

Travel-Wise Motorist Lists Ten Great Drives

All Now Easily Accessible to Those On Two-Weeks Vacation Schedule, Thanks to Better Highways

By LEN BARNES

Getting there — to a vacation, that is — can be more than half the fun, if you go by car. And if you include one of a handful of America's great drives in your route.

Once accessible to only a few who had unlimited time, all these drives are now easy to reach for most Americans and Canadians on a two-week vacation, thanks to distance-whittling limited access, divided Interstate highways.

The writer has not driven every mile of North America roads, or even every route that has some fame or is beautiful. But I will recommend the following 10 as outstanding on anyone's list of great motoring experiences.

CALIFORNIA'S OCEAN ROAD—Numbered US 101 with frequent cuts west on California 1, this road curves through a variety of spectacular scenery from sea level to 2,000 feet and down again on the way from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

It goes through or past sand, mountains, cliffs, arroyos, ocean, fishing villages, onion fields, grape arbors, remote and beautiful Big Sur country, rock coves, crooked cypress trees (among the world's oldest living things) and plenty of palms.

CANADA'S BANFF-JASPER DRIVE — This road seems to have been built over animal trails. It turns so often as it follows five great river valleys through a virgin wilderness along the most spectacular portion of America's grandest mountain chain — the Canadian Rockies.

Banff-Jasper has been called the most scenic highway in the world, and hundreds of vari-shaped mountain peaks, from needled spires and inverted ice cream cones to saw-toothed piles and razorback edges give this claim credence as they stand watch on both sides.

COLORADO'S MILLION DOLLAR HIGHWAY — Anyone who picks just one Colorado highway will get arguments, there are so many great ones. But US 550 from Durango to Ouray has got to make even the most sophisticated motorist catch his breath at least once a minute.

Blasted out of sheer rock, this road offers just enough

room for two cars to pass in places, and a scarcity of guard rails. In places top of the cliff cannot be seen from one side, or bottom of the canyon on the other. Its spectacular switchbacks keep one constantly in view of soaring peaks.

FLORIDA'S OVERSEAS HIGHWAY — One can go over the Atlantic Ocean in his car for most of the way from Miami to Key West on US 1.

Taking off on a series of hurdles sometimes skipping at water level, sometimes vaulting 75 feet above the ocean, this concrete thread holds together a necklace of 750 keys, or small, low, narrow spits of limestone, coral and sand that poke their heads a few feet above salt water in the highway's path or alongside it. There are 49 bridges totalling nearly 18 miles.

GREAT LAKES STATES, ONTARIO'S LAKE SUPERIOR DRIVE — The essential appeal of this drive is it makes wilderness easily accessible. It meanders through muskeg, rifles through rock, snakes through swamps, curves through rock canyons, roars through rock gorges, is sometimes smooth as a billiard table, sometimes bumpy as a chuckhole-filled street in spring.

From it one sees magnificent sweeps of Lake Superior, vast vistas of mountain and valley, glimpses of gem-like lakes hidden in the trees, many of which have never been fished, and which are visited by moose and bears regularly. This is a drive of such varie-



More eye-filling vistas include the Upper Takquamenon Falls in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (top) and the necklace of 750 keys linked by Florida's Overseas Highway (bottom).

ty that everyone will bring home a different impression.

HAWAII'S CIRCLE OF OAHU ISLAND DRIVE — Toughest job I had was deciding which to describe of many drives the Hawaiian Islands offer. For they are all lovely, and most feature essentially the same things: breathtaking vistas of the ocean in its many colors, accessibility to beaches which are little-used, roads edged with everything from stately coconut palm trees to flowers ranging in color from white to red seemingly growing wild, roads which cut through lush green sugar cane fields higher than one's car, or which edge sugar pineapple fields rich and red. Volcano country with black rock along-shore, rock crumbling to red and turning into rich earth inland.

MONTANA'S GOING-TO-

THE-SUN HIGHWAY — Of all the roads I've ever driven, this one bisecting Glacier National Park is my personal favorite. I have driven it both ways eight times and always see something new. The late Stephen T. Mather, first director of the National Park Service, wrote of it:

"It is doubtful if in any other road in America can in the same distance unfold . . . such a grand array of beautiful forests, dashing torrents, wonderful gorges and valleys, towering cirques, and a vista of bold, needle-peaked mountains and serrated escarpments . . ." It's

probably the only road in the world so engineered that one can climb 4,000 feet with numerous switchbacks in less than 20 miles, cross the Continental Divide, descend 4,000 feet in 25 miles, and never have to change driving ranges once. Even those who fear mountain driving should have no trouble here.

NORTH CAROLINA'S OUTER BANKS HIGHWAY—Many call this drive on State 12 the "road that beat the sand dunes," for it makes accessible a remote, 150-mile stretch of pencil-thin sand islands constantly moved about by the wind from the Atlantic Ocean on the east. To the west is Pamlico sound, which separates the islands from the mainland by eight to 30 miles of water. From its inland end at Elizabeth City it goes through towns with salty names like Nags Head, Hatteras, Ocracoke.

There are 70 miles of clean, white, uncrowded sand beach for surf and boat fishing, bathing and just beachcombing in this National Seashore park. There are two free and one toll ferry rides of 45 minutes each. One can explore quaint fishing villages, hear Bankers converse in Elizabethan-flavored English, cast for a variety of ocean fish at Gamefish Junction, where massive warm and cold ocean currents collide, see the shipwreck-studded beach along the "Grave-

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