

DARK SKIES



Idaho is home to the nation's first International Dark Sky Reserve and five distinct areas recognized by the International Dark-Sky Association as offering stellar night-sky viewing of the Milky Way, meteors, planets and more:

- [Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve](#)
- [Craters of the Moon National Monument](#) — Dark Sky Park
- [City of Rocks National Reserve](#) — Dark Sky Park
- [Bruneau Dunes State Park](#) — Dark Sky Park
- Ketchum, Idaho — Dark Sky Community

Thanks to Idaho's low population and abundance of open land, dark skies can also be enjoyed outside of these designated areas. Whether you're camping or enjoying an evening stroll, Idaho's starry skies are sure to impress.

HISTORY & CULTURE

Imagine being trafficked across the world as a teenager and sold into servitude in one of the most remote areas of the American West. This was the harsh reality of Polly Bemis, who forged an extraordinary life in Idaho's Frank Church–River of No Return Wilderness in the late 1800s. Today, the [Polly Bemis Ranch](#) is a National Historic Site, where you can experience this iconic pioneer's remarkable story firsthand.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, forcing nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast into ten prison camps around the country. One of these camps was in southern Idaho, near Jerome, where 13,000 people were imprisoned during World War II. Today, [Minidoka National Historic Site](#) features a visitor center, housing exhibits along with a film showcasing daily life at the camp. Visitors can also explore the remains of the entry guard station, waiting room and rock garden.

For an out-of-this-world experience, lace up your boots for a trek at [Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve](#). The unique landscape of lava flows and cinder cones resemble the moon's surface so much that the reserve was used as a training ground for NASA's Apollo 14 mission. 2024 marks the 100th anniversary of the protected area, which will be celebrated with themed monthly events that highlight the values that have shaped the park.

Delve into more of Idaho's WWII history at [Farragut State Park](#), which was once the world's second-largest naval training facility. One of the few remaining buildings is the brig—the base jail—which houses a museum with war memorabilia.



BASQUE CULTURE



Boise is home to the largest population of Basques per capita outside of the Basque Country. Stroll through downtown Boise's [Basque Block](#) to explore the culture and cuisine of this proud, vibrant community. Experience the unique Basque language, history and customs at [The Basque Museum and Cultural Center](#). Then treat your tastebuds to Basque cuisine at The Basque Market or Bar Gernika, where you can sample chorizo (flavorful sausage) and croquetas (deep-fried rolls filled with cheese or meat) and wash it down with a kalimotxo (red wine and cola over ice). Every five years, Basques from around the world gather in Boise for [Jaialdi](#)—a six-day festival packed with Basque food, music, dancing and much more. The next Jaialdi takes place July 29-August 3, 2025.

ELEVATED EXPERIENCES



Idaho offers travelers curated adventure, blending nature and outdoor activities with comfort, charm and sophistication. Take your next vacation up a notch with these elevated experiences.

Tee off at Idaho's premier public golf courses, including [Bronze Buffalo Ranch at Teton Springs](#), [Coeur d'Alene Resort](#)—with its famous floating 14th green—and three courses offering a variety of terrain and challenges at [Sun Valley Resort](#).

For a true western experience, filled with horseback riding, gourmet country dining, evening entertainment and more, saddle up for an all-inclusive stay at [Western Pleasure Guest Ranch](#), [Red Horse Mountain Ranch](#) or [Diamond D Guest Ranch](#). Accommodations include lodge suites or log cabins along with three hearty meals a day and all the outdoor activities you can handle.

Indulge in a rejuvenating journey for your body, mind and soul by treating yourself to some well-deserved self-care and pampering with luxurious body treatments at [The Spa at Sun Valley Resort](#), [The Cove at Shore Lodge](#) or [The Spa at Tamarack Resort](#). For a unique wellness experience, unwind at [Maple Grove Hot Springs](#)—a serene off-grid oasis, where you can stay in plush yurts or wood cabins, soak in mineral springs and attend yoga and indigenous storytelling workshops.

CULINARY

Idaho is home to several James Beard Award-nominated chefs and restaurants, and in 2023, the state claimed its first winner for Best Chef in the Mountain Region: Kris Komori of [KIN](#) in Boise, which offers guests a five-course, prix-fixe menu with drink pairings. 2024 award nominees include Salvador Alamilla of [Amano](#) in Caldwell, Dan Ansotegui of [Ansots](#) in Boise and Heather Logan and Ben Barlow of [Stanley Supper Club](#) in Stanley. Finalists are announced in April, with the winners awarded in June.

With its four distinct seasons, fertile volcanic soil and ideal latitudinal location, the Gem State is perfect for grape growing and winemaking. [Three American Viticultural Areas](#)—Snake River Valley, Eagle Foothills and Lewis-Clark Valley—combine for over 1,300 acres of vineyards and are home to more than 65 wineries and tasting rooms, where you can grab a glass or book a tasting tour. Idaho is also the country's top producer of barley and the second-highest grower of hops, contributing to the state's robust craft beer industry. Enjoy a frothy pint at 80+ breweries across the state. Every April, [Idaho Craft Beer Month](#) celebrates its breweries and diverse flavors with a statewide pint day, beer-pairing dinners, new beer releases and other events.



BIRDWATCHING



Bird is the word in Idaho—home to more than 400 species of birds, making it a great destination for birding enthusiasts. [Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge](#) holds the largest nesting population of sandhill cranes in the world. Discover 220+ species of birds as well as the migration of swans, mallards and teal at [Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge](#). Get up close with live raptor presentations at the [World Center for Birds of Prey](#). For more birding adventures, hit the [Idaho Birding Trail](#) with 250+ sites and more than 2,000 miles of birdwatching trails to explore.

Laurie McConnell

Tourism Communications Specialist
208.287.0781 | laurie.mcconnell@tourism.idaho.gov
visitidaho.org
[@visitidaho](https://www.instagram.com/visitidaho)

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