

NEW WEBSITE/NEW RESORTS | RV REVIEW: COACHMAN BROOKSTONE BKF375FL | CASH FOR ADVICE

COAST COAST

CoastResorts.com

SUMMER 2015

By Highway and Byway

SCENIC SOUTHEASTERN
UTAH'S RED ROCKS

Just Add Water

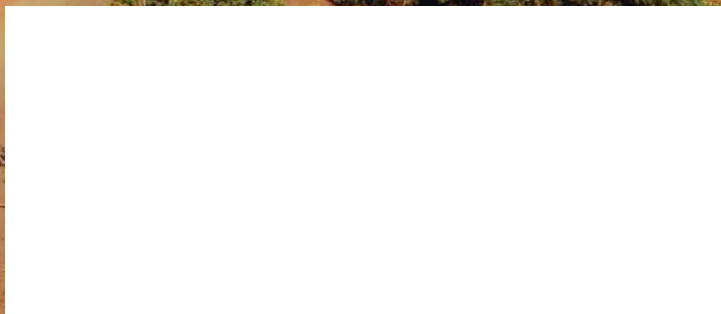
NATIONAL SEASHORES -
10 REFRESHING DESTINATIONS

SUMMER DESTINATIONS

St. Croix River Resort
Hinckley, Minnesota

El Golfo Beach Resort
El Golfo, Sonora, Mexico

Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort
Cosby, Tennessee





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CONTENTS

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COVER PHOTO:
Utah's red rocks, Emily Fagan

CTC40830 0515

TRAVEL

10 A Utah Road Trip

By highway and byway, travel amid red rocks in southeastern Utah.

PHOTOS AND STORY
BY EMILY FAGAN



15 Shore Leave

North, South, East or West, our 10 National Seashores offer year-round fun.

BY DAVE G. HOUSER

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 From the President
- 5 Member Matters
- 6 Resort Updates
- 7 You're the Experts
- 20 RV Review

RESORTS

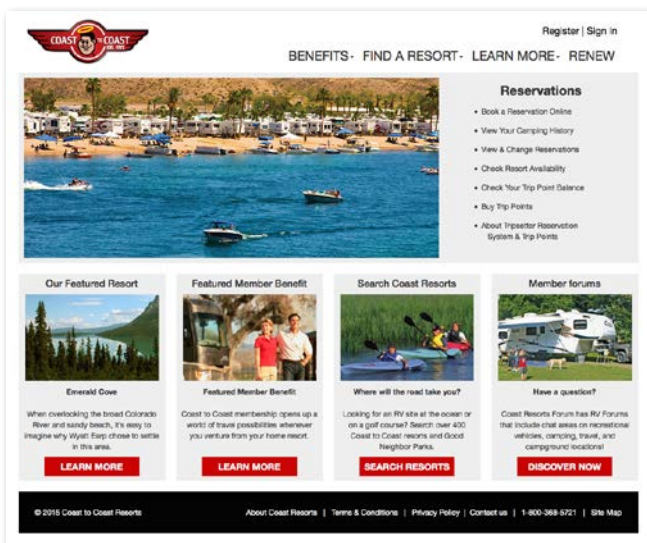
- 8 St. Croix River Resort
HINCKLEY, MINNESOTA
- 9 El Golfo Beach Resort
EL GOLFO, SONORA, MEXICO
- 22 Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort
COSBY, TENNESSEE

15



Coast Announces A New Website and Two New Resorts!

FROM THE
PRESIDENT



Our website has a cleaner look and easier navigation.

Coast to Coast launched a redesigned website in early May. In addition to having a cleaner graphic look and much simpler navigation, our website will now display correctly whether you view it on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. This feature alone is a major upgrade to our website, as it will automatically adjust to whatever device you're using to display the information you're accessing in a very readable form. Check out our new website at www.CoastResorts.com, and send any comments or feedback to CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com.



In addition to the two new resorts we announced in our spring issue, Coast to Coast recently added two more new resorts to our network. St. Croix River Resort is a new Coast Premier resort in Hinckley, Minnesota. This new resort is part of the Midwest Outdoor Resorts group that includes Rushmore Shadows Resort in Rapid City, South Dakota, and Hidden Bluffs Resort in Spring Grove, Minnesota. This new Coast affiliate is located about 90 minutes north of Minneapolis/St. Paul via I-35. Opportunities for outdoor activities abound at St. Croix River Resort, as the resort is a short distance from St. Croix State Park, St. Croix State Forest, and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

For more information see the resort profile on page 8 of this issue.

The second new resort affiliate we've added is El Golfo Beach Resort in El Golfo, Sonora, Mexico. This is a Coast Classic resort that is a member of the Colorado River Adventures family of resorts. Located about an hour south of Yuma, Arizona, El Golfo features oceanfront RV campsites on the Sea of Cortez. At El Golfo you can relax by the poolside cabana and cantina or enjoy activities such as boating, fishing, snorkeling, sea kayaking, hiking, and swimming. For those who enjoy ATVing, there are miles of off-road trails and sand dunes to explore; bring your own ATV or rent one on-site. For more information see the resort profile on page 9 of this issue.



PUTTING MEMBERS FIRST

In other news, Coast member Fredrick Martin won a \$100 Camping World gift certificate in our recent Trip Plus contest! Fredrick was one of hundreds of Coast members who entered our contest by downloading a discount coupon or the My Deals mobile app in March or April. You can enjoy big savings every day on dining, shopping, recreation, and entertainment by using our Trip Plus benefit. Just go to our website at www.CoastResorts.com, sign in, click on Member Benefits, and scroll down to the Trip Plus benefit, and click on the link. You can choose savings from more than 120,000 discount locations, and either print and redeem coupons or download the My Deals mobile app and use mobile coupons. If you have a smartphone, you owe it to yourself to download the My Deals mobile app. With your smartphone it can locate coupons for you based on your location, whether you're at home or on the road. Get started today and you'll soon be on your way to saving hundreds of dollars per year, enough to more than pay for your Coast membership!

Happy Trails!

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MEMBER matters



A Primer on Coast Network Policies

Coast members frequently ask us questions regarding policies for use of our Coast resort network. Following are brief explanations of our network policies in two key areas.

Multi-Resort Systems

When an individual, company or corporation owns and operates two or more Coast to Coast affiliates, we refer to that as a multi-resort system. Visits by Coast to Coast members to properties within these resort groups have a special restriction. The restriction is that members cannot book back-to-back reservations at Coast resorts within a multi-resort system. After each stay in a multi-resort system, a member must be out of that multi-resort system for 7 days before starting another reservation/stay at a resort within that same multi-resort system.

For example, a member books a stay for 4 days at Emerald Cove Resort, which is part of the Colorado River Adventures resort group. The member then tries to book a stay for the following 4 days at Lake Havasu RV Park, which is also part of the Colorado River Adventure resort group. Our Tripsetter Reservation System has rules built in that would prevent this reservation from being made, as the member would have to be out of the Colorado River Adventure resort group for 7 days following the initial stay to make the second reservation at Lake Havasu RV Park.

