



PLOWING THROUGH untouched powder in Idaho. Snowkiting across frozen New Hampshire lakes. Backpacking in the country's second largest canyon. It's time to make a few edits to your standard bucket list—35 of them actually. Grab a pen and clear your calendar. Winter is coming, and we can't wait.

BY ALISON MILLER



WEST

1/ Follow That Horse (or Hound)

If you're versed in cross-country skiing and your dog was born to run, sign up for a skijoring lesson at **DEVIL'S THUMB RANCH RESORT & SPA** (from \$40), just outside Winter Park, Colorado. Your dog steers while you provide the momentum. Another version of the sport is powered by horse: Expert skiers scale jumps and dodge gates during an annual competition in Leadville, Colorado.



2/ SURF WHERE THE SPORT WENT STATESIDE

Surfing's arrival in Santa Cruz, California, dates back to 1885, when three Hawaiian princes vacationing here were so impressed with the waves that they commissioned a local lumber mill to craft redwood boards for them on the spot. More than a century later, the churning swells and gnarly breaks created by the curve of Monterey Bay and its long sandbars still have a magnetic pull on riders. Need a leg up?

recall your wipeouts in hyperbolic detail at the Jack O'Neill Lounge. / Two-hour semiprivate lesson, \$120

SAVOR THE NEXT GREAT FOOD CITY

In Sacramento and the surrounding Central Valley, farm-to-table is the long-standing modus operandi, not just a catchphrase. Make your home base the centrally located **RED LION WOODLAKE SACRAMENTO**, and then loosen your belt for

Book a lesson with native Californian and lifelong surfer Ed Guzman, who's been riding these waves since moving to the area in 1986. Just beyond the **CLUB ED SURF SCHOOL** on Cowell's Beach sits the stylish **DREAM INN**—a great excuse to

this daylong tour: **3/ BREAKFAST** Local bacon and egg sandwich on a house-made English muffin smeared with avocado spread from **OLD SOUL CO.** Get a cup of direct-trade Costa Rican coffee too, and give a knowing nod to Sactown's coffeegeatsia on your way out.

4/ LUNCH Chicken-fried mushroom po'boy at **MOTHER.** You won't find any meat at this comfort food emporium, and you won't miss it either.

5/ DINNER Five-course prix fixe menu at **THE KITCHEN.** Reservations book up months in advance for this once-nightly interactive dinner party. Think open kitchen, entertaining chefs, beautiful fare, and 50 new foodie friends.

6/ NIGHTCAP Star bartender Ryan Seng's homemade nocino at **GRANGE**, inside the sleek **CITIZEN HOTEL.** Seng harvests the walnuts himself for this spiced Italian liqueur. Drink

it on its own or upgrade your Manhattan.

7/ TAKE THE LONG WAY

In the wintertime, the snow-strewn farm country of northern Washington's **METHOW VALLEY** makes a fine canvas for cross-country trails. In fact, it's home to North America's largest interconnected system of them: 120 miles of groomed paths

with plenty of restaurants, general stores, and lodges along the way. / Day pass, \$24

8/ SKI IN SOLITUDE

Anti-scene skiers, here is your respite. **PAYETTE POWDER GUIDES** whisks adventurous types to the snow-draped peaks of Idaho's West Central Mountains, where thousands of acres of untouched powder awaits. No people, no ski lifts, just pure, unadulterated snow



POP QUIZ

A Downtime Decree

THERE'S A SIMPLE WAY to protect your health, lower stress, strengthen relationships, and increase productivity: Go on vacation, says Dr. Leigh Vinocur, the Diamond Resorts International® Vacation Doctor. Take the quiz below to educate yourself about the importance of time off, and then let your wanderlust do the rest.

- ___ percent of Americans say their happiest memories come from vacations.
- ___ percent of Americans were more satisfied at work when they took regular vacations.
- On average, more than ___ percent of Americans are leaving seven or more days of paid vacation on the table annually.
- ___ percent of Americans believe vacations are important in their life.

A. **71**
B. **74**
C. **90**
D. **40**

Visit diamondresorts.com/vacationdoctor or takebackyourtime.org to learn more about the health benefits that come from taking a vacation.

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. A, 3. D, 4. B

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF CLUB ED SURF SCHOOL AND MOTHER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PIERRE JACQUES/HEMIS/CORBIS (SKIJORING) AND COURTESY OF PAYETTE POWDER GUIDES



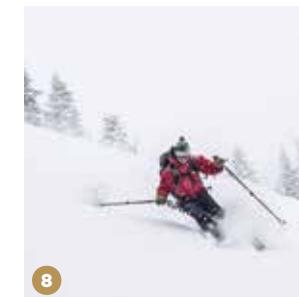
SELF-SOOTHE IN SONOMA COUNTY

This bucolic stretch of California countryside bears a well-deserved reputation for food and wine. Who knew bathing was such a big deal too?

