**The sights of USA.**

The US claims to be the greatest success story of the modern world - a nation fashioned from an incredibly disparate population who, with little in common apart from a desire to choose their own paths to wealth or heaven, rallied around the ennobling ideals of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence to forge the richest, most inventive and most powerful country on earth.

Despite polemicists who justly cite the destruction of Native American cultures, racism and imperialism at the top of a long list of wrongdoings, half the world remains in love with the idea of America. This is, after all, the country that introduced the world to the right to the pursuit of happiness, free speech, electric light, airplanes, assembly-line automobiles, the space shuttle, computers, blues, jazz, rock & roll and movies that climax at the high-school prom.

On a short trip, it can be hard work dismantling your preconceptions. So much of the country has been filmed, photographed, painted and written about that you need to peel back layers of representation to stop it from looking like a stage setting. This worldwide representation can make the country seem strangely familiar when you first encounter novelties like 24-hour shopping, bottomless cups of coffee, 'Have a nice day,' drive-thru banks, TV evangelists, cheap gasoline and newspapers tossed onto lawns. But you'd be foolish to read too much into this surface familiarity, since you only have to watch Oprah for half an hour to realize that the rituals and currents of American life are as complex, seductive and bewildering as the most alien of cultures.

Come prepared to explore the USA's unique brand of 'foreignness' rather than stay in the comfort zone of the familiar. You'll discover several of the world's most exciting cities, some truly mind-blowing landscapes, a strong sense of regionalism, a trenchant mythology, more history than the country gives itself credit for and, arguably, some of the most approachable natives in the world.

Since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, followed with a highly publicized spate of anthrax-laced mailings that exposed government workers, media personel and mail carriers to the deadly disease, the entire USA has been on a heightened state of alert. Add to this rampant rumours of repercussions for the bombing of Afghanistan, and you're dealing with one nervous country.

While your chances of falling victim to shady terrorist plots are probably pretty slim (though you never know; perhaps packing that lucky penny isn't such a silly idea), you are very likely to experience a variety of potentially annoying security protocols, particularly surrounding airline travel. Make sure all your identification and other documents are up-to-date, confirm reservations and bag-checking procedures ahead of time, and arrive at the airport at least an hour before your flight departs.

No matter what form of transportation you're using to navigate the USA, however, it behooves the careful traveler to keep an eye on current events during these *very* interesting times.

**Culture**

'Give me your tired, your poor/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,' reads the inscription on the Statue of Liberty. And the world did, fueling the dynamism of America with waves of ambitious immigrants from every downtrodden corner of the globe. Immigration is one of the defining characteristics of America's national identity, though calling the US a 'nation of immigrants' neatly sidesteps Native Americans (already here) and African American slaves (brought against their will).

In the past 30 years, the old notion of America as a melting pot - a stew in which immigrants' individual differences are lost in uniformity - has given way to the salad-bowl model, in which the individual pieces still retain their flavor while contributing to the whole.

Americans are constitutionally guaranteed freedom of worship; dominant faiths include Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism, among others.There are plenty of indigenous faiths as well, such as Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.

American English encompasses a multitude of regional accents of differing degrees of intelligibility. Spanish has effective dual-language status in parts of southern California, New Mexico, Texas and Miami. There are 400,000 speakers of Native American dialects.

Modern American culture is a juicy burger of mass culture garnished with 15 minutes of fame. It owes as much to marketing savvy, communications technology and mass-production techniques as it does to artists and entertainers. If you can name it, American companies have invented, packaged and disseminated it to as many consumers as cheaply and conveniently as possible.

The elusive concept of 'American-ness' is often defined by cinema and television. The advent of TV in the 1950s shook Hollywood's hegemony to its core, but both forms of media have managed to coexist, even operating synergistically. The global distribution of American movies and TV shows has shaped the world's perception of the country to a high, if not completely accurate, degree.

The American music industry is the world's most powerful and pervasive, though groundswell movements remain the driving force of American pop. African Americans' influence, including blues, jazz and hip-hop, can hardly be exaggerated.

Rap, America's inner-city sound, places an equal emphasis on an ultraheavy beat, sound montage, street cred and macho posturing. Its appeal to middle-class white America will no doubt bemuse sociologists for decades.

