

Unappreciated attractions pack most punch

Find hidden gems in the shadows of famous counterparts

Underrated is a verb that never will let you down. How could it? The definition spells it out. *Underestimate the extent, value or importance of someone or something.*

It's easy to be underrated among a group of stars. That goes for vacation destinations, as well. We constantly are told about places we must visit. But there also are places we *should* visit – ones that rarely are mentioned but are hidden gems waiting to prove their value.

They are sites less crowded and exist in some of the U.S.'s quieter spots. They might prove to be kinder to your wallet, but there is nothing cheap about them.

Take Yellowstone National Park, for instance. Old Faithful is arguably the most famous geyser in the world. But have you heard about Castle Geyser? The cone-shaped blistering fountain is older than its famous sister. It erupts less frequently, but when it does, it can shoot water as high as 90 feet into the air.

Mount Rushmore flaunts four of our country's most memorable presidents. But don't ignore the Crazy Horse Memorial that is fewer than 20 miles away. It's a tribute to the Lakota warrior who famously led Native American fighters in the Great Sioux War of 1876-77. It is the largest mountain carving in the world – an awe-inspiring sight.

Few destinations in New York City are more popular than Central Park. But if you're interested in the perfect remedy



DEEP IMPACT – Palo Duro Canyon Lighthouse watches over the beautiful lands of the Amarillo natural wonder. *Image: Kip. Adobe Stock.*

for maddening crowds, visit Tryon Park. It's north of Central Park and sits on the edge of the Hudson river. It's a modest 67 acres in size, but it boasts eight miles of peaceful pathways and the Cloisters, a branch of the Met focusing on medieval works.

Glacier National Park ranks among the top 10 most-visited parks in the U.S.

But the North Cascades, located about 500 miles away in Washington, remains blissfully anonymous. Appreciate the snowy peaks, fir-covered hills and glaciers. Among the most striking natural wonders is the North Klawatti Glacier.

Palo Duro Canyon in Amarillo doesn't have much of a reputation – at least compared to its southwest competition, the

Grand Canyon. Palo Duro is blessed with similar rugged red rocks and epic sunsets and sunrises but attracts a fraction of visitors. More than 30 miles of trails make it a playground for hikers, bikers and horseback riders.

Yosemite's Half Dome attracts major crowds. It rises 5,000 feet over the Yosemite Valley and offers fabulous views, but there are plenty of other bluffs found in the American West, including Devils Tower. Located in Wyoming, Devils Tower is a national monument that matches Half Dome in height and is sacred to many groups of Native American people.

Rock formations are geological gifts, and Natural Bridges National Monument is a shrouded jewel near the famed Arches National Park. The former is named for its trio of bridges carved out by rivers. It's also the first designated International Dark Sky Park worldwide, providing star-studded solitude.

Big Sur is a fabled stretch of California's storied Highway 1. It's a leading attraction for sightseers. A quieter journey, however, is sitting farther north. Oregon's shoreline includes a utopia like Ecola State Park. Drivers will find similar rock-studded sands and dramatic bluffs and might even spot a whale.

It's wise to visit the U.S.'s most admired destinations, but don't forget about the little guys. They have plenty to offer and always deliver.

Princess betting newest ship hits the jackpot

Newly christened *Sun Princess* boasts cruise line's largest casino

Princess Cruises has gone “all-in” with its newest ship. There is nothing small about its latest vessel, *Sun Princess* – the largest among its impressive fleet.

Sun Princess set sail in February to a much-anticipated voyage. The next-generation ship holds 4,300 guests, cruising them in laps of luxury and enormity.

Among its impressive feature, one that shines near the top is The Princess Casino. It houses an astounding 50% more space and 30% for machines than the line's Royal Class ships. It's a gambler's paradise on the high seas; a jackpot awaits.

Located on deck 8 and adjacent to the bustling Piazza, The Princess Casino offers high ceilings and a spacious floorplan for world-class gaming comfort and entertainment. Several gaming positions are infused into the Piazza, giving guests easier and faster access to their favorite betting games.

Gamblers will find more than 200 of the newest and most popular slots and video-poker machines. The Princess Casino also features live table games that offer progressive jackpots and a variety of other games Princess players have come to enjoy. Included in the expansive casino is the original “Buffalo Zone” at sea – bringing these popular games by Aristocrat to the



BETTING MOOD – The Princess Casino is one of the many enhanced amenities on *Sun Princess*, the cruise line's newest ship. Image: Princess.

newest “Love Boat.”

