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COAST-TO-COAST ROAD TRIP · 10 DAYS ONE WAY

Los Angeles to New York Self-Drive Itinerary

Whether travelling via car or motorhome (“RV” in US speak) this trans American journey has something for everyone.

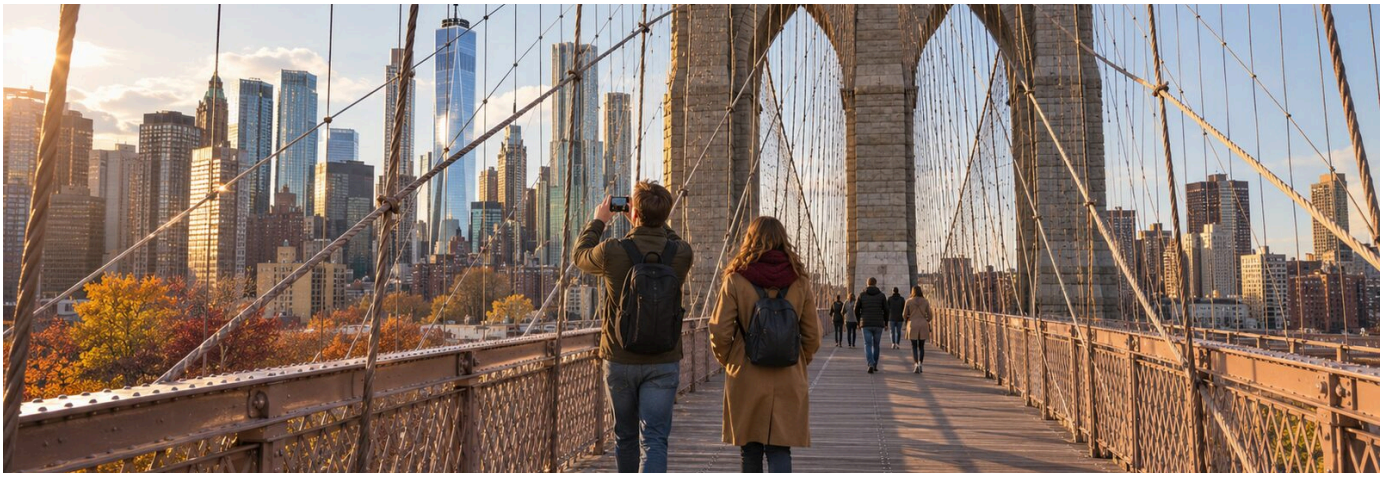
A road trip from Los Angeles to New York is an undertaking as grand as the cities themselves - driving there non-stop would take you around 40 hours over the space of almost 4,500 kilometres. However, this isn’t a journey designed for haste - it’s one to be enjoyed.

Over 10 days, you’ll get the chance to encounter 10 different states - California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