The US has churned out a veritable forest of literature. The illustrious lineup begins with Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson, Henry James and Edith Wharton, and moves into the modern era with William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck, Jack 'Backpack' Kerouac, Arthur Miller, both the Williamses, Saul Bellow, John Updike and Toni Morisson..

After WWII, the focus of the international art world shifted from Paris to New York. Artists leaving war-torn Europe brought the remnants of surrealism to the Big Apple, inspiring a group of young American painters to create the first distinct American painting style, abstract expressionism.

The relentless ascendancy of mass media gave birth to pop art. Slick, surface-oriented and purposely banal paintings like Andy Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Cans* are now American icons.

When we think of US cities, we think of skyscrapers, those architectural testaments to market forces and American optimism. Chicago is a living museum of high-rise development. New York boasts its fair share of stunners too. Despite increasing homogenization, rural America retains its idiosyncrasies, and distinctive vernacular architectural styles persist in New England (clapboard), California (Spanish Mission) and New Mexico (adobe).

American sports developed separately from the rest of the world and, consequently, homegrown games such as baseball, football and basketball dominate the sports scene. Soccer and ice hockey are runners-up to the Big Three. Urban America also invented the great indoors: aerobics and the gym, indoor skiing and rock-climbing - examples of what can go wrong when too much disposable income hits up against too little leisure time.

**Walt Disney World**

Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida is not just a theme park, but a huge resort complex covering 47 square miles. The resort contains four separate theme parks, three water parks and 99 holes of golf on several different courses. Miles of outdoor recreation are available including hiking, biking, boating and swimming. It has three separate areas containing shopping, dining and entertainment facilities as well as a fourth area with nightclubs. A fairly new addition to the resort is the state of the art sports complex where Disney hosts a wide variety of sporting events. Finally, there are about 18 Disney owned and operated hotels and several non-Disney hotels in the resort. All this combined with many other attractions in the Orlando and central Florida area can be quite overwhelming.

No other Disney resort comes close to the size and diversity of Disney World Florida. If you have previously visited one of the other Disney resorts such as Disneyland California, Disneyland Paris or the new Disneyland Tokyo, you should still visit Disney World in Orlando, Florida. All other Disney resorts consist of a single theme park and are quite small compared to the massive resort complex in Florida. Each of the other parks are no larger than the Magic Kingdom theme park in Disney World, which is only one small part of the complex. Remember, that only the resort in Orlando, Florida is referred to as Disney World or Walt Disney World. The other parks are usually called Disneyland. The size and diversity of the Disney World resort ensures that it will probably remain the number one vacation destination in the world for years to come.

The main attractions at the resort are divided into four theme-parks.Magic Kingdom, the first theme park built at the resort, has rides, shows and attractions divided among seven fantasy areas. This is the place to find all your favorite Disney characters and attractions. Epcot, the second theme park built at the resort, is divided into two areas: Future World and World Showcase. The attractions in Future World are based on modern and futuristic advances in communication, transportation, energy, agriculture and much more. World Showcase allows you to explore culture, cuisine, shopping and entertainment from many countries including Canada, UK, France, Japan, Morocco, US, Italy, Germany, China, Norway and Mexico. The Disney-MGM Studios offers behind-the-scenes looks at the making of movies and popular TV shows and provides live original shows. There are also a number of thrilling rides or attractions based on blockbuster movies, which provide exciting stunts and amazing special effects. Animal Kingdom is the newest and largest theme park to open in the Disney World resort. This 500-acre park is divided into three areas: The Real, The Mythical and The Extinct. The Real area features live animals in exotic landscapes and provides a safari-like experience. In The Mythical area, guests come face-to-face with magical and make believe creatures. In the Extinct Area, dinosaurs come to life.

And now let us see what can every city present to the visotor that camr to explore it.

**New York**

They don't come any bigger than the Big Apple - king of the hill, top of the heap, New York, New York. No other city is arrogant enough to dub itself Capital of the World and no other city could carry it off. New York is a densely packed mass of humanity - seven million people in 309 sq miles (800 sq km) - and that's just Manhattan, only a part of greater New York City. All this living on top of one another makes the New Yorker a special kind of person. Although it's hard to put a finger on what makes New York buzz, it's the city's hyperactive rush that really draws people here.

