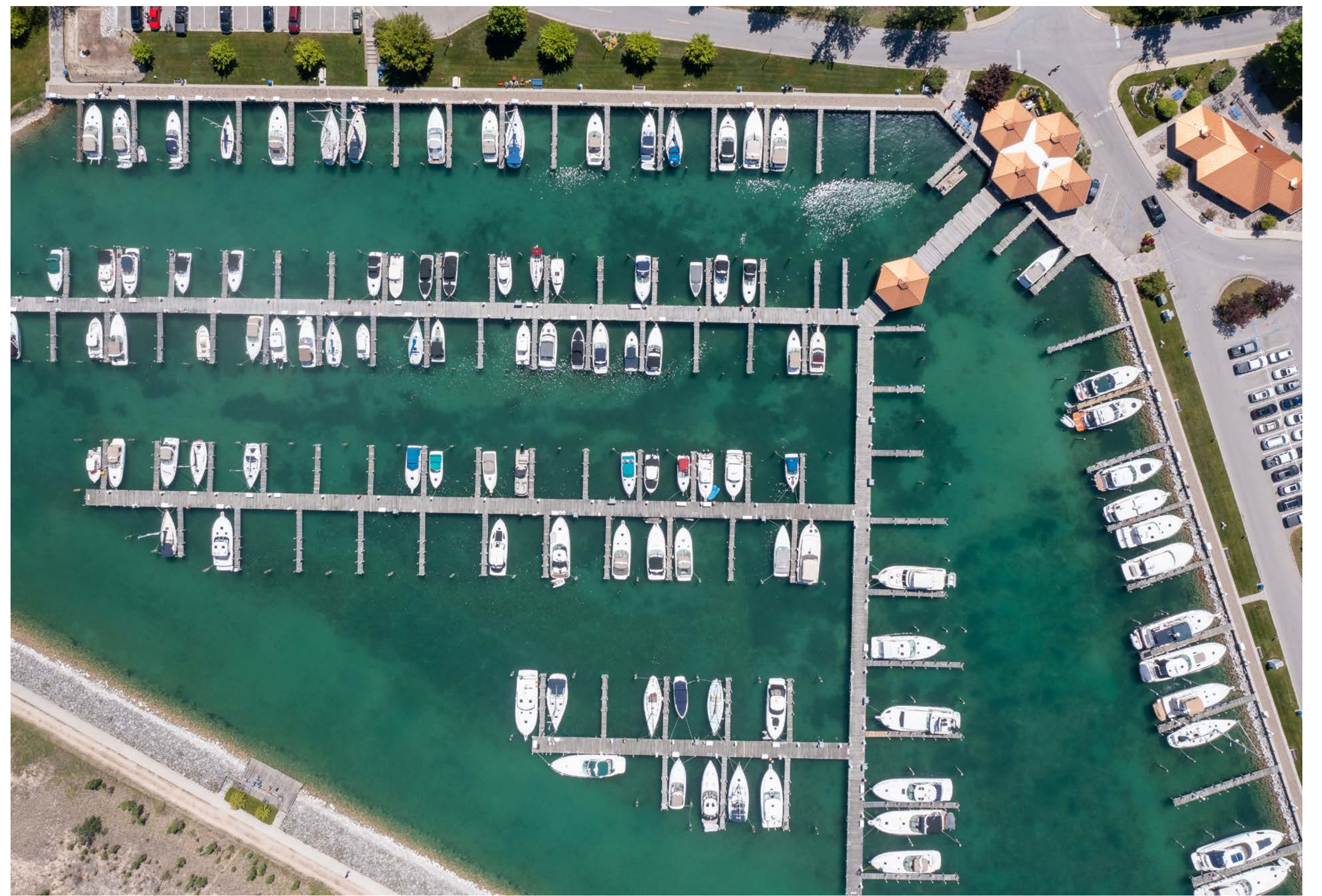
Visit in the spring to avoid the crowds and watch nature come alive with blooms.

For water sports, the best time to visit is during the summer months. The warm weather makes it an ideal place for swimming, boating, and relaxing in the sun.

Michigan is famous for its fall foliage. Visit during this time of year for a visual feast. You'll find vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows lighting up the surrounding forests.

Your Next Favorite Destination?

