INSIGHT GUIDES

US NATIONAL PARKS WEST



FREE EBOOK AND APP
WITH THIS INSIGHT GUIDE

Stunning photography

In-depth features on history and culture

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Inside front cover National Parks of the American West overview
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LEGEND

Insight on
Photo story

THE BEST OF US NATIONAL PARKS WEST: TOP ATTRACTIONS



△ **Grand Canyon National Park**. The Colorado River and relentless erosion carved the Park's colorful buttes, mesas, and 2 billion-year-old rock formations. See page 159.



△ **Denali National Park**. In a class of its own and home to vast numbers of wildlife including Alaska's grizzly bear, Dall sheep, moose, and caribou. See page 343.

▽ **Olympic National Park**. Walk among towering old-growth trees and lush ferns in one of the world's few temperate rainforests. See page 315.





△ **Carlsbad Caverns National Park**. The fantastically decorated limestone caves are also a haven for 400,000 Brazilian free-tailed bats. See page 222.



▷ **Rocky Mountain National Park**. Famous for a sea of craggy peaks over 12,000ft (3,660 meters), it gives new meaning to the term "breathtaking." See page 299.



△ **Zion Narrows**. Backpack across miles of silent high-country peaks and plateaus at Zion National Park, a nature sanctuary in the heart of southern Utah's pioneer Mormon Country. See page 151.



△ **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park**. Watch lava flowing and new land being created here on the volcanically active Big Island of Hawaii. See page 127.

