

TimeOut

The best last-minute Fourth of July weekend getaways near major cities

It's the Fourth of July—what are you doing staying home?



Photograph: ShutterstockKey West, Florida

While major cities like [Los Angeles](#), [Chicago](#), [New York](#), [Boston](#) and [Miami](#) all offer plenty of Fourth of July fun, they can get quite crowded. Instead, escape the throngs of travelers by embarking on a last-minute getaway somewhere nearby. Below, we've rounded up five of our favorite Independence Day weekend getaways within easy driving distance of the aforementioned U.S. cities. From an oceanfront SoCal retreat to a quaint Rhode Island town steeped in history, these last-minute July 4th vacation destinations truly offer something for everyone.

Bristol, Rhode Island

Unbeknownst to many, this tiny Rhode Island Town—about two hours from Boston—is home to America’s oldest continuously running Independence Day celebration. The 2.5-mile [Military, Civic and Firemen’s Parade](#) dates back to 1785 (yes, really) and lures in hundreds of out-of-towners from near and far. However, this is just the tip of the iceberg: In the days leading up to the main event, the patriotic town offers a handful of [live concerts](#) and a spectacular [fireworks display](#). The fun continues post-parade when travelers can partake in outdoor activities like biking and boating; [walking tours](#) are also available. Meanwhile, history buffs need not miss [The Bristol Historical and Preservation Society](#), housed in an 1828-era jail, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in honor of the Bristol Veterans of the Civil War.

Where to stay: The beautiful [Bristol Harbor Inn](#) offers 52 contemporary guest rooms and suites overlooking Narragansett Bay. The on-site spa is a favorite amongst wellness-seekers, while the Dewolf Tavern is the perfect spot for drinking, dining and mingling with fellow guests; live music is also available.



Photograph: Shutterstock/Yingna Cai Old beach house at Narragansett bay Bristol, RI