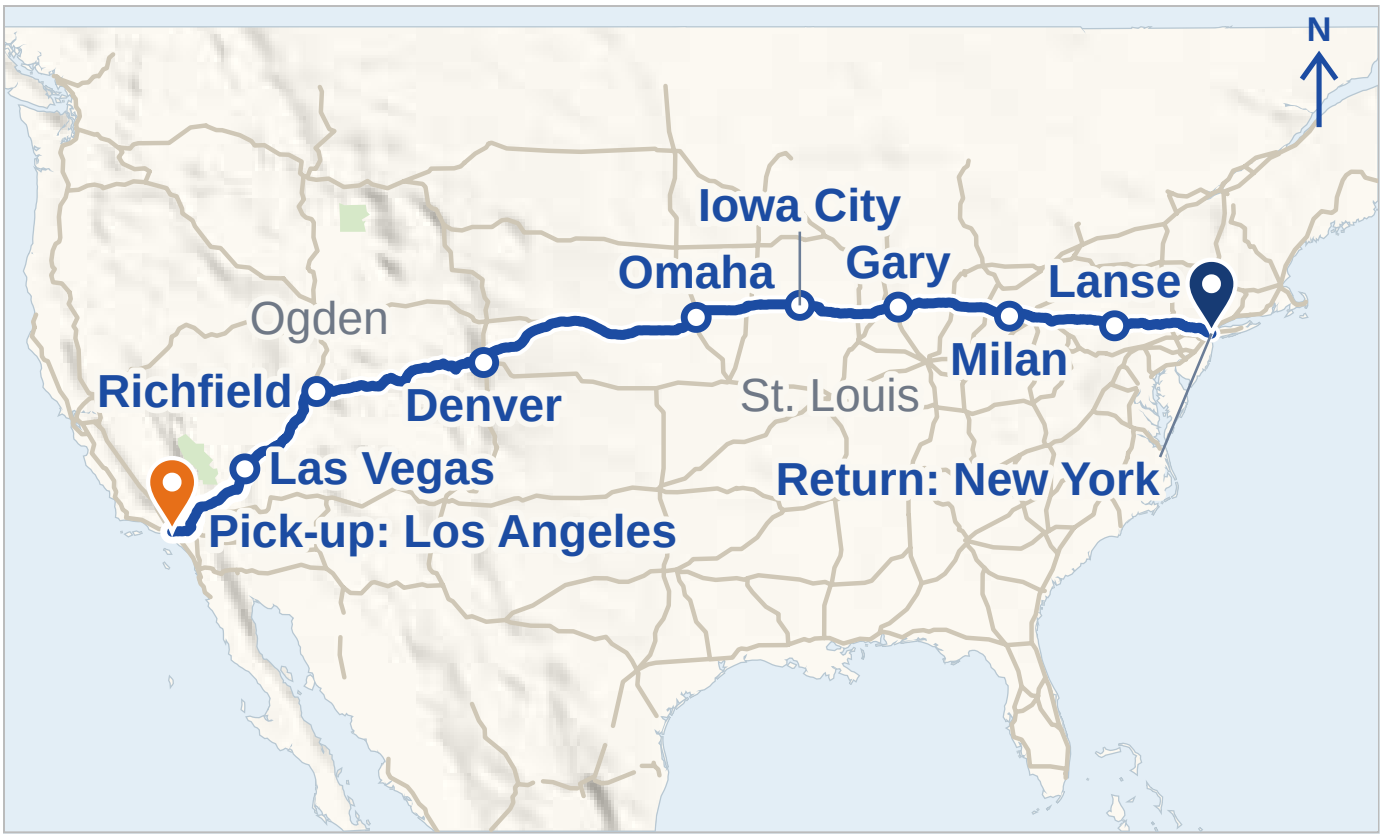
We’ve designed this particular itinerary to give you a taste of each of these wonderful locations, mapping out things to see and sights to seek out in each of them.

DISTANCE	DAYS	ROUTE	DRIVING TIME
About 4,545 km (2,825 mi)	10 days, 9 drives	One way, Los Angeles to New York	About 51 h 30 min by car

LONGEST DRIVE	VEHICLE
875 km (540 mi), Denver to Omaha	Car or motorhome



Brooklyn Bridge, New York, day 10 · Illustrative image



Planning overview, not navigation. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors · coastline Natural Earth · relief Terrain Tiles (USGS 3DEP, SRTM).

Picking up in Los Angeles

You'll generally need your licence, a credit card in the main driver's name and your booking confirmation: see what to bring at pick-up. Before you drive away, you'll check the vehicle against its condition report, and with a motorhome staff show you how it works: see what happens at a motorhome handover. More on motorhome hire in Los Angeles.

DRIVE

435 km (270 mi) from Los Angeles

about 5 h by car · about 6 h by motorhome

Via **Barstow Freeway / Mojave Freeway**

DAY 1

Los Angeles to Las Vegas, Nevada

PICK-UP

Usually, when you're flying into sunny Los Angeles, you'll find yourself touching down at the largest airport in California, LAX International. It's here that you'll be able to pick up your baggage before jumping into your pre-arranged hire car or motorhome.

From here, you'll spend your very first day in the USA driving east across California along Interstate 15 - destination Las Vegas, Nevada. While you can do this first leg in five hours, we recommend stopping off at one the many sights along the way to truly absorb the feel of California.

