



Ten Native American Experiences for 2020

Looking to explore Native American culture? These distinctive cultural experiences are often located alongside stunning landscapes on or adjacent to tribal lands across the U.S. #DiscoverNativeAmerica

Explore California’s Tribal Culture in a Redwood Canoe (California)

California’s Yurok Tribe, whose ancestral home sits alongside the Klamath River and California’s famed Redwood forests will start offering a new tour program in 2020. Designed to educate visitors about tribal culture along the Klamath River, the Redwood Canoe Adventure Tour will commence in May 2020. Guests will learn about Yurok tribal culture while paddling down the river in a traditional redwood canoe. According to the Tribe, this is the only location in the world offering redwood canoe tours. An experienced Yurok guide teaches guests about the culture of the tribe, the language and the ecosystem of the river. Eventually, the tribe plans for residents to open ancillary businesses, such as gift shops and related boat rides in nearby waterways. visityurokcountry.com

Follow in the Footsteps of Lewis & Clark; Then Visit the Earth Lodge Village (North Dakota)

North Dakota’s Reunion Bay, known for its boating and fishing activities, is the site where Captain Meriwether Lewis and Second Lieutenant William Clark constructed Fort Mandan to settle in for a long winter season (from November 1804-April 1805), while establishing diplomatic relations with tribes throughout the area. It is also where Lewis and Clark hired interpreter Charbonneau and his teenage wife, Sakakawea (Sacajawea), who would travel with the expedition to the Pacific Ocean and back.

Here, visit a traditional Earth Lodge Village, operated by the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikira Nation (Three Affiliated Tribes), located along Lake Sakakawea, the Killdeer Mountain and Four Bears Scenic Byway. The village offers a Native American experience, including cultural performances and demonstrations from interpretive guides and authentic food offerings. Rent a tipi for the night, hike the area trails and round out your trip by kayak or canoe in Four Bears Bay. mhanation.com/tribal-tourism

Four-Nation Commemoration of the Mayflower Landing at Plymouth (Massachusetts)

After the Mayflower landed at Plymouth in 1620, the Puritans would not have survived without the assistance of the Wampanoag people who have made their home in southeastern Massachusetts for more than 12,000 years. In 2020, the United States will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the landing at Plymouth, and organizations from four nations, the U.S., the U.K., the Netherlands and the Wampanoag Nation, including the federally recognized Tribes of Aquinnah and Mashpee, will share stories of America’s founding from their own perspectives. The Wampanoag Ancestors Walk will include Tribal members carrying the names of the original 69 villages of the Wampanoag Nation. plymouth400inc.org

Trace Cherokee History Beyond the Trail of Tears (Oklahoma)

During a 20-year span in the mid-1800s, more than 100,000 Native Americans were forced to move hundreds of miles west of their ancestral homes. The arduous journey, often made in the harshest of conditions, is known as the Trail of Tears. But the history of the Cherokee people is an enduring one, stretching well beyond the Trail of Tears. With the opening of the Cherokee National History Museum inside the 150-year-old Cherokee National Capitol building, visitors are able to experience the Tribe’s history from pre-European contact all the way through its revitalization after the American Civil War. Many artifacts are on loan from such notable facilities as the Smithsonian Institution, Gilcrease Museum, Oklahoma Historical Society and Cherokee National Archives. VisitCherokeeNation.com

NativeAmerica.travel

These experiences and many more can be found on NativeAmerica.travel, the leading resource for travelers planning trips to Native American destinations.

The website is operated by the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA), an organization charged with providing technical assistance and training to tribal tourism entities throughout the United States.



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Celebrate a Feast Day (New Mexico)

When Spanish settlers crossed into New Mexico in search of the mythical Seven Golden Cities of Cibola during the 16th century, they also sought to convert Native Americans to the Roman Catholic faith. Five centuries later, New Mexico's 19 Native American Pueblos showcase distinctive cultures that blend Spanish and indigenous traditions, especially during Feast Days, when Catholic saints are commemorated in grand programs that include Native dances (religious commemorations), cultural activities, arts and crafts and, of course, local foods. Feast days, which occur throughout the year, are generally open to the public, although visitors should do some research on the etiquette required to honor local tribes and traditions.

indianpueblo.org/19-pueblos/feast-days

Watch the Buffalo Roam (Wyoming)

