

# AMERICAN TREASURES

**M**ovies and television have made so many U.S. landmarks familiar to the world—big city skylines, the white marble memorials of Washington, D.C., the plains and high mountain “cowboy” country of the west and, of course, the hillside Hollywood sign announcing the glamour of Los Angeles—that it is not unusual for people to think they know what America is like before ever setting foot here.

Once actually in the United States, however, visitors find a remarkably diverse nation—often far different from their expectations—full of wonderful and unique sights, sounds, foods, and friendly, welcoming people.

AP/WWP Photo by Beth A. Keiser



AP/WWP Photo by Matt York

While U.S. icons, like Chicago's Sears Tower, the Grand Canyon, and Disney World are well worth seeing, there are other treasures and often a few surprises to be found off the beaten path.



AP/WWP Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Think, for instance, of New York City ... did you come up with the image of a Hansom cab ride through Central Park in the snow?



AP/WWP Photo by Wally Santana

We've put together a collection of photos to suggest ways to expand the possibilities of seeing the United States, even those places you already think you know.

An interest in U.S. history, for example, could lead you to the various Native American festivals which can be found in all 50 states, not just the western ones [<http://www.500nations.com/>]. This Tuscarora Indian is performing in New York. History buffs around the entire country stage local reenactments of U.S. battles, the most popular being those of the American Revolution (1774-1781) and the Civil War (1861-1865). Although not pictured here, other alternatives include everything from ancient Indian mounds to historical villages of various periods.



AP/WWP Photo by Michael Oloriewski

AP/WWP Photo by April L. Brown



AP/WWP Photo by Seth Perlman



AP/WWP Photo by Danny Johnston

Our deep agricultural roots are evident in the hundreds of state and county fairs [[http://www.expocentral.com/agriculture/us\\_fairs/US\\_Fairs.html](http://www.expocentral.com/agriculture/us_fairs/US_Fairs.html)] held throughout the summer and fall. The fairs are occasions for local residents to show off the results of their previous year's work, and for tractor competitions, parades, and midway attractions. Here you see "Uncle Sam," one of several decorated 'cows' on parade at the Illinois State Fair and the midway rides of the Arkansas State Fair.



AP/WWP Photo by J.D. Pooley

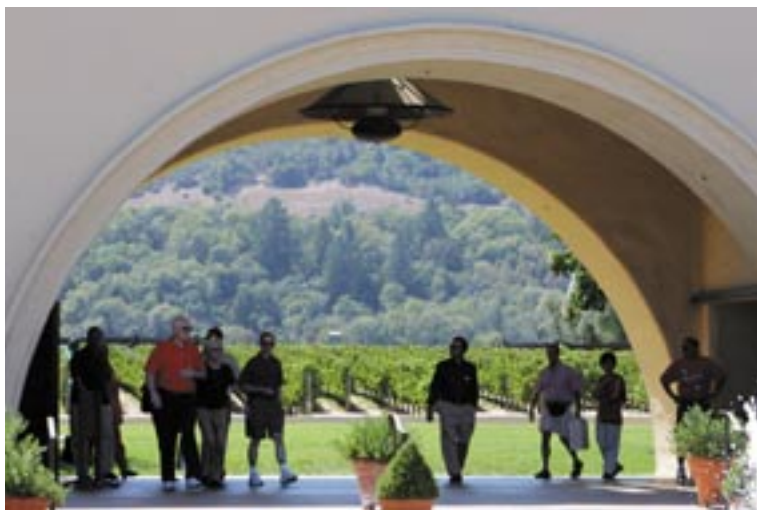
If you are a ride enthusiast, there are many theme parks [<http://themeparks.about.com/od/findusthemeparks/>] in addition to the world-famous Disney attractions. Cedar Point Amusement Park in Ohio, for example, has the Millennium Force (lower left) which rises 95 meters and goes over 145 kilometers per hour.

Should you prefer museums, there is an incredible range located all over the country [<http://icom.museum/vlmp/usa.html> or <http://www.museumlink.com/states.htm>] from classical art to museums devoted to every topic possible: maritime life, stitchery, and western heritage to name just a few. Shown is the Children's Museum in Indianapolis, Indiana.

