

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

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The 15 Best U.S. Small Towns for a Summer Vacation

These fetching towns will put you under their summertime spell.

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There's just something about a small town in summer that hits a little differently. Perhaps it's the community festivals, the breezy nights walking down Main Street, or an ice cream truck rumbling down a suburban road blaring that all too familiar song. Whatever it is, we've got love for it. And we bet you do too. Here are 15 small towns that are ideal for a summer getaway right now.

McCall, Idaho

It's important to keep your mind open to the possibilities during a visit to [McCall](#), a locale home to 3,200 residents. That's because, in McCall, you'll find Payette Lake, which is reportedly home to [Sharlie](#), a lake monster, which has been described as a creature "...at least 35 feet long, with a dinosaur-type head, pronounced jaw, humps like a camel, and shell-like skin."

Lake monsters aside, McCall is a pretty welcoming place. Located in the awe-inspiring West Central Mountains of Idaho, this is a place to pack your activewear as you're likely going to spend your days hiking and horseback riding or mountain biking and waterskiing until the sun goes down. (Bird-watching, dinner cruises, whitewater rafting, and paddleboarding are all big local draws, too.) After a long day of working up a sweat, kick back at [Salmon River Brewery](#). Specifically, head up to its rooftop beer garden that affords the best view of Payette Lake from downtown. Book dinner at the [Clubhouse Restaurant](#) at [Jug Mountain Ranch](#), which has a patio dining setup ideal for sunset dining. Come nap time, book the upmarket [Shore Lodge](#) or [Hotel McCall](#), both of which will keep you safe from lake monsters all night long.