

# 10 most popular spring break destinations

Jane Reynolds, Oyster.com 7:55 a.m. EST February 17, 2016



Tampa: Truth be told, a large factor in Tampa's popularity is its affordability; you get that sunny Florida spring break without the price tag of locales such as Miami (more on that later). The area's most beloved strip of sand, Clearwater Beach (technically in Clearwater), isn't just for swimming; visitors here can kayak, fish, sail, jet ski, parasail and even go on cruises to spot dolphins and take in the sunset. Tampa appeals to all kinds of spring breakers, but it's particularly well-suited to families on vacation. *Oyster.com*



(Photo: Oyster.com)

[f 306](#) [TWEET](#) [in 28](#) [COMMENT](#) [EMAIL](#) [MORE](#)

In the heart of February, it can feel like the actual spring season will never arrive. But here's the upside: Spring break is that light at the end of the tunnel that can get you through dreary weather and stretches of work weeks with no vacation days in sight. So it's not surprising that many take

advantage of this week-long holiday, even if they're no longer on an education-regulated schedule. Pooling together statistics from sources such as [Kayak](#) and [Twitter](#), Oyster.com calculated the 10 most popular destinations for spring break this year among U.S. travelers. Are you headed to one of them? Take a look.

## Austin

Austin is certainly an emerging party town — although you don't necessarily jump to this city when thinking about spring break. However, warm temperatures, the famed [South by Southwest](#) festival (taking place in mid-March), and a growing fear of the [Zika virus](#)' presence in Caribbean locales has helped this destination reach the No. 1 spot. During spring break, visitors can hit up Downtown's Six Street for delicious [Tex-Mex](#), live music and bustling bars.

Hotel pick: Close to Downtown, [Hotel Saint Cecilia](#) is a solid pick for spring break — thanks in large part to its small, but sleek, pool.

## Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

At the southern tip of Mexico's [Baja Peninsula](#), Cabo San Lucas — a beach town on the stretch of coastline collectively known as [Los Cabos](#) — has long been a popular vacation spot for sun-worshipping party seekers over spring break, and this year is no different. Aside from its lively party scene, Los Cabos remains a staple in the beach resort world thanks to its California-esque vibe. It almost feels like an extension of [Southern California](#), with deluxe accommodations, striking golf courses, high-end shops, and of course, beautiful beaches.

Hotel pick: [ME Cabo](#) is set on bringing sexy back, from the on-site clubs to the resort's private beach.

## Tampa

Truth be told, a large factor in Tampa's popularity is its affordability; you get that sunny Florida spring break without the price tag of locales such as Miami (more on that later). The area's most beloved strip of sand, [Clearwater Beach](#) (technically in Clearwater), isn't just for swimming; visitors here can kayak, fish, sail, jet ski, parasail and even go on cruises to spot dolphins and take in the sunset. Tampa appeals to all kinds of spring breakers, but it's particularly well-suited to families on vacation.

Hotel pick: Also a solid choice for families, [Emerald Greens Condo-Hotel](#) features suites with full kitchens and a massive pool area with a splash zone for kids.

### **South Padre Island, Texas**

This island, reachable from the Texas mainland via Route 100, is wildly popular during spring break, mostly because it's so cheap and highs are at the mid 70s by mid-March. Co-eds from various Southern colleges flock to its beaches, and South Padre hosts a massive annual spring break shindig — complete with DJs and crowds of nearly 20,000. Families can also find plenty to do here, though; there's dolphin watching, water parks, kiteboarding, sailing and plenty of inexpensive dining options.

Hotel pick: [The Pearl South Padre](#) sits on the southern tip of the island, flanked by a wide, sandy beach.

### **Las Vegas**

No matter the time of year, most visitors to Las Vegas head to the Strip, the 3 1/2-mile-long stretch of [Las Vegas Boulevard](#) packed with more than 20 of the world's largest casino-resorts and nearly 70,000 hotel rooms. But during spring break, even more descend on Sin City — bikinis in tow. That's because, come March, the notorious Vegas pool parties pick up once again for a rowdy, wild spring break crowd.

Hotel pick: Nowhere is the pool party more famous than at the [Hard Rock Hotel and Casino](#), which hosts a wild Sunday "Rehab" bash.

### **New Orleans**

No wonder New Orleans is a top spot for spring break; this culture-packed city stays at a comfortable 70 degrees (or above) during the springtime, and — from February's [Mardi Gras](#) to April's [Jazz Fest](#) — there's always a party going on. Families can enjoy ghost tours and Creole eats, river cruises and historic sights, and partiers can take advantage of the lenient open-container laws and infamous (extremely potent) cocktails.

Hotel pick: With a small pool, spacious cottages, and a central location in the [French Quarter](#), [Audubon Cottages](#) appeals to both families and groups of friends.

### **Miami**

The beautiful beaches, renowned food scene and celebrity-grade clubs that stay open until 4 a.m. make Miami a popular destination for spring break. And while [Miami](#) is certainly not cheap, you get much of the fun, beachy vibe here that the Caribbean provides — without the extra cost of a Caribbean-bound flight. Like Cuba's ultra-capitalist offshoot, Miami is a sprawling, modern metropolis that's nonetheless relatively safe and clean for a city-meets-beach-town getaway.

Hotel pick: There are so many new hotels in Miami to choose from, but it's hard to beat the pristine scene at [1 Hotel South Beach](#).

### **Panama City Beach, Fla.**

Any destination dubbed the "Spring Break Capital of the World" should make this list, and so of course, Panama City Beach does. This low-key Florida beach town hosts nearly half a million co-eds every spring and keeps them entertained with outdoor concerts and contests, popular restaurants and bars with extended happy hours, and even an amusement park. Families can enjoy many of these perks as well, and often appreciate the destination's relatively low prices. There's also miles and miles of white sand, beautiful state parks, historic sites and great fishing. And a bonus: If you go during spring break, you'll miss the jellyfish that become prevalent in the late summer.

Hotel pick: As the name suggests, the [Shores of Panama by Oases](#) sits right on the lovely white sands of Panama City Beach, with all 796 of its rooms equipped with balconies overlooking the ocean.

### **Cancun, Mexico**

Cancun — with its beautiful sandy beaches and turquoise waters — is one of the world's top beach destinations, so it comes as no surprise that it's one of the most-visited spring break destinations on the planet. The Hotel Zone is where to go if you're looking for all the college spring break staples; dozens of megaresorts line miles and miles of postcard-perfect beaches where guests lounge in the sun, margarita in hand. Families can be just as happy here, though, especially if they opt for a quieter all-inclusive with amenities such as a kids' club and water park.

Hotel pick: A mid-range all-inclusive right on the beach, [Fiesta Americana Condesa Cancun All-Inclusive](#) has the poolside bars and live entertainment for partiers, but the kids' club and low-key restaurants that families will likely enjoy.

### **Los Angeles**

Time and time again, Los Angeles makes the top 20 list for the most visited cities in the world — and though summer is its true peak season, L.A. definitely welcomes a swarm of visitors for spring break. Show business is indeed a huge part of the city, and it's there for visitors to enjoy, from tours of movie studio backlots to celebrity sightings. But L.A. has so much more to offer, including a thriving visual arts scene, and natural beauty, from beaches and mountains to great parks.

[Oyster.com](#) comprehensively visits, photographs, reviews and rates each hotel we feature.