Elmer’s Bottle Tree Ranch in Oro Grande is classic pit stop, with an almost surreal forest of bottle trees glinting in the Californian sun. This incredible art installation is truly something you need to see firsthand - the artist, Elmer Long, died in 2019, and his family keeps the ranch open to visitors.

Once you’re back on the I-15, continue through Barstow until you reach Ghost Town Road. If you can believe it, this leads to the Calico Ghost Town, an old silver mining camp in San Bernardino county. Abandoned after the value of silver went down in around the 1890s, the carefully restored town is a glimpse into the past, with plenty of fun activities to undertake, from gold panning to ghost tours.

Less than two hours outside Las Vegas, you’ll find the fabled Zzyzx Road, which will take you down a desert detour to an oasis. In the past, the oasis was modelled into a health spa with ‘healing waters’, until the area was taken over to become the current California State University’s Desert Studies Centre.

Once you’ve taken a wander around Zzyzx, jump back onto the I-15 North for the final leg of the day into the glittering jewel of the desert, Las Vegas, Nevada.

You are spoiled for choice when it comes to accommodation, from family friendly motels to dazzling five-star hotels on the Vegas Strip. Once you’ve settled in, venture out to discover some of Las Vegas’ iconic burger joints - FukuBurger, In-and-Out, Bachi Burger... the list goes on! For those 21 and older, you also have the option of visiting one of the city’s famous casinos for your one night in Vegas - just be sure to gamble responsibly!

DRIVE

455 km (285 mi) from Las Vegas

about 4 h 45 min by car · about 5 h 45 min by motorhome

Via **Veterans Memorial Highway**

DAY 2

Las Vegas to Richfield, Fishlake National Forest, Utah

With a four-hour drive ahead of you, grabbing breakfast in Las Vegas is essential. And there’s no better place to sample that American staple - pancakes - than BabyStacks. This beloved eatery now has four locations across the city, serving up dreamy pancakes and breakfast delights, including their most popular offering, the Red Velvet.

Hit the I-15 again, heading northwest through the brilliantly named Valley of Fire State Park. When you leave Nevada, you’ll briefly cross into the fringes of Arizona, before emerging in Utah. It’s here that I-15 turns into I-70, and you’ll enjoy a scenic drive into Fishlake National Forest.

A welcoming change of scene from the desert roads, Fishlake is characterised by open meadows bordered by aspen trees as well as the gem of Utah, Fish Lake itself. In addition to being an abundant fishing lake, the area surrounding it is also prime birdwatching land. You’ll be staying in the state of Utah overnight, in the small town of Richfield. There are a number of modest accommodation options available for weary travellers to put their feet up, as well as a camp ground where you can park a motorhome.

DRIVE

755 km (470 mi) from Richfield

about 8 h 15 min by car · about 10 h by motorhome

Via **Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway**

DAY 3

Richfield to Denver, Colorado via Glenwood Springs

We hope you got a good night's sleep in the quiet town of Richfield - today's journey from Utah into central Colorado is long, but also incredibly scenic. You'll be following the I-70, winding your way through Sevier and Grand County before you reach Grand Junction.

Here, you'll need to bear left to stay on the I-70 to avoid taking a massive detour deep into Colorado. After a stretch of 139 kilometres and about 1 hour 40 minutes, you'll arrive at Glenwood Springs.

While you could keep driving another three hours to continue straight to Denver, we recommend calling it a day in Glenwood Springs. The perfect place to unwind and relax after those hours on the road, Glenwood Springs offers a haven of natural beauty, as well as natural hot springs to loosen those knots.

Surrounded by Colorado's snowy peaks, there is no shortage of things to do here, from hiking and biking to horseback riding, rafting and skiing. For those who fancy an adrenaline rush, there's also skydiving and zip lining to enjoy here.

When you feel like you're ready to move on - and that could be a while - make the trip to Denver.

