America’s National Parks offer some of the world’s greatest natural wonders, including unique outdoor recreation opportunities in all corners of the nation. Nowhere is this truer than on the water. From world-class fishing to houseboating and more, the waters of national parks offer unique boating experiences ranging from tranquility to high adventure. Here is our selection of great places to go boating in your national parks, courtesy of the American Recreation Coalition. Entries are listed alphabetically by NPS unit. Find more national park boating opportunities at www.findyourpark.com. Find information on buying fishing licenses and finding boat access ramps across the USA – including America’s Top Family Fishing and Boating Spots -- at www.takemefishing.org. Learn more about today’s boating choices, boating shows and more from www.discoverboating.com!

**Spectacular Views, Endless Opportunities – Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (MT, WY)**

The vast, wild landscape of Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area offers visitors unparalleled opportunities to immerse themselves in the natural world. Numerous marinas along the canyon offer visitors the opportunity to rent or use their own boats to enjoy the colors and scenic beauty of Bighorn Canyon. With over 120,000 acres, the park offers an astounding variety of ecosystems, wildlife and more than 10,000 years of human history to explore. Ok-A-Beh Marina and Horseshoe Bend Marina offer multiple ways for boaters of all experience levels to enjoy this unique part of the National Park System. More information is available at Bighorn Canyon’s National Park Service site here.

**World-Class Fishing in Biscayne Bay – Biscayne National Park (FL)**

With mangrove shorelines, seagrass meadows, sand flats, and deeper reefs and wrecks, Biscayne National Park offers diverse fishing and boating experiences in its 172,000 acres year-round, right in Miami’s backyard. The park offers free educational fishing clinics to help you choose tackle and gear,
and learn new fishing techniques. Four county marinas near the park allow for easy access, with two feeding directly into the park. Although Biscayne is a national park, fishing in the park is governed by the state of Florida, and a valid Florida State Recreational Fishing License is required to fish anywhere in the park. More information is available at Biscayne Bay’s National Park Service site [here].

**Historic Islands in Boston Harbor – Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area (MA)**

The Boston Harbor Islands are one of the northeast’s great destinations. Just minutes from downtown Boston and surrounding communities, the harbor islands offer magnificent views, remarkable history and countless recreation opportunities. Whether you call Boston home, or are visiting for the first time, the Boston Harbor Islands should be on your bucket list. Launch your boat from Constitution Marina in the Charlestown neighborhood in Boston or one of many boat ramps near the islands, take a ranger tour, see America’s oldest light station. Get on the water and explore one of the country’s most historic harbors. More information is available at Boston Harbor Island’s National Park Service site [here].

**Boating Is a Way of Life – Cape Hatteras National Seashore (NC)**

Boating is a way of life on the Outer Banks. There’s much more water than there is land, so it’s only natural to be afloat. Maybe it’s the whipping wind in your face or the wake you leave behind, but being on the water can clear your head like nothing else. On a boat, you can easily forget about the problems of life on land. Whether you’re arriving by boat, trailering your own boat behind your car, or planning to rent one once you get here, you will find that Cape Hatteras National Seashore and the island villages are very accommodating to boaters. Launch or rent a boat from one of several marinas located on Cape Hatteras, or use a public boat launch to start your boating adventure. More information is available at the Cape’s National Park Service site [here].
**Follow in the Wake of Captain John Smith’s Chesapeake Bay Journeys – Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA)**

Bring along a copy of James Michener’s *Chesapeake* and *A Boater’s Guide to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail* as you learn about discoveries of the 1600’s, sample dining at towns like St. Michaels, listen to NOAA’s talking buoys on your smartphone and visit island communities today on Tangier Island and Smith Island on the first water-based national trail in this country. The Boater’s Guide is an invaluable resource for finding out where to launch your boat, best boats to use, sights to see and more on this 3,000 mile resource. More information is available at the Trail’s National Park Service site [here](#).

**Visit One of the Treasures of the Florida Keys – Dry Tortugas National Park (FL)**

With no roads or airports, the way to experience one of America’s most beautiful parks is by boat. Located 70 miles west of Key West, Dry Tortugas National Park is home to picturesque blue waters, breathtaking coral reefs and Fort Jefferson – the site of Dr. Samuel Mudd’s jail cell. Snorkeling, diving, fishing, camping and more are available in the park. Whether taking the Yankee Freedom Ferry, hiring a charter or piloting your own boat, a visit to Dry Tortugas is sure to create lasting memories. Learn more at [www.drytortugas.com](http://www.drytortugas.com). More information is available at Dry Tortugas’ National Park Service site [here](#).
A World Heritage Site in Your Backyard – Everglades National Park (FL)

Spanning 1.5 million acres, most of Everglades National Park is accessible only by water, so bringing or renting a boat is the ideal way to experience the park. The park offers excellent fishing, and snapper, sea trout, redfish, bass, and bluegill are plentiful. With patience and luck, you'll see flocks of wading birds, deer, and even the park’s most sought-after resident, the American Alligator! More information – including marina locations and regulations – is available here.

