



Image: eventh. Adobe Stock.

Bucket list trip highlighted by multiple journeys

Alaska's unrivaled allure radiates on land and sea

SURF AND TURF is synonymous with extravagant dining. It's succulent seafood combined with a tender filet served in a setting meant for royalty. It's a meal as memorable as it is delicious.

Now imagine that same scenario - but this time, it pertains to your next vacation. It's a trip that combines land and sea to create the ultimate travel experience. Wanderlust satisfied from all directions - whether it's on terra firma or blue waters.

Or in this case, both.

AAA is offering five packages that combine land and cruise tours of Alaska - aka *The Last Frontier*, *Land of the Midnight Sun* or *The Great Land*. It's a territory blessed with more nicknames than a famous celebrity. The trips range from 11 to 13 nights, with seven of those nights spent on Royal Caribbean's *Radiance of the Seas*.

The cost (per person double occupancy) of the trips varies. Grand Mountain Marvels (June 1-14) is \$3,369. Mountain Panorama Adventure (June 14-26) is \$2,990. Alaska Wilderness Spectacular (July 13-26) is \$3,260. Grand Mountain Marvels (August 9-22) is \$3,059. And Alaska Wilderness Spectacular (August 23-September 5) is \$2,970. Flights are not included. You can speak with a AAA Travel Advisor for pricing on flights.

Alaska ranks high on bucket lists among U.S. destinations. Its natural beauty creates a work of art from all directions. Snowcapped mountains rise from the landscapes. Varieties of wildlife roam unsettled lands dotted with lakes, streams and lush forests.



Image: Royal Caribbean

Fjords, glaciers and unique villages comprise locations that only can be explained by personal experiences. Your legs may move you, but your eyes will guide you to witness some of the most beautiful sights worldwide.

"To the lover of wilderness, Alaska is one of the most wonderful countries in the world," once said renowned naturalist John Muir.

Alaska is a place of wonder. Our country's largest state has fewer than 700,000 citizens, making such a massive land seem intimately storytelling. A day in the wilderness provides a lifetime of satisfaction. And a lifetime of satisfaction delivers a day you'll never forget.

Visit a host of Alaska's hotspots via glass-domed Wilderness Express, riverboat, motor coach or just by taking a stroll. Hike rare terrains, raft down rough rivers or kayak in calmer waters.

Travel into the unspoiled wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve. Keep alert for wildlife

continued on pg 18

REAL ID Extended to May 7, 2025

The Department of Homeland Security extended the REAL ID deadline to May 7, 2025. The REAL ID Act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards and prohibits Federal agencies from accepting for official purposes licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards. Beginning May 7, 2025, every state and territory resident will need to present a REAL ID compliant license/ID, or another acceptable form of ID for boarding commercial aircraft, accessing Federal facilities and entering nuclear plants. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) considers a current passport or military ID acceptable identification for boarding an aircraft. For more information on Pennsylvania's REAL ID compliant license, visit dmv.pa.gov/REALID/Pages/default.aspx.

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From Where I Sit

**Change of seasons ups risk of ID theft
AAA's ProtectMyID® decreases odds of infiltration**

By Terri Petrick
President, AAA East Central

Fall is in the air, and I, for one, could not be more excited. The leaves are beginning to change. "Sweater weather" is here, and ... of course, pumpkin-spiced everything! It's also the time of year that parents send their kids back to college. And before we know it, there will be an uptick in online shopping for the holidays. These are cause for great joy for us. But, they are also bait for identity thieves.

College students find themselves using internet in public places, and they could be targets for scams. And with every internet transaction you make over the coming months, your personal data is at risk.



Terri Petrick

So, before you become a victim of cybercrime, ask yourself: what steps are you taking to protect your identity?

Cybercrime and identity theft are the fastest-growing crimes in the nation. Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information without your consent to commit fraud or other crimes. This information can include your Social Security number, birthdate, driver's license numbers, financial account details and more.

While organizations that hold our data are constantly updating their security measures, cybercriminals can be quite crafty and resourceful.

This is why it's important now, more than ever, to be proactive. And AAA is here to help.

AAA Members have access to a benefit that - to my great surprise - many aren't aware of! ProtectMyID® from AAA, fueled by Experian®, offers members financial



Image: JohnKwan. Adobe Stock.

Stay Protected



Scan QR code for details about
AAA's ProtectMyID® plans.

with extra features like additional identity-theft insurance, dark-web surveillance, social media monitoring and much more.

These are just some of the tools you should be using to keep an eye on your personal information. Falling victim to identity theft can be inconvenient, expensive and devastating. Some warning signs that you may be compromised include household bills not being delivered, credit or loan applications being denied, receiving statements for purchases you didn't make, and fraudulent transactions appearing on your accounts and credit cards.

To minimize your risk of identity theft, avoid sharing your personal information, create strong passwords, use two-factor authentication, only sign on to secure Wi-Fi sites, update your social media settings to "private" and avoid the use of debit cards while shopping online.

When it comes to protecting your identity, a little effort will go a long way. Activate your ProtectMyID® member benefit today by scanning this QR code or visiting your local AAA branch office.

support and peace of mind.

There are three tiers of coverage: ProtectMyID® Essential, ProtectMyID® Deluxe and ProtectMyID® Platinum. ProtectMyID® Essential, which is "free" to you as a member, offers credit monitoring, Experian® credit report, lost-wallet protection and fraud-resolution support. AAA Premier members also have \$10,000 in identity theft insurance.