In a city that is so much a part of the global subconscious, it's pretty hard to pick a few highlights - wherever you go you'll feel like you've been there before. For iconic value, you can't surpass the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, Central Park or Times Square. The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the world's top museums, and the Museum of Modern Art isn't far behind. Bookshops, food, theater, shopping, people: it doesn't really matter what you do or where you go in New York because the city itself is an in-your-face, exhilarating experience.

New York's famous hustle and bustle was abruptly cut short on September 11, 2001, when a terrorist attack in the form of two hijacked passenger aircraft razed the gleaming twin towers of the World Trade Center. Thousands of people were killed in the worst terrorist act ever on US soil. New York is currently in a state of shock. Whether this makes way for anger, disillusionment or optimism is yet to be seen. In the meantime, this spectacular city has a great deal of work ahead of it as it tries to rebuild its business district and its confidence.

**San Francisco**

Even people who hate the United States love San Francisco. It has a self-effacing flutter of the eyelids so blatantly missing from brassy New York and plastic LA, an atmosphere of gentile chic mixed with offbeat innovation. This is a place that breeds alternatives: It's the home of the Beat Generation, flower power, student protest and gay pride. One of the country's most attractive cities, San Francisco boasts foggy, hilly streets that provide gorgeous views of San Francisco Bay and its famous bridges. This is a mosaic of a city, a big picture made from the colorful tiles of the Latino Mission, gay Castro, bustling Chinatown, clubby SoMa, hippie Haight-Ashbury and Italian North Beach. Fisherman's Wharf is the epicenter of tourist kitsch and the gateway to Alcatraz, while Union Square is where the classy shoppers congregate.

**Los Angeles**

It's possible that Los Angeles is a figment of its own imagination. No other city studies itself so intently - on film, television or in glossy magazines. LA is a monster of a city, a tangle of freeways and sprawling suburbs where anyone without a car is considered intellectually impaired. This is where the American Dream is manufactured, and if you're not prepared to embrace the dream you'll doubtless find LA filthy, irritating, frightening or just plain dumb. But if you long to stand in the footsteps of stars and breathe their hallowed air, you've come to the right place. In this town, chefs are household names and nobodies erect billboard shrines to themselves. LA is a feast of fame-associated sights - cruise Sunset Strip, walk Rodeo Drive or Hollywood Boulevard, be seen on Melrose or Venice Beach, gawk at babes in Malibu or poke your nose through the gates of Beverly Hills. No one does a theme park like the Angelenos: Disneyland is the mother of them all, and Universal Studios turned its back lot into a thrill ride years ago. When the glitz starts coming out your ears, head for the almost-reality of Little Tokyo and El Pueblo de Los Angeles or Pasadena's Huntington Gardens.

**Miami**

Fat old people in Bermuda shorts, street stabbings, Cuban plots, drug dealers, sneakers without socks and an excess of pink - Miami is none of these things. Desperately redefining itself, Miami (and in particular, South Beach) has declared itself the Most Fabulous Spot in the US. As evidence, it cites the recently restored pastel-riot of the Deco District, a friendly neighborhood feel and a fledgling art and culture scene looking for a sunny alternative to New York. And of course there's Miami Beach itself, a glorious stretch of white sand lapped by clear blue water. The heart of all this newfound fashionableness is Ocean Drive, flanked on the east by the city's hippest beach and the west by a string of sidewalk cafes. This is where the late Gianni Versace lived, and his acolytes still throng here to pose waifishly over rocket salad. Miami also has the world's most beautiful swimming hole, the Venetian Pool, one of the world's best zoos and a bunch of expat Cuban elder statesmen playing dominoes in Máximo Gómez Park. In stark contrast with the hedonistic lightheartedness of the rest of Miami, the Holocaust Memorial is one of the most exquisite and moving monuments you'll ever visit.

**New Orleans**

If New York makes you nervous, you'll hate New Orleans. Others will find that the sleazy touch of danger in the air is what makes this Southern city so compelling. A steamy brew of zydeco, voodoo, gumbo and antebellum ambience, New Orleans grows on you like a strangler vine - you might as well lie back and enjoy it. Most people know New Orleans for its parties, particularly the orgiastic indulgence of Mardi Gras or the year-round bacchanal on Bourbon Street. But if crowds and alcohol poisoning aren't your thing, don't despair. Aficionados of historic architecture will exult in the crowded French Quarter and grandiose Garden District, while those with a hankering to take history home will adore the antique shops of Royal Street. New Orleans has a tendency to bring folks out in a rash of Lestatesque gothic brooding - have a wander among the city's ornate aboveground cemeteries or shed a tear for Jeff Buckley on a ferry cruise of the Mississippi River, then forget your troubles with some crawfish, cool jazz and a mint julep.

