

THE

SOQ

UPGRADE YOUR TRAVEL IQ WITH THE LATEST GLOBAL TRENDS

Parks and recreation

National Park Week, from 18 to 26 April this year in the United States, sees free entry to all parks on the first day and a slew of special events throughout the period. Here's what you need to know about the country's massive national park system.

327 million

Visitors to the country's national parks in 2019. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park along the Tennessee–North Carolina border was the most popular, with 12.5 million visitors.

62

Total national parks in the US. The latest, White Sands in New Mexico, known for its immense dunes of glistening gypsum sand, was granted national park status in December 2019.

IMAGES: ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (MAIN, 1957); SHUTTERSTOCK.COM (IN-FULL BLOOM)

THE FINAL FRONTIER

The International Day of Human Space Flight falls on 12 April. Here are some landmark moments in the history of space exploration

Sputnik 1 is the first artificial earth satellite to be launched, heralding a new age of space exploration.

1957



1961



Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first human to journey into outer space, with his capsule Vostok 1 completing a full orbit of earth on 12 April.

5.34
million hectares

Size of Wrangell-St Elias National Park & Preserve in Alaska, making it the largest national park in the US. Conversely, Missouri's Gateway Arch National Park, one of the smallest, measures just 36.8 hectares.

28,970

Total length of trails within the US National Park System. The longest is the North Country Trail, which crosses from New York to North Dakota and spans 7,400km.

86m

Depth, below sea level, of Badwater Basin in California's Death Valley National Park, making it the lowest point in all of North America.

IN FULL BLOOM

Where to spot cherry blossoms across the network this month



1921

Founding of Brooklyn Botanical Garden's Cherry Walk, the centre of the Sakura Matsuri (April 25 to 26), which celebrates Japanese culture.



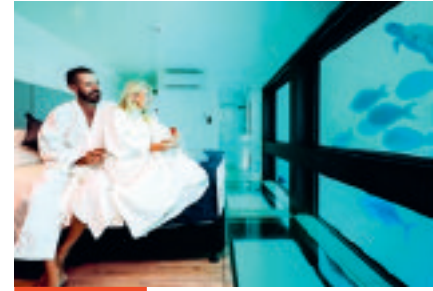
200

Cherry trees at Langelinie Park in Copenhagen, which hosts the annual Copenhagen Sakura Festival (18 and 19 April).



2

Cherry tree groves at Parc de Sceaux just beyond Paris. Bosquet Nord and Bosquet Sud are home to pink and white blossoms respectively.



1,500

Fish species that guests at Reefsuites – a new A\$10 million underwater hotel in the Great Barrier Reef – can try and spot, from the clownfish to the redthroat emperor.



600

Capacity at Lafayette, a music venue at lifestyle hub Goods Way in London, which debuted in March. It also hosts eateries such as Temple of Seitan and the bar Sweetwater.

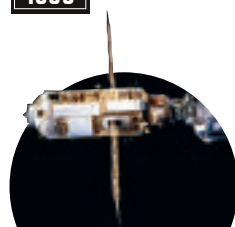


1969

The first humans – led by Apollo 11 commander Neil Armstrong – land on the moon. The event is broadcast on live TV worldwide.

Five space agencies, from NASA (United States) to JAXA (Japan), jointly launch the International Space Station (ISS).

1998



2001

American entrepreneur Dennis Tito forks out US\$20 million to board a Russian spacecraft to the ISS, where he spends nearly eight days as the first space tourist.

NASA astronaut Christina Koch returns to earth after an incredible 328 days in space – the longest spaceflight undertaken by any woman.

2020