The Deluxe and Platinum tiers come at additional monthly costs, but you certainly get more than what you pay for

FREE JUNIOR ASSOCIATES

Priceless Protection for Teens

If your teen has reached driving age, don't let them go it alone. AAA members can extend their AAA coverage for dependents age 16 to 18, with a free Junior Associate membership. They'll carry their very own AAA card, and are entitled to AAA benefits and services including 24/7 roadside assistance, exclusive savings at AAA Discounts & Rewards, AAA Mobile solutions and more. Members can add Junior Associates by calling or visiting their local AAA office or, by clicking on AAA.com/JuniorAssociate. (All Associate Members must reside at the Primary Member's address, and proof of age may be required).

Note: Free Junior Associates are not available with the Monthly Dues Option.

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Porch pirates primed to take packages

Steps to protect you from thieves lurking neighborhoods

By Robin Jones

Cyber Monday kicks off the busy season for more than just online retailers and delivery services. It also opens high season for porch pirates.

Of course, thieves who steal packages from homes operate year-round, but they're particularly active during the holidays. If you order gifts online, you risk becoming one of their victims. But there are ways to protect your purchases, including:

Have your packages delivered to a secure location – Many retailers allow you to opt for in-store pickup when you order online. You also can have packages sent to a UPS store or U.S. Postal Service (USPS) office, designated brick-and-mortar retailers, or to an Amazon Locker facility. Your apartment complex's leasing office also might accept packages.

Sign up for delivery alerts – Some retailers will send you an email or text when your package is dropped off, and most delivery services have apps that allow you to track packages. That way, you can make sure you are home to receive the package or you can ask a neighbor to collect it for you.

Install a security camera – A front-door camera alone might discourage



BAD GIFT – The holiday season brings more packages being left near the front doors of the homes of online shoppers. They can become a prize for porch pirates. *Image: C5Media. Adobe Stock.*

package pirates. Even if it doesn't, it will record the theft and give you evidence to bolster any claim you make.

Place a lockbox at your doorstep – This large container can be bolted to your property. After placing a package inside, a delivery person can secure it

with a combination lock. If a package is stolen, you have a few avenues for resolution, including:

Contact the retailer who sold you the item – Many sellers will provide a replacement or refund if you call customer service and explain what

Of course, thieves who steal packages from homes operate year-round, but they're particularly active during the holidays.

happened.

File a claim with the delivery service – If the retailer doesn't respond or attempt to resolve the issue, you can reach out to the outfit that delivered the package. FedEx, UPS, DHL and the USPS allow you to submit a claim for lost, damaged or delayed packages.

Call your credit-card company – Most credit cards provide purchase protection, which reimburses you for items that are damaged or stolen, as long as you paid for the item entirely on the card and file the claim within a certain number of days of the purchase. Some high-value items aren't covered, though, and some credit-card companies require you to file a police report or insurance claim first.

Talk to your insurance agent – A package stolen from your porch was on your property, so it is covered by your homeowners or rental insurance. However, your deductible applies if you file a claim, as do any limits on certain items.

Busy shopping centers up parking risks

Holiday season should keep motorists on extra alert

The day following Thanksgiving – better known as Black Friday – kicks off the holiday-shopping season. It's a time when millions of shoppers, eager to find deals, wait in line or camp outside a store to get first crack at discounted merchandise.

Shoppers should anticipate busier roads and parking lots, and plenty of pedestrians. AAA recommends drivers take precautions and exhibit patience and courtesy by safely sharing parking lots.

Attention to safety keeps others from harm's way and avoids putting a damper on the holiday season. Few things ruin a moment worse than a car accident. The sound is debilitating and the outcome could be costly. Safety always should be a priority.

AAA offers these tips on how to approach shopping-center parking during the holiday season:

Drive slowly inside parking lots and garages – Scoring that great deal isn't worth the risks of speeding to find a space.

Stay off your mobile device and always watch for pedestrians and other vehicles – Remember, they might not be paying attention to their surroundings.

Back out slowly from your space, especially if you're near large



SHOP CLASS – Drivers and pedestrians should be on alert for vehicles, shoppers and buggies when visiting shopping centers during the holiday season. *Image: Africa Studios. Adobe Stock.*

vehicles – Pause once you can see beyond the vehicles parked next to you. This allows passing drivers to see your car.

Back into your parking space – This allows you to pull out of the spot with better visibility.

Learn to play the outfield –

Outlying areas have more spaces, lighter traffic and less risk of collision. Parking a greater distance from the store should lessen the risk of collision, and you'll likely deal with less pressure from impatient shoppers who are searching to find the "perfect" spot.

Shoppers should anticipate busier roads and parking lots, and plenty of pedestrians. AAA recommends drivers take precautions and exhibit patience and courtesy by safely sharing parking lots.

See and be seen – Use your headlights when searching for a spot, even during the daytime. The light will let other cars see you approaching around turns and can make fitting into a tight spot easier.

Don't trap yourself – Avoid parking between a pair of tall SUVs or minivans, where it might be difficult to back out of the space. Seek help from a passenger if you can't see well enough to exit the spot safely.

Keep an eye out for pedestrians and small children – Kids can be difficult to see in busy parking lots and often make quick, unpredictable movements. Hold their hands when walking to and from the car to keep them safe from traffic.

Always wear your seatbelt – Injuries can occur, even at slow speeds. Make sure all passengers are buckled up while the car is moving.

Shop 'til you drop but pay attention to your driving. Don't put a damper on the jolliest time of the year.

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Claire, UPMC Children's patient with cancer

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Every child deserves a healthy future.
Give today.



givetochildrens.org/aaa



THANK YOU TO AAA EAST CENTRAL for making this message possible.