10/ VINTHERAPY BATH AT KENWOOD INN & SPA Choose pinot noir, chardonnay, or sparkling. You'll get a glass to drink, natch, but you'll also be introduced to the other healing powers of the grape. The salts, oils, and scrubs used here are derived from seeds, skins, and vines. / \$65 for hotel guests

11/ CEDAR ENZYME BATH AT OSMOSIS DAY SPA SANCTUARY This Japanese bathing ritual involves no water. Instead, you'll lay in a tub as an attendant covers you in a fragrant bed of enzyme-laced ground cedar wood and rice bran, heated to 150 degrees via natural fermentation. The payoff? Improved circulation, relief for sore muscles, and an infectious warm glow. / \$99

12/ RITUAL BATH AT THE FAIRMONT SONOMA MISSION Sure, there's an outdoor loggia with teak loungers and five pools, but the aquatic experience of your dreams begins inside the colossal bathhouse. Start with an exfoliating shower and an herbal steam, and then dip into the expansive Roman soaking pool fed by a natural hot spring. / Day pass, \$89 for non-hotel guests; free when booking a same-day treatment valued at \$169 or more (on weekdays)



9/ MARVEL OVER FALLS

The sheer basalt walls along the **COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE** feature one of the highest concentrations of waterfalls in North America, and in most cases only a short hike through old-growth forest is required. Afterward, rest your bones at Portland's **HOTEL ROSE**, a handsome hideaway with city views on the west bank of the Willamette River. / From \$139



13/ Gaze at American Grandeur

Just outside Amarillo sits a stunning natural setting that rivals both Grand Canyon and Bryce Canyon national parks. Stretching 120 miles with an average depth of 800 feet, **PALO DURO CANYON** is the second largest in the country. Mountain bike, hike, or ride on horseback to glimpse the grand expanse and its sandstone hoodoos. The wildlife viewing is exceptional during the winter.

SOUTHWEST MIDWEST



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14/ TAKE A COCKTAIL TOUR OF TULSA

Aaron Post of **VALKYRIE** and Noah Bush of **HODGES BEND** are the cocktail kings of this ever-more hip Oklahoma city. Visit them first, but make time to sidle up to the other hot spots catapulting T-Town into libation legitimacy: The Vault, the Tavern, Biga, Juniper, and Andolini's.

15/ GALLERY-HOP ON LAKE MICHIGAN

The lakefront communities of Saugatuck and Douglas have been a haven for

artists since The School of the Art Institute of Chicago set up a summer painting school here 100 years ago. These days, you can browse contemporary African art (**AMAZWI**), sculpture from felled trees (**MARCIA PERRY'S ARK GALLERY**), and American ceramics and crafts (**GOOD GOODS**). Afterward, cozy up to a wine-paired meal at the opulent **BELVEDERE INN**. Chef-owner Shaun Glynn runs this elegant homage to Old World Europe, where dinner is served alongside a log fire in the original 1913 fireplace.



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16/ TOAST TO AN UNSUNG WINE REGION

You'll find rarefied varietals like traminette and chambourcin in droves on the rich farmland of Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio. Twenty-six wineries have turned this pastoral landscape on the banks of Lake Erie into a flourishing wine destination. If you're not into snowshoeing,

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW SMITH/STOCKSY UNITED (PALO DURO) AND COURTESY OF VALKYRIE AND LODGE AT GENEVA-ON-THE-LAKE

BACKPACK-READY

Into the Wild

Rough it the right way with these off-the-beaten-path essentials.



BIOLITE NANO-GRID A dimmable lantern with a 72-hour battery life that moonlights as a power source, a flashlight, and a light string? Brilliant! (Add extra lamps for \$30.) / \$100; biolite.com

MOUNTAIN HARD-WEAR SHIFTER 2 With room for a pair of backpackers, this budget-friendly tent sets up in five minutes or less. / \$200; mountainhardwear.com

ABEO AERO-SYSTEM HYLAN Channeled air chambers and a mesh and nubuck upper keep you comfy and dry no matter what the terrain. / \$160; thewalkingcompany.com

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF BIOLITE, MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR, THE WALKING COMPANY, AND CUYAHOGA VALLEY SCENIC RAILROAD

stay at the stately **LODGE AT GENEVA-ON-THE-LAKE** and sign up for the wine shuttle. Don't leave town without a bottle of ice wine, a heady digestif made from grapes left on the vine until they're frozen. / From \$99

will of course be served, and pajamas are encouraged. / From \$45; free for children under 2

17/ RIDE THE POLAR EXPRESS

Every November and December, northeastern Ohio's **CUYAHOGA VALLEY SCENIC RAILROAD** transforms into the magical locomotive depicted in Chris Van Allsburg's beloved children's book. The train winds through the wintry landscape of **CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** before reaching its final destination: the North Pole. Hot chocolate

