

## Best Boating Destinations for Summer

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Boating is known to reduce stress and improve quality of life. Luckily, you don't have to sail the deep blue sea for some great voyages. Ninety percent of Americans live less than an hour from a navigable body of water, whether a sprawling lake or the beautiful ocean. Some cities in the [United States](#) are renowned for their terrific boating facilities, exciting water activities and nautical lifestyle. From the laid-back island of Key West to the famous yachters' stomping grounds of Marina del Rey, these top boating destinations for summer are a boater's paradise.



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### Marina del Rey, California

Just a 45-minute drive from downtown Los Angeles and a stone's throw from [Santa Monica](#), Marina del Rey is the largest manmade small-craft harbor in the United States. Experiencing a major renaissance, the area is known to woo the rich and famous with its highbrow amenities, including the luxurious Ritz Carlton Marina del Rey, which is situated on the marina itself. Many boaters along the California coast moor here not only for the terrific setting and ambiance, but because the docks hold more than 4,300 boats and yachts. If you don't have a million-dollar yacht like some of the celebrities who frequent here, you can also rent a boat, hire a skippered charter or learn how to sail with [Blue Pacific Boating](#).



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### Newport, Rhode Island

Newport is the most well-known seaside boating town in New England. Newport Harbor served as the port of call for the famed America's Cup -- an international yachting race -- for years. Boaters still come from around the world to check out the yachting facilities and to experience the quaint New England charm at sea. Book a private charter with [Sightsailing](#) for a thrilling sail, one of [Newport's](#) most sought-after activities and pastimes. A visit also wouldn't be complete without experiencing the terrific seafood restaurants located right on the harbor.



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## Key West, Florida

Boaters find the Florida Keys a paradise, and [Key West](#) is the premier island for all things nautical. The southernmost island is renowned for having the best sunset on the continent, so sunset cruising is a popular activity. Thanks to the laidback lifestyle, boaters here are casual with a “don’t worry, be happy” attitude. Should you have a rather big sailboat, Conch Harbor Marina offers slips that can accommodate vessels up to 195 feet, but it’s not a problem if you don’t own one at all; [Key West Charter Boat Association](#) has the largest fleet in the Florida Keys for those who want to take to the water for some sport fishing or simple relaxation out at sea.



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## Lake Havasu, Arizona

Quickly emerging as a hot spot for boaters, Lake Havasu is a large reservoir in the middle of the Arizona desert in Mojave County with 60 miles of waterways to explore. Boaters can find hidden coves, sandbars, beaches and the iconic [London Bridge](#). In the past decade, Lake Havasu has cultivated a religious following among spring breakers - 24-hour partying is not unusual -- but the college-aged crowd can be found here throughout the year, thanks to the lake’s warm temperature, 16 boat launches and plenty of party-boat rentals.



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## Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Life seems to revolve around the water in this city known for its 23 miles of beaches. Thanks to more than 300 miles of inland waterways, [Fort Lauderdale](#) is referred to as the "Venice of America." More than 40,000 yachts are based in the sunny city, giving Fort Lauderdale bragging rights as the yachting capital of the world, and not surprisingly, the annual [Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show](#) is one of the largest in the world. Boaters have no shortage of activities, whether it's snorkeling, scuba diving near coral reefs or even fishing. Fort Lauderdale is also close to the Bahamas and Miami for quick jaunts.



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## Seattle, Washington

It may be gray and rainy in [Seattle](#), but it will always be a favorite destination for boaters. There are hundreds of miles of protected salt water surrounded by the beautiful landscape of the Olympic and Cascade mountains. Many residents commute by boat from their waterfront homes to work in the city. Sailing has been a top recreation for decades in Seattle, which has more pleasure boats per capita than anywhere in the United States. Boating centers and piers are surrounded by parks, so nature completely abounds.