Tips From a AAA Travel Advisor: Autumn Long

Costa Rica stands out among destinations

Resorts, beaches, sights make Caribbean location a winner

After working for US Airways, TSA and Southwest, I was looking for a career change after the pandemic. Travel is my passion, so I accepted a position as a AAA Travel Advisor. What is my favorite destination? The three I's: Ireland, Ireland, Ireland.



AAA Travel Advisor:
Autumn Long

But the most popular vacations I book daily are trips to popular warm destinations like Mexico, the Caribbean and Costa Rica!

This September, I was happy to return to Costa Rica with a coach full of travel professionals to do hotel site inspections. Seeing so many properties first-hand provided invaluable insights when recommending properties to our members.

We flew into Liberia airport and stayed at the Secrets Papagayo Resort – a stunning all-inclusive property with lush gardens on the gulf. The resort is large and hilly with a black-sand beach. It's a great getaway for clients who want an adult-only resort. It's a large spread-out property, not suitable if you have mobility issues. We also toured the nearby



BEACH BUM – Palm trees, nicely manicured landscaping and a pristine beach hug the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea in Costa Rica. *Image: Autumn Long. AAA*

Planet Hollywood, which is an all-ages getaway with a party atmosphere.

Further north, we toured Dreams Las Mareas in popular Guanacaste near the tropical rainforest. Dreams caters to couples and families. Rooms are decorated with natural-wood tones to complement the natural landscape. It was easy to get around and the property had a white-sand beach.

My favorite resort experience was watching the loveable monkeys swinging

high in the Guanacaste trees. Nearby activities included whitewater rafting and hiking in the rainforest. Also in Guanacaste is the Westin Reserve Conchal, a golf and tennis resort with a lagoon-style pool. It's a quieter resort and they provide golf carts. The only downside to me was the vendors on the beach, but the shoppers liked it! Next door is the upscale W Hotel Reserva Conchal, with its unique rooms including the stunning Sunset Treehouse Room, with views of

the mangrove forest from your private balcony!

What was my favorite and most unexpected experience? Tamarindo. We toured the Tamarindo Diria –one of the most iconic beach resorts. This charming resort is on Costa Rica's most famous beach, so you can enjoy 1.8 miles of white sand just a few steps from your room.

My choice for romance, celebrations and honeymoons is the Casa Chameleon at Las Catalinas. The rooms are spacious with plunge pools and the food is out of this world. They also have a wine cellar.

We toured the Mistico Hanging Bridges and did a Jungle cruise, but my sightseeing highlight was seeing Arenal Volcano and the Hot Springs. Arenal Springs Resort and Spa is an active resort with an animal sanctuary, rock-climbing wall, and river for rafting and tubing, along with the hot springs. My overall favorite hot-spring experience was at the Tabacon Thermal Resort and Spa. The hotel was separate from the spring down the road. The property was huge with dozens of pools.

My tips for your trip are to bring B.D.P – Bug Spray, Dramamine and Patience. The road infrastructure is winding and some are gravel and rough. It takes longer than expected to get where you are going. And do a guided tour, so your guide can navigate the roads and point out the animals along the way!

Holiday Office closings:

Thanksgiving Holiday
CLOSED

**Thursday, November 23 and
Friday, November 24**
(all offices will resume
normal operating hours
Saturday, November 25)

Christmas Holiday
CLOSED

Monday, December 25
(all Branch offices will reopen
Tuesday, December 26)

New Year's Holiday
CLOSED

Monday, January 1
(all Branch offices will reopen
Tuesday, January 2)

Winter chill can put battery in a bind

AAA replacements reliable, ease your concerns

It shouldn't be assumed the 2023 winter season will be **an improvement from** last season's. It's likely snow and colder temperatures could be on the horizon. Frigid windchills and icy conditions add to the wear and tear on vehicles, particularly batteries.

It's an ideal time to have your car's battery tested to be assured it's ready for the upcoming winter season. Batteries are delicate and could lose charge with the first wave of chilly conditions. Cold and damp weather can take a toll on an electrical system overburdened by defrosts, windshield wipers and lights. It's never too early to be prepared.

Lead-acid batteries' lifespans depend on a variety of factors, but only 30% of new ones will last three years. Batteries must work under temperature extremes and withstand constant shocks and vibrations.

It might seem as if batteries that are used less often should have better lifespans, but that isn't always the case. Batteries could drain more quickly if the car is driven 20 minutes or fewer, causing the battery never to fully charge. Batteries that are deeply discharged or rest idly for long periods of time are more vulnerable to sulfation, a buildup of lead-sulphate crystals, the primary cause of premature-battery failure.

New cars require a steady flow of



HOLDS A CHARGE – AAA batteries have 36-month, free-replacement nationwide warranties. *Image: AAA.*

electricity to control multiple onboard computers and powertrain features, such as stop-start technology, heated seats, wireless hotspots and video displays that keep the vehicle running smoothly. Reduced hours of daylight result in more use of headlights and heating – all of which take tolls on the battery's power reserve.

The battery should be replaced to help prevent a future roadside

emergency if you notice a dimming of interior lights or a clicking noise when turning over the transmission. Have a trained technician clean the battery cables and check that the electrical system is charging correctly.

AAA Battery Service offers fast, accurate and convenient mobile-battery testing and replacement. State-of-the-art diagnostic equipment will confirm whether the battery will hold a charge,

or if the problem lies deeper in the electrical system.

This service is included in your AAA membership. If necessary, and with your approval, a new, high-quality AAA battery will be installed immediately and onsite.