Members who make drive-up reservations must pay close attention to the Multi-Resort System rule. We have had instances where drive-up members were initially accepted into a resort, only to be told a short time later that they had to leave the resort because their stay followed another stay in the same resort group and therefore they were in violation of the Multi-Resort System rule.

For a complete list of Multi-Resort Systems, see page 42 of the 2015 Coast Resort Directory or the Benefits page on the CoastResorts.com website.

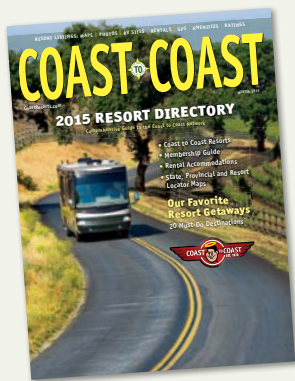
Drive-Ups

Drive-ups, defined as arriving at a Coast to Coast Resort or Good Neighbor Park without a reservation, is something that we discourage. The reason is that

members who drive-up at a resort may not be able to stay at that resort, as the resort may not have sites available for Coast members. It is at the discretion of each affiliate whether they will honor the Coast to Coast rate for any member who drives up without a valid reservation, including day-use RVers. In addition, many resorts have policies that they will not accept drive-ups from Coast members. These policies are noted in the *2015 Coast to Coast Resort Directory* and our online directory in each resort or Good Neighbor Park listing.

Rather than driving up to resorts, we encourage Coast members to use our Tripsetter Reservation System to book reservations. Members can do this either through the CoastResorts.com website or by calling Coast Member Services at 1-800-368-5721. There is no additional charge when booking reservations through our member service center. So use our Tripsetter Reservation System to navigate the Coast network, and you'll always enjoy smooth sailing.





RESORT UPDATES

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE 2015 DIRECTORY

The *2015 Coast to Coast Resort Directory* is packed with everything you need to navigate the network of Coast to Coast Resorts, Good Sam Parks, and Good Neighbor Parks. To keep members up-to-date, each issue of the magazine includes any updates that have occurred since the last issue.

COAST TO COAST RESORTS

COAST PREMIER ADDITIONS:

MINNESOTA

St Croix River Resort - Midwest Outdoor Resorts, 40756 Grace Lake Rd, Hinckley, MN 55037 Resort: 605-399-7899; Reservation: 800-231-0425. Emails: Resort: sued@stcroixriverresort.com; reservation: rickn@midwestoutdoorresorts.com. Website: midwestoutdoorresorts.com. St. Croix Resort is located near the St. Croix River and adjacent to the St. Croix State Forest. Spacious cul-du-sac campsites provide privacy. Choose quiet relaxation or get involved in as many planned activities as you wish. Directions: From the Twin Cities: 35 N to Hinckley exit. Right on State Highway, 23 miles. Just before the St. Croix River turn left on Grace Lake Road. Resort 1 mile on Right. Latitude: 46.056021; Longitude: -92.466982. RV sites: Full: 0; Partial: 96; Dry: 10. Check-in: 4 p.m.; Check-out: 11 a.m. Season: May 1 – October 14. Max. RV Length: 44 feet; Max. Amps: 30. Amenities: fire rings, picnic tables, activity center, gift shop, crafts, dump stations (2), activities, firewood, grocery, handicap access, showers (hot), ice, laundry, picnic area, playground, RV supplies, tenting, tubing, canoes, pavilion, shuttle trips, badminton, horseshoes, indoor pool, volleyball, tourist attractions nearby, casino nearby, fishing nearby, golf nearby.

COAST PREMIER UPDATES:

NORTH CAROLINA

Sycamore Lodge - Travel Resorts of America; Jackson Springs (page 145) Reservations: 855-432-8457; Fax: 910-693-3065

OHIO

Rocky Fork Ranch - Travel Resorts of America, Kimbolton (page 149) Reservations: 855-432-8457

Wally World Riverside Resort - Travel Resorts of Ohio, Loudonville (page 150) Reservations: 855-432-8457

OKLAHOMA

Eagle's Landing (formerly Bear's Den Resort), Grove (page 153)

PENNSYLVANIA

Gettysburg Battlefield Resort - Travel Resorts of America, Gettysburg (page 158) Reservations: 855-432-8457

COAST PREMIER TERMINATION:

GEORGIA

North Shore Resort, Greensboro (page 117)

COAST DELUXE UPDATES:

IOWA

Lakeshore RV Resort and Campground, Oelwein (page 122)

Formerly: Lake Shore RV Resort

MICHIGAN

Timberlake Resort & RV Club, (page 129)

New Email: tammy@timberlakervresort.com

TENNESSEE

Big Buck Camping Resort, Hornsby (page 160)

Directions: From Jackson: Hwy 45 S, to Hwy 64. Right toward Memphis, follow for 10 miles (just past the Hardeman County Road sign), Right on Sparks Road, the resort is 0.3 miles on the Left. From Memphis: US 64 E 10 miles E of Bolivar. Left on Sparks Road.

COAST DELUXE TERMINATION:

ALBERTA

Half Moon Lake Resort, Sherwood Park (page 190)

COAST CLASSIC ADDITIONS:

MEXICO

El Golfo RV Resort - Colorado River Adventures, Los Cinco Amigos Del Golf, Clara S.A. de C.V., El Golfo, Sonora, 85344. Resort: 760-663-494; Reservation: 760-663-4968. Emails robinj@cramember.com; coloradoriveradventures.com. Description: Located on the Sea of Cortez an hour south of Yuma, Arizona, with miles of pristine white sand beach, tidepools and breathtaking area views. A fishing village with charter fishing available, great shrimp and just a few restaurants in town. For off-road enthusiasts El Golfo boasts sand dunes comparable to Glamis. Directions: South on Highway 95 through Yuma, Arizona to Mexican border town of San Luis. Go through Declaration Lane (on left). Go 8 stops, watch for overhead sign to El Golfo. Turn right. Stay on Road (003). Resort is 2 miles south on beach after asphalt ends. Latitude 33.9172; Longitude: -114.3885. RV sites: Full: 165; Partial: 0; Dry: 0. Check-in: 8 a.m.; Check-out: 3 p.m. Season: Year-round. Max. RV length: 40 fee; Max. amps: 30. Notations: Drive-ups not accepted. Amenities: outdoor swimming pool, shuffleboard, store, clubhouse (w/satellite TV), laundry, volleyball court, basketball court, beach (private), game room, Jacuzzi, off-roading, golf nearby, fishing nearby.

