

# How many states have you visited?

Lifetime quest for 1 traveler is part of a trend

By **BETH J. HARPAZ**  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — I recently reached a goal that I've been working on for most of my life: I visited all 50 states. And I've been surprised by how many others I know who have been on the very same quest.

"We're seeing more and more people with this goal," said Alicia Rovey, founder of the All Fifty States Club. "It seems like any room you go in, there's at least one person that is trying to get to all 50."

What's behind the trend? Gas is cheap. The 50-state bucket list appeals to all age groups, from millennials who love to travel, to folks who travel a lot for work, to empty nesters and retirees with time for road trips.

For Americans, traveling around the U.S. is also cheaper and less daunting logistically than traveling internationally. And because the U.S. is so big and diverse, every region has something different to offer, from cities to farms, from mountains to beaches, from Southern food to Tex-Mex.

Some travelers use apps or online maps to track their travels. Others use real maps. Alyssa Kauanoe sells a product online called JetsetterMaps (\$28) that lets travelers "scratch off the states you've been to and get your own personalized travel map."

But because there's no real way to check on those applying for membership in the All Fifty club, "we don't ask for proof," said Rovey. "It's kind of an honor system."

For a visit to count, Rovey says, "You have to touch the ground and breathe the air." That "rules out airplane layovers." But she says most 50-staters set their own stipulations:



ELON HARPAZ/AP

Beth J. Harpaz, Associated Press travel editor, has a moment of triumph in September as she reaches the end of her 50-state list.

having a meal, spending the night, going to a historic site or spending time with a local.

Jefferson George visited 50 states in 50 days. He drove to the lower 48, starting in Maine and ending in Seattle, then flew to Alaska and before noon on day 50, made it to Hawaii. But he didn't just set foot in a place to check it off. "I wanted to see something of note in each state, whether it was an established attraction like the North Rim of the Grand Canyon or something maybe a little more obscure like the first paved

road in America in a little town, Bellefontaine, Ohio."

Kelly Will did the 50 states in a year, using social media to find families to stay with everywhere she went and immersing herself in each community for a few days. She's written a book about the experience that she hopes to publish titled, "Little Miss Willful: An Exploration of Feminism, Fear and Faith Across 50 States," and said the education she got spending time with folks around the country was equivalent to "about six different master's degrees in college."

For some, the trips offer solace.

Jen Miller, author of "Running: A Love Story," set out to see the 18 states she hadn't visited after her dog died and she sold her house "because of a terrible neighbor." She got through the 18 in just one summer, and along the way, adopted a new dog in Boise, Idaho.

Rovey says more than half of the club's 4,000 members name Hawaii and Alaska as their final stops. That makes sense: Those destinations require more planning, time and money than just driving across

state lines. But the other place at the end of the 50-state road for many travelers is North Dakota.

"That seems to be a state that is not on the way to places for people," said Rovey. "Many of our members have had to make a special trip to get there." One recommendation for travelers hoping to reach all 50: If you're close to another state, make that extra trip.

Former AP newsman Dick Lipsey is running a marathon or longer race in each state: "I have four states left and plan to finish

up in North Dakota."

I thought North Dakota would be my last, too. But my travels through the 50 states have been somewhat random compared with those who themed their trips or set deadlines. As it turned out, I got to North Dakota's beautiful Theodore Roosevelt National Park a few days before I made it to Idaho.

But I did mark the moment when I ended my quest. I made my husband pull the car over and posed for a photo beneath the sign that read, "Welcome to Idaho."



ANTONIO CALANNI/AP

Zicasso offers an Italy in Vogue tour, which can be taken during Milan Fashion Week.