AAA Battery Service vehicles carry batteries compatible with 90% of all cars, SUVs and light trucks. And each AAA-branded battery is covered by an unprecedented nationwide 36-month, free-replacement warranty.

Our Instant Quote battery-price calculator on AAA.com will provide you member and nonmember pricing for your vehicle's battery, reflecting your exclusive AAA discount. Every battery AAA replaces – more than 2 million since 2021 – is safely recycled to protect the environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If your battery is failing you, give yourself the added peace of mind by calling the AAA Battery Service for a no-cost evaluation. AAA Battery Service is available from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. 7-days a week. To verify AAA Battery Service availability in your area, call our toll-free number: 1-800-222-4357.

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Alaska's unrivaled allure

continued from page 1

on the Denali Natural History Tour and stare in awe at Denali – the highest peak in North America, rising 20,310 feet.

Witness the Chena River by boat, stop by Talkeetna – considered one of Alaska's "funkiest" small towns – to visit a main street inundated with roadhouse restaurants, cafes, brew pubs and shops.

Visit the acclaimed Anchorage Museum before taking a brief tour of Alaska's capital city. See the Chugach Mountains. Discover Seward – one of the state's oldest communities – or hike a trail that approaches a glacier. You can hear the ice crackling.

These places barely scratch the surface of Alaska's dense personality. It's one so deep, it cuts into the core of the earth.

Alyeska offers a rich variety of marine species. Stroll through the forest and along mountain trails abloom with wildflowers in Girdwood and enjoy water views of the Turnagain Arm and Cook Inlet. Dig deeper into the 49th state's history and heritage in Fairbanks.

Alaska's story is a chapter-filled masterpiece. Each one enlightens your curiosities and leaves you yearning to absorb its mystical traits.

That's why cruising it by sea is considered just as satisfying as trekking it by land. Seven nights on *Radiance of the Seas* will enhance Alaska's mysteries from different perspectives.

Your cruise embarks from Vancouver or Seward, depending on your itinerary. *Radiance of the Seas* is a floating resort that boasts myriad activities. Gaze at glaciers while unwinding in one the Solarium's whirlpools. Entertain yourself in its Casino Royale, see a Broadway show or visit a nightclub.

Enjoy first-class dishes from its main



Main Image: dbvirago. Adobe Stock. | Secondary Image: Image: Southwest Adventure Tours.

dining rooms or signature restaurants. Take advantage of their eclectic menus that are sure to satisfy your tastebuds.

Sail to Alaskan destinations that will enhance your trip. See cities and small towns, glaciers and waterways, including Inside Passage. It stretches more than 500 miles from Puget Sound into the Gulf of Alaska. Shaped by glaciers, the landscapes are comprised of mountains, crisp blue icebergs, deep fjords and more than 1,000 islands.

Few cruise ships visit Sitka, but it's a stop well worth taking. The picturesque town has a rich-Russian heritage and a host of historical attractions.

Ketchikan is labeled the "Salmon Capital of the World". Culture-hungry cruisers can witness the largest collection of standing totem poles globally.

See humpback whales off the coast during the summer.

Mountains coated with vibrant green landscapes surround Juneau. It's home to the Alaska State Museum. Hike up Mount Roberts for panoramic views across the city or hop on the Mount Roberts Tramway and ride to its apex.

Witness Hubbard Glacier – the largest tidewater glacier in North America. It calves throughout the summer and towers over passing cruise ships.

Miners once flocked to Skagway. Its historic district hosts 100 buildings from the gold-rush era, making it a fascinating stop.

Ice Strait Point is a tourist destination just outside the small village of Hoonah on Chichagof Island – home to the largest bear population in the world. Watch

Scan QR code for details about the trip or visit [web address].

When: [date] to [date]

Cost: \$ [amount]

Member Discount*: [percentage]

Airport: Pittsburgh

*Discount per person double [amount] and only applicable to air-inclusive rate.

for whales and other wildlife. Take a vehicle expedition, brave the world's largest ziprider or just absorb the surroundings.

Haines, meanwhile, is simply breathtaking. The sun peeks above beautiful mountains that rest above thick forests. Kayak in its calm lakes, spot the American Bald Eagle, as well as other species, fish or visit its art galleries.

Alaska moves our minds in ways we didn't believe were possible. It nearly sits on top of the world, reminding us that it has few peers and even fewer blemishes.

Visit [web address] to learn more about these trips.

AAA to provide roadside services through Apple Members can receive assistance via satellite on iPhone 15, 14

Users of the newly announced Apple iPhone 15 and iPhone 14 now can get access to Roadside Assistance via satellite by utilizing AAA services.

AAA is one of North America's largest and most-trusted membership organizations. It responds to more than 30 million calls for roadside assistance annually and serves more than 63 million members. By working with Apple, AAA will be able to reach people who may otherwise be unable to receive help.

"Safety is at the core of who AAA is as an organization, and we're taking that commitment to the next level by offering AAA services to iPhone users who would have previously been unreachable," said Marshall Doney, president and CEO, AAA. "Now, thanks to iPhone's satellite capabilities, iPhone users with Roadside Assistance via satellite can get help when they need it most but can't reach us via traditional connections."

iPhone users who request roadside assistance can be connected via satellite with AAA after answering a few questions to capture important details. Users will receive clear guidance on how to stay connected to a satellite. It will allow them to message with a AAA agent and receive important information about the status of their request.



APPLE SKY – AAA Members soon will have access to roadside assistance via satellite through iPhone 15 and iPhone 14 phones. This will better assist members broken down in areas that don't have connectivity. Image: Joshua Resnick. Adobe Stock.