INDIANA

Grand View Bend, Howe (page 121)

Resort: 574-575-5927; Reservations: 574-575-5927

OKLAHOMA

Terra Starr Park, Checotah (page 152)

Street address: 420589 E 1147 Road

TEXAS

River Bend Country Club, Brownsville (page 162)

Formerly River Bend Resort

GOOD NEIGHBOR PARKS

GOOD NEIGHBOR ADDITIONS:

NEW YORK

Jellystone at Birchwood Acres - Sun RV Resorts, 85 Martinfield Road, Greenfield Park, NY 12435. Resort: 888-886-2477; Reservation: 248-234-6027. Website: sunrvresorts.com. Located in the foothills of the New York Catskill Mountains, the resort offers a full amenity package. Participate in the many planned activities available all season. Take a dip in our swimming pool, relax in the hot tub or stay active

with a game of basketball or softball. There's a fantastic amenity package and great local attractions. Directions: From New York City: Route 87 (Thruway) N to Exit 16. Route 17 (I-86) W to Exit 113. Right on route 209 N 13 miles to Ellenville. Left on route 52 W for 8.5 miles. Left at sign 1 mile. From Albany: Route 87 S (Thruway) to Exit 19. Route 209 S 29 miles to Ellenville. Right on Route 52 West for 8.5 miles. Left at sign for 1 mile. From: Hartford: Route 84 W to Exit 4W. Route 17 W to Exit 113. Then follow directions from New York City above. Latitude: 41.7259269 Longitude: -74.4857134. Check-in 2 p.m.; Check-out 2 p.m. Season: May 3 to October 8. Max. RV length: 45 feet; Max. amps: 50. Notations: Additional charges: \$16/night additional adult (8 and older); \$7/night additional child (ages 3-7). Standard site includes: full hook-up, 30 amps, gravel, back-in, two adults, two children. Drive-ups not accepted. Amenities: outdoor pool, hot tub, grocery store, playground, picnic tables, fire ring, group activities, ball field, gift shop, tennis, RV supplies, basketball, shuffle board, fishing.

SOUTH DAKOTA

No Name Luxury Cabins & RV, I-90 Exit 34, 20899 Pleasant Valley Drive, Sturgis, SD 57785. Resort: 605-347-8891; Fax: 605-347-8891; emails: camping@nonamecity.com; nonamecity.com. Nestled in the Black Hills of South Dakota, No Name City Luxury Cabins & RV is a small, family oriented campground. The resort has both tree cover and open all-grass camping. Directions: I-90 Exit 34. Southside of Interstate. Drive .75 miles on service road (Pleasant Valley Drive). Do not use address on GPS. Latitude: 44.363405; Longitude: -103.46579. RV sites: Full: 19; Partial: 28; Dry: 9. Check-in: noon; Check-out: 11 a.m. Season: April 1 to September 30. Max. RV length: 40 feet; Max. amps: 30. Amenities: recreation hall, cable TV, dump station, group activities, handicap access, showers (hot), hot tub, ice, laundry, library, lounge, meeting rooms, movie rentals, pavilion (outdoor), picnic area, picnic tables, playground, pool table, propane, pull through, rentals, outdoor pool (heated), tenting, hiking trails, TV lounge, showers (individual stalls).

TENNESSEE

Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort, 4874 Hooper Hwy, Cosby, TN, 37722. Resort: 855-557-6778. Emails: info@smprvresort.com; smprvresort.com. The property borders the Great Smoky Mountains National Park with trail heads located right next to the property. The property is planning two phases of building. The first phase will include a pool with sun deck, office, pavilion, rally room, restrooms, laundry room, and approximately 75 full hook-up sites. There is 4G cell service throughout the property. Directions: From Gatlinburg: TN-73 E/US-321 N/US-321 Scenic S Go NE toward East Parkway. Continue straight onto TN-73 E/US-321 N/US-321 Scenic S/East Parkway continue to follow TN-73 E/US-321 Scenic S. Resort on Right. Latitude: 35.7742, Longitude: -83.2583. RV sites: Full: 60; Partial: 0; Dry: 0. Check-in: 2 p.m.; Check-out: 11 a.m. Season: Year-round. Notations: Additional charges: \$5/night additional adult or child, \$2/night pets, \$1/night Wi-Fi, \$5/night additional vehicle, \$3/night pull-through. Tax. Amenities: recreation hall, outdoor swimming pool, laundry, fitness room, firewood, ice, gift shop, Wi-Fi access, cable TV, playground, hiking trails, horseshoes, volleyball, handicap access, biking, fishing nearby, golf nearby, shopping nearby, church nearby.

GOOD NEIGHBOR TERMINATIONS:

ARIZONA

Picacho Peak RV Resort, Picacho

GIVE ADVICE; GET \$\$\$

What do these people all have in common?

- Bonnie and Vance Clegg, Breckenridge Lake Resort
- Jim Deorio, Bass Lake Resort—Travel Resorts of America
- Gary and Vickie Doramus, Timber Lodge RV Resort
- John Van Houten, Scroon River—Adirondack Adventures

Each of these Coast to Coast members has shared expert advice in our magazine and earned \$25 for their efforts.

Their advice ranged from the simple I-wish-I'd-thought-of-that like using a Swiffer Sweeper to clean the outside of the RV, to more challenging tips such as fixing a broken refrigerator door handle. Each "aha" moment shared with our members made life easier for quite a few people and earns you some play money.

So put on your thinking cap and jot down your best tips and send them in. Here's how.

Email your tips and accompanying photos or sketches to editor@coastresorts.com. Make sure to include your name, the name of your Coast to Coast home resort, and your mailing address. If your tip is selected for publication, you'll receive \$25.

Cash is going out this edition to Jerry Vite. His tip is simple but will save you time and energy.

YOU'RE THE EXPERTS

INSIDE INFORMATION FROM COAST TO COAST MEMBERS

You can save many steps and frustration by putting your RV license tag number and car license tag number in your cell phone address section. We use the Z section because that's rarely used.

JERRY VITE
*Pride Resort,
North Carolina*

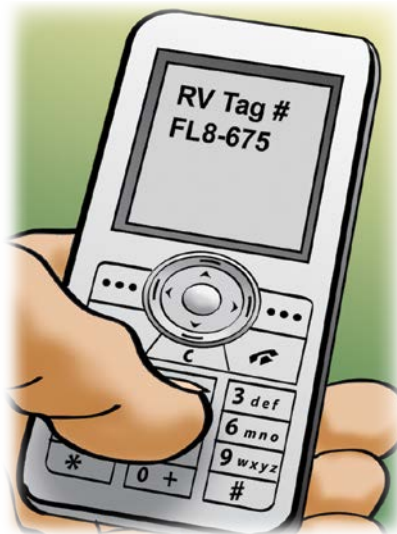


ILLUSTRATION BY WAYNE SHIPP

St. Croix River Resort

Experience unique and spacious cul-de-sac campsites at St. Croix River Resort



RESORT TYPE: Coast Premier

LOCATION: Hinckley, Minnesota

SEASON: May to October

WEBSITE: www.midwestoutdoorresorts.com

Escape your hectic lifestyle and enjoy a stay at a Minnesota RV resort located alongside the St. Croix River—90 minutes northeast of the Twin Cities.

“St. Croix River Resort is located near the St. Croix River and adjacent to the St. Croix State Forest. The spacious cul-de-sac campsites provide privacy not found elsewhere. You can choose quiet relaxation or get involved in as many planned activities as you wish,”

says Sue Dutcher, resort manager.

“Explore the miles of trails on your ATV in the beautiful forests. Experience a tube float trip, paddle a canoe, or do a little quiet fishing. Enjoy a refreshing swim in the warm indoor pool. Then end your day with a glowing campfire, roasting marshmallows with some favorite songs or stories,” she says.

