

Park LIFE

Fresh air, stunning SCENERY... oh, and bears. Check out the five best NATIONAL PARKS in the world, and discover which YOU'LL be exploring next BY RACHEL BROWN

Teddy BEAR'S PICNIC

Park here Yellowstone (or as Yogi Bear would say, "Jellystone") in the US state of Wyoming, was the world's first national park. Its residents include wolves, bison, elk and bears, and visitors get lessons in how to pepper spray a grizzly, just in case they have to fend for themselves. No joke. There's also great horse riding, boating, fishing and hiking.

Park & ride Fly from London to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, from £675 with Delta Airlines (Delta.com) then catch a shuttle transfer or rent a car (Jacksonholenet.com/transportation).

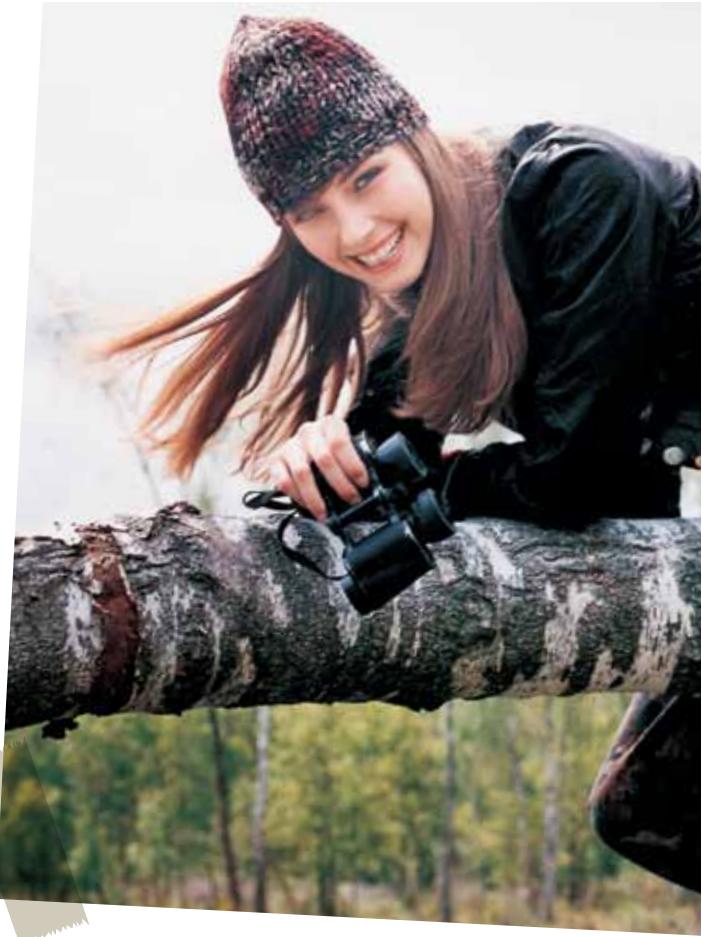
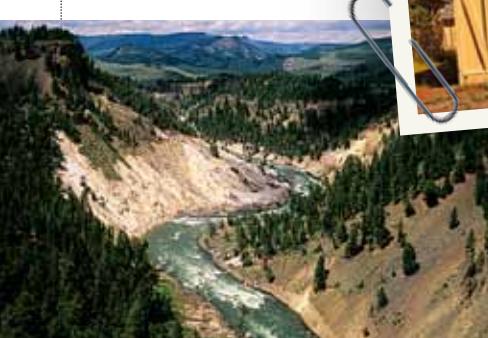
Picnic time Start with waffles at the top of Rendezvous Mountain. Or picnic on bagels from the Wildflour Bakery at the south-east gateway to the park. Then join a horse trail ride as part of the Roosevelt Old West Dinner Cookout, and dine alfresco on steak, coleslaw and potato salad, cowboy style.

Pyjama party Bag a park lodge with doubles from £43 per room (Yellowstone-nationalparklodges.com).

Once the day visitors leave, you get VIP access to the park – along with the bears, of course...



Left: Look out for Boo Boo in the park
Above: Stay in a park lodge – painted yellow, natch



Lakes APPEAL

Park here More of a staycation kinda girl? The Lake District is for you. England's biggest national park is a fave with outdoorsy types for its great cycling, kayaking, hiking and fishing (Lakedistrictfishing.net).

Park & ride Train stations at Kendal, Oxenholme and Carlisle connect to London and Glasgow, but it's easiest to get about by car (hire from £33.50 a day, Hertz.co.uk).