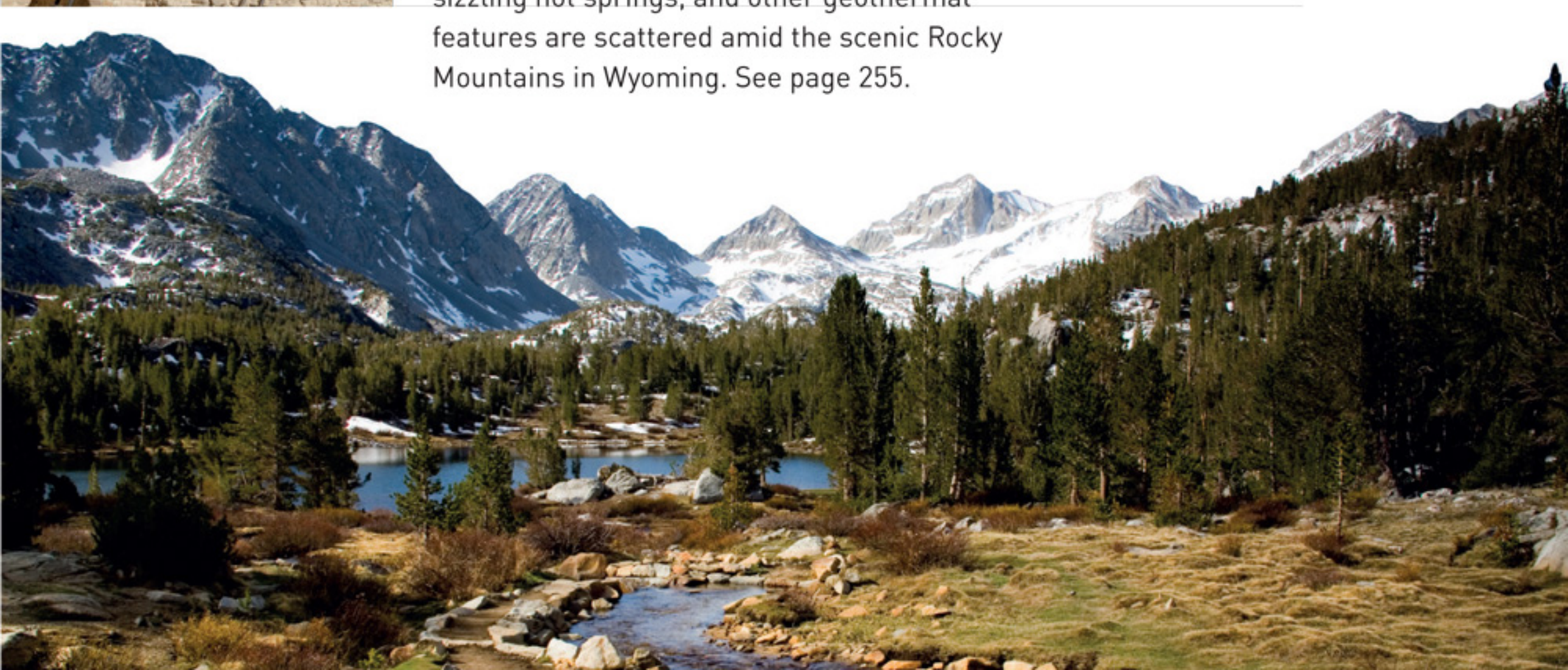


△ **Yosemite National Park**. With its glaciated granite domes, lush river valley and Sierra Nevada high country, it deserves its reputation as California's most beloved national park. See page 73.



◁ **Ancestral Pueblo culture**. This reached its apotheosis in the 13th-century cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado's San Juan Mountains. See page 239.

▽ **Yellowstone National Park**. Spewing geysers, sizzling hot springs, and other geothermal features are scattered amid the scenic Rocky Mountains in Wyoming. See page 255.



THE BEST OF US NATIONAL PARKS WEST: EDITOR'S CHOICE



Crater Lake National Park.

BEST SCENERY

Canyonlands National Park. Breathtaking views of the Colorado and Green river canyons characterize this mesmerizing wilderness park near Moab. See page 187.

Crater Lake National Park. A spectacular seasonal rim drive and fascinating boat tour around America's deepest lake awaits visitors to Oregon's only national park. See page 335.

Arches National Park. An easy drive and trails lead to some of the more than 2,000 sandstone arches clustered in this family-friendly park. See page 197.

Grand Canyon National Park. Explore historic rustic architecture at Grand Canyon's South or North rims. See page 159.

Glacier Bay National Park.



BEST WILDLIFE WATCHING

Katmai National Park. In late summer, large numbers of the park's 2,000 resident brown bears visit Brooks Camp on the Katmai Peninsula to fish for salmon. See page 350.

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Whale watching is a popular summer activity in this land of glaciers and fjords, where humpbacks and grays bulk up on herring before heading south. See page 351.

Yellowstone National Park. The chance to see thriving wolf and bison populations in the wild is just one of the reasons to visit Yellowstone, an intact ecosystem. See page 255.

Channel Islands National Park. These southern California islands offer sanctuary to four species of seals and sea lions, sea otters, whales, and marine birds. See page 119.

Zion National Park. Water in the desert attracts large numbers of animals to this canyon refuge, including wild turkeys, canyon tree frogs, peregrine falcons, mule deer, and cougars. See page 151.

BEST SCENIC DRIVES

Glacier National Park. Going-to-the-Sun Road traverses some of the most dramatic Rocky Mountain scenery in the West, even as the park's glaciers melt. See page 279.

Badlands National Park. A starkly beautiful landscape of rolling grasslands and twisted canyons stretches across the windswept plains of the South Dakota homeland of the Lakota Sioux. See page 290.

North Cascades National Park. Linking the fertile Puget Sound with the dry Methow Valley east of the Cascades, State Route 20 is a favorite Northwest drive. See page 321.

Bryce Canyon National Park. Thirteen spectacular overlooks offer views of Bryce's rainbow-colored hoodoos (spires) eroded into the Paunsaugunt Plateau on the 18-mile (29km) scenic drive. See page 180.



A bull elk.