"We know firsthand how stressful it is to be stranded with a breakdown, especially if you find yourself in a remote location or without cell service," said Doney. "Your options are limited – walk to a service point or area with cellular connectivity or Wi-Fi, which can be

miles away, or attempt to flag another motorist down. Apple's satellite infrastructure is an innovative solution that is already providing critical emergency support to iPhone users, and AAA is proud to offer Roadside Assistance via satellite in partnership with Apple."

"Safety is at the core of who AAA is as an organization, and we're taking that commitment to the next level by offering AAA services to iPhone users who would have previously been unreachable. Now, thanks to iPhone's satellite capabilities, iPhone users with Roadside Assistance via satellite can get help when they need it most but can't reach us via traditional connections."

Marshall Doney,
AAA president and CEO

Roadside Assistance via satellite will be available on all iPhone 15 and iPhone 14 users in the U.S., regardless of whether they are a AAA Member. Once the questionnaire is received, AAA Members will be verified and service will be provided. Nonmembers will be responsible for payment upon completion of the service.

Roadside Assistance via satellite is built on the groundbreaking technology that powers Emergency SOS by satellite, launched by Apple in 2022. It allows iPhone 14 and iPhone 15 users to access emergency services via satellite when cellular coverage or Wi-Fi is unavailable.



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Separate purchase of AAA membership is generally required to obtain and renew AAA insurance. AAA insurance is a collection of AAA branded products, services and programs available to qualified AAA Members. AAA personal lines insurance is provided by Auto Club Indemnity Company (the Indemnity). AAA East Central Insurance Agency, Inc. is a resident producer agency for the Indemnity. Copyright © 2023 AAA East Central. All Rights Reserved.

Past comes to life in Newfoundland

Island offers beautiful sights, tales of a mythical past

Known as “The Rock” and synonymous with Vikings, Newfoundland is a land hard to ignore.

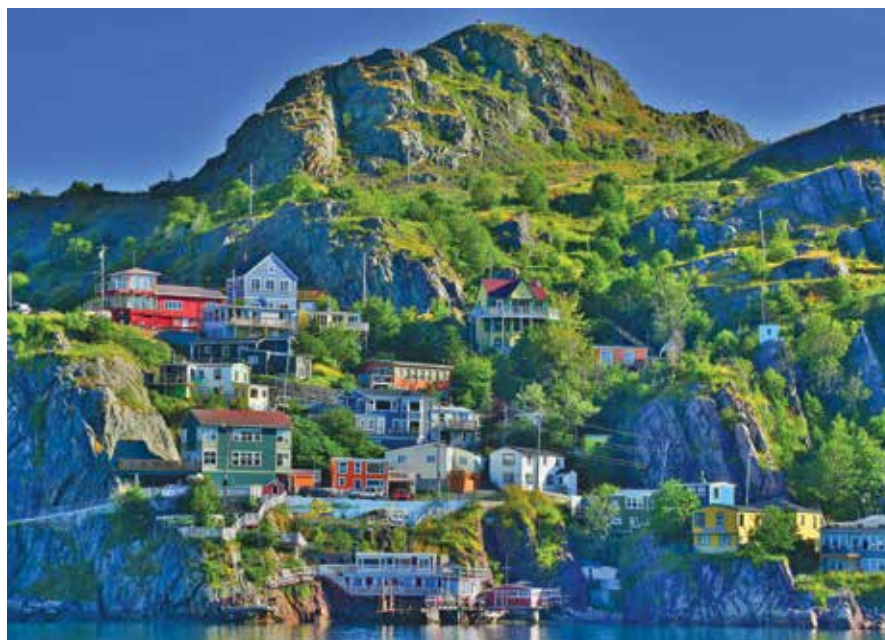
The island is an independent nation off the east coast of Quebec. Deep history meshes with unique architecture and natural beauty. Stories abound and legends grow.

Newfoundland’s west coast served as a landing spot for Vikings. It also is home to continent-sized tectonic plates that ring like Thor’s hammer, jostling for position beneath the earth’s surface.

Gros Morne National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the western base of the Northern Peninsula. It’s one of a handful of places worldwide where the earth’s mantle – normally, 20 miles beneath the crust – is visibly exposed. Glaciers, retreating from the ice age, have carved a hanging valley, flat-topped mountains and deep fjords.

L’Anse-aux-Meadows sits on the northern-most tip of the western peninsula. The only authentic Norse site in North America, it’s where Vikings tried to colonize the northeastern shore of North America during the first millennium.

A museum houses artifacts and Viking sod houses have been reconstructed on the site. Costumed



COLORFUL PERSONALITY – Sunlight brightens the striking houses and green hillside at The Battery in St. John’s, Newfoundland. *Image: Doug Gordon. Adobe Stock.*

interpreters teach visitors how to walk in the footsteps of a Viking, feast on its traditional food and attend a wedding.

Travelers can purchase hand-embroidered parkas or visit the Mukluk Factory to shop for a pair of fur-lined boots in St. Anthony. The larg-

est population of humpback whales globally populate the seas. Tall cliffs offer majestic vantage points for whale-watching and counting drifting icebergs.

Newfoundland’s charming capital, St. John’s, can be found on its east coast. It is North America’s most east-

erly city and it’s where Marconi intercepted the first transatlantic radio signal in 1901 on Signal Hills. Witness the pageantry of red-coated soldiers marching to fife and drums and firing muskets and cannons at Quidi Vidi Battery Historic Site.