18/ MAKE LIKE A LOCAL

Santa Fe's pink adobe walls and Sangre de Cristo Mountains are perpetually enchanting, as are the bevy of galleries on Canyon Road. Therefore the secret is *not* to veer off the beaten path but rather to visit in winter, when locals relish having the place to themselves. Spend nights at the **BUFFALO**



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THUNDER RESORT & CASINO. Rooms are accented with carved headboards and Pueblo-style art, and the indoor pool and spa are open year-round. / From \$99



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19/ SLEEP WHERE INSPIRATION STRIKES

Folk artist Howard Finster's **PARADISE GARDEN**—a showcase of nearly 47,000 works of art, each decorated, painted, and inscribed on repurposed objects and slabs of cement—is now open to overnighters via Airbnb. Spend your day pondering the dizzying collection, and then bunk up in the one-bedroom cottage, located in Summerville, Georgia, that's every bit as colorful as its surroundings. / \$130

20/ TAKE A GOLF ODYSSEY

Luxuriate in affordable championship golf on Alabama's **ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL**, where winter highs hover between 53 and 62 degrees and greens fees aren't much higher. The trail spans 26 courses. Here, our picks for a Birmingham-based jaunt:

Start at **OXMOOR VALLEY's** Ridge course, where undulating fairways are flanked by thick forest. The next day, drive northeast to **SILVER LAKES** and create your own combination from four newly



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rehabbed nine-hole courses in the Appalachian foothills. End up back in Birmingham

at **ROSS BRIDGE**, the fourth longest course in the world, where you can pack it in to the sound of a bagpiper saluting the sunset at **RENAISSANCE ROSS BRIDGE GOLF RESORT & SPA**.

21/ GO FLY A SNOWKITE

Imagine sailing across miles of frozen lakes on a pair of skis as the wind propels you. Sound fun? Then you'll want to plan a trip to New Hampshire's Mount Washington Valley. Chris Krug, the owner of **HARDWATER KITING** in North Conway, New Hampshire, offers instruction for all levels at more than 40 surrounding sites, whether your objective is learning to maneuver the kite or catching some air. / From \$100



22/ Soar like a Wright Brother

Just down the beach from where Wilbur and Orville took their first manned flight in North Carolina's Outer Banks, the **KITTY HAWK KITES FLIGHT SCHOOL** offers the closest thing to reliving that historic day: a ride on a replica Wright Glider. After an hour of instruction, you'll strap in belly-down and push off. A ground crew keeps you tethered as you float for 50 to 100 yards per takeoff. / \$349

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF PARADISE GARDEN AND HARDWATER KITING

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF KITTY HAWK KITES FLIGHT SCHOOL



23/ PARTY LIKE IT'S THE GILDED AGE

Tucked in the Allegheny Mountains, 80 miles south of Buffalo in Bradford, Pennsylvania, the rustic-luxe **LODGE AT GLENDORN** keeps the legacy of Adirondack Great Camps alive. Try your hand at skeet shooting, ice fishing, curling, or snowshoeing, and then retire with a whiskey around the soaring sandstone hearth. Bringing the entire brood? No problem. Though 12 cabins now surround it, the main house was originally built in the 1930s for a single multigenerational family. / From \$450



24/ START YOUR OWN SECOND LINE

You're getting married! Or maybe it's your birthday or anniversary. Or perhaps you're just the kind of person whose presence demands fanfare. You'll fit right in in New Orleans, home of the second line, a parade that earned its name because a jazz band leads and a "second" wave of handkerchief-waving merrymakers follows. Anyone can stage one—all you need is a permit from the city and a jazz band (find one on GigSalad). You don't even have to bring friends; just plan your parade route through the French Quarter, and revelers will be hot on your trail in no time. / Permit, \$50



TALE OF TWO CITIES

A breakdown of Mexico's two most alluring Pacific destinations, miles apart in distance and demeanor

31/ PUERTO VALLARTA

LAY OF THE LAND: Wreathed by lush jungle and the Sierra Madre Mountains, its elongated beach fronts one of the largest bays in the world.

ACTIVITIES: Peel off-road in an ATV or zip-line in the jungle. For a mellower journey, explore the agave fields and distilleries surrounding the pueblo of Tequila, a World Heritage site.

CULTURE: Observe the traditional "yarn paintings" of the indigenous Huichol people in the surfing village of Sayulita, 25 miles north.

PRO TIP: The Four Seasons' Pacifico Golf Course features the world's only natural island green.

32/ LOS CABOS

LAY OF THE LAND: This pair of cities is situated at the tip of the Baja peninsula, a strip of subtropical desert between the Pacific and the Sea of Cortez.

ACTIVITIES: Legendary sportfishing is a top draw in late fall. For a glimpse of migrating gray whales, travel in winter or early spring.