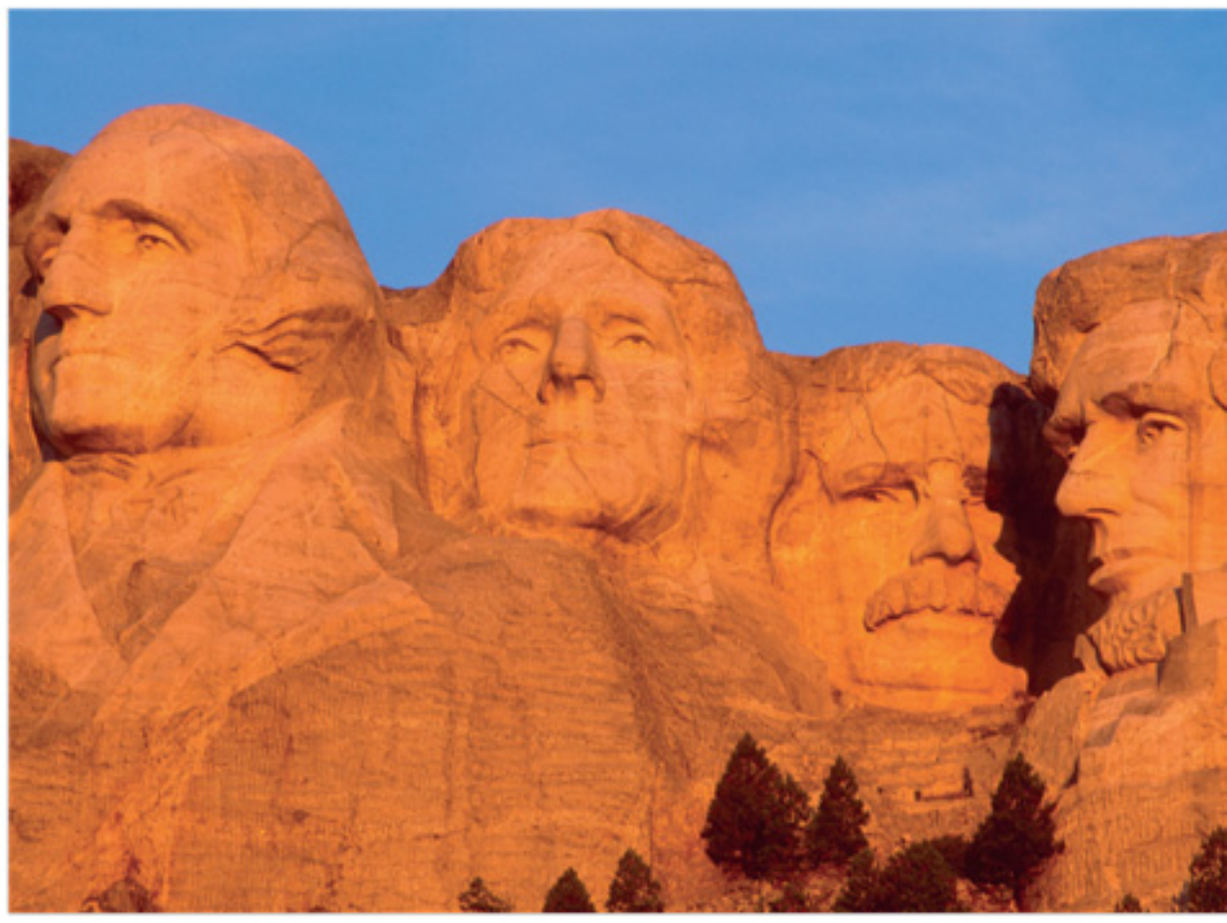
BEST FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Mount Rainier National Park. Climbing routes and the 93-mile (150km) Wonderland Trail and other trails explore varied Mount Rainier habitats, from alpine to temperate rainforest. See page 329.

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Sandwiched between Capitol Reef and Lake Powell, this undeveloped park invites explorations of Indian rock art, pioneer history, and scenic slot canyons. See page 177.

Big Bend National Park. Raft Rio Grande canyons, hike the Chisos Mountains, and explore old mining roads in this spectacular Texas park on the US-Mexico border. See page 229.

Dinosaur National Monument. Famous for its dinosaur quarry and magnificent scenic canyons, Dinosaur is popular with river runners floating the conjoining Green and Yampa rivers. See page 305.



Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

BEST HISTORIC SITES

Chaco Culture National Historical Park. Chaco's enigmatic great houses, built AD 900–1100, now lie in ruins surrounded by the Navajo reservation. See page 241.

Mesa Verde National Park. Mesa Verde populations exploded in the 1200s, when newcomers built Cliff Palace and other villages in the cliffs. See page 239.

Canyon de Chelly National Monument. Two lush canyons on the Navajo reservation protect 13th-century Ancestral Pueblo cliff dwellings. See page 241.

Pipe Spring National Monument. This fortified Mormon ranch on the Kaibab Paiute Indian Reservation in the Arizona Strip interprets early Mormon polygamy and Paiute culture. See page 157.

Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Sculptor Gutzon Borglum's patriotic portraits blasted out of the Black Hills include busts of presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. See page 289.

Rafting Rio Grande canyon.