Petoskey Bay Harbor offers everything you could want in an RV destination:



stunning scenery, world-class amenities, and easy access to all that Northern Michigan has to offer. Create your own adventure—whether that's relaxing on the beach or by the pool, strolling through history, enjoying outdoor activities, or catching a movie. Who knows? Petoskey Bay Harbor might just become your next favorite destination. ❤️



RVX

INSIDE: We cover the best portable and space-saving adventure gear.



CAMPING, ADVENTURE, AND THE RV EXPERIENCE



The right gear can turn any trip into an unforgettable adventure. A well-equipped van build creates a comfortable home on wheels. While smart, space-saving gear—like foldable kayaks, inflatable paddleboards, and compact bikes—ensures you're always ready to explore. Make sure you have the essentials you need wherever the road leads.



VAN-LIFER APPROVED



There's something undeniably appealing about life on the road. Whether it's waking up to a new view every morning, the freedom to chase adventure (or not be tied down to your "stuff"), or the satisfaction of crafting a home that fits your unique lifestyle, van builds are an exciting way to embrace a minimalist, travel-filled life.



But while the dream of van life may seem romantic (especially when filtered through social media), the reality requires careful planning, smart budgeting, and the right gear to make the journey comfortable, safe, and sustainable. From power solutions to cooking essentials, ventilation to storage, experienced van lifers know that having the right products can make all the difference between an enjoyable adventure and a frustrating experience they're ready to pack up and forget.

If you're planning your own van build, you don't have to go through trial and error to find the best gear. We've rounded up 12 must-have products many van lifers swear by—essentials that will help you stay powered up, comfortable, and organized, whether you're parked at a scenic overlook, deep in the backcountry, or navigating an urban jungle.

THE PROS & CONS OF A VAN BUILD

Before we dive into the must-have products, though, it's important to consider the pros and cons of building your own van, rather than choosing one that's already built or picking another type of RV instead.

PROS:

Customization: One of the biggest draws of a van build is the ability to design it exactly how you want. From layout to materials to functionality, you get to tailor everything to your needs, wants, and aesthetics.

Cost Savings Over Time: While the initial investment can be high (which can come as a surprise), van life can be more affordable in the long run, especially when compared to renting or maintaining a traditional home.

Off-Grid Freedom: With the right power setup,

water system, and storage solutions, you can travel and camp almost anywhere without relying on traditional infrastructure.

Minimalist Lifestyle: Downsizing to a van forces you to prioritize what you truly need, which many find freeing and rewarding. Many enjoy no longer being “owned” by their stuff.

Adventure on Your Terms: Your home is on wheels, meaning you can chase good weather, explore new destinations, and stay as long as you like in places you love. You may also find it’s easier to take advantage of new job opportunities in different locations.

CONS:

Upfront Costs: Outfitting a van properly—especially with high-quality electrical, plumbing, and insulation—can be expensive. You may expect to be able to build your own van on the cheap, but materials, time, and essentials can add up.

Space Limitations: Living in a van means sacrificing many of the common comforts of a traditional home. There’s no room for a full kitchen, large bathroom, or ample storage.

DIY Challenges: Unless you buy a pre-converted van, building out a van yourself requires carpentry, electrical, and plumbing skills—or hiring professionals for specific jobs, which can cause costs to skyrocket. While there are many jobs you can do yourself, some require know-how if not outright expertise.

Maintenance & Repairs: Whether it’s a mechanical breakdown or wear and tear on your living space, ongoing maintenance is inevitable. And it can often be required at the most inopportune times.

Legal & Parking Considerations: Some areas have restrictions on overnight parking, requiring you to carefully plan where you’ll stay.



*“DOWNSIZING TO
A VAN FORCES
YOU TO PRIORITIZE
WHAT YOU
TRULY NEED”*

Despite these challenges, many van lifers find that the rewards far outweigh the drawbacks. With the right preparation and essential gear, you can make van life both comfortable and practical. That starts with the essential products that will set you up for success.

MUST-HAVE PRODUCTS FOR YOUR VAN BUILD

Power & Electrical

- **Lithium Battery System** (e.g., Battle Born, Renogy): A reliable, long-lasting power source is absolutely essential when it comes to keeping your entire rig running, especially if you'll be boondocking.
- **Solar Panels** (e.g., Renogy, Zamp Solar): Essential for off-grid energy and self-sufficiency.
- **Inverter** (e.g., Victron, Renogy, Go Power!): Converts DC power to AC, allowing you to use standard appliances.