There’s more to the resort than the river. Relax in your spacious site enjoying either full hookup sites or electric/water sites. Don’t worry about having to leave the resort to pick up forgotten items. The convenience store has just what you need. Plan a picnic with the new friends you’ve made during your stay in the covered pavilion.

When not playing in the river, enjoy the well-maintained playground. Spend a lazy afternoon or evening in the game

room. Let our activities director help you make the most of your stay with activities and events. Enjoy volleyball, badminton, and horseshoes.

Offsite fish, tube, or canoe along the St. Croix River. Visit Minnesota’s largest state park: St. Croix State Park. Don’t miss the Grand Casino Hinckley for endless entertainment and concerts. You can walk, bike, or ride the Willard Munger State Trail. Make sure to pack your clubs and play a round at the Grand National Golf Club.

Visit the Hinckley Fire Museum, located in the restored railroad depot. Travel back to an earlier time when there were individual men’s and women’s waiting rooms. Visit the depot agent’s apartment and watch a documentary in the Freight Room.





El Golfo Beach Resort

The Sea of Cortez forms the backdrop of this South of the Border resort



RESORT TYPE: Coast Classic

LOCATION: El Golfo, Sonora, Mexico

SEASON: Year-round

WEBSITE: www.coloradoriveradventures.com

If you're a fan of the sea, sand, and sun, then head your rig across the border from Yuma, Arizona, to El Golfo, Mexico. In addition, if you enjoy boating, fishing, golf, water skiing, hiking, swimming, or just relaxing with friends and family, then El Golfo Beach Resort is the place for you. Just imagine parking your RV on the edge of the Sea of Cortez and enjoying a relaxing or activity-filled vacation.

"It's lovely; it's not touristy," says Lindee Woody, member referral coordinator. "There are darling restaurants and shops nearby and the beach feels like it's a private beach—rarely occupied by locals. You can walk for miles and miles from our resort on untouched beaches, which are great for sand dollar collecting"

"There's enough of the sleepy culture of Mexico, with enough of the amenities that you feel like you're on vacation," she said.

The resort is complemented by miles of off-road trails, sand dunes, and deep sea fishing. Rent an ATV and experience the time of your life. Onsite, feast at the poolside cabana and cantina or take a dip in the pool. Feel safe with 24-hour security. There's a clubhouse, family recreation center, and planned activities. Other amenities include a Ja-

cuzzi, game room, and RV storage.

Offsite try your hand at snorkeling or SCUBA diving, which takes you to the gorgeous and active reefs below. Charter a boat and catch the big one while deep sea fishing.

As of March 1, 2010, all U.S. citizens—including children—must present a valid passport, book, or card, for travel beyond the "border zone" into the interior of Mexico. Bring your vehicle registration and insurance card. It's always advisable to purchase Mexican auto insurance, which will protect you during your trip.

The Sea of Cortez has been called "The World's Aquarium" and "The World's Greatest Fish Trap." The sea is abundant with game fish and an extraordinary amount of world record fish have been taken in these waters.



A scenic view of a desert canyon with a winding road and a river in the distance. The canyon walls are made of layered red and orange rock. A paved road curves through the canyon, and a river is visible in the background. The sky is clear and blue.

A UTAH ROAD TRIP

Driving Amid the Red Rocks

Photos and story by Emily Fagan



Clockwise: Camping in the red rocks of Utah, Gorgeous view of Hite Crossing Bridge in Glen Canyon, Thick and squat Kachina Bridge

With 27 officially designated National and State Scenic Byways, it's nearly impossible to drive any kind of distance in Utah without going through some spectacular countryside, no matter what route you choose. However, there is one drive a bit off the beaten path that is not nearly as well known as the other Scenic Byways and yet is truly worthy of a detour. The Bicentennial Highway is lightly traveled and easily driven—even in a big rig—and our eyes kept popping at the majestic scenery as we drove. Turning from that road onto the Capitol Reef Scenic Byway, I just couldn't stop taking photos out the windows.

Starting this 163-mile journey across southeastern Utah in Blanding, my husband Mark and I headed south on U.S. Route 191 and then took a right turn to head west on SR-95. This special road was named the "Bicentennial Highway" because the final yards of asphalt were poured in 1976—the year of the U.S. Bicentennial. It is utterly spectacular and

very worthy of an RV road trip.

Eyeing it on the map before we started, we were a little nervous that there might be switchbacks or tight turns that would be difficult with our 36-foot fifth-wheel and long-bed truck. However, the grades and sweeping turns were very manageable and the entire drive was a sheer delight.

With every bend in the road, we found ourselves craning our necks to take in the stunning views out our windows. Enormous, patterned red rock walls lined the sides of the road, and mystical red rock formations rose up from the horizon and changed shape as we passed them by. The landscape was vast, open and colorful, and completely devoid of the human touch. Everywhere we looked, we felt inspired by the wondrous creations of a divine hand.

In Blanding, while inquiring at the Visitors Center about the difficulty of traversing this road with a big RV, we met Fred Johnson, a construction worker who had been part of the team that

paved this highway in the 1970s. For two years, he and his fellow workers lived out in this magnificent landscape, enduring all kinds of discomforts and hardships while upgrading this beautiful road to suit the modern age of fast moving cars. What a place to work.

The road was first constructed in 1935 as a gateway from Blanding to the Natural Bridges National Monument and remained unpaved through the 1960s. It wasn't until the 1970s that portions of the road began to be paved. Yet, because it doesn't link any major towns or cities, we found that as we passed by one glorious red rock vista after another on our way to Natural Bridges, there was rarely another vehicle on the road. How isolated and scorching hot it must have been to work those asphalt machines on this gorgeous, lonely road. Yet what a stunning landscape to call "the office."

We arrived at Natural Bridges uncertain of what to expect. It turns out that this fascinating National Monument features three huge natural rock arches.



Clockwise: Mark climbs down a rough hewn wooden ladder to Sipapu Bridge, Sipapu Bridge at Natural Bridges National Monument, Glen Canyon was formed by damming the Colorado River to form Lake Powell

To make the experience even more breathtaking, each natural bridge is accessed by a steep hike down to the base of the bridge and then back up again. Luckily, we hadn't worn ourselves out with a workout yet that morning, so as we started down the trail to the first arch, called Sipapu Bridge, and arrived at the first rough-hewn Navajo-looking log ladder, we scampered down it full of vim and vigor.

The trail to the Sipapu Bridge hugs a massive overhanging rock wall that Mother Nature has painted in wide swaths of black and orange and pink. It is hard to believe that the forces of wind and water have shaped these rocks, and as we hiked along in the soft sand in the shade of these cliffs, I couldn't help but imagine the ancient people who once sought shelter here. What a surprise it was, then, in the midst of these musings, to look down and see bare footprints before us in the sand. It turned out they were footprints left behind by the new and popular "FiveFinger" shoes worn by

a hiker ahead of us.

