

## America's Byways® Fun Facts

- Alaska's Glenn Highway boasts the largest collection of glaciers of any US National Park, in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.
- Kodiak, Alaska on the Alaska Marine Highway was the first capital of Russian America, established in 1792.
- The Baranov Museum Building, a National Historic Landmark in Kodiak on the Alaska Marine Highway, is the oldest of only 4 Russian structures remaining in the U.S. Built in 1808, it is the oldest building in Alaska.
- Alaska is the only state which has three bear species: brown (which includes grizzlies), black and polar. Admiralty Island, reached by the Alaska Marine Highway, is said to have the densest bear population on Earth at almost one per square mile.
- Experience a little bit of Scandinavia while visiting Petersburg on the Alaska Marine Highway. Celebrate Norwegian Independence Day and admire the Norwegian tole-painting on the buildings.
- Enter the Ring of Fire on Alaska's Marine Highway where you can explore 81 of America's 86 volcanoes.
- Which byway is the least-traveled federal highway in the U.S? No doubt due to its numerous and incredible switchbacks, the Coronado Trail Scenic Byway in Arizona holds that distinction. An old cowboy once scoffed when he heard of the plans to build the road: "There ain't even a good horse trail." Oddly enough for a highway so little used, the Coronado Trail was America's first federal-aid highway. It was completed in 1926.
- Want to ski in the South? Come to Mt. Lemmon Ski Valley on the Sky Island Scenic Byway in Arizona, the southernmost downhill ski resort in the U.S.
- Drive from desert to mountaintop along the Sky Island Scenic Byway in Arizona, and in just 27 miles you will pass through biological diversity equivalent to a drive from Mexico to Canada.
- Southern California doesn't take a back seat to San Francisco in Victorian-era architecture. Step back in time at Heritage Square on the Arroyo Seco Parkway in Los Angeles, where all the houses have been restored to their original Victorian architecture.
- From Dante's View on the Death Valley Scenic Byway in California you can see both the lowest and the highest point of the desert, a difference of over 11,000 feet.

- For several days each year Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway in California is quite a “hopping” place. Mark Twain made this area famous with his 1865 tale, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” This contest draws tens of thousands of spectators and over two thousand “frog jockeys” to “Frogtown” each May for the annual “Calaveras County Fair and Jumping Frog Jubilee.”
- In 1862, a small herd of camels raised quite a stir when they were herded through Calaveras, Big Trees, Hermit Valley and over Ebbetts Pass to Nevada. The camels' owner, Julium Bandmann, wished to use them as pack animals in silver mining. However, the temperamental camels proved difficult to handle, and he abandoned the venture.
- Stand in awe among some of the oldest and largest living things on earth on the Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway in California. Calaveras Big Trees State Park contains the northernmost grove of giant sequoias (sierra redwoods) in the U.S. Some of its trees are over 250 feet tall, as much as 25 feet in diameter and up to 2,000 years old.
- Visit where Colorado’s skiing industry began, at a 1911 winter carnival in Hot Sulphur Springs on the Colorado River Headwaters Byway. An exhibit in the town’s Pioneer Village Museum details the humble beginnings of this multimillion-dollar powerhouse of Colorado’s economy.
- Abraham Lincoln found a resting place in the Rockies at Mount Toll in the Indian Peaks Wilderness of Colorado on the Colorado River Headwaters Byway. To many, this 2,989 feet peak looks like a profile of our 16<sup>th</sup> President’s face, posed as if he were lying down looking up at the clouds.
- Step onto the “Roof of the Rocky Mountains,” 12,110 feet above sea level at Rock Cut on the Trail Ridge Scenic Byway in Colorado.
- At three stories high, the largest “Lazy Susan” jail in the U.S. is on the Loess Hills Scenic Byway -- the Squirrel Cage Jail in Council Bluffs in Iowa. Built in 1885, this unique design allowed the jailer to view all prisoners from one vantage point.
- On the Country Music Highway in Kentucky, you can enjoy country music history, and refuel your vehicle at the same time, at the Country Music Gas Station in Louisa.
- It is estimated that as many as half of all land birds that breed in eastern North America pass through Louisiana twice each year.
- Hikers along the Creole Nature Trail may be glad of the tremendous numbers of birds, for this area of Louisiana also has at least 39 species of mosquitoes.
- Southern Louisiana is one of only a few locations worldwide with the unique formations known as *cheniers*, or wooded sandy ridges. A small section of eastern Texas, and the

plain from Brazil to Venezuela are the only other places in the world where cheniers exist.

- Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge on the Creole Nature Trail has the highest alligator nesting density in the US.
- Pinin' for the fjords? Visit Somes Sound and Harbor on the Acadia Byway in Maine to see the only fjord in the continental U.S. (though geologists now debate the classification and call it a 'fjard' instead.)
- Get the jumbo box of popcorn and enjoy a show at the Fox Theater, the largest surviving motion picture palace in the world, located on Woodward Avenue in Detroit, Michigan.
- Planning a jaunt from the continental U.S. to Canada? You'll need to head *south* – if you're on Woodward Avenue in Detroit, Michigan.
- To view a 53-foot waterfall in the middle of a major city, head to Minnehaha Park and Falls on the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Can't make it to Niagara Falls? Brides and grooms can tie the knot in Niagara Cave's wedding chapel on the Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway in Minnesota.
- Visit the Jolly Green Giant Marker on the Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway in Minnesota and practice your "ho, ho, ho's."
- The Bible was first translated into the Dakota language at the Lac qui Parle Mission on the North Shore Scenic Byway in Minnesota.
- You'll find the only museum dedicated to sandpaper – the 3M/Dwan Museum – in the town of Two Harbors on the North Shore Scenic Byway in Minnesota.
- Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway in Minnesota is the only national byway whose primary theme is a 'tall tale.'
- Come to Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway for a parade and see its 'living mascot,' Paul Bunyan, as well as the 'Babemobile,' a car named after Babe the Blue Ox.
- At the turn of the century, folks in Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway country obtained the first minnow "seining" permit ever issued. "Seining" is how minnows are commercially and privately caught.
- Play cards? The Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway in Minnesota has its own deck. The "3" card features Pequot Lakes' Bobber Water Tower. The Tower is said to be proof of Paul's epic fishing struggle with Notorious Nate, a forty foot northern "so mean that he was expelled from every school of fish in the five-state area."

- You'll not prick your finger on the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway in Minnesota, where the mayor of Manhattan Beach, artisan Frederick Gridley, also known as the Viking warrior Frederick the Bearclawed at Høstfest, tells tall tales and makes world-renowned thimbles.
- The branch of the Holcim Cement Company on the Little Dixie Highway of the Great River Road in Missouri supplied much of the cement for the Panama Canal.
- The world's only permanent circus, an indoor changing sky, and the tallest freestanding structure in the West – where else but on the Las Vegas Strip in Nevada?
- Travelers can retrace the life of the famed outlaw along the Billy the Kid Trail National Scenic Byway in New Mexico.
- Check out one of the nation's best preserved collection of shipwrecks and submerged cultural artifacts at the Underwater Preserves in Lake Champlain and Lake George on the Lakes to Locks Passage in New York.
- McKenzie Pass – Santiam Pass Scenic Byway in Oregon contains an underwater forest. More than 3,000 years ago, a volcanic eruption created a clear lake, which swallowed trees that are still rooted to the ground today. Visitors can go for a boat ride and paddle directly over the submerged trees.
- Locals in Lincoln City on the Pacific Coast Scenic Byway in Oregon are proud to say their area has the shortest river in the world. At 120 feet, this tiny river into the Pacific Ocean matches its tiny name – the D River.
- The only place in the world where you can watch two rivers collide is on the Rogue-Umpqua Scenic Byway in Oregon. These two headstrong rivers are the North Umpqua and the Little River.
- A peach in the sky might make you do a double take, but if you're driving the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Byway in South Carolina, you can relax. It's just the Peachoid – a giant water tower painted to look like a peach (<http://www.gaffney-sc.com/Waterpeach.htm>.)
- Vernal, Utah, a hub for both the Flaming Gorge-Uintas Scenic Byway and the Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway, takes pride that one of their banks was “delivered” through the mail.
- At the turn of the 20th Century, the town of Bramwell on the Coal Heritage Trail in West Virginia boasted more millionaires per capita than any other town in the United States.
- Bramwell on the Coal Heritage Trail is said to have been the first U.S. town to have electric streetlamps. Those original streetlamps still stand today.

- Burning hotter and cleaner than the native English fuel, coal supplied by the Coal Heritage Trail's town of Bramwell helps keep the royal family warm at London's Buckingham Palace even today.
- The Washington Heritage Trail in West Virginia proudly displays George Washington's "bathtub" – a tongue-in-cheek monument to presidential bathing.
- The word of a ghost was good enough to convict a murderer in Greenbrier County on the Midland Trail in West Virginia.