A DAY IN DENVER

DAY 4

Denver, Colorado

Denver is too big a city to be explored in one day, but you can try. Head towards 16th Street (the 16th Street Mall until 2025), often considered to be Denver's version of Los Angeles' Rodeo Drive. It's the perfect place to get your fill of shopping, restaurants, theatres and cinemas - there is always something going on here.

If scenery is your game, Colorado is the name. That old adage of 'it's not where you're going, it's how you get there' will never seem truer as you drive your hire car up Mount Blue Sky Scenic Byway (formerly Mount Evans Scenic Byway). The highest paved road in the US, this 30-kilometre route is known as the 'road to the sky' – a name that needs little explanation as you climb high above Denver up the majestic Mount Blue Sky (formerly Mount Evans).

Want to make a little money? Head on over to the US Mint for a free, intriguing tour. First established in 1863, the facility can pump out some 50 million coins a day.

As you'll be staying the night, why not do something different and hunker down in the ART Hotel? This modern feat of architecture houses a luxury retreat endowed with a number of stunning artworks as well

as slick, chic suites with clever high-tech amenities. Of course, if you're not in the mood to splash out, Denver has plenty of other places to stay as well.

> **Book ahead:**
> The Mount Blue Sky road opens in summer only and needs a timed-entry reservation, so check it's open and book before you go.

DRIVE

875 km (540 mi) from Denver

about 9 h 15 min by car · about 11 h 15 min by motorhome | Via **I 80**

DAY 5

Denver to Omaha, Nebraska

After an invigorating day in Denver, you'll be back on the road, direction Omaha, Nebraska. You'll be starting out on the I-76, which eventually becomes the I-80 after you cross state lines. At seven and a half hours there are plenty of roadside attractions where you can stop off and stretch your legs during this long journey.

If you swing by Ogallala, Nebraska, make sure you bring your camera for some fun snaps at the UFO Water Tower, as well as at the Petrified Wood Gallery - entirely dedicated to showcasing a collection of ancient wood and fossils, not to mention Native American artefacts.

As you say goodbye to Ogallala, it's another four hours, forty minutes or so to Omaha through the Nebraska countryside. Be sure to grab a meal before the big trip in Paxton, where you'll find Ole's Big Game Steakhouse and Lounge - a true slice of Americana. From here, take the I-80 all the way into Omaha, where you can have the rest of the day to rest or explore.

DRIVE

400 km (250 mi) from Omaha

about 4 h 30 min by car · about 5 h 30 min by motorhome | Via **I 80**

DAY 6

Omaha to Iowa City, Iowa

The city of Omaha, right on the border of the neighbouring state of Iowa, has plenty to see and do for visitors. As today's leg of the road trip is a slightly shorter one, this leaves you some free time to explore before you leave. Pay a visit to the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, with its incredible indoor desert ecosystem, as well as America's largest indoor rainforest.

You can also pick up a tasty bite in the Dundee Neighbourhood or explore the rustic chic surroundings of the Old Market, with its cobblestone streets and great shops. When you're ready to hit the road once more, jump back into your hire car and make your way back onto the I-80, crossing the border into Iowa.

Your final destination in ‘The Hawkeye State’ is Iowa City itself, but there is plenty to see along the route if you’d like a stop-off. This includes the World’s Largest Truck Stop - yes, we’re serious! A destination in itself, Iowa 80 Truckstop has a whole range of snacks and souvenirs as well as an awesome museum round the back.

Once you’ve recovered from the excitement of the truck stop, head across state on the I-80 W into Iowa City, your final destination for the day.

DRIVE

385 km (240 mi) from Iowa City

about 4 h 30 min by car · about 5 h 30 min by motorhome | Via **I 80**

DAY 7

Iowa City to Gary, Indiana

As you leave Iowa City, follow the I-80 right across the state line into Illinois. The drive ahead is relatively short, but it’s one where you have an incredible treat at the end - a visit to the stunning Lake Michigan at Gary, Indiana.

While you won’t be stopping overnight in Illinois, there’s plenty to stop off and see en route. At 3 Floyds Brewing Company, you’ll find some of the world’s finest craft beers, so be sure to stop by for a tour and perhaps pick up a crate or two - but remember not to sample any until you are safely parked up for the evening!