**Capitol**

Three years after Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton decided that Washington DC should house the nation's capital in 1790, construction began on the grand Capitol that now graces the hill east of the Potomac. By the turn of the century, the movers, shakers and lawmakers began to move in. The British nearly burned it to the ground in 1814, demoralizing the Americans almost enough to provoke the abandonment of the whole DC experiment. However, some last gasp stiff upper lip was scrabbled together and the Capitol was rebuilt from 1817 to 1819. The House and Senate wings were added in 1857, the nine-million-pound iron dome in 1863 and the east face in the 1950s, making the current icon over twice as large as the original building. The Capitol, as well as being Washington DC's most prominent landmark, is the epicenter of the city: its major avenues intersect at an imaginary point under the dome.

**White House**

Every president since 1800 has snuggled down in the White House, ensuring that 1600 Pennsylvania Ave is the nation's most famous address. The White House is a cozier-than-it-looks Neoclassical manor which has survived a torching by the British in 1814, a Jacqueline Kennedy redecoration campaign in the 1960s and Ronald Reagan doing broomstick reruns of the Kentucky Derby through the 1980s. Presidents have customized the property over time: Jefferson added toilets, FDR Roosevelt put in a pool, Truman installed a second-story porch, Bush added a horseshoe-throwing lane and Clinton put in a jogging track and a seven-seat hot tub. Some residents never leave: it's said that Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry Truman both sighted the ghost of Abe Lincoln in Lincoln's old study. Daily tours herd visitors through eight interior rooms but the grounds are only open on Easter Monday for the traditional Easter Egg Roll.

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

The most visited memorial in DC is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a stark, powerful structure designed by Maya Ying Lin, whose design was selected from a national competition when she was a 21-year-old architecture student at Yale University. Two walls of polished black marble that come together in a V shape are inscribed with the names of 58,202 veterans killed or missing as a result of the Vietnam War. Names are inscribed chronologically from date of death; alphabetical rosters are available nearby. On request, volunteers will help you get rubbings of names from 'The Wall.' The most moving remembrances are the notes, medals and mementos left by survivors, family and friends since the memorial was completed in 1982. Opponents to the design insisted that a more traditional sculpture be added nearby; a memorial to the women who served in the war was another later addition.

**Independence Hall**

As well as being one of the country's best examples of understated Quaker-influenced Georgian architecture, Philadelphia's Independence Hall was the site of many of the fledgling nation's early twitterings. It was built between 1732 and 1756 as Pennsylvania State House, the colony's headquarters, at which time it was on the outskirts of the city. The Second Continental Congress met here from 1775 to 1783. The Assembly Room is where the delegates from the 13 colonies met to approve the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776), where the design of the US flag was agreed upon (1777), the Articles of the Confederation were drafted (1781) and the Constitutional Convention was held that produced the US Constitution (1787). The assassinated body of President Abraham Lincoln lay in state here on 22 April 1865.

**Paul Revere House**

The Paul Revere House, a small clapboard affair originally built in 1680, is worth a visit - and not just because it's the oldest house in Boston. The blacksmith Revere was one of three horseback messengers who carried advance warning to American rebels on 18 April 1775, of the British night march into Concord and Lexington that sparked the War of Independence. He lived here right through the revolutionary period, managing to father a dozen kiddies when he wasn't out riding for the righteous.

**Statue of Liberty**

The Statue of Liberty, the most enduring symbol of New York City - and indeed, of the USA - can trace its unlikely origins to a pair of Parisian Republicans. In 1865, political activist Edouard René Lefebvre de Laboulaye and sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi went to a dinner party and came away with the notion of building a monument honoring the American conception of political freedom, which they would then donate to the Land of Opportunity. Twenty-one years later, on October28, 1886, the 151ft (45m) *Liberty Enlightening the World*, modeled on the Colossus of Rhodes, was finally unveiled in New York harbor before President Grover Cleveland and a harbor full of tooting ships. It's a 354-step climb to the statue's crown, the equivalent of climbing a 22-story building, and if you want to tackle it, start early to avoid the crowds - it's hard to contemplate the American dream with your nose to the tail of the person in front.