*Renogy
3000w Inverter*



Climate Control & Insulation

- **MaxxAir or Dometic Fan**: Provides crucial ventilation and circulation to keep the van cool and reduce moisture buildup.
- **Thinsulate Insulation**: One of the best ways to regulate temperature and dampen sound.



*MaxxAir
Ventilation
Fan*

Water & Plumbing

- **12V Water Pump** (e.g., Shurflo, Seaflo): Delivers pressurized water to your sink or shower.
- **Composting Toilet** (e.g., Nature's Head, Air Head): A favorite among van lifers for its eco-friendly and odor-free design.

*Nature's Head
Composting
Toilet*



Kitchen & Cooking

- 12V Fridge (e.g., Dometic, ARB, ICECO, BougeRV): Keeps food fresh without the hassle of having enough ice or emptying out the water as it melts.
- Portable Induction Cooktop (e.g., Duxtop, Nuwave): Efficient cooking with minimal energy use.

Duxtop Induction Cooktop



Safety & Connectivity

- Mobile Router & Signal Booster (e.g., WeBoost, Pepwave): Ensures reliable internet for remote work, navigation, and entertainment.



weBoost Drive X

Building out your own van is an exciting journey, and having the right products can make all the difference in creating a comfortable, functional, and efficient living space. Whether you're focused on staying powered up, maintaining a comfortable climate, managing water needs, cooking meals, maximizing storage, or staying connected, these 12 must-have products are top recommendations from experienced van lifers.

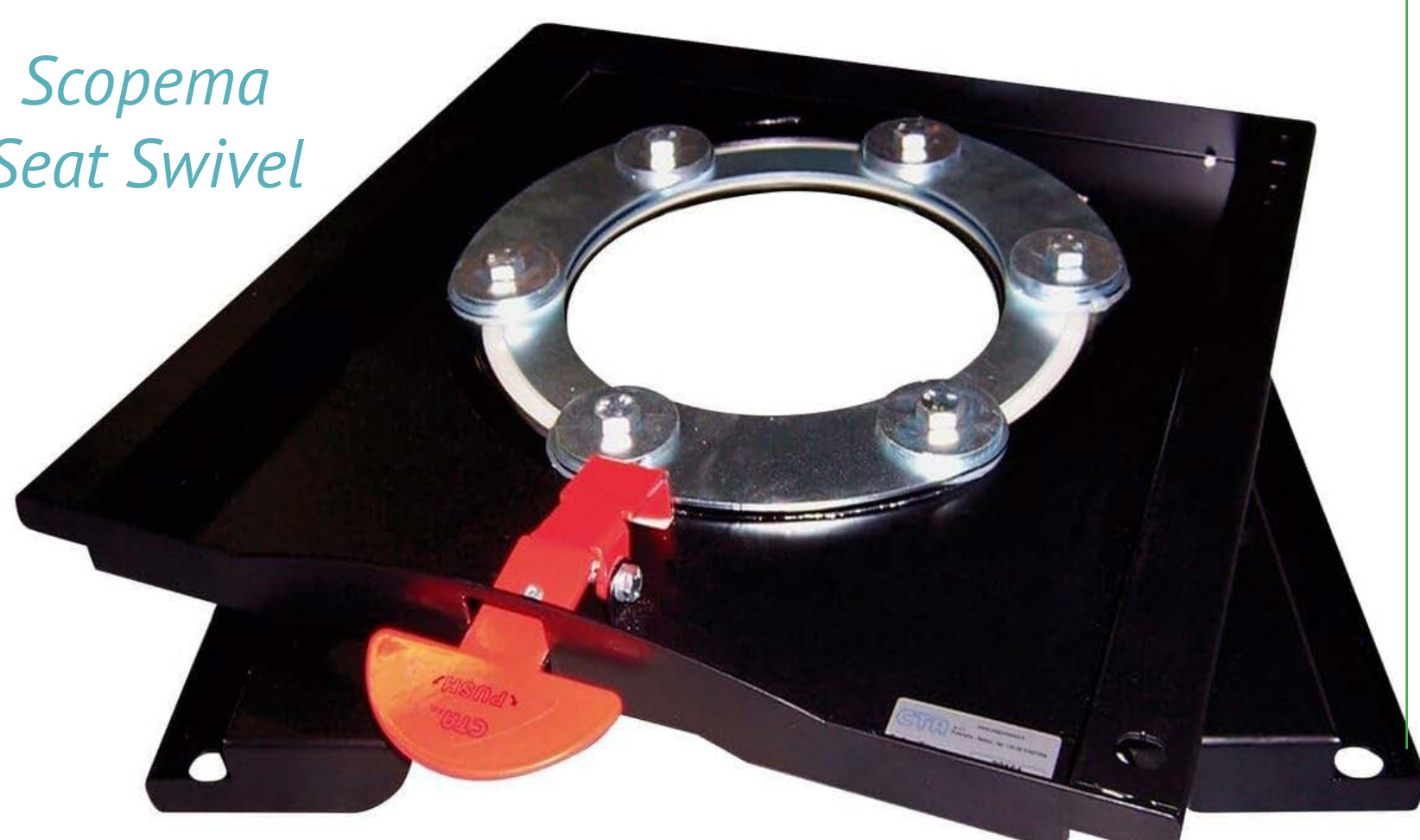
Before starting your build, consider your travel style and priorities. Will you be off-grid often? Do you need a kitchen setup that allows for daily cooking? Are you working remotely and require a reliable internet connection? Answering these questions will help you tailor your van to your unique needs.