Newfoundlanders embrace the Scottish and Irish lilt of their ancestors and are fond of what they refer to as “a time.” Locals have yarns to spin or tunes to strum. Listen to traditional Scots and Irish folk music in pubs on George Street and sample the country’s infamous local rum – Newfoundland Screech.

St. John’s boasts the only public fluvarium – or windows on a stream – in North America. The underwater-viewing station has nine panoramic-viewing windows that give guests an opportunity to witness the secret life of a river and fish native to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Bonavista Peninsula and the picturesque town of Trinity can be found by traveling north along the Atlantic Coast. The historic town dates to 1580 and served as the site of North America’s first court in 1615. Enjoy crab, lobster and freshly caught fish in the village of Killick-Claw, depending on the season.

Newfoundland is a place where the past comes to life and it never gets old.

Peak experience awaits at Canadian Rockies

Parks, mountains, lakes and more offer walk on wild side

There aren’t enough adjectives to describe the beauty of the Canadian Rockies. Magnificent, splendid and glorious may quickly come to mind, but they barely scratch the surface.

Words paint a picture in our minds, but nothing tells a true story better than witnessing it with our own eyes. Natural wonders have been spurring our senses from the beginning of time.

Snow-covered mountains, winding canyons and fascinating rock formations are among the many treasures waiting to be discovered. Meadows carpeted with wildflowers and supernatural glacial lakes put a bow on this gift of travel.

Banff National Park is 80 miles west of Calgary. Its spectacular views have lured Hollywood icons and British Royalty, but the brightest stars are the local elk who wander the streets. Gushing Bow Falls sits adjacently to the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel. Inspired by a Scottish castle, it took an army of stone-carvers and masons nearly two decades to complete.

The Banff Gondola sends passengers on an eight-minute ride to the summit of Sulphur Mountain. Marvel at 360-degree views of Banff, the Bow Valley and six scenic mountain ranges



MASTERPIECE – The Canadian Rockies reflect off Moraine Lake in western Canada. *Image: Horticulture. Adobe Stock.*

that ascend 7,486 feet above sea level.

Snow-clad snow domes and Victoria Glacier surround Lake Louise, 36 miles west of Banff. The water’s mysterious blue-green color is the result of fine, glacial “rock flour” particles suspended in the water.

Moraine Lake sits 10 minutes from Lake Louise. The invaluable location once graced the Canadian \$20 bill.

Loft peaks, including the third-highest mountain in the Rockies, from this crystalline waterway.

Appreciate stunning scenery while traveling Bow Valley Parkway. The 35-mile excursion should include a stop at Johnson Canyon. Seven waterfalls are hidden inside secluded rock walls and accessible by a walking trail. Bighorn sheep and mountain goats

frequent the limestone cliffs near Upper Falls. Cross the Continental Divide into Yoho National Park to visit Takakkaw Falls – a cascade higher than Niagara Falls.

Icefields Parkway – called “20 Switzerlands in one” – links Lake Louise to Jasper. The 143-mile parkway offers a constant changing of the mountains, waterfalls, icefields and more than 600 glaciers – the most among other roads on the continent.

Columbia Icefield feeds six major glaciers. That is where you can board an Ice Explorer – an all-terrain vehicle with tires five feet in diameter – for a trek across the Rockies’ biggest icefield and the Athabasca Glacier. The four-mile-long tongue of the ice is the greatest ice mass outside the Arctic Circle.

Witness spectacular scenery, including the Athabasca Falls, on the road to Jasper. Canada’s largest mountain park is home to Mount Robson, the tallest peak in the Canadian Rockies. Considered the backbone of the world, it allows visitors to make a thrilling ascent up Whistler Mountain aboard the Jasper Aerial Tramway.

Regality rarely comes easy, but a visit to the Canadian Rockies is a trip meant for a king and queen.

Get Ready for Winter

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Holidays don't mix with drinking and driving

Intoxicated drivers are 40 times more likely to get in crash

Having a drink with friends and family to celebrate the holiday season is a commonality among many Americans. Raise a glass and toast to good times and more to come.

'Tis the season to being more responsible – especially behind the wheel.

Alcohol-related car fatalities spike during the final six weeks of the year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that drunk-driving crashes nearly triple from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day.

Drunk drivers comprise approximately one-third of all motor-vehicle deaths. On average, alcohol-related car deaths occur every 45 minutes. The numbers are disheartening, but what makes it more tragic is that these deaths and injuries are preventable. It requires drivers to make responsible decisions for it to become reality.

"A DUI conviction can weigh heavily on your pocketbook," said Theresa Podguski, AAA East Central director of legislative affairs. "But getting in your car after a night of drinking could cost you more than just money. It can result in lives lost."

A driver's blood-alcohol content (BAC) depends on many factors. How much and how quickly did a person drink? What is the person's body



DON'T MIX – Drinking and driving is a recipe for disaster. It's wise to pass the keys if you've had too much to drink. *Image: Brian Jackson. Adobe Stock.*

weight and gender? Research indicates that alcohol's effect on females tends to be stronger and last longer than it does on males.

The risk of getting into a car crash rapidly increases after a BAC of .05 – one or two drinks. A person with a .08 BAC – the legal limit in all 50 states – is

40 times more likely to be killed in a crash than a sober driver.

Drivers who feel they have had too much to drink should call a friend, a rideshare or cab service. Simply put, don't drive. Never ride in a vehicle that is being driven by a person who is drunk. Time is the only cure for

"A DUI conviction can weigh heavily on your pocketbook. But getting in your car after a night of drinking could cost you more than just money. It can result in lives lost."

Theresa Podguski,
AAA East Central director
of legislative affairs.

intoxication. Coffee and cold showers are myths.