**Times Square**

Dubbed the 'Great White Way' after its bright lights, Times Square has long been celebrated as New York's glittery crossroads. The Square went into deep decline during the 1960s when the movie palaces turned triple X and the area became known as a hangout for every colorful, crazy or dangerous character in Midtown. These days the sleaze has mostly given way to an infectious vibrancy, and the combination of color, zipping message boards and massive TV screens makes for quite a sight. Up to a million people gather here every New Year's Eve to see a brightly lit ball descend from the roof of One Times Square at midnight, an event that lasts just 90 seconds and leaves most of the revelers wondering what to do with themselves for the rest of the night.

A visit to fascinating Mount Vernon, George Washington's Virginia home for many years, is second in popularity only to the White House as a visited historic house. The country estate of this quintessential country gentleman has been meticulously restored, giving an insight into late-18th century plantation life. Although the grounds are immaculate and the house more than stately, all is not ostentation: there are many glimpses of the farm's working nature and regular living history presentations. George died here in a four-poster bed on 14 December 1799, and both he and his wife Martha are buried in an enclosure on the south side of the 19-room mansion.

**Monticello**

Everybody knows Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's Virginia home, probably because it is on the back of the nickel coin (the perfect souvenir?). The house is very much the embodiment of its creator, Jefferson, who oversaw all stages of its development over a period of 40 years and incorporated many of his fascinating if somewhat eccentric ideas in the design. The president's private chambers were set up so that he got out of the right side of his bed to write and on the left side to get dressed. Other unusual features include a concave mirror in the entrance hall that greets visitors with their own upside down image, hidden and narrow staircases (Jefferson considered ordinary staircases unsightly space wasters), the two-pen 'polygraph' used to duplicate correspondence and an indoor compass connected to a weather vane on the roof. Jefferson died here in 1826 and is buried on the estate where his favorite oak tree once stood.

**Jamestown**

Jamestown, Virginia, was founded in May 1607 when *Discovery, Godspeed* and *Susan Constant* moored in deep waters off the peninsula between the James and York rivers and 104 men and boys disembarked. It was the first permanent English settlement on the continent but was doomed to failure because of starvation, disease and attacks by Native Americans. In 1619 the first representative assembly met and Jamestown served as Virginia's capital from then until 1699. When the statehouse had been burned for a fourth time, the settlers accepted that they had chosen a poor site and they moved inland to what is now Williamsburg. The original Jamestown is now a collection of ruins, historical markers, visitor centers and ongoing archaeological digs.

So we see now that USA is really fascinating country that has a lot of sights to be visited.

**Off the beaten tracks**

For somebody who is already see all that wonderful things in America might be interesting to discover something new, where the tourists are not so common and whereyou can meet only native sitizens, but they are also the sights of USA.

Highway 395

Out where the Sierras drop straight down into the sagebrush of eastern California's Owens Valley, truckers, hunters and road-trippers cruise Hwy 395. Though the road runs several thousand miles from the northern fringes of the Los Angeles basin to the Canadian border, the best leg stretches 250mi (400km) between Lone Pine, in the shadow of 14,500ft (4350m) Mt Whitney, and Carson City, Nevada. You can reenact scenes from *Gunga Din* and *How the West Was Won*, both shot in the Alabama Hills just west of Lone Pine, where's there's a film festival every October.

The Manzanar National Historic Site, about half an hour's drive north of Lone Pine, consists of the remains of one of the infamous 'relocation' camps in which American citizens of Japanese descent were imprisoned during WWII. A little farther on is the funky

Eastern California Museum, a mixed bag of displays on natural history, Paiute Indian basketry and ancient Milk of Magnesia bottles. If you've still got a nest egg left when you reach Carson City, east of Lake Tahoe just over the Nevada border, let it ride at one of the town's many casinos.

Flagstaff

If the strip-mall chintz of small-town Arizona leaves you dry, drop in on Flagstaff, a cultural oasis in this otherwise arid landscape. The historic downtown area, harking back to the town's early days as a railroad whistle stop, comes as a welcome relief from the region's dusty motels and truckstop diners. In this neighborhood, antique inns sidle up against vegetarian cafes, and you're more likely to hear strains of a local jazz combo than any rumble of RV traffic. And as the novelty of nontouristy downtown wears thin, there's always a visit to the Lowell Observatory, where in 1930 the planet Pluto was discovered, or a stroll through the 200 blissfully green acres at the local arboretum.

