

25 Best College Towns and Cities in the U.S.

Whether you're planning a college tour or a cultural getaway, these spots make the grade.

By [Stacey Leasca](#) | Updated on October 10, 2024

A good college town is where the students breathe life into their communities with art, culture, social opportunities, and school spirit. With a demographic skewing younger, towns and cities with academic institutions typically have cool shops, good food, thriving nightlife, and diverse musical acts. Beautiful natural surroundings are a major plus.

From the biggest city in New England to small communities surrounded by countryside in the West, these college towns and cities are not just great places to study but also worthwhile to visit.

- Best big city: Boston
- Best small town: Oxford, Mississippi
- Most robust social scene: Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Most scenic: Boulder, Colorado
- Best for culture: Austin

Whether you're planning a weekend getaway or a university tour, read on to discover all 25 of our favorites.

Providence, Rhode Island



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Though it's a small city, Providence has a big reputation as a college town with Ivy League Brown University and the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, among others. In addition to cultural gems like the [RISD Museum](#), [Providence has an exciting food scene](#) fueled by graduates of the renowned culinary arts program at Johnson & Wales University.