Those hosting parties should make certain guests leave with sober drivers. Take a person's keys if they seem to have had too much to drink. Safety never should be taken for granted, even if the person being protected is unruly and doesn't want to stay.

AAA works year-round in educating motorists about driving practices that will help keep them safe and reduce drug- and alcohol-related crashes. Together, we can make everyone safer and keep alcohol- and drug-impaired drivers off the road.

Common sense saves lives, lessens injuries and/or avoids a lifetime of regret.

'Tis the season, indeed.

Sun always shining on Mexico hotspot

Cancun blessed with flawless beaches and attractions

It's a city synonymous with vacationing. It might as well come with the label "resort town."

This is Cancun – a Mexican town best described as a beach with an island in the center. Once a place where Mayan emperors visited for rest and relaxation, it now is a destination where millions of travelers visit annually in search of the same results.

The cosmopolitan-resort town is perched on the limestone shelf of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and is one of the most popular vacation spots in the world. Cancun breathes life into those eager to escape their daily grinds. Blue skies mesh with puffy clouds and a radiant sun to create the perfect get-away cocktail.

Luxury hotels populate the Hotel Zone, a seahorse-shaped oasis connected by a pair of causeways and flanked by the tranquil Nichupte Lagoon and the restless Caribbean Sea. People-watchers stroll the palm-fringed promenade that hugs the pure shoreline.

Cancun boasts 12 miles of beach that snuggle with turquoise waters and white sand. All are open to the public and make for a perfect walk. Guests can hike along the northern shore by the calming waters of Bahia de Mujeres or follow the Caribbean Sea on the eastern shore. Sand shares the appearance of talcum powder and doesn't



YES YOU CAN – Luxurious resorts line the coast, waiting to entertain guests in Cancun. *Image: jdross75. Adobe Stock.*

burn feet thanks to its limestone composition that doesn't absorb heat.

Cancun established its reputation as a resort town on the shoulders of Playa Ballenas, a magnificent white-sand beach. Boogie-boarders flock to Las Perlas, and Playa Tortugas is a popular public beach and a departure point to sleepy Isla Mujeres of Island

of Women.

One of the most idyllic spots in the Caribbean, Cancun is home to a turtle sanctuary, the remains of a notorious pirate's lair and the Cave of the Sleeping Sharks. Vicious Tiger sharks lay motionless 65-feet below the surface, a phenomenon caused by the cave's oxygen-rich water, which serves

as a narcotic on the soporific sharks.

Schools of dazzling blue neons hover around Cancun's clear waters among the rocks and piers. The otherworldly Underwater Museum features more than 500 life-sized figures in two locations.

Bargain for authentic Mexican handicrafts, silver and Maya-inspired art and designer clothing. Most open-air markets are located in El Centro, the downtown area. Mercados on Tulum Avenue is an ideal place to hone your bargaining skills.

Cancun's nightlife ranks among the best in the Caribbean. Visit a **multitude nightclubs**, pubs and other establishments. See a show; perhaps Cirque du Soleil-style acrobats, celebrity impersonators or costumed dancers. The options seem endless.

Step away from the hustle and bustle and visit nearby Mayan archeological sites, including El Ray that is located not far from the resort area. Chichen-Itza is about 120 miles southwest of the city and covers six-square miles. It's dominated by the Kulkulkan step pyramid, which functions as a giant solar calendar. During equinox, sunlight sends an image of a serpent undulating down the temple walls.

Beaches, resorts and good times are associated with Cancun. It's a trifecta that never disappoints.

Ice dams can cause serious issues

AAA breaks down what they are, how they damage homes

Ice dams hanging from the roof might make a perfect setting for a painting – a winter wonderland, no doubt. But what if they are ice dams? Well, that's another story.

Ice dams form when warm air from inside your home melts snow on your roof. It refreezes at the eaves, creating a dam. As melting and freezing continue, water pools behind the dam and could eventually leak into your home, resulting in costly water damage.

Ice dams are a battle you don't want to fight. Protect your roof and your wallet by taking the necessary steps to prevent ice dams from forming.

Ice dams are a headache for homeowners. They look unsightly and can cause serious damage to your roof and house structure. Without proper insulation, warm air from inside the house leaks into the attic and melts snow on the roof.

This melted snow refreezes at the colder eaves – creating an ice dam – which forces its way under the shingles and finds holes in the roof decking. Suddenly, you have water dripping into your attic. You can avoid this nightmare by making sure your house is properly insulated. It could save you trouble and money in the future.

AAA recommends these steps:

- Increase attic ventilation through



WINTER PROBLEM – Ice dams form in a gutter, potentially causing serious damage to the home. *Image: soupstock. Adobe Stock.*

the use of soffit and ridge vents to help circulate air through the attic, ensuring a consistent temperature.

- Examine your insulation to make sure it's not blocking the vents and check its depth.
- Prevent heat from escaping into

your attic by ensuring all attic ducts are sealed and properly insulated, and any exhaust fans lead outdoors, not to the attic.

- Consult a professional if your attic is a living space, you need vents installed or insulation added.

It's important to take steps to prevent ice dams from forming in the first place. One of the best ways is to make sure your attic insulation is adequate and properly installed.

Keeping the bottom couple of feet of roof and gutters clear of snow can help minimize ice dam formation, but it's not a foolproof solution. If you do find yourself with major ice dams, do not attempt to remove them yourself or get up on your roof. Instead, call for a professional with experience in removing ice dams safely and effectively – just be sure to ask about their methods first, as chipping or sawing away at the ice can cause damage to shingles. Prevention is key when it comes to avoiding costly repairs down the line.

