

DEPARTURES

7 Best Outdoor Hotel Experiences Across the US

By [The Editors](#) on May 03, 2021

[The 2021 Legend Awards.](#)



© Michael Chilcoat/Courtesy The Ranch at Rock Creek

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Over the last 12 months, travelers have put a premium on [outdoor experiences](#). In a year where we spent so much time cooped up inside, luxury travelers road tripped to find a change of scenery and [escape into the wilderness](#). Our favorite outdoor experiences across the U.S. allowed for ample social distancing and reminded us of the majestic scenery we can find right

here in our backyard. From newly opened [five-star glamping resorts](#) to [helicopter-fueled adventures](#), these are the [Legend Award](#) honorees for best outdoor experiences.



Courtesy Enchantment Resort

Enchantment Resort

[Enchantment Resort](#), an [American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts](#) property nestled within Boynton Canyon in Sedona, Arizona, debuted Trail House in October 2020 as a way to further immerse guests in their idyllic natural surroundings. Trail House offers private guided experiences through the Sedona red rocks—from sunset hikes to the most picturesque canyons to mountain biking adventures for any and all skill levels. The beauty of Trail House's guided experiences is they can be tailored to each guest, based on what they want their Sedona trip to look like. If you're seeking solitude and a meditative experience, your guide can bring you to the under-the-radar mesas with exceptional views and no crowds. If you're an adrenaline seeker, the guides can teach you to mountain bike. And if you're keen on learning more about the spirituality of Sedona, Trail House can plan a private vortex hike for you.



Courtesy Aman Resorts

Camp Sarika, Amangiri

The pinnacle of luxury glamping, [Camp Sarika](#)—part of [Amangiri](#), an [American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts](#) property—invites guests to experience the heat, and heart, of the Utah desert. The camp is an intimate escape, with only 10 sites holding a maximum of 30 guests. Each canvas-topped unit, with one or two bedrooms, features living and dining areas, bathrooms, and a private plunge pool for the ultimate after-hike refresh. There are also two spas with treatments inspired by traditional Navajo healing. The camp is a short five-minute drive, or 30-minute hike, from the main resort, meaning visitors have access to Amangiri's full suite of amenities as well. After a day exploring the surrounding three national parks or the Navajo Nation Reservation, Camp Sarika is a regenerative oasis to retreat back to.



Jay Dash/Courtesy The Lodge at Blue Sky, Auberge Resorts Collection

The Lodge at Blue Sky, Auberge Resorts Collection

The remote alpine terrain of Utah's Wasatch Mountain Range is a playground of possibility thanks to the helicopter experiences offered by [The Lodge at Blue Sky, Auberge Resorts Collection](#), an [American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts](#) property. The Lodge at Blue Sky's signature Park City helicopter experiences are nothing short of legendary. After boarding the helicopter in a nearby meadow, guests are welcomed to a mountaintop yurt for an early-morning feast, followed by an exhilarating helicopter ride across 200,000 acres of accessible land to their ultimate destination. Whether heli-skiing, heli-snowshoeing, or heli-wellness, the Lodge at Blue Sky has a high-altitude trip for anyone seeking solitude in nature.



Nicole Franzen/Courtesy Troutbeck

Troutbeck

Tucked away on 250 acres in upstate New York, you'll find [Troutbeck](#), where an abundance of hiking trails, locally sourced food, and yes, ponds and streams full of fish, enhance the natural beauty of this estate. The newly constructed [Barns at Troutbeck](#) are home to the inn's wellness offerings. With a harmonious blend of golden reclaimed timber and sleek, relaxing interiors, the Barns are a calming and warm retreat in the wilderness. The Tall Barn, with its sweeping ceilings and views of the surrounding woods, is built for studio classes including yoga and meditation, while the adjacent Long Barn holds the gym, changing rooms, and saunas.



Stuart Thurlkill/The Resort at Paws Up

The Resort at Paws Up

Home to a working cattle ranch, [The Resort at Paws Up](#) in Montana boasts 100 miles of trails across a 37,000-acre property. A stay in the private vacation homes drops you squarely amid the timbers, while their luxury camping tents offer sophisticated, safari-style accommodations. The list of outdoor activities is expansive, with offerings in boating, hiking, biking, rafting, swimming, horseback riding, sporting clays, ATV tours, and of course, fly-fishing. The newest addition on the southern edge of the ranch is The Green O, an adults-only sanctuary set to open this summer. There are 12 units, each a different “Haus,” all with floor-to-ceiling windows, offering a respite among the trees.



Courtesy Castle Hot Springs

Castle Hot Springs

[Castle Hot Springs](#), an [American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts](#) property, is a remote outdoor enclave that revolves around three natural hot springs—including the hottest fresh water hot spring in the world. The resort doubles as a working organic farm and the most exceptional property features—the greenhouses, the dining areas, and the spa—are set at least partially outdoors. But their most impressive outdoor experience is the [Castle Hot Springs Via Ferrata Adventure Course](#). Via Ferrata—Italian for Iron Way—is a climbing course using rungs, ladders, and steel cables. There are very few courses in the U.S., and this one, made just for Castle Hot Springs, that allows aspiring climbers (with a guide) to scale the 400-foot Castle Peak.



Courtesy The Ranch at Rock Creek

The Ranch at Rock Creek

The rustic yet refined [Ranch at Rock Creek](#) is a sprawling retreat located on more than 6,000 acres in the Montana wilderness. The ranch's all-inclusive model means that you will never have to miss out on an adventure. Forget cancellation costs or extensive planning headaches, The Ranch at Rock Creek prides itself on a year-round activities program and farm-to-table meals, all part of the package deal. This breathtaking combination of Western adventure and amenities includes an expansive spa and expert guides to lead you on any number of outdoor experiences: fly fishing, horseback riding, geocaching, hiking, snowshoeing, ice skating, sledding, and more. Plus, an exclusive ski concierge awaits winter Ranch guests at the nearby Discovery Ski Area. The Ranch at Rock Creek features many types of accommodations to fit individual styles, including luxury suites, private authentic log cabins, and a historic, original homestead barn. But luxurious glamping in canvas-topped cabins along the stream is perhaps the best way to reflect on nature as part of the experiential travel at the Ranch.

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