CULTURE: Cabo San Lucas is home to a bustling marina, rowdy nightlife, and prime shopping. Or trek the 20 miles to San José del Cabo, where cobbled streets lead to galleries, farm-to-table fare, and a historic mission.

PRO TIP: Swimmers, scope out Medano Beach, Playa Palmilla, and Playa del Amor.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER



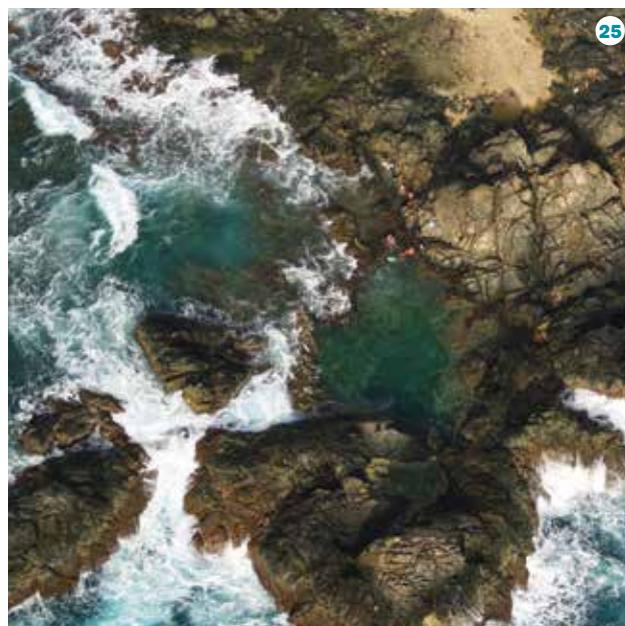
25/ EXPLORE UNTAMED ARUBA

Aruba's white-sand beaches are dreamy, and you should devote a fair share of your time to them. But there's an equally spectacular natural resource here that many visitors overlook. Spanning nearly 20 percent of the island—including 5.5 miles of eastern coastline—**ARIKOK NATIONAL PARK** is home to sand dunes, volcanic lava formations, and cactus groves. Two must-sees? **GUADIRIKIRI CAVE**, a nearly 500-foot-long limestone expanse illuminated by splashes of sunlight, and **CONCHI**, a swimming hole

formed by waves lapping over a natural rock pool. Explore on your own or book a Jeep tour with former park ranger Eddy Croes, founder of **ARUBA NATURE SENSITIVE TOURS**. He'll pick you up at your hotel and take you to these and other natural sites. / Park admission, \$11; tours from \$85

26/ STUDY MODERNISM IN MEXICO CITY

The clean-lined architectural style prevails in Mexico's capital city. See its beginnings and ponder its future with a local architect via **E-ARCHITECT TOURS**.



Each journey is tailor-made. Two spots you won't want to miss: the former house and studio of influential architect **LUIS BARRAGÁN**, built in 1948, and the striking **MUSEO SOUMAYA**, the city's newest ensemble of futuristic steel and glass. / Prices upon request; contact isabelle@e-architect.co.uk

SEEK SOLITUDE IN PUNTA CANA

This beachfront stretch on the Dominican Republic's eastern coast is known for its 40-strong collection of all-inclusives. If that doesn't sound like the place for respite, dig deeper. A handful of resorts on this prime Caribbean turf pride

themselves on privacy and remoteness: **27/ SANCTUARY CAP CANA** Soak up the view from this cliffside, Spanish-style resort or from the nearby Jack Nicklaus golf course. For maximum R&R, book a Castle Junior Suite in the adults-only area. / From \$263

28/ ZOETRY AGUA If you long for lapping waves, rustling palms, and the sound of your fingers flipping the pages of that book you've been meaning to read, hole up in a private, cane-thatched suite at this wellness-focused retreat. / From \$410 **29/ SIVORY PUNTA CANA** Each of the 55 suites sports a private balcony or terrace and a personal plunge pool or hot tub. Romance rules here: Arrange for a private dinner on the beach or the romantic turndown—upon returning to your room you'll be greeted by a bubble bath festooned with candles and floating petals. / From \$246

30/ SPY A RESPLENDENT QUETZAL IN COSTA RICA

Not into bird-watching? We dare you to encounter one of



these guys and come away with a mind unchanged. (The adjective "resplendent" is even part of its official name.) Sacred to the ancient Aztec and Mayan peoples, the quetzal's jade plumes extend up to 3 feet long and shimmer like a hologram when in flight. Spot one in **POAS VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK** (30 miles northwest of San José), and then meditate on your good fortune at the nearby **PURA VIDA SPA & YOGA RETREAT**, where you can enjoy twice-daily hatha yoga (every day but Wednesday) with a tropical view. / Park admission, \$10; yoga, \$15 per class for hotel guests