Flagstaff makes a great base for day trips, since the Southwest's greatest attraction, the Grand Canyon, is less than a two-hour drive away. Within an hour of town you can explore ancient Anasazi and Sinagua Indian pueblos; marvel at the site of a mile-wide meteor crater; hike, bike and ski some of the state's most pristine mountains and forests; and even have your chakras realigned in the New Age mecca of Sedona.

Crazy Horse Memorial

Rising out of the foothills in the southwestern corner of South Dakota is a massive statue of Crazy Horse, the Sioux leader famous for orchestrating the demise of General George Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn. The statue, carved out of the mountainside, already dwarfs Mount Rushmore, while providing a revisionist twist to the latter's celebration of dead white males. Begun in 1948, the memorial is still in progress. There's a museum on the site, which is just north of the town of Custer.

Wrigley Field

Built in 1914, Chicago's Wrigley Field is the third-oldest baseball park in the country and a quirky slice of America's sporting pie. Known as 'The Friendly Confines,' the tiny ivy-walled pillbox is one of the most agreeable spots to while away a day consuming hot dogs and beer, and undoubtedly the best place to learn the meaning of die hard. The home team, the Chicago Cubs, haven't won a World Series since 1908, but you'll never meet anyone in the world as loyal as a Cubs fan. The neighborhood around Wrigley stands as a testament to this, with private houses donning additional rooftop bleachers, and every bar within a three mile radius serving as a secondary house of worship.

Wrigley Field is probably the only baseball diamond left in America where the score-by-innings and pitchers' numbers are changed by hand, and where putting in modish things such as floodlights caused a backlash. One of Wrigley's traditions is to fly a flag bearing a 'W' or 'L' atop the scoreboard after a game. The white flag with a blue W indicates a victory; a blue flag with a white L (all too common) means a loss.

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

Janis Joplin may have wanted a Mercedes Benz, but instead she got a Porsche - a kaleidoscopic, candy-colored acid trip on wheels. You can see it at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, in Cleveland, Ohio, along with Elvis Presley's black leather 'Comeback Special' suit and Ray Charles' sunglasses. Why Cleveland? Because it's the hometown of Alan Freed, the disk jockey who popularized the term 'rock and roll' in the early 1950s - that and some heavy lobbying by the mayor. If you're a fan of IM Pei's architectural style, you'll love the record-player shaped building.

Appomattox

Appomattox, Virginia, was the site of Confederate General Robert E Lee's surrender to Union commander Ulysses S Grant, which ended the US Civil War. The surrender took place at the Appomattox Court House on 9 April 1865. The court house is now part of a national historic park, which includes restored period buildings, self-guided walking tours, audiovisual presentations and informative rangers.

Preservation Jazz Hall

The Society for the Preservation of New Orleans Jazz was established in 1961 to provide hard core jazz musicians with a home and jazz devotees with an appropriate place of worship. In a tiny former tavern off Bourbon Street in the French Quarter of New Orleans, the hall brings together veteran jazz musicians twice a night to pay homage to the art of Crescent City-style improvisation. The most accurate words to describe the experience include 'sweaty,' 'overcrowded' and 'unforgettable.' The amount of space is so limited that patrons are forced to flow out onto the sidewalk, where they fight to hear and see through a fogged window that faces the musicians' backs. Every set's combo of trumpet, clarinet, trombone, drum and piano player is different, while a touring group has been going out on the road for over 30 years, spreading the virtue of Preservation Hall jazz.

Better time to go.

The US is most popular with travelers during the summer, but this is when American families pack everything up and head out to visit Aunt Tilly. To avoid mobs (especially throughout the national-park system), it's better to go during autumn or early spring.

Autumn is an especially good time to visit New England and the upper Great Lakes because fall colors are at their best. Most of the country east of the Rockies is hot and humid during summer, especially the south. The deserts between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada are very hot and dry during the summer, especially in the southwest. California's southern coast is comfortable year-round, but if you want to experience the beach scene, it's best to visit between June and September.

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