Sipapu Bridge is a grand sandstone arch that has the classic shape of an ordinary bridge. Although we were among a few dozen people who hiked to it on this particular day, the first American settler to come across it was Cass Hite when he was out searching for gold in 1883. After we admired the bridge for a while, we made our way back up along the striped rock wall to the wooden ladders and on up to the loop road that winds through the park.

The second stone arch in the collection is Kachina Bridge and, just like Sipapu, it requires hiking down stairways that have been carved into the sandstone by the National Park Service and clambering down log ladders as well. Unlike Sipapu, however, Kachina is a thick and squat bridge that crosses a large cool wash filled with brilliant green shade trees. Along the flanks of this bridge we saw the faint etchings of petroglyphs that were pecked out of the rock eons ago. We were intrigued to learn that some of

the cliff dwellers from the Mesa Verde area 150 miles away in Colorado had called this place home around 1200 A.D.

We got our workout once again as we huffed and puffed up the ladders and staircases back to the loop road, and then drove on to the next bridge, Owachomo, where once again we scrambled down to the base. In contrast to its two sister bridges, this bridge is thin and soars high into the air, looking quite delicate from a distance. Up close, however, it is a massive structure as well, with trees growing under its foundation.

Driving the eight-mile-long rim road around Natural Bridges, we got an overview of the marvelous landscape of the area as well as great views of the three bridges. Many visitors to Natural Bridges skip the hiking part, but for us the highlight of this park was the four miles of walks through nature and the fun obstacle courses that we encountered as we hiked down to and up from each bridge.

Back out on the Bicentennial Highway, we continued our road trip. As we watched

Clockwise: The Bicentennial Highway snakes through spectacular red rock vistas, the bare footprint of a "FiveFinger" shoe, the orchard and the antique farm wagon let us know we're close to the Community of Fruita



the various red rock formations go by, we were reminded that their shapes can be a lot like psychologists' ink blots—often they resemble something. We passed a pair of flat-topped mesas that Native Americans called "Bears Ears" and then another mammoth red rock configuration that the early Mormons dubbed "Jacob's Chair." Even though no one keeps cheese in a box any more, we instantly recognized the formation called "Cheese Box" when it appeared ahead of us.

No sooner did these fanciful formations fade into the distance behind us than the Bicentennial Highway began a series of marvelous turns and descent as it carried us toward Glen Canyon Dam. This stunning portion of the road was so exhilarating that I could barely sit still in my seat. Much to Mark's surprise, at one point I practically climbed out the truck window so I could get photos of the magical landscape around us, especially as we approached the Hite Crossing Bridge at the confluence of the Colorado and the Dirty Devil rivers.

There is a fabulous viewing area where visitors can get a bird's eye view of the waterways and valleys from several different vantage points, and we wandered around these viewpoints for quite some time, reading the plaques that described the geology and history of the area.

Glen Canyon Dam was built in the 1960s, and when it blocked the Colorado River to form Lake Powell, the water not only rose above ancient Native American settlements containing artifacts, petroglyphs, and precious clues to the ancient human history of this raw land, but it drowned the more recent mining town of Hite City. After World War II, uranium was eagerly mined in this area, and the folks who created the subsequent boom town were said to have "uranium on the cranium." Naturally, a bust eventually followed, and the remains of Hite City weren't considered worthy of preserving in the 1960s compared to the power, water, and flood control that the new Lake Powell would provide to the region.

Once we left Glen Canyon in our wake, all these fabulous images and history gave us much to ponder and chat about as the sights along the Bicentennial Highway grew more ordinary and we settled back into routine driving. In the tiny community of Hanksville, we turned left onto SR-24 to continue our journey west on the Capitol Reef Scenic Byway. In no time we were craning our necks once again as exotic rock formations in shades of grey and maroon began to loom up out of the landscape around us.

This portion of the Capitol Reef Scenic Byway is characterized by pale, towering cliffs, and swirling rock patterns that look like the gods dipped their fingers in finger paint and smeared the colors on the rounded domes. After a while, these smooth, colorful surfaces gave way to bold, jagged red rock cliffs with flanks resembling cathedral buttresses. We had arrived at Capitol Reef National Park, a long skinny park, about 5 miles wide by 50 miles long, that runs on a north-south axis along a huge buckle in the earth's



Clockwise: Thrilling views in Capitol Reef National Park encourage you to get out of your vehicle, stand, and take it all in.

crust called the Waterpocket Fold.

The tiny community of Fruita is at the heart of this area. Mormons settled there in the late 1800s, and by 1917 had built a lively village filled with orchards. Cherries, apricots, peaches, pears, and apples are still grown in Fruita, but on our visit we were a little too early to take advantage of the harvests. Driving the scenic road through the park, we saw remnants of Fruita's past, including an old plow standing in a field and an old pioneer schoolhouse.

This area was extremely difficult for the Mormon pioneers to reach, due to the rugged terrain of the Waterpocket Fold. However, there was one route into town via Capitol Gorge that ran along the bottom of a wash. Between 1871 and the early 1940s, Mormons arrived via this route, first by horse and buggy and then by car.

We hopped out of our truck to stretch our legs, and hiked partway into this wash, following the tall stone cliffs on either side. High up on the flat rock sur-

face to one side, we spotted the etched names, initials and dates that had been carved by the arriving pioneers long ago. This antique graffiti is called the "Pioneer Register" today, and we saw names and dates from the late 1800s all the way up to 1942.

This hike was the first of many glori-



ous hikes, bike rides and scenic drives we took through Capitol Reef National Monument during our week-long stay and was the perfect cap to our wonderful

driving tour across southeastern Utah.

Utah's Bicentennial Highway and Capitol Reef Scenic Byway gave us a road trip we will never forget. From the unique stone arches of Natural Bridges National Monument to the jaw-dropping scenic vistas along the highways to the dramatic system of waterways and gorges in Glen Canyon to the Mormon register of pioneers arriving in Fruita, we had been treated to a dazzling array of sights. If you are planning a trip through Utah's more notable regions, consider a detour that includes these two awe-inspiring scenic byways in the southeastern part of the state.

For More Information*

Visit www.visitutah.com/plan-your-trip/getting-around-utah/scenic-byways

*Utah's scenic byways are a system of 27 routes statewide that offer outstanding beauty and are clearly designated with colorful highway signs. The byways are also indicated with dotted lines on the official Utah highway map.

Shores Leave

North, South, East, or West:
National Seashores offer year-round fun

By Dave G. Houser

For most of us, there's no better day than one spent visiting the seashore. Our nation is embraced by nearly 12,000 miles of coastal shoreline, so we Americans are truly fortunate.

The U.S. Congress designated some of the nation's most important and least developed coastal areas as national seashores, based upon natural, cultural, and recreational attributes. Responsibility for preserving and protecting them falls to the National Park Service (NPS) that administers ten national seashores gracing the coastlines of ten states.

While no written description or static image can match the experience of a live visit, here's a summary of each of America's national seashores.

Seashores are listed from west to east.

Point Reyes

If you love the sight of long stretches of deserted beaches, rugged cliffs and headlands punctuated by wind-bent trees and a stately old lighthouse, basking elephant seals, and circling seabirds—you're an ideal candidate for a visit to California's Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS).