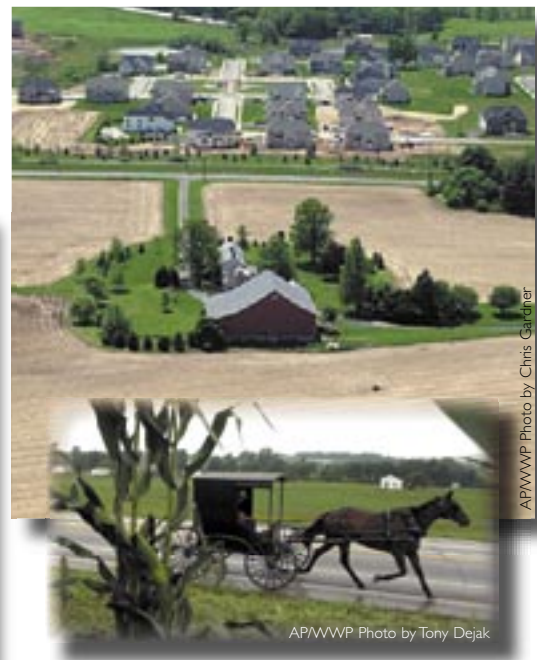


AP/WWP Photo

Or how about a visit to our wineries? America's wines continue to earn international awards, and vineyards offering tours now exist in almost every state [<http://www.travelenvoy.com/wine/USA.htm>]. Shown (below left) are the Robert Mondavi vineyards in California. Visitors who go beyond the cities are often surprised by how rural much of the United States is. Efforts are in place to keep it that way. Pictured is a farm in Pennsylvania, part of the state's Farmland Preservation Program. While driving through the countryside, especially in Pennsylvania and Ohio, you might share the road with an Amish buggy (lower right). The Amish, a religious group of German background, shun modern culture and conveniences, emphasizing humility and mutual support of members of their community.



AP/WWP Photo by Eric Risberg



AP/WWP Photo by Chris Gardner

AP/WWP Photo by Tony Dejak

Other Americans take delight in expressing their individualism, often in humorous ways. On the “Pizza Farm” in Alton, Illinois, a farmer has taken a half-acre plot, made it circular and divided it into ‘slices’ with each wedge devoted to growing a pizza ingredient.



AP/WWP Photo by Tom Gannam



AP/WWP Photo by Mike Gullett

The legendary Route 66, running diagonally from Chicago to Los Angeles, still offers views of kitschy Americana roadside attractions. Here a member of the Galena, Kansas Chamber of Commerce paints markers to guide the way. Read about things to see on Route 66 and other U.S. transcontinental road trips at <http://www.roadtripusa.com/>.

If you're really into the off-beat, travel to Carhenge, which duplicates the dimensions and orientation of Stonehenge. It's part of the Car Art Reserve near Alliance, Nebraska. There are at least nine other versions of Britain's Stonehenge in the United States—and a few are actually made out of stone, although foam and refrigerators have also been used—according to <http://www.roadsideamerica.com/set/OVERhenges.html>.



AP/WWP Photo by David Zalubowski

Of course, whether you like to watch or play, the United States is a sports-lover's paradise.

For outdoors enthusiasts, there are rugged sports like dog sledding in Alaska [<http://www.iditarod.com>], or kayaking, shown here at Great Falls Park in northern Virginia.