Picnic time The area is packed with quality restaurants, old-school bakeries and cosy cafes. Stock up on local specialities such as Cumberland sausages and Cumberland Rum Nicky (a date and rum flan) at Cranstons Cumbrian Food Hall in Penrith. Or dine out at Jerichos in Windermere (Jerichos.co.uk), which is listed in the Michelin Guide.

Pyjama party Lakeland House, Coniston, has amazing views – double rooms cost from £78 a night (Lakelandhouse.co.uk). Camping fans should check out Eskdale's Fisherground Campsite, from £6 a night (Fishergroundcampsite.co.uk).



You'll get a view to a hill at Lakeland House



Stay under CANVAS in the doors or snuggle up in STYLE

Glacier MINT

Park here The largest ice cap in Europe, Vatnajökull, which featured in Bond flick *A View To A Kill*, is framed by stunning scenery in Iceland's national park of the same name. Make like Roger Moore and strap on skis or jump on a skidoo. There are also rivers, waterfalls and black volcanic sands. In winter, temperatures drop to -30°C, but that's when it's best to see reindeer and the Northern Lights.

Park & ride Return flights from London to Reykjavik cost from £200 (Icelandexpress.com), excluding taxes.

Picnic time Whale steak, smoked lamb and pickled fish top the menu, but there's also great cheese, breads and local puds, like *skyr* (similar to yoghurt). Try the post-dinner "viking hour" at Fosshotel Vatnajökull (Fosshotel.is) for schnapps looking out over the glacier.

Pyjama party The Fosshotel Vatnajökull has doubles from £87 a night. Or try foodie fave Arnanes Country Hotel from £126 a night (Arnanes.is).



The Fosshotel's better than all white



This is just the tip of the iceberg

Hot SPOT

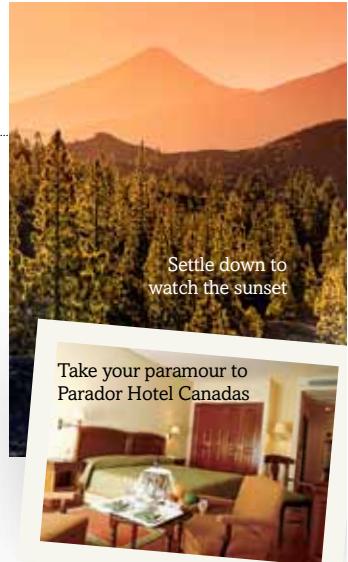
Park here An intriguing "lunar" landscape, Teide in the Canary Island's Tenerife is Spain's oldest, biggest and busiest national park. It was used as the backdrop to the film *Clash Of The Titans*, so pop along for your own Hollywood holiday. Trek up the black rock volcano (Thomsonexcursions.co.uk), but pack the sunscreen: temperatures can top 40°C. The park is home to eagles, native lizards, wild sheep, Algerian hedgehogs and fascinating flora.

David Attenborough would be in seventh heaven.

Park & ride Return flights from London to Tenerife South cost from £102.40 (Ryanair.com).

Picnic time Tenerife's warm climate equals juicy fruit and veg all year round, while a plentiful supply of seafood from the Atlantic means you'll always find fresh, delicious food. Pack a picnic, or lunch at Restaurante Bambi (Bambi-gourmet.es).

Pyjama party Take in the view at Parador Hotel Canadas del Teide in La Orotava, with doubles from £72 (Expedia.co.uk). Or splash out at the five-star Hotel Botanico & Oriental Spa Garden, where doubles cost from £205 (Hotelbotanico.com).



Settle down to watch the sunset

Take your paramour to Parador Hotel Canadas



Cougar TOWN

Park here

Kootenay National Park in the Canadian Rocky Mountains is home to bears, wolves, coyotes, cougars, lynx, wolverine, moose, goats and bighorn sheep. Phew! As well as playing animal bingo, you can try mountaineering, boating, fishing, or just hang out in the natural hot springs in the village of Radium. Weather varies from hot, dry cactus country to cool and rainy glacier land.

Park & ride Flights from London to Vancouver cost from £624 (Aircanada.com). Car rental costs from £35 per day (Avis.co.uk).

Picnic time Kootenay is picnic central, with handy kitchen shelters, stoves and firewood stations. Pick up supplies from stores outside the park and treat yourself to a Canadian feast of BBQ pork, apple chicken salad and bannock bread followed by butter tarts and brownies.

Pyjama party Chalet Europe has doubles from £76.70 a night (Chaleteurope.com). In the summer, you can pitch a tent in the park from £13.80 a night (Pc.gc.ca). 



Leave? You won't be able to bear it!



Log on at the Chalet Europe