Don't let ice dams lead to winter blues. If you notice water damage or leaks coming into your home, acting quickly is key. Contact your insurance provider as soon as possible and review your plan's coverage for ice dam damage. While many policies have this protection, there could be exclusions, so it's important to double-check. With a little bit of research, you can keep winter worries at bay. Visit the U.S. Department of Energy for more information about how much insulation you need.

'A Christmas Story House & Museum' raises spirits

Setting of the classic film brings to life Ralphie and his family

The cult-hit film "A Christmas Story" holds a special place in the hearts of millions of fans who eagerly await Christmas Eve to watch their favorite holiday movie.

The tradition dates nearly three decades and it grows each year. Unforgettable characters and storylines make it one of the best holiday movies of all-time.

Ralphie is determined to get a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas – even if he'll "shoot his eye out." The Old Man curses "the way other artists might work in oils or clay." And poor Randy is bundled up so tightly for school that he can't put down his arms.

It truly is an original. It's unknown the last time Mother Parker had eaten a warm meal. The Old Man comes to life once his "major award" arrives. And Scut Farkus – "what a rotten name" – is a villain unlike any other, staring devilishly with his "yellow eyes."

The hidden gem, however, is the Parker home. The coal-dust-spewing domicile is intimate and old-fashioned. Spigots are built into the walls of the kitchen sink. The radio plays "Little Orphan Annie" and the family makes fond memories inside this



STORY TIME – Fans can visit the house from the classic holiday hit "A Christmas Story" in Cleveland. *Image: A Christmas Story House & Museum.*

humble house.

Fans can learn more about the home by visiting it. The "A Christmas Story House & Museum" is located in Cleveland and is open year-round, seven days a week for public tours and overnight stays are an option.

The Bumpus House, too, is open for overnight stays. Located to the left of the A Christmas Story House, it's the fictional home of Ralphie's unruly neighbors and their 785 smelly hound dogs. It has a pair of accommodations: The "Hound Dog

Haven" that can accommodate four guests and the "Stolen Turkey" suite that can house as many six guests.

The museum features original props, costumes and memorabilia from the film, as well as hundreds of rare behind-the-scenes photos. Among the props and costumes are the toys from the Higbee's window, Randy's snowsuit, the chalkboard in Miss Shields' classroom and the family car.

And don't forget about the "major award." The legendary leg lamp sits in the front window, illuminating "electric..."

Purchase mementos at the museum gift shop. Take home your electric leg lamp or Ralphie's bunny suit. Figurines, decoder pins and replicas of the Parker tree star also are available – and so is the Red Ryder BB gun.

A visit is a step back in time – to a simpler place. It offers fans an up-close viewing and an opportunity to learn more about the film. It also should inject a burst of holiday spirit – no matter the time of the year.

Spend a long weekend or just make a day of it. "A Christmas Story House & Museum" is well worth the trip.

And don't forget: Never put your tongue on a flag pole during the winter months.

Popularity of EVs growing in number of areas

AAA finds travelers are renting them on vacation for test drives

Consumer interest in electric vehicles has skyrocketed during the past decade. EV purchases totaled 96,000 in 2013 and are expected to reach 1 million by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, travelers are beginning to take notice and some are "taking one for a spin" while on vacation, thanks to them being available as rental cars. AAA's rental-car partner, Hertz, has been investing heavily in EVs for its fleet with purchases from Tesla, Polestar and GM.

The company has tens of thousands of EVs for rent at more than 1,600 locations in 44 states. Hertz is focusing on providing nearly 2 million EV rentals by the end of this year – about five times the number of EV rentals it had in 2022.

Record-breaking fuel prices have inspired consumers to purchase EVs. Sales increased by more than 65% from 2021 to 2022. Drivers regularly say cost, range anxiety and availability of charging stations are among their prime concerns as to why they are skeptical to purchase an EV.

A recent survey by Verra Mobility found that 78% of Americans would consider renting an EV to become more familiar with the car before making a purchase.



PLUG IT IN – Hertz plans to have 2 million electric vehicles available to customers by the end of this year. *Image: AAA.*

A AAA survey from 2020 found that driving an EV alleviated concerns and of the those surveyed, 77% said they were less or no longer concerned about range after buying and EV; and 96% said they would buy or lease another EV the next time they were in the market for a new car.

Many of those who remain uncertain or are considering buying an EV have been renting them to "kick the tires." It may be test-driving one for

the weekend in town or planning ahead and requesting one for a trip.

What first-time EV drivers should consider:

Understand the driving range – The rental-car agent should explain to you how far you can expect to go on a full charge and how that changes depending on how many passengers you have and how much luggage and gear you are packing. It's important for drivers to pay close

attention to the charge they have and to know how far they need to travel to recharge the vehicle.

Finding and booking a charging spot – Charging an EV is different than filling up a traditional vehicle. Researching charging locations and how to pay to charge a vehicle are important steps before renting an EV. Some states and regions have more charging opportunities than others.

Road trips take more planning – Planning is essential if you are renting an EV for a road trip at your destination. Charging stations normally are along the busiest routes. There are fewer charging options in rural areas. Make sure there are ample charging stations available if you are traveling to a remote location.

Understand the technology – EVs are different from internal-combustion engines. The gauges will look different and the onboard electronics may seem unfamiliar to anyone who is new to EVs. Most EVs also comes with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) like lane-departure warnings, blind-spot warnings, automatic-emergency braking and adaptive-cruise control. Acceleration and braking also are different. Knowing what the car can and cannot do are important before hitting the road.