For those looking for a true slice of American patriotism, there are two enormous Stars And Stripes flags lining the route across Illinois - you can’t miss them!

As your journey brings you towards the north-western corner of Indiana, make your way to the city of Gary, Indiana.

In addition to bordering the great Lake Michigan, Gary is also the hometown of the Jackson 5, meaning you can visit the birthplace of the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, whilst you are here.

DRIVE

425 km (265 mi) from Gary

about 4 h 45 min by car · about 5 h 45 min by motorhome

Via **Indiana Toll Road**

DAY 8

Gary to Milan Ohio

Before you set off for Ohio, you simply have to spend a bit of time on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Gary is situated on the southern shore, where there’s plenty to experience in the great outdoors - whether you’re into hiking and birdwatching, or a tranquil morning fishing.

Today's first leg of the journey sees you heading out on the highway to seek out the eastbound Interstate 90. Your next overnight destination will be Milan - no, not the Italian fashion capital - a small town in Ohio that sits on the shores of Lake Erie.

If you're heading by on the Saturday before Halloween, the Tombstone Derby at Elmore is well worth your time - the locals dress up in their scariest outfits to race motorised coffins around the town for a night of spooky merriment.

Pulling into Milan, you'll have a range of affordable options in terms of accommodation. A quiet town, this place is simply perfect for spending a night after a day on the road.

DRIVE

415 km (255 mi) from Milan

about 4 h 45 min by car · about 5 h 45 min by motorhome | Via **I 80**

DAY 9

Milan to Lanse, Pennsylvania

Your first port-of-call on day nine is to check out the southern shores of Lake Erie - a spectacular sight first thing in the morning. With some epic photographs snapped onto your SD card, get back into your hire car and find the I-90, which will quickly become Interstate 80.

The itinerary for today will take you on a scenic drive, leaving the bounds of Ohio to cross into Pennsylvania. The I-80 takes you right through the picturesque Cuyahoga Valley National Park, complete with lakes, ancient trees and eagles soaring overhead.

Just before you hit Pennsylvania, you'll drive across the Meander Creek Reservoir, a beautiful mirror-like body of water which has built an outstanding reputation for birdwatching.

As you continue on into the heart of Pennsylvania, you'll soon find yourself immersed in the verdant forests of the 'Keystone State' - be sure to stop along the meandering highway to grab photos of the soaring canopies, babbling brooks and all other things natural and wonderful, before you stop at the secluded, rural town of Lanse.

This quiet town is your last overnight stop before your final destination, so use your time here to relax and recharge.

DRIVE

405 km (250 mi) from Lanse | **about 5 h** by car · about 6 h by motorhome

Via **Z. H. Confair Memorial Highway**

DAY 10

Lanse to New York, New York

RETURN

We're going to be honest here - there isn't a great deal to be said of the final stretch into New York. Mostly small homesteads and quaint villages line the route along the I-80 E and the I-280 E, but it's when you see the famous city skyline swing into view that you can really start to become excited.

This thriving metropolis needs little introduction. Of course, there are the classic sights to be seen, from the Statue of Liberty herself, towering 93 metres above the waves on Liberty Island, to the towering Empire State Building, once the world's tallest structure.

You can stretch your legs on a stroll across the Brooklyn Bridge, incorporating one of the most photogenic views of Manhattan en route to one of the city's most artistic, hip boroughs. Catch some rays in Prospect Park, and sample some of the best NY style pizza around at Di Fara Pizza in Midwood.

If you're into the music scene, catch a gig at the Music Hall of Williamsburg, or if you're a fan of amusement parks, catch the ferry to Coney Island for some good old fashioned fun. To toast to the end of truly epic journey, treat yourself to a drink at rooftop bar Gallow Green or Top of the Strand. Who knows, maybe you'll catch a show on Broadway, or go soak up the atmosphere at Times Square. Take your time in New York, you've earned it!

Returning in New York

If staff find new damage, ask for the updated condition report and how any charge is worked out: see checking the vehicle when you return it. More on motorhome hire in New York.

Enjoy the journey, coast to coast.

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