Above all, remember that van life is about freedom, adventure, and making the most of every mile. With the right gear in place, you'll be well on your way to creating a van that feels like home—wherever the road takes you. ❤️

Storage & Organization

- Swivel Seat Bases (e.g., Scopema, Amazing Auto): Maximizes interior space by turning the front seats into part of the living area.
- Modular Storage Boxes (e.g., Front Runner Wolf Pack, AluBox): Durable and stackable for efficient gear storage.

Scopema Seat Swivel



MAX FUN

MINIMAL SPACE

MAXIMIZE YOUR FUN WITH MINIMAL SPACE: PORTABLE ADVENTURE GEAR

One of the things we love most about RV living is the freedom to chase adventure! Whether that's paddling across a crystal-clear lake, casting a line at a remote fishing spot, or biking through your campground or a gentle trail.

Yet when you're RVing, you also have space and weight limitations—even if you have a larger rig or a toy hauler, there's only so much you can carry. Especially if you have multiple passions, packing the gear you'll need for your favorite activities can feel like a challenge.



Renting once you reach your destination is always an option. However, when renting equipment, you may not find the best quality, and over time, the costs can start to add up—enough to consider investing in your own.

Enter portable, collapsible, and inflatable outdoor gear. These space-saving options let you bring your own equipment without sacrificing valuable storage space or dealing with gear that's not as good as you're used to (or dipping into your wallet anytime you're ready for an adventure). With your high-quality portable gear, you're ready for adventure on your terms.


From foldable kayaks to inflatable paddleboards, compact fishing rods to collapsible bikes—you've got numerous options made to fit your favorite pastimes into your RV lifestyle.

FOLDING KAYAKS: *Compact and Ready for Adventure*

Kayaking is one of the best ways to explore lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. Unfortunately, traditional kayaks take up a lot of space. That's where folding kayaks come in. These innovative, high-performance boats can pack down into a suitcase-sized case! So they're easy to store and transport to your next destination.

Folding kayaks aren't just convenient. They're built for adventure. Many models are made from durable, lightweight materials that hold up to rugged conditions, taking you from calm waters through choppy currents. Plus, the setup is surprisingly simple and fast. You can go from packed to paddling in minutes.

Top Folding Kayak Options for RVers

- 
ORU KAYAK—One of the most well-known brands in the foldable kayak space, Oru offers origami-style kayaks that unfold in minutes. They're lightweight, rigid, and built for both beginners and experienced paddlers. The Oru Beach LT is great for calm waters, while the Oru Bay ST can handle rougher conditions.

TUCKTEC FOLDABLE KAYAK—If durability is your priority, Tucktec's hard-shell folding kayak is a solid option. It's made of recycled plastic and folds down without requiring extra parts or frames. Plus, it's one of the most affordable folding kayaks around.



OREGOMI PADDLER—This newcomer is making waves with its lightweight, eco-friendly design. Inspired by origami, the Oregoni Paddler features a sleek, foldable structure that's easy to set up and store. Its sturdy construction and smooth performance make it a fantastic option for RVers who want a reliable kayak/paddleboard that's even easier to set up.



Portable kayaks are perfect for RVers for a number of reasons. Of course, they're space-saving. Most can be stored easily in a storage compartment—no roof rack or special mounting needed. They're also lightweight—often coming in under 30 pounds. Made with durable materials, they can withstand going from lakes to rivers to oceans. And most take just 2 to 15 minutes before they're ready to hit the water.

