

AIR TRAVEL SPECIAL BEST AND WORST AIRPORTS AND AIRLINES FOR FLIGHT DELAYS + WHY TO FLY NOW

TRAVEL + LEISURE

GREAT ESCAPES

FROM VERMONT TO VIEQUES



TRAVEL+LEISURE

AMERICA'S

FAVORITE

CITIES

2014

For our eighth annual (and sometimes controversial) America's Favorite Cities survey, we tallied more than 50,000 votes, ranking 38 cities across the U.S. in dozens of categories, from food and culture to stylish locals. Read on to find out which destinations earned top marks, and to get insider advice on how to tap into the local scene.

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The New York City skyline at dusk.

**AMERICA'S
FAVORITE
CITIES**

**YOUR
NO. 1
PICK**



PROVIDENCE

Top Cities Overall

1. Providence
2. Houston
3. Kansas City
4. Minneapolis/St. Paul
5. Los Angeles



Top row, from left: The Dorrance by day; the Dean's karaoke bar; a view of Benefit Street.
Center: The lobby at the Dean; shaved scallops at Birch. **Bottom row:** Historic buildings seen on a Providence Walks tour.

FIVE REASONS TO GO NOW

This year's overall winner has a bit of everything: great food, an exciting bar scene, and endless curb appeal.

1. Because the city is a legitimate culinary capital. Queue up for a table at **North** (foodbynorth.com; \$\$), a modern Asian hot spot by James Mark, a David Chang protégé, or book at **Birch** (birchrestaurant.com; \$\$\$), an ambitious chef's counter with a focus on local ingredients (whelks; quahogs; foraged herbs).

2. Because downtown has gone from seedy to hip. Westminster Street is booming, thanks to the restoration of the **Arcade**—the country's oldest indoor mall, now a retail hub with micro-loft apartments. Also lining the boulevard: well-curated boutiques such as **Clover** (cloverprovidence.com) and **Homestyle** (homestyleri.com), a design emporium selling prints by RISD grads.

3. Because as much as it's a college town, the bars are all grown up. Just stop by the **Dorrance** (thedorrance.com), as good for dinner as it is for drinks, in a gilded building that was once the Federal Reserve, or the **Eddy** (eddybar.com), an intimate jewel box with a rotating cocktail list. Order the Sun and Moon, made with fig liqueur and Galliano.

4. Because it's brimming with New England charm. A new city-funded initiative, Providence Walks, lets you discover the area's historical architecture by following a 2½-mile trail that starts at the State House and ends at Brown University.

5. Because there's finally a cool place to stay. The new, 52-room **Dean** hotel (thedeanhotel.com; \$) is big on both style and attitude, with peekaboo bathrooms and—if you're lucky—Del's lemonade shandies at turndown.

—NIKKI EKSTEIN