### **Multistate Byways**

- Look for lightning bugs lighting up the night sky in the *Firefly Capital of the World*, otherwise known as Boone, on the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina.
- Watch the swirls of snow defy gravity and fall upwards at Blowing Rock on the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina.
- Search out the mysteries of the Lost Sea, an underground lake located in Sweetwater, Tennessee on the Cherohala Skyway.
- Satisfy your sweet tooth on the Connecticut River Byway in New Hampshire and Vermont. With 111 feet of counter space and three tiers of candy shelves displaying upwards of 700 jars of treats such as licorice, taffy, jawbreakers and mints, Chutters Store in Littleton, New Hampshire, claims to be the largest candy counter in the world – and has a certificate from the Guinness Book of World Records to prove it.
- The Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway in Utah and Colorado is not only popular with Jurassic Park fans, but chicken lovers as well. The "Mike the Headless Chicken Days" festival in Fruita, Colorado celebrates the life of an ill-fated chicken that had its head lopped off, but still lived for several more years.  
([www.miketheheadlesschicken.org](http://www.miketheheadlesschicken.org))
- The Great River Road in Alton, Illinois features a statue of Robert Wadlow, the world's tallest man. Standing at 8'11", he is called the "Alton Giant."
- Ride the shortest and steepest scenic railway in the world on Iowa's Great River Road. First built in 1882, the Fenelon Place Elevator, also known as the Fourth Street Elevator, is 296 long and takes riders just 189 feet up the side of a cliff from Fourth Street to Fenelon Place in the business district of Dubuque.
- Stand aside, San Francisco! With five half curves and two quarter curves over a distance of 275 feet and rising 58.3 feet, stone and brick paved Snake Alley in Burlington, Iowa on the Great River Road is a worthy challenger to Lombard Street's fame as the crookedest street in the U.S.

- The Great River Road in Minnesota can heat up 48 states at the same time at the Fireplace of States in Bemidji. Stones from across America, including portions of the Statue of Liberty and the US Capitol, make up this attraction.
- On the Historic National Road in Illinois, condiment cravers will be awestruck when they see the world's largest bottle of catsup in Collinsville, Illinois. It stands 170 feet tall and has its own fan club ([www.catsupbottle.com](http://www.catsupbottle.com)).
- The B&O Railroad Museum on Maryland's Historic National Road in Baltimore might be one of the few museums you can actually "buy" (if you play Monopoly®.)
- Have your picture taken with two giant arrows at Twin Arrows on the Historic Route 66 in Arizona.
- On what byway was a dead man served a drink? It happened at the long-gone Two Guns Trading Post on the Historic Route 66 in Arizona. Learn this colorful story in Winslow, Arizona.
- The International Selkirk Loop is proud of being the last wild place where no mammal has gone extinct in the last 10,000 years.
- Over 100 different species of trees, including the dogwood and redbud, grow along the Natchez Trace Parkway.
- Along the Ohio River Scenic Byway, travelers can visit the self-proclaimed home of Superman in the town of Metropolis in Illinois, which features a seven-foot tall fiberglass statue of the superhero.
- Fort Ontario along the Seaway Trail in New York was used in the French & Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, WWI, and WWII.
- Fort Ontario along the Seaway Trail in New York was the only refugee center in North America for victims of the Nazi Holocaust.
- The Seaway Trail contains the only U.S. Naval Station ever managed by a woman, Mrs. Albert Metcalf, who managed it from 1906-1915.
- What do the Talimena Scenic Drive in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and the Flaming Gorge-Uintas Scenic Drive in Utah have in common? They both run along or through mountain ranges that go east-west rather than north-south as do nearly all the mountain ranges in the world. These are the ancient Ouachitas in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and the towering Uintas in Utah.
- Don't recoil in horror as you drive the Talimena Scenic Drive in Arkansas and Oklahoma. In spring and fall, the high water table may make iron-rich water seep through the asphalt, causing the byway to "bleed" red water.

- U.S. 491 between Monticello, UT and Gallup, NM (part of the Trail of the Ancients), used to be known as the Devil's Highway. Strange things are said to have happened on this road, once numbered U.S. 666, until the locals got tired of giving the Devil his due and asked for the road to be renumbered.
- Straddle four states at once at the only spot in the U.S. where four states converge – Four Corners National Monument on the Trail of the Ancients. The four states are Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico.
- With over 5,000 archaeological sites recorded (and many more awaiting study), Canyon of the Ancients National Monument near Trail of the Ancients in Colorado has the highest known archaeological site density in the United States. Humans have lived in this area for at least 10,000 years, from the early Basketmakers through today's residents.
- One of the best places to encounter a peculiar river phenomenon called 'sand waves' is on the San Juan River through Trail of the Ancients country in Colorado and Utah. Sand waves surface out of nowhere and may build to as much as 8 feet, making a seemingly flat stretch of water into a wild boating adventure.
- Salute Old Glory while traveling the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway. You'll find the tallest flagpole west of the Mississippi in Dorris, California.
- Share a tall tale with a 22-foot statue of Paul Bunyan and Babe in Westwood, California on the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway.
- Ski in a volcano at the Mt. Shasta Ski Park on the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway in California.
- They say lightning never hits the same spot twice, but the Mt. Thielsen Wilderness on the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway begs to differ. This "lightning rod of the Cascades" attracts bolts of electricity to its peaks.

**America's Byways® are a collection of distinct and diverse roads, designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.**

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