See New York City in a Whole New Light! – Gateway National Recreation Area (NJ, NY)

Gateway National Recreation Area offers one of the most unique recreation experiences in the country. Situated on and near the shoreline of New York City, Gateway offers boating, ocean swimming, bird watching, hiking and camping in an urban environment. Located within the park, Gateway Marina offers a full-service experience right in Brooklyn. Launch your boat into Jamaica Bay and head out to get a view of the City that Never Sleeps you'll never forget. More information including directions and rates is available through Gateway Marina’s website at http://www.gwmarina.com/, or at the unit’s National Park Service site here.
A New Perspective of the Nation’s Capital – George Washington Memorial Parkway (DC, MD, VA)

See national landmarks like the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument and Kennedy Center like you’ve never seen them before as you cruise one of the most famous rivers in the world. Launch or rent your boat from the one of several marinas that dot the river, including the Washington Sailing Marina, Columbia Island Marina and Belle Haven Park and Marina on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Cast a line for bass, pike, walleye and more as you enjoy a day on the water in the nation’s capital. Learn more about the George Washington Memorial Parkway at the unit’s National Park Service page here.

Spectacular Canyons and Native American History on Lake Powell – Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (AZ, UT)

Surrounded by canyons, peaks and buttes, Lake Powell offers an experience unlike any other. Rent or launch houseboats, ski and fishing boats, personal watercraft and paddle crafts from Antelope Point Marina, located just 12 miles from Page, AZ. The marina is located within the Federal Reservation of the Navajo Nation, which gives Antelope Point a unique native influence in the design and engineering of the marina facility, making it one of the largest of its type in the world. If you need a break from the water, Antelope Point is also the closest land-based marina to world-famous Rainbow Bridge National Monument, which is a short hike from the Rainbow Bridge Dock. Or, play a round of golf while taking in spectacular views at Lake Powell National Golf Course. More information is available at Glen Canyon’s National Park Service site, here.
A Whole New View of the Grand Tetons – Grand Teton National Park (WY)

Framed by the majestic Grand Tetons, Jackson Lake in Grand Teton National Park offers some of the best scenery in the world from the comforts of your boat. Rent or launch from Colter Bay Marina and enjoy pristine mountain waters. Sail, waterski or windsurf Jackson Lake and catch glimpses of America’s iconic wildlife like elk, bison and more! For more information on boating regulations and launch sites, click here. More information is available on Grand Teton’s National Park Service site here.

Visit Remote Beaches – Gulf Islands National Seashore (MS)

If you have a boat, then the Gulf Islands National Seashore is perfect for you, offering the chance to visit beaches on several different islands in a day. Marinas dot the Mississippi coastline, including the Gulfport Small Craft Harbor, Bay Marina in Bay St. Louis, and the National Park Service maintains a public boat launch at the Seashore’s Davis Bayou Area. If piloting your own boat isn’t your speed, take a ferry out to these pristine islands through Ship Island Excursions and look for dolphins as you cruise the islands. Enjoy bird watching, swimming, fishing and even island camping in the beautiful Gulf of Mexico. More information including regulations and safety information is available here.
Your Own Floating Luxury Suite – Lake Mead National Recreation Area (AZ, NV)

Imagine all the comforts of home – comfy beds, great living space, a fully appointed kitchen and a solid sound system – on your own private floating condo surrounded by Lake Mead’s million-dollar view. Located less than an hour from Las Vegas, houseboating on Lake Mead offers a secluded, surreal landscape of crystal-clear waters and colorful canyons. Lunch and launch from Callville Bay Resort & Marina in Nevada or take a trip to the Arizona side of the lake and launch from Temple Bar Marina. Your houseboat will be your home base for fishing, hiking, swimming, water sports and more! Learn more about Lake Mead National Recreation Area at its Park Service site here.

Cruise Crystal Waters – Whiskeytown National Recreation Area (CA)

Mountain peaks frame Whiskeytown Lake’s beautiful sapphire-blue waters. The lake offers boating, waterskiing, sailing, kayaking and canoeing on its crystal-clear waters surrounded by 36 miles of shoreline. Share the lake with the numerous breeding pairs of bald eagles that live on the shoreline, and cast a line for trout, bass and salmon. Launch your own boat, or rent one from Oak Bottom Marina by day – where you can get everything from boats and kayaks to water toys and fishing gear – and spend the night at Oak Bottom RV Park and Campground just a stone’s throw from the water. Learn more at Oak Bottom’s website at www.whiskeytownmarinas.com/, and at Whiskeytown’s Park Service website here.
Voyageurs National Park offers more than 270 of the best and most pristine camp sites available in the National Park System. The catch? All of the sites are accessible only by watercraft! Enjoy your own private lakefront experience in Minnesota’s North Woods with easy access to swimming, fishing, hiking and more! Launch your boat for free using a boat ramp at one of three National Park Service Visitor Centers located in the park, or set out from any one of five gateway communities around the park. More information is available at Voyageurs’ National Park Service site here.

AMERICAN RECREATION COALITION — is a nonprofit, Washington-based federation founded in 1979. The association provides a unified voice for recreation interests to ensure their full and active participation in government policy-making on issues such as public land management. ARC membership consists of more than 100 organizations, including national and regional associations and corporations that represent a major share of the $650 billion a year recreation/leisure industry and enthusiast groups representing millions of recreationists. Since its inception, ARC has sought to catalyze public-private partnerships to enhance and protect outdoor recreation opportunities and resources. ARC conducts research, organizes national conferences, and disseminates information through a variety of means, including its Web site www.funoutdoors.com. ARC plays a leading role in several key coalitions and organizations, including the Coalition for Recreational Trails, Scenic Byways Coalition and Coalition for Recreation in the National Forests. ARC is leading the effort to expand activities across the country associated with the celebration of June as Great Outdoors Month™. ARC was also instrumental in launching National Get Outdoors Day, a national effort dedicated to helping children enjoy healthy, active outdoor lives.