AP/WWP Photo by Ron Edmonds



AP/WWP Photo by Al Grillo

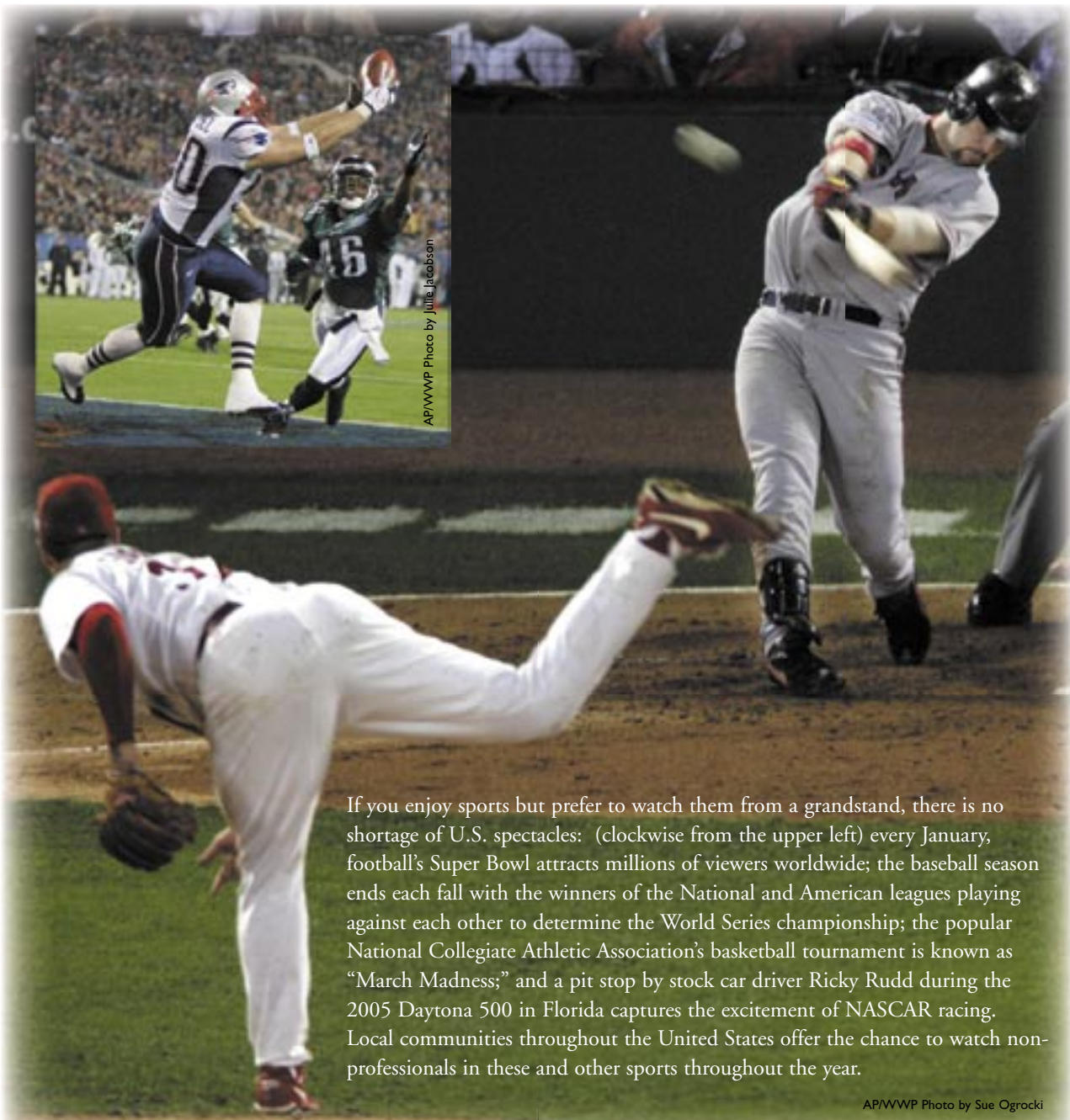
A game that began with college students lobbing “Frisbie Bakery” pie tins at each other, Frisbee has evolved into a competitive sport. Pictured are students from Brown and Dartmouth universities contending in the 2005 New England Regional Ultimate Frisbee Tournament in Rhode Island. Lacrosse, which originated with Native Americans hundreds of years ago, is the most rapidly growing team sport among U.S. men and women. The photo shows the game between teams from the universities of Oregon and Washington at the 2004 Pacific Northwest Collegiate Lacrosse League Tournament.



AP/WWP Photo by Adam Hunger



AP/WWP Photo by John Froschauer



AP/WWP Photo by Julie Jacobson

If you enjoy sports but prefer to watch them from a grandstand, there is no shortage of U.S. spectacles: (clockwise from the upper left) every January, football's Super Bowl attracts millions of viewers worldwide; the baseball season ends each fall with the winners of the National and American leagues playing against each other to determine the World Series championship; the popular National Collegiate Athletic Association's basketball tournament is known as "March Madness;" and a pit stop by stock car driver Ricky Rudd during the 2005 Daytona 500 in Florida captures the excitement of NASCAR racing. Local communities throughout the United States offer the chance to watch non-professionals in these and other sports throughout the year.

AP/WWP Photo by Sue Ogrocki



AP/WWP Photo by Bob Jordan



AP/WWP Photo by Mark Humphrey