INFLATABLE PADDLEBOARDS: Stability Meets Convenience

Stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) is a fantastic way to explore the water. But traditional paddleboards are big, bulky, and challenging to store. That's where inflatable paddleboards (iSUPs) shine.

Modern inflatable paddleboards are surprisingly rigid and stable, thanks to high-pressure air chambers and durable drop-stitch construction. When fully inflated, they feel almost as solid as a traditional hardboard, yet they roll up into a compact backpack when not in use. That makes

them perfect for RVers who want to bring their own gear without taking up too much precious cargo space.

Top Inflatable Paddleboard Options for RVers



IROCKER ALL-AROUND—A versatile, high-quality board that works for both beginners and experienced paddlers, this board is stable, durable, and comes with a complete kit, including a pump and carrying bag.



RED PADDLE CO RIDE—Known for its premium durability and excellent performance, this board is ideal for RVers looking for a top-tier inflatable SUP that will last for years.



ATOLL PADDLEBOARD—A lightweight yet strong option that supports a wide range of paddlers, this board is made for all-around use and packs down neatly for easy transport.





SERENELIFE INFLATABLE SUP—A budget-friendly choice that's still durable and beginner-friendly, making it a great option for occasional paddlers or families.

While you may be concerned that the inflatable walls can't withstand a lot of use, most are highly durable as they're made with military-grade PVC and reinforced seams to withstand years of use.

Paddleboarding has been a growing passion for RVers everywhere. Now, you can more easily take it with you as you can find options that roll up into a backpack-sized carrying case, making them easy to stow in an RV. They're also lightweight (around 20 to 25 pounds), so they're fairly easy to carry to the water. Most take around 5 to 10 minutes to inflate if you're using a hand pump. It can take even less time with an electric pump.

RETRACTABLE FISHING POLES:

Cast a Line Anywhere

For RVers who love fishing, bringing along a traditional fishing rod can be tricky. Full-length rods are long, awkward to store, and prone to getting tangled or damaged in transit. Retractable, telescoping fishing poles can be a game-changer. These space-saving rods collapse down to a compact size—small enough to fit in a backpack or an RV storage bin—without sacrificing strength or performance.

Whether you're fishing from a dock, a kayak, or a quiet riverbank, having a portable rod means you're always ready to reel in a catch.

Top Retractable Fishing Pole Options for RVers

PLUSINNO TELESCOPIC FISHING ROD AND REEL COMBO—This highly rated yet budget-friendly option comes with a collapsible rod, reel, and carrying case. It's best for beginners and casual anglers.



KASTKING BLACKHAWK II TELESCOPIC ROD—A durable, high-performance telescoping rod that offers the strength and sensitivity of a traditional rod. Yet it collapses down for easy storage.



DAIWA MEGAFORCE TELESCOPIC ROD—This well-built, smooth-action rod from a trusted brand is great for those who want a reliable option for both freshwater and light saltwater fishing.

SOUGAYILANG TELESCOPIC FISHING ROD – A lightweight, affordable, and versatile rod that works well for a variety of fishing styles.



If you're into fishing and RVing, retractable fishing poles are an amazing option. First off, they collapse small enough to fit in storage compartments, backpacks, or under-seat storage. They're also lightweight, durable, and reliable. They provide solid performance for a variety of types of fishing—from lakes to rivers and even to some ocean fishing. And unlike with traditional fishing rods, you don't need special holders or extra storage racks. So, you're ready to drop a line whenever you find that perfect fishing spot.

COLLAPSIBLE BIKES:

Two-Wheel Freedom Without the Bulk

One of the best ways to explore a new destination is on two wheels. Imagine cruising through a national park, riding into town for supplies, or hitting a scenic bike trail. Having a bike on board adds an extra layer of adventure to RV life. The challenge? Traditional bikes take up a lot of space and thus require exterior racks or bulky indoor storage. Why not think a bit out of the usual bike box?

Folding bikes can pack down into a more compact size, so they're fairly easy to stow, even inside an RV or tow vehicle. Despite their small footprint, many of today's folding bikes offer sturdy frames, smooth rides, and there are even electric assist options.

Top Collapsible Bike Options for RVers

AVENTON SINCH 2 (FOLDING E-BIKE)—A powerful folding electric bike with fat tires for extra stability. It features a 500W motor, pedal assist, and a step-through frame, so it's easy to get on and off. This is the bike for RVers who want an effortless ride on paved roads or light trails.





