

BE STRONG+WELL HEALTHY BODY PLAN

getaway

Summer adventures await!

Energize your body and mind, and immerse yourself in nature, with an exhilarating vacation in one of these spectacular and sporty destinations.

by Pam O'Brien

1 REI CO-OP ADVENTURES

Outdoor lovers, rejoice—REI has added 17 new trips in the U.S. Take the three-day San Juan Family Kayak Tour, and paddle the Cascadia Marine with your crew. As you navigate the rich ecosystem, you'll look for sea lions, otters, and porpoises. Then camp on one of the islands, where you'll learn about the area and enjoy delicious meals prepared by your guides. Or get your adrenaline pumping with the Yosemite Backpacking Half-Dome five-day trip. You'll climb the 4,800-foot mountain and see stunning views of the Sierra Nevada, and you'll also explore the backcountry. In the evening, sit down to dinner under the stars in your wilderness campsite. (San Juan Islands trip: \$949 per person for REI members—lifetime membership is \$20 per person; Yosemite trip: \$1,699 per person for REI members, rei.com/adventures)

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2 BETHLEHEM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

This picturesque town in the White Mountains offers endless opportunities for hiking, biking, water sports, and zip-lining, among other things. Start your visit at Franconia Notch State Park, where you can walk through the amazing Flume Gorge with its waterfalls, glacial pools, and granite walls. Go canoeing or kayaking at Echo Lake; try rock climbing at Cannon Cliff, where you can see hawks and falcons; or head to a destination nearby where you're likely to spot a moose. For help with the moose sighting (and all the activities the area has to offer), stay at the award-winning Bear Mountain Lodge, a rustic yet luxurious hand-crafted log cabin on 26 wooded acres with views of Mount Washington, where the owners will help you create your perfect adventure itinerary. (Rooms start at \$200 per night and include a full breakfast, bearmountainlodge.net)

3 ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Asheville is an adventure lover's paradise that you can explore by land, air, and water. Spend a day or two hiking through the surrounding mountains and forests (check out the Asheville Hike Finder at exploreasheville.com). Climb Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Mississippi, for some amazing views. Or combine wellness and tranquility with your trek by taking a waterfall nature yoga hiking tour (starting at \$69 per person, namasteinnature.com). Get up early for a hot-air balloon ride over the mountains to watch the sun rise (\$299 a

person, ashevillehotairballoons.com). End the day with a stand-up paddleboard tour down the river at sunset (\$80 per person, waimaunaashevillesuptours.com). For a customized experience, stay at the Cumberland Falls Bed & Breakfast Inn and take private hiking and kayaking tours with the innkeeper, who is a certified naturalist. At night, relax in the peaceful gardens or at the spa. (Rooms start at \$229 a night, cumberlandfalls.com)

4 ESTES PARK, COLORADO

Located at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Estes Park is the perfect gateway to some incredible experiences—and it tends to be less crowded than other nearby places. Begin your adventure with an overnight llama pack and fly-fishing trip. You'll hike through the backcountry with your adorable llama pal and fly-fish by day. In the evening, your guide will set up camp and prepare your meals (\$325 per person per day, kirksflyshop.com). Take a whitewater rafting ride through rapids on the Colorado River, and prepare for some wild twists, turns, and drops (\$129 per person, 3-person minimum to book online, rapidtransitrafting.com). Or be a daredevil and camp on the side of a cliff with Kent Mountain Adventure Center, where you can rock climb and have a steak dinner before tucking into your sky-high bed (\$1,600 for 2 people, kentmountain.com). When you're ready to come back down to earth, check into a luxury suite at the Della Terra Mountain Chateau and head to the spa or sauna for a little rest and relaxation. (Suites start at \$285 a night, dellaterra-mountainchateau.com) ■