This 100-square-mile sanctuary, occupying a dramatic peninsula alongside Highway 1 in Marin County, preserves a

Historic 1870 Point Reyes Lighthouse is a top attraction, as is a nearby 1927 lifeboat station.

Information: 415-464-5100
www.nps.gov/pore.

Padre Island

One of a pair of national seashores fronting the Gulf of Mexico, Padre Island National Seashore (PINS) is located 43 miles southeast of Corpus Christi, Texas,

Gulf Islands

Largest of the country's national seashores, Gulf Islands National Seashore (GINS) extends across a 150-mile-long string of barrier islands in Florida and Mississippi, protecting 137,458 acres of beach, maritime forest, and wetlands.

Snowy-white beaches at Santa Rosa Day Area and Perdido Key rank among the finest in the state and provide a real contrast to some of the park's other fea-



Left to Right: Point Reyes' shoreline is home to breeding northern elephant seals. The Point Reyes Lighthouse is also known as Point Reyes Light or the Point Reyes Light Station. Kemp's Ridley sea turtles nest at Padre Island National Seashore. The white sand beaches of the Gulf Islands National Seashore welcome human visitors and birds, such as this great blue heron.

colorful tapestry woven with threads from its unique geography, natural diversity, and long history of human culture.

Home to 1,500 species of plants and animals, including more than 400 species of birds, PRNS keeps naturalists with an interest in flora and fauna busy. Whale spotting is popular during the annual gray whale migration from January through April. From December to March, a breeding colony of northern elephant seals takes over the beach at Drake's Bay.

Hiking is the most popular activity available to visitors and the park boasts a 150-mile system of trails.

on an undeveloped 70-mile stretch of the world's longest barrier island.

PINS offers a haven for some 380 species of birds and is one of the few nesting grounds for the Kemp's Ridley sea turtle—most endangered of all sea turtles. The creatures nest here from April through mid-July.

Visitors spend their days at PINS splashing in the usually warm and gentle Gulf waves, shell collecting, kite flying, windsurfing, and fishing. Anglers surf-cast here, with moderate success, for sea trout, redfish and whiting.

Information: 361-949-8068/9
www.nps.gov/pais.

tures, including a pair of Civil War-era forts—Barrancas and Pickens—both open to visitors.

Naval Live Oaks Visitor Center is a good place to view exhibits tracing the history of the area's dense stand of live oak trees, once used in the building of wooden naval ships. Aside from the William M. Colmer Visitor Center in Ocean Springs, the Mississippi District consists of offshore islands accessible only by boat.

Boasting a diversity of ecological communities, both districts of GINS are notable for a variety of wildlife. Nearly 300 species of birds have been documented within the park and it's a refuge for the

endangered loggerhead sea turtle and gopher tortoise.

Information:
850-934-2600 in Florida,
228-875-9057 in Mississippi
www.nps.gov/guis.

Canaveral

Located adjacent to Kennedy Space Center, Canaveral National Seashore (CNS) is a peaceful and pristine barrier

community of Eldora.

CNS provides habitat for 14 endangered or threatened animal species, including three species of sea turtles—loggerhead, leatherback and green—that come ashore from May through August to nest on island beaches. Mosquito Lagoon provides refuge for manatees during the spring and summer. Bottle-nosed dolphins also frequent both lagoon and ocean. Bird watching is great here too, especially during the winter.

Now the island's serene landscapes and 17 miles of gorgeous sand and surf mix with moody marshes, maritime forests, and fading reminders of a grander time to provide a memorable visitor experience.

The NPS ferry operates twice a day shuttling passengers between the town of St. Marys, Georgia, and CINS. Most day-trippers catch the 9 a.m. ferry to join the ranger-guided and narrated "Land & Legacies" tour. This six-hour, 30-mile van tour covers much of the island, visit-



Left to Right: Fort Massachusetts is a Civil War-era fortress on West Ship Island, Gulf Islands National Seashore. Check out the interpretive signs or take a hike on the many trails at Canaveral National Seashore. No matter which National Seashore you visit, plan on great beaches. Birds of all kinds—pelicans, terns, and gulls—and sand dunes, greet you at Cumberland Island National Park.

island spanning 24 miles—the longest stretch of undeveloped beach on Florida's east coast. The island is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Mosquito Lagoon on the west.

CNS offers water-based recreation, including canoeing and kayaking, hiking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing. Boardwalks provide easy access to Apollo and Playalinda beaches.

Four nature and historic trails are found in the northern reaches of the park. Turtle Mound Trail, a self-guided 0.3-mile track leads to an ancient 50-foot-high Timucuan Indian shell midden. Eldora Trail leads about the same distance to the long-abandoned Mosquito Lagoon

Information: 321-267-1110
www.nps.gov/cana.

Cumberland Island

One of several of southern Georgia's "Golden Isles," Cumberland Island was established as a national seashore in 1972. Cumberland Island National Seashore (CINS) is accessible only by NPS ferry.

Its semi-isolation, and the fact that most of the island served as the domain of the wealthy Carnegie family from the 1880s until it was acquired by the NPS in 1971, have spared it for posterity.

ing its most important scenic and historic sites. Highlights include the ruins of 18th-century Dungeness Mansion, Plum Orchard Mansion, and The Settlement. Plum Orchard is a beautifully renovated Classic Revival-Style manasion built by the Carnegies in 1898. The settlement was established in the 1890s for workers.

Other visitor options include hiking or cycling the island's main road and 50 miles of trails.

Information: 912-882-4336
www.nps.gov/cuis.

Cape Lookout

One of a pair of North Carolina's string of Outer Banks barrier islands to be designated national seashores, Cape Lookout National Seashore (CLNS) is not nearly as well known or frequently visited as its neighbor to the northeast, Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

The two parks are geographically similar, comprised of slender slivers of sand facing the Atlantic Ocean to the east and

Information: 252-728-2250
www.nps.gov/caloc.

Cape Hatteras

Stretching north to south across three Outer Banks barrier islands—Bodie, Hatteras, and Ocracoke—Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) protects a 70-mile string of scenic beach, sand dunes, marshes, and woodlands. It was designated in 1953 as the country's first

Noted for its epic winds and world-class waves, Cape Hatteras is a hotspot for surfing, windsurfing, and kite boarding. Fishing is excellent here, too.

Information: 252-473-2111
www.nps.gov/caha.

Assateague Island

Best known for its herd of wild horses, Assateague National Seashore (AINS) is a 37-mile-long barrier island that sweeps



Left to Right: Kayaks are popular at Cape Lookout National Seashore. Sea oats defend against erosion. Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is the tallest brick lighthouse in the United States. Visitors enjoy life on the beach in a variety of ways. RV camping is inviting at Assateague Island National Seashore.

backed on the mainland side by shallow sounds, but CLNS is largely undeveloped. Its three barrier islands—North Core Banks, South Core Banks, and Shackleford—offer 56 miles of white-sand beach, accessible only by ferry and ideal for sunbathing, surfing, and fishing.