“Casino lovers, high rollers or simply those wanting to try a hand during their vacation will be stunned by the new Princess Casino,” said John Padgett, President of Princess Cruises. “Princess has embraced the casino experience and is proud to offer such exciting gaming surrounded by absolutely world-class dining and

entertainment.”

Princess Casino's key enhancements include:

- Nearly 9,000-square feet, featuring 10-foot ceilings, 227 slot machines and 13 live tables.
- Newest and most comfortable gaming seating available for slot and table-game players.
- New linked blackjack- and pok-

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er-table progressives, offering high-value cash top awards.

- High-limit slot area, with high-end seating.
- New gaming experiences and celebrations through an interactive audio-visual experience throughout the casino.

The 175,000-ton, 4,300-guest *Sun Princess* offers an array of exciting new entertainment and culinary offerings, as well as luxurious staterooms and suites across a broad spectrum of categories. It has the most balconies and sun decks on any Princess ship. Guests will be able to absorb the sunshine and crystal-clear waters of the Mediterranean and Caribbean from the comfort of their own room.

To book a Princess cruise or learn more about other cruise lines, visit your nearest AAA branch office to meet with a travel advisor or visit AAA.com/Travel.

AAA puts tire-pressure sensors to test

Don't let vehicle's monitoring system leave you feeling flat

A new study by AAA found that in-vehicle tire-pressure-monitoring systems (TPMS) generally are accurate, but drivers still should check their tire pressure manually.

Why keep tabs on your tires? They are the only part of your vehicle in contact with the road and proper inflation is the key to safety and better gas mileage.

“Whether in rain, sleet, snow, or dry conditions, tires are the unsung heroes of your car,” said Greg Brannon, AAA's director of automotive engineering. “They are designed to work best when properly inflated. Our research found that the pressure-monitoring systems that provide data for instrument displays or trigger the amber dashboard warning worked as intended. But we recommend always having a dependable old-school manual pressure gauge to check them once a month because a tire can be more than 20% deflated before it triggers the dashboard warning.”

AAA engineers evaluated 11 passenger vehicles from 2022-24 models, including sedans, pickups and SUVs with “direct” TPMS, which uses air-pressure sensors mounted in each wheel. The AAA survey found that the average percentage difference between displayed and actual tire pressure



AIR SUPPLY – AAA recommends regularly using a tire gauge to monitor tire pressure. Image: NongAsimo. Adobe Stock.

was between 1.2% and minus-1.5%, depending on the tire location.

Additionally, the amber warning TPMS light illuminated when tires were underinflated to 75% of the posted pressure (located on the sticker inside the doorjamb) for five of the 11 test vehicles. Five of the six remaining test vehicles illuminated the TPMS warning dashboard light when tires deflated to 70.3% to 72.9% of the posted pressure,

depending on the test vehicle.

Key findings from the study:

- No significant error in displayed tire pressure readings was noted for any vehicles evaluated within the study.
- The largest percentage difference in reported vs. actual tire pressure was 3.3%. This large pickup truck had a significantly higher posted pressure than other test vehicles.

- One vehicle did not illuminate the TPMS warning light even when one of its tires was deflated to only 65% of the recommended posted pressure, despite the immediate update of pressure readings in the instrument cluster.

AAA urges drivers to utilize displayed tire pressures in the instrument cluster and keep tires inflated to the vehicle's posted pressure rather than relying solely on the TPMS light to determine when a tire needs to be reinflated.

TPMS lights only illuminate when one or more tires are severely underinflated. Drivers should regularly check the displayed tire pressure at each corner. In addition, not all vehicle TPMS provide pressure readings. Some systems, particularly on older vehicles, only have a warning light if one or more tires are low.

AAA encourages drivers to regularly check their tire pressure (either in the instrument cluster or using a gauge), even if their TPMS light is not illuminated. And with winter approaching, it's important to remember that cold weather makes the air denser, so the pressure in the tire is reduced, triggering a dashboard warning. Do not ignore the warning even if the light goes off after driving because the tire is likely low. For this reason, tire pressure should be checked when cold.