## TIP, TRIPS & DEALS

### Italy tour focuses on fashion

By **PHIL MARTY** | Chicago Tribune

Fashionistas with deep pockets can indulge themselves with the 10-day Italy in Vogue tour offered through Zicasso, a luxury travel specialist. Though the trip may be taken any time of year, the best time to do it is in conjunction with 2018 Milan Fashion Week, Feb. 21-27 for the fall/winter exhibition or Sept. 19-25 for the spring/summer exhibition. The standard tour features highlights like a private VIP fashion show at the Ferragamo Boutique in Florence, an after-hours private tour of the Rolex laboratory, a tour of the Armani Silos that have displays of past collections, a visit to the Italian Institute of Fashion, browsing the Milan Fashion District with an English-speaking personal shopper and a private master class in the art of perfume-making. There's also access to one of the Milan Fashion Week events if the tour is taken during that time. The package during Fashion Week is priced from \$9,899 per person, double occupancy. At other times, it's priced from \$6,569. International airfare is extra. [tinyurl.com/y723u9cg](http://tinyurl.com/y723u9cg)

## Live like a local

If you like to immerse yourself in local culture when you travel overseas, check out Untours, which recently added a Scottish Highlands option to its roster. The company specializes in setting you up in an apartment for one or two weeks and providing transportation that, depending on the location, will be a car or a pass for public transportation. I've used Untours in Greece, Italy and Switzerland and have never been disappointed. Apartments are generally modest, but their locations make them a great way to feel like a local. There's also a local contact who can help when you have questions. Check out the Highlands Untour at [tinyurl.com/ya36k6j6](http://tinyurl.com/ya36k6j6).

## Celebrate Christmas in Poland

Christmas Traditions of Poland offers the opportunity for a variety of holiday experiences, including a Christmas Eve dinner in the home of a Polish family in Warsaw. The eight-day/seven-night escorted tour from MIR Corp. begins in Krakow with a visit to the Christmas market in the centuries-old Market Square. See how to make classic Christmas ornaments during a workshop, and visit a small factory where hand-blown ornaments are made. Also included are a class in making pierogis and a sleigh ride. After Christmas Eve dinner, you can go to a midnight church service with caroling. The trip is limited to 16 people and is priced from \$3,995 per person, double occupancy. International air is extra. Trip dates both this year and next are Dec. 18-25, though pricing in 2018 is \$500 more. [tinyurl.com/losbxbr](http://tinyurl.com/losbxbr)

Phil Marty is a freelancer.



ASOBU

## All-in-one pill dispenser

By **JUDI DASH**  
Los Angeles Times

A drink of water and your pill dispenser are a match made in travel heaven. Asobu blesses the union with the all-in-one Pill Organizer Bottle.

This plastic pill dispenser has seven snap-open compartments and slides snugly into (and out

of) a niche on the outside of a wide-mouth, 20-ounce plastic water bottle that's BPA-free.

The bottle's screw-on top doubles as a cup.

Tiny plastic pegs built into the bottle keep it from rolling around while you are removing pills or refilling organizer compartments.

The Asobu Pill Organ-

izer Bottle is transparent. The bottle's pill compartments are on the small side, so you can't load them with multiple large capsules. There's no divider for pills taken at different times of the day, either.

Price: \$12.99; [www.asobubottle.com](http://www.asobubottle.com).

Judi Dash is a freelancer.

## NEED TO KNOW

### Historic Paul Revere area to get overhaul

Associated Press

BOSTON — Paul Revere's neighborhood is getting a makeover.

Boston Mayor Marty Walsh recently helped break ground on a \$2.5 million project to revitalize North Square, a part of the city's historic North End that's home to the revolutionary's house.

The Democratic mayor says the project will transform the modest cobblestone square and surrounding streetscape in front of Revere's house into



CHITOSE SUZUKI/AP

This 2004 photo shows visitors to the Paul Revere House in the soon-to-be-revitalized North End in Boston.

a "livable, walkable, multi-modal, green and sustainable" one.

North Square is one of Boston's oldest occupied neighborhoods and is a popular tourist destination that sees 4 million visitors a year as part of the Freedom Trail.

Revere is famed for his midnight ride April 18, 1775, warning that the British were coming.

In September, archaeologists excavated what they believe was the site of an outhouse next door to Revere's home.