Ferries carry passengers and vehicles across Core Sound from the mainland to the islands. A ferry also connects the Cape Hatteras community of Ocracoke and historic Portsmouth Village on North Core Banks.

Cape Lookout Lighthouse is another major point of interest. Visitors can climb 207 steps to the top.

national seashore.

Although the beach scene is quite similar to that of Cape Lookout, highway access to CHNS (via NC Highway 12) has resulted in much greater development, including motels, restaurants and other services.

Once dubbed the “Graveyard of the Atlantic” for its treacherous shoals, currents, and storms, Cape Hatteras has a wealth of history relating to more than 600 shipwrecks—and the lighthouses built to help prevent them. CHNS has three lights, the renowned Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Bodie Lighthouse, and Ocracoke Lighthouse—the latter two open for climbing from mid-April to October.

south from Ocean City Maryland and well into Virginia.

AINS is one of the most inviting of all the seashores and offers plenty to see and do. Cycling paths and hiking trails thread through both districts and canoeists and kayakers can ply the bay and marshes from designated launch areas. Surf and shell fishing are popular here and there are lifeguard-protected swimming beaches in both districts.

Camping and vehicles are not allowed in the Virginia refuge. Go there instead to witness shorebirds passing through during their twice-yearly transcontinental migrations—or during the fall to see large flocks of snow geese that shelter in the

bays and marshes.

Assateague's famous horses (about 125 in Maryland; 150 in Virginia) have been around more than 300 years—descendants of domesticated animals brought by colonists to graze on the island.

Information: 410-641-1441
www.nps.gov/asis.

Fire Island

Perhaps the most unusual and unlikely

The park protects two unique ecosystems worth seeing—Otis Pike Fire Island Wilderness, an isolated area of high dunes that is the only federal wilderness area in the state of New York, and the Sunken Forest, a 39-acre maritime holly forest, northernmost of its kind on the Atlantic Coast.

Cultural attractions include Fire Island Lighthouse and the William Floyd Estate. The 1858 lighthouse, at the island's western end adjacent Robert Moses State Park,

uplands, and forests—that support more than 450 species of animals.

The cultural landscape of CCNS is equally diverse. Preserved and open to public visitation are such historic structures as Old Harbor Life Saving Station, the Nauset, Three Sisters and Highland Lighthouses, and the cliff-top site at South Wellfleet where, in the early 1900s, Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi erected a telegraph transmitter that helped give birth to global wireless communication.



Left to Right: Meet Jojo and Sonja, who live on Assateague Island. Piping plover nesting grounds are protected at Fire Island National Seashore. Tour the Sunken Forest at Fire Island. Visit the Life-saving Station at Cape Cod National Seashore or take a ranger-guided tour.

of all the national seashores, Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) exists in the very shadow of the Big Apple. Stretching 32 miles along the south shore of Long Island, Fire Island is a spaghetti-thin barrier island between Great South Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

Although much of the 9.6-square-mile island remains undeveloped, there are 17 small resort communities scattered around the island.

With no paved roads, Fire Island is accessible only by shuttle ferries from Patchogue, Sayville, and Bay Shore, Long Island. The primary modes of intra-island transportation are walking, biking, and golf carting.

features exhibits and interpretive programs.

Information: 631-687-4750
www.nps.gov/fjis.

Cape Cod

“A man may stand there and put all America behind him,” noted famed author and naturalist Henry David Thoreau, in reference to the magnificent 40-mile stretch of Atlantic-facing beach preserved today as Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS).

Massachusetts' national seashore encompasses an amazingly rich mosaic of ecosystems—sandy beaches, dunes, tidal flats, salt marshes, bogs, grasslands,

Hiking and bicycle trails invite visitors to explore hidden reaches of the 70-square-mile park. Among CCNS's six swimming beaches, Coast Guard Beach in Eastham was a favorite of Thoreau and remains so today for local residents and visitors alike.

Visiting CCNS is easy, with most park features situated off Route 6 between the entrance in Eastham and the eclectic village of Provincetown at the island's northern tip.

Information: 508-771-2144
www.nps.gov/caco.

Images were provided by the National Park Service and David G. Houser.



2015 Coachmen Brookstone (BKF375FL)

Full-timing's made easy in this fifth-wheel with front living room and multiple slide outs.

The first time I saw an upside-down refrigerator I remember thinking how peculiar it was. Who would put the freezer on the bottom? The more I looked at it though I began to realize that this feeling had nothing to do with the design being wrong—no, it was because I had just never considered the possibility of the freezer going anywhere but on top. It was unfamiliar and a change to an item that I considered “finished and unchangeable.” That was a decade ago and these types of refrigerators are commonplace now and frankly a very practical innovation. I just had to have an open mind.

I'm telling this story because the first time I saw a front living room in a fifth-wheel trailer, I had exactly the same feeling. Bedrooms belong up front, my sense of familiarity told me—not salons. Yet, this topsy-turvy design not only made sense but in the past five years or so it has inspired manufacturers to offer a host of these designs. Still the majority of fifth-wheels have the bedroom up front—but having

this choice has opened my mind to the possibilities in never limiting design options.

Now, climbing into Coachmen's Brookstone FL (front living room) still flicks at me with a momentary hesitancy when I see the fireplace in the nose—but only for a moment. Frankly, I've become a fan.

The Brookstone family is made up of seven models ranging in length from 34 feet 8 inches to 39 feet 6 inches. Of these, only one is a front living room layout. However each version has certain elements in common, the first being residential-sized bathrooms. Each has a large shower with sliding glass doors, full vanity, and a linen closet. A neat feature is a revolving pet food and water bowl holder under the vanity cupboards. Coachmen says more than 70% of full-timers travel with pets—there is also an outside leash anchor. The thinking is obvious—why do without just because you're on the road?

This unit also makes use of multiple slideouts (five in this



case) to create as much living space as possible. For instance, both the front living room and rear bedroom have opposing slides that offer lots of floor space. In the bedroom this fact creates another lounge space as the wardrobe slide also carries the 32-inch HD TV and vanity counter area. While there are no other chairs in this space, the optional king bed in my tester came with a memory foam mattress that could incline the head of the bed providing a comfortable reclining position for reading or viewing. This bed is easily walked around and offers a high ceiling and large opening window across the back of the trailer. Of course it also has its own door to the bathroom as well as a passage door.

The word residential comes up often in the company literature. I take it to mean that amenities are like those at home. That's no surprise for a unit that is meant to be a full-timer RV—however Coachmen has included a few features that others often miss. A full-size kitchen garbage can for one. A dedicated spot for a laundry hamper and the rough-ins for a stackable washer/dryer and second A/C unit. The kitchen can also be equipped with a large 12-cubic-foot refrigerator with ice maker. All these things are items you'd have at home, so why not in your RV?

The living room is a sizable entertaining space with opposing couches in the slides plus an oversized rocking recliner. Everything is anchored by the 50-inch smart TV that has its own keyboard so it can stream the Internet. This TV is centered in the beautiful cabinetry that takes up the entire front wall including a built-in electric fireplace. One of those couches is also a Lane sleeper sofa. This effectively puts over-

night guests at the other end of the unit for more privacy.

