Too Cool for School: 8 Fun End of Summer Escapes

September 24, 2014 – It’s time for back to school shopping, last minute science experiments, packed lunches, and busy weekends filled with ballet recitals and soccer practices. With the hectic schedule that follows the start of a new school year, it can seem almost impossible to find time for the perfect end of summer getaway.

Fortunately, hotel search www.trivago.com has gathered 8 of the best destinations across the country for drivable, last-minute weekend trips before the leaves turn to crimson and the crisp fall air rolls in. Whether you want to bring the kids along for a family-friendly vacation, or escape for the perfect couples’ retreat, you are sure to find everything you’re looking for in one of these amazing cities.

San Antonio, TX

With its rich history and limitless attractions like the Alamo, the Riverwalk, and the breathtaking Hill Country region, the southern charm of San Antonio is a must-see for native Texans and visitors alike. Entertain the kids at Six Flags Fiesta Texas, Seaworld San Antonio, or Schlitterbahn Waterpark, which is only a short drive away in New Braunfels. Appreciate art at the McNay Museum or bike around the scenic Mission Inn trails and then grab dinner at one of the many acclaimed restaurants in the Pearl Brewery. End the evening in the trendy neighborhood of Southtown to enjoy the warm summer night on a patio with an ice cold beer or fusion cocktail.

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Minneapolis, MN

The green lifestyle of Minneapolis is alive with outdoor enthusiasts enjoying the numerous bike trails, kayaking down the Mississippi River, or taking an evening stroll through downtown. One of Minneapolis's best kept secrets is its flair for budget-friendly fashion. Indulge in tax free shopping at the Mall of the America, one of the nation's largest retail complexes, or amaze the kids and visit attractions such as the Nickelodeon Universe or Barbie Dreamhouse Experience. Sports fanatics can take on a Minnesota Twins or Minnesota Vikings game, while fine art enthusiasts can grab seats in the Tony-award winning Guthrie Theater. Minneapolis's world known music venues offer everything from rock to jazz and are guaranteed to deliver the ultimate concert experience.


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Courtesy of (counter-clockwise) Gilmour Creative, Meet Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, and Explore Minnesota Tourism.
Sonoma County, CA

As the birthplace of California’s wine industry, Sonoma County is home to over 400 wineries and boasts over 60,000 acres of never-ending, lush, ripe vineyards. Savor a glass of California’s richest Cabernet Sauvignons or a juicy Pinot Noir as you dine tablesde in a picturesque vineyard. In addition to the luxurious wine culture, Sonoma is also a haven for relaxation. The rejuvenating day spas and peaceful resorts will help you de-stress and energize your mind and body. Sonoma County has more artists per capita than anywhere else in the state, you are sure to find your fair share of galleries, sculpture gardens, and major performing arts centers like the Green Music Center. For a more active vacation, travelers can hike through the wondrous redwood forests, fish along the coast, or simply enjoy the natural beauty of northern California’s beaches.

Boston, MA

Cobblestone pavements and red brick houses tell the tale of one of our nation’s oldest settlements – Boston. Walk amongst the spectacular New England foliage as you experience the history of the Civil War along The Freedom Trail. Stray away from the typical tourist destinations and head over to Jamaica Pond. Here you can spend your day on the water, signing up for sailing lessons or renting your own rowboats and kayaks. Discover lighthouses or lounge on the ferry while you travel to the islands around Boston Harbor. Back on the mainland, sample award-winning craft beers during a tour of the iconic Samuel Adams Brewery and reward your taste buds with fresh seafood, creamy clam chowder and New England’s famous lobster rolls.

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Lush green squares, elegant architecture and the famous southern hospitality draw visitors from all over to America’s sweetest southern belle, Savannah. One of the most walkable cities in the U.S., Savannah offers 22 tree-lined squares – some of which date back to 1733 – ornamental ironwork, and Antebellum-style homes as far as the eye can see. If sandy beaches and salty breezes are more your style, Tybee Beach is definitely worth a visit. Discover marine wildlife during a Tybee Beach Ecology Tour and learn about these sea creatures at the Tybee Marine Science Center. Adventurers can enjoy jet skiing and deep sea fishing, while those looking for something more relaxed can simply hang out on the beach and soak up some sun. A ghost tour of America’s most haunted city will raise goose bumps as you walk through spooky graveyards and come face-to-face with lost spirits and mysterious phantoms.
Annapolis, MD

Tucked away on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland’s capital boasts a maritime heritage unlike anywhere else. One-of-a-kind boutiques, home décor shops, antique stores, and fine art galleries line the waterfront streets of Downtown Annapolis. The whole family can enjoy a guided tour of the impressive Navy Academy campus and even attend a spirited Navy football match. If you’re feeling lucky, try your hand at Blackjack, Roulette, or Craps at Maryland Live! Casino where the nightlife and live entertainment keep going until the sun comes up. A trip to Annapolis wouldn’t be complete without getting on the water for an early morning sailing session or a sunset harbor cruise.

Columbus, OH

Just a short drive from major cities like Cleveland, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati lies Ohio’s capital – Columbus. Tour Europe without leaving the country as you stroll through the historic German Village, filled with beautifully restored homes, classic bakeries, and delicatessens. Have fun with science at over 300 interactive exhibits at The Center of Science and Industry (COSI), or see animals from all over the world at the nationally acclaimed Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. The vibrant and eclectic Short North neighborhood is lined with Bohemian studios, high end boutiques, and a fair share of bargain stores. Daredevils will flock to Grand Prix Karting, the nation’s largest indoor karting attraction, and Hocking Peaks Adventure Park for an exhilarating zipline challenge.

Kansas City, MO

For a truly off-the-grid and budget-friendly weekend destination, Kansas City's Midwestern allure is impossible to miss. Known for jazz, fountains, and barbeque, Kansas City is considered the “Heartland of America,” a metropolis offering a wealth of attractions for the whole family. Jump on board the Arabia Steamboat Museum for a glimpse of frontier life and buried treasure, or brace yourself for roller coasters and thrill rides at the Worlds of Fun amusement park. KC is also a shopping goldmine – the Spanish-inspired Country Club Plaza offers more than 180 shops and restaurants and you are sure to find a variety of local boutiques in the Northland, Downtown, and Brookside & Waldo districts. The Tuscan-inspired Briarcliff Village sits on the top of a hill and is the perfect place for outdoor shopping, dinner, and a breathtaking view of downtown.

About trivago
Travelers find the ideal hotel for the best price on www.trivago.com. trivago is the world's largest online hotel search site, comparing rates from over 700,000 hotels on over 175 booking sites worldwide. trivago integrates over 120 million hotel ratings and 14 million photos in order to make finding the perfect hotel easier for users. Over 75 million visitors per month find their ideal hotel by using trivago's various filters. trivago was founded in 2005 in Düsseldorf, Germany and currently operates 47 international country platforms in 28 languages.

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