

Do You Know These 10 Natural Wonders of the U.S?

written by Pam Baker



While the allure of exotic places is undeniable; their addresses are up for debate. We often assume that the natural wonders of the world are only to be found on foreign shores. But, before you board that plane or ship to go off to foreign shores, here's a list of ten natural wonders in the U.S. you shouldn't miss!

- 1) **Mystery Hill, North Carolina.** In North Carolina on US Highway 321, not far from another natural wonder, Blowing Rock, lies Mystery Hill. Be sure to tour the Mystery House where this natural gravitational anomaly warps all known physics: Stand at a 45° angle, watch a ball roll up hill and see water flow up hill, among other weird-science things. Don't worry; this is not a spooky place. There is a stronger than average gravitational pull to the north which affects physics in counter-intuitive ways. In any case, it is a rare place indeed.
- 2) **Blowing Rock, North Carolina.** Neighboring Mystery Hill, this rock is known as the place where nothing light thrown over the edge actually falls. It too has a logical explanation: Blowing Rock is an immense cliff, overhanging Johns River Gorge 3,000 feet below. It is called Blowing Rock because the rocky walls of the gorge form a flume through which the northwest wind sweeps with such force that it returns light objects cast over the void. Ripley's "Believe-It-Or-Not" dubbed it "the only place in the world where snow falls upside down."
- 3) **Niagara Falls, New York.** Three large waterfalls with beautiful countryside and a prevailing mist that separates the U.S. from Canada. Powerful and inspiring, it's a must-see.
- 4) **The Grand Canyon, Arizona.** The overwhelming scale of the place is breath-taking; the colors beyond any artist's palette. Carved millions of years ago, this wonder is too immense to appreciate in a mere day.
- 5) **Yosemite National Park, California.** A mesmerizing mix of deep valleys, huge waterfalls, ancient giant sequoias, and vast wilderness. To many, it's a canvas of creation second to none.

6) **Mariposa Grove, Yosemite Park, California.** This grove is filled with Giant Sequoias, two of which are among the 50 largest such trees in the world. The one known as the Grizzly Giant is estimated to be between 1600 and 2000 years old. This site is like no other on earth - and guaranteed to dwarf even the biggest of human egos.

7) **Zion National Park, Utah.** Dubbed "sand castles crowning desert canyons" this magnificent place is a canyon with towering cliffs painted by God in hues of cream, pink and red. Absolutely breath-taking!

8) **Mount Rainier, Washington.** An active volcano 54 miles southeast of Seattle with permanent snowfields and glaciers galore. There is also an extensive network of glacier caves to explore with formations that count as natural wonders in their own right.

9) **Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho.** So huge it resides in three states, this collection of natural wonders includes Old Faithful, some of the world's most extraordinary geysers and hot springs, plus its own version of the Grand Canyon.

10) **Death Valley National Park, California, Nevada.** A two-state spread ranging from steaming sand dunes to snow-capped mountains. With multi-colored rock layers, shifting sand and rushing water through canyons carved by time, there is much to marvel at here. A place steeped in myth and legend.

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