Another interesting note is the headroom in the nose. While it's less than a rear living room setup, I found it ample. I think in part this is helped by the arched ceiling that visually opens the space, plus the windows that flood the area with light.

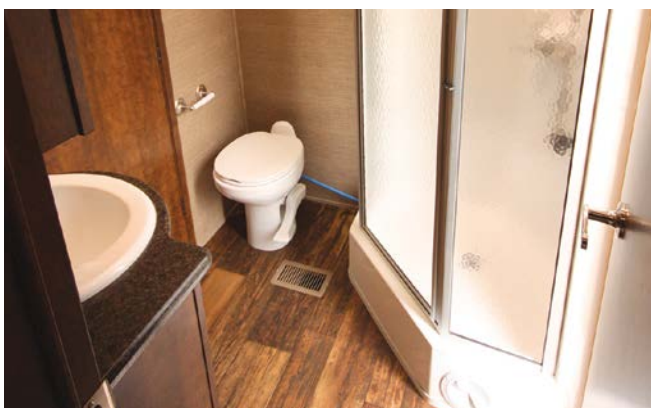
The middle of the coach houses the kitchen. This is also where the main entry door is—though there is a second door that opens into the bathroom. This puts the high-traffic area squarely onto the vinyl flooring, which looks like a wide-plank barn board complete with surface undulations. The stove, complete with burner covers, is housed in the fifth slide while the double sinks are 90 degrees to the right. This two-tiered counter has a reasonable amount of space. An added feature is that someone working here is facing the front living room making conversation easier. Another benefit to this design is the high ceiling in the kitchen where dining occupants can be cooled by the overhead ceiling fan.

The Brookstone is a four-season trailer so special attention has been paid to insulation, heating, thermal windows, heated tanks, and an enclosed underbelly. For the same reason, basement storage is large, ample, and also pass-through. Slam latches are a nice feature and the doors are insulated as well.

As for towing—the Brookstone is a large trailer and needs an appropriately sized truck. Mine was a single-rear-wheel Ford F350 with the Power Stroke diesel engine. This was more than ample—not just for power but also for the feeling of confidence that comes with a heavy chassis towing a heavy trailer. Pin placement on the Brookstone offered 90 degrees of turning, which is handy with a trailer this long. The 7,000-pound Dexter axles carry 16-inch tires. The trailer also has a system called Correct Track Suspension Alignment. Along with the Mor/Ryde suspension, it tracks straight, turns easily, and covers uneven ground in the campground while staying close to level. A nice towing trailer overall.

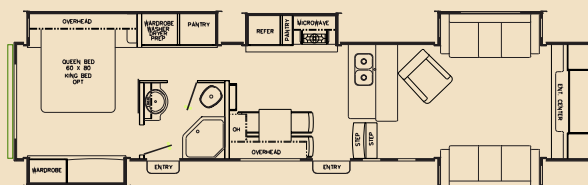
If you are in the market for an upscale fifth-wheel, for full-timing or otherwise, have a look at the Brookstone line.

—Howard J. Elmer



2015 COACHMEN BROOKSTONE F375FL

- DRY WEIGHT:** 12,290 pounds
- GVWR:** 15,500 pounds
- LENGTH:** 39 feet 6 inches
- HEIGHT:** 12 feet 11 inches
- WIDTH:** 96 inches
- FRESHWATER:** 70 gallons
- GRAY WATER:** 90 gallons
- BLACK WATER:** 45 gallons
- AWNING:** 17 feet
- BASE PRICE:** \$56,832.75



RESORT REPORT

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Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort

All the amenities of a premier RV resort with all the beauty of a national park



RESORT TYPE: Good Neighbor Park

LOCATION: Cosby, Tennessee

SEASON: Year-round

WEBSITE:

www.smokymountainpremiervresort.com

Whether you're driving a Class B or a 40-plus-foot coach, you'll find a home at Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort nestled alongside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Cosby, Tennessee. The campground is specifically designed for large rigs. Whether you prefer a back-in, pull-

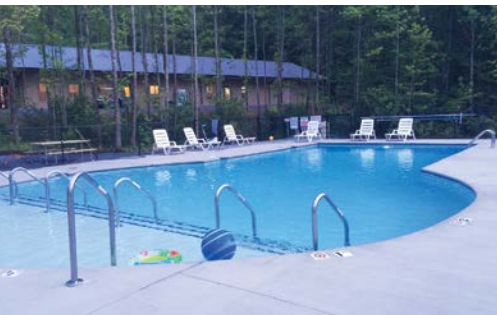
through, or pull-in site, there is room for you. You'll feel at home in your spacious site—the average site is approximately 2,500 square feet. Opened in 2014, the all-new resort has an old-world feeling because the owners took great pains to preserve the large old-growth trees while making sure the roads are wide and manageable.

"We decided to build Smoky Mountain Premier RV Resort because we saw a need in the area," says Jessica Brooks, co-owner. "Most of the existing campgrounds were built in the '60s and '70s and the sites are very small. As campers, we understand the wants and needs of other campers. In the past we've had a hard time finding local campgrounds that could accommodate the size of our motorhome. This is why we decided to undertake

building our own resort. We wanted to bring an RV park to the area with lots of amenities as well as large, spacious, shaded sites, which make you feel like you're camping in the national park. I feel like we've achieved that goal."

In addition to expansive sites, each has full hook-ups including water, sewer, electric, and cable. Amenities include gated access and security camera, a well-stocked store, pool with sun deck, horseshoe area, corn-hole boards, playground, Wi-Fi, golf cart rentals, and much more.

Offsite, you'll find places to go rafting, tubing, zip-lining, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, skiing, and golfing. To really see the area, take a motorcycle tour or scenic helicopter tour. Or visit the nearby section of the Appalachian Trail.





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Looking for some inspiration this summer? School is out, the days are long, and the doldrums of winter are months away. Carefree and sun-drenched, summer is the ultimate season for a memorable vacation – a time to swim, sunbathe, picnic, and otherwise enjoy the great outdoors. If you're planning a warm-weather escape, read on for our top summer travel ideas.

Orlando, FL

Every kid dreams of a trip to Orlando, Florida, the famous hometown of Disney World and Epcot Center. In addition to the Magic Kingdom, there are dozens of other amusement and water parks.

Branson, MO

With so many things to do in Branson, it's an easy choice for summer vacations. Home to a variety of live stage shows and the beautiful outdoors of the Ozark Mountains.

Las Vegas, NV

Everyone in the family can have a good time in Las Vegas and it is an affordable vacation spot for families. Shows, attractions and great food options make Las Vegas a terrific choice for a family getaway.

Myrtle Beach, SC

This old-fashioned resort town has something for everyone, from championship golf courses to the largest water park in South Carolina or take the kids to the beach for banana-boat rides.

Gatlinburg, TN

Every day is an adventure in Gatlinburg. Whitewater rafting is an exciting way to spend a day in the Smoky Mountain region. Gatlinburg also has some of the largest outdoor waterparks in the region. Start the day with an early morning tee time.



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