

**REAL SIMPLE**

# 5 Small U.S. Towns Worthy of Your 2020 Destination Bucket List

These small cities are big on excitement.

Metropolitan hotspots like New York City, Miami, Chicago, and San Francisco certainly offer visitors plenty by way of food, entertainment, and sights. Sometimes, though, a small town getaway is exactly what your wanderlust heart desires. While the lesser-known U.S. destinations on this list might not even pop up in an expanded view on your Google Maps app, a visit to any one of them will give you a chance to break away from the hustle and relish in small town magic.

## **1** Beaufort, North Carolina

A stroll through the coastal town of Beaufort, North Carolina might just have you feeling as if you're a character in a romantic novel, and it's easy to see why. The perennial warm and salty air and mix of Georgian and Colonial architecture lend to the romantic vibe, so much so that famed author Nicholas Sparks set two of his most well-known books here, *A Walk to Remember* and *The Choice*.

If you're keen on living the Sparks life, sign up for A Ride to Remember with Hungry Town Guided Tours, which allows you to peddle through historic Beaufort while a guide calls out notable spots from the books and movies. Afterward, indulge in some of the town's delicious food. La Perla is a local favorite with a rotating Spanish/Latin menu and Moonrakers provides lunch with a glittering view of the Crystal Coast.

Beaufort is also a great destination for the laid-back adventurer. Try stand up paddle boarding or kayaking to Carrot Island with Beaufort Paddle and you might just catch a glimpse of wild horses and oyster bays along the way. A journey to the Cape Lookout National Seashore, which requires a three-mile boat ride, is also worth it for an up close and personal view of the handsome checkered lighthouse.