In 2019, Wyoming's Wind River Reservation welcomed five new male bison, bringing the herd to 33. The five new members were the offspring of 200 Yellowstone bison previously transferred to the Fort Peck Reservation as part of the first tribal government-to-tribal government bison transfer, coordinated in partnership with the National Wildlife Foundation. With advance reservations, guests may sign up to tour the Wind River Reservation and experience the culture and history of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes, as well as learning more about the area's tribal buffalo program.

easternshoshone.org



Reflect on the Legacy of Indian Boarding Schools (Nevada)

From 1890-1980, the federal government operated the Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada. This was one of 60 Indian Boarding Schools set up during the late 1800s, which were designed to emphasize patriotism, citizenship and manual labor skills. Students were prohibited from speaking their languages or practicing their traditions and had no contact with their families.

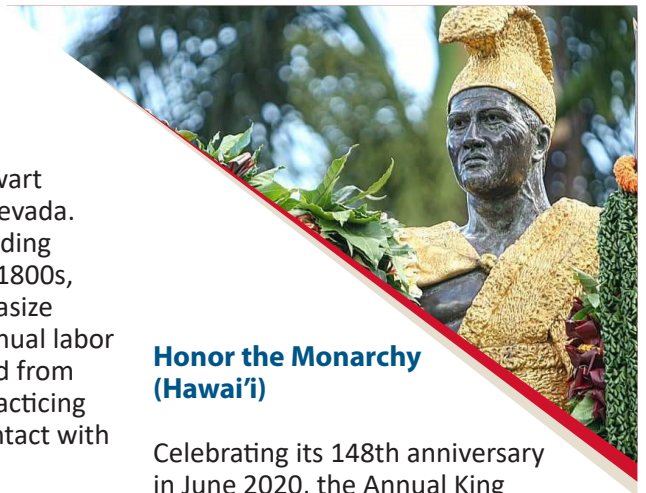
In late 2019, the Stewart Indian School will find new life as the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. Located on a massive campus which is home to more than 60 buildings, the cultural center will interpret the history of the school, the student experience and the lasting effect of Indian boarding schools around the country. stewartindianschool.com

Born to Ride on the Native American Horse Trail (Alabama)

A dissertation by Lakota/Nakota/Cheyenne scholar Yvette Running Horse Collin is redefining what is known about horses in America—namely they were not introduced by the Spanish as is commonly believed. According to the research, "Native Americans always had a sustained relationship with the horse." Running Horse Collin is also the co-founder of the Sacred Way Sanctuary, an educational facility dedicated to preserving the traditions of Native American horses.

The facility's interpretive center is open every Saturday, and tours of the sanctuary can also be arranged with prior reservations. Sacred Way Sanctuary is located in Florence, Alabama, on what was once part of the first Federal Indian Reservation in the United States. It is one of a handful of sanctuaries that make up the Native American Horse Trail.

sacredwaysanctuary.org



Honor the Monarchy (Hawai'i)

Celebrating its 148th anniversary in June 2020, the Annual King Kamehameha Day holiday, the only US festival to celebrate a monarch/monarchy. Once a national holiday, Kamehameha Day honors Kamehameha I, the chief who united the Hawaiian Islands in 1810. Celebratory and commemorative events take place throughout the Hawaiian islands, including North Kohala, on the Island of Hawai'i, the birthplace of Kamehameha, where residents played a role in saving his life as an infant. Other major events include the famed King Kamehameha Statue Lei Draping Ceremony in Honolulu, Hilo and Kohala and statewide parades, the 104th Annual King Kamehameha Celebration Floral Parade on O'ahu, and the Nā Kamehameha Commemorative Pā'ū Parade & Ho'olaule'a—West Maui's longest running event.

Hawaii.com/kamehamehaday

Knuckle Hop, Ear Pull and One-Foot High Kick Your Way to Fame (Alaska)

With games like the Knuckle Hop, Four-Man Carry, Ear Pull, One-Foot High-Kick and Seal Skinning, the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO), held every July, are surely unlike any other athletic competition in the world. All the contests are variations of traditional exercises designed to hone the physical and mental skills necessary to survive in the challenging polar region. Along with athletic competitions, WEIO features dancing and storytelling and the general camaraderie for which Native Alaskans are known. weio.org