BROMPTON M6L FOLDING BIKE—
One of the most compact and well-built folding bikes on the market. It folds in under 20 seconds and is made for city cruising and light touring.

LECTRIC XP 3.0 (FOLDING E-BIKE)—A powerful folding electric bike with fat tires for extra stability. Take a look if you're interested in an easier ride with pedal assist.



BIKE FRIDAY NEW WORLD TOURIST—This top-tier folding bike built for long rides, travel, and adventure. Fully customizable, it offers a smooth ride and packs down small, making it an excellent choice for RVers who want a reliable bike for city riding and light touring.



Admittedly, few collapsible bikes will suit avid mountain bikers or hardened roadies. That said, for those who want to check out more terrain or get out and spend some time in nature, foldable bikes fit the bill and easily slide into an RV compartment. Plus, they can be stored more securely and out of the elements inside your RV. And many models are lightweight enough to lift and carry.

Collapsible bikes give RVers the freedom to explore without the hassle of full-size bicycles. So, you can roll into town to grab food or a beer, ride along a beachside path for some gentle exercise, or glide through the campground to get a better feel of your location.

TRAVEL LIGHT, PLAY HARD

One of the greatest joys of RV life is the freedom to chase adventure wherever the road leads. Whether you're paddling across a quiet lake, reeling in a fresh catch, or biking through a scenic mountain pass, having the right gear on hand makes every stop along the way even more memorable.

Thanks to innovative, portable outdoor gear, you don't have to leave your favorite activities behind. These space-saving options let you pack light while still bringing everything you need to make the most of your travels. In short, these more portable options provide the freedom to explore, experience, and enjoy the outdoors on your terms. ❤️

TURN THE MILES INTO SMILES



FUN APP-BASED CAR GAMES

AH... the great family road trip. Journeying across the state, country, or even continent and keeping everyone entertained can be challenging, to say the least, but RVing isn't just about getting from Point A to Point B (sanely). It's about the laughter and the memories made along the way.

Of course, devices seem to have taken over every aspect of our daily lives, so why not put them to good use? Instead of everyone staring at separate screens, use them bring the family together. Really! Interactive, app-based car games can turn travel time into playtime. Test your trivia skills, act out hilarious prompts, or battle it out in a digital card game to make the miles fly by and keep the whole crew entertained.

Road Trip Travel

Games App: Turn the open road into an adventure with this all-in-one game app designed specifically for road trips! Packed with state trivia, scavenger hunts, and classic car games, this app gets everyone looking out the window, engaging with their surroundings, and enjoying the ride. It's the perfect way to spark curiosity and learn fun facts about the places you're passing through.





CREATING LASTING MEMORIES

Kahoot!: If your family loves a little friendly competition, Kahoot! is the perfect game to play on the go. Create your own quizzes or choose from thousands of ready-made ones to challenge each other on everything from pop culture to history. Play solo, in teams, or go head-to-head for bragging rights on the next leg of the journey!



Heads Up! Get ready for some serious belly laughs! Heads Up! is a charades-style game where one player holds the phone to their forehead while the rest of the family gives clues to help them guess the word or phrase. Act out wacky scenarios, do your best celebrity impressions, and get the party started with a game guaranteed to fill the RV with laughter.

UNO Car Party: Bring the classic UNO battle to the digital world with this easy-to-play app. UNO Car Party lets the whole family jump in on the fun both in the car and hanging out at the campground. Play strategically, use those Wild Cards wisely, and don't forget to yell "UNO!" before your last card.



Trivia Crack 2: Challenge your family's knowledge with this fast-paced trivia game! With thousands of questions across a variety of categories, Trivia Crack 2 keeps everyone guessing and learning. Play head-to-head or take turns answering questions to see who's the top know-it-all—at least when it comes to random facts!



GAME ON!

With these fun and interactive games, the road trip itself becomes part of the adventure. Wherever the road takes you, these apps make it easy to connect, compete, and create lasting memories together.



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R	I	M	B	N	F	L	K	A	A	T	D	T
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SANDWICH
CUPCAKE
DESSERT
TOMATO
BURGER

CHEESE
PEPPER
BREAD
PASTA
JUICE

PIZZA
SALAD
MILK
FISH



T	T	U	T	B	A	N	N	Q	C	I	A	B
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Get 5G on the Road. Fast. Reliable. Secure.

Discover how AT&T enables our fast 5G speeds for customer to download, stream, and share when you're on the road.

