



Don't miss these beautiful, budget-friendly escapes in our own backyard

BY CARRIE ROLLWAGEN | TYPOGRAPHY BY LUKE LUCAS

## FLORIDA

### T.H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park

PORT ST. JOE  
[floridastateparks.org](http://floridastateparks.org)

Welcome to one of Florida's best-kept travel secrets. The seclusion and singular

beauty of these beaches have earned them the nickname the "Forgotten Coast." You'll feel like you are miles (and maybe even decades) away from the flash and fireworks of some of Florida's other attractions when you reach this park, which offers nearly 10 miles of white sand bordering bright blue water.

## LOUISIANA

### Chicot State Park

VILLE PLATTE  
[crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks](http://crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks)

You'll find no place better than Lake Chicot to observe the beauty and uniqueness of Louisiana's landscape and wildlife. An 8-mile canoe trail winds through

cypress trees. The Louisiana State Arboretum, which is located adjacent to the park, covers more than 600 acres. Lake Chicot itself is pretty and charming, circled by a lovely fishing-and-backpacking trail that also makes for a great mountain biking route on the way.

## MISSISSIPPI

### Tishomingo State Park

TISHOMINGO  
[mdwfp.com/parks](http://mdwfp.com/parks)

Tishomingo State Park is gorgeous and inviting, the perfect place to spend a pleasant summer day or to enjoy a family camping trip. Hikers will find huge rock formations, outcroppings, and bluffs throughout the park. Mossy boulders and wildflowers are everywhere. The area's natural beauty has been appreciated for centuries: Traces of Native American culture run all through this park, from its namesake (Chief Tishomingo of the Chickasaw Nation) to archaeological sites revealing the lives of the Paleo-Indians who lived off the land thousands of years ago. Modern visitors can take canoe float trips down Bear Creek, angle for catfish and bass at Haynes Lake, rock climb, swim at the park's pool, and even play disc golf at three 18-hole courses. **SL**