

Pack Your Bags: The NY Times 36 Hours Guide

January 30, 2012 By [Natalie](#) [22 Comments](#)

Ant and I have logged more than 25,000 miles of road trip travel in our two decades together. To us, the beauty of the road trip is spontaneity...with a side of inspired planning. Past road trip motivations have come in the form of magazine articles, invitations from friends, or once, in 1998, a television show on quirky hotel rooms (see: The Madonna Inn, San Luis Obispo).

In the past, I've also taken direction from The New York Times 36 Hours column—a great feature if you've never read it—and have never been disappointed. Often times, our road trips only allow for short visits—24-48 hours in a city or town—and the Times column really distills the often overwhelming information found in guidebooks into manageable pieces.

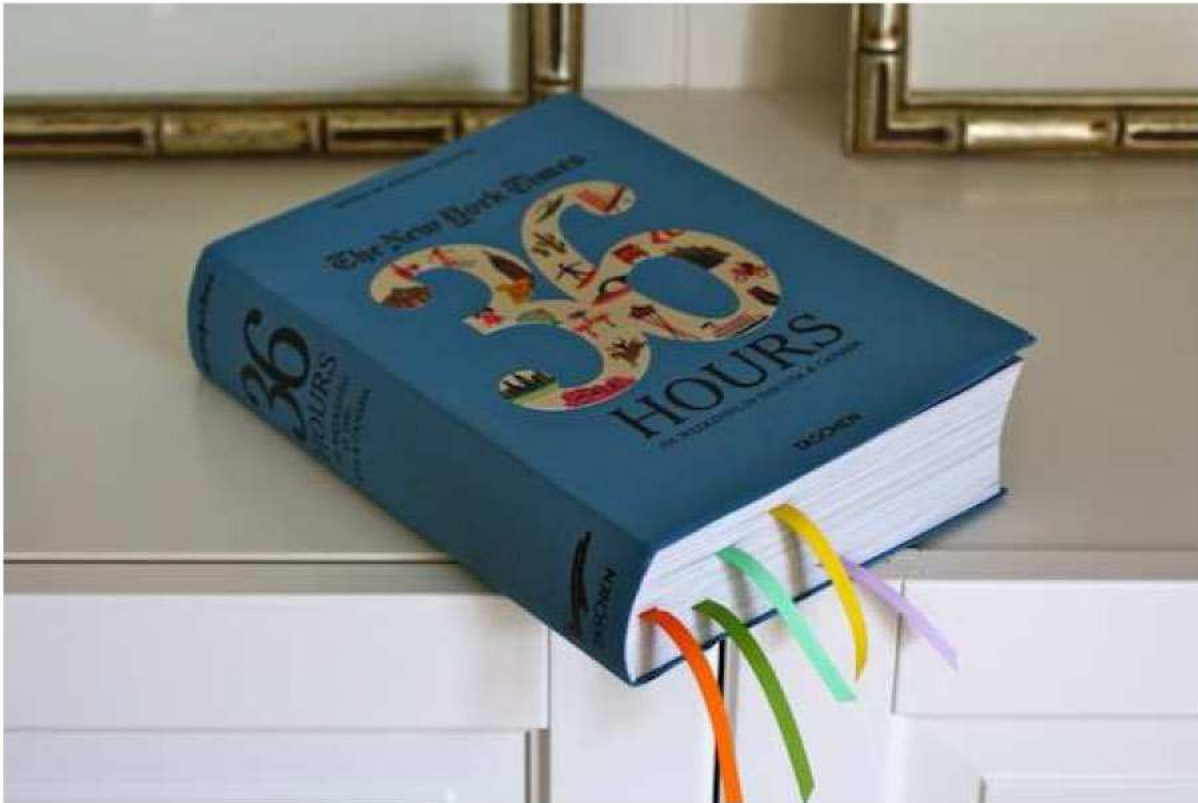


We might never have found the fried chicken and mac 'n cheese at Alcenia's in Memphis (and our swell digs at The Talbot Heirs) without the 36 Hours column!

The regions covered in 36 Hours (photo via Taschen.com). This listing of big cities doesn't include the dozens of small cities included in the book.

Edited by Barbara Ireland, *36 Hours* is a terrific book for your favorite road tripper or arm-chair traveler. I've been pouring over the pages and am eager to take another trip to visit my cousin in down in Raleigh so I can visit Father & Sons Antiques, The Scrap Exchange, and chow down on some barbecue at [The Pit](#), a place I also saw on The Food Network. Also, I'm frothing to get back to Savannah after reading about the places I've missed on my visits there.

In December, The New York Times released a compilation of the US and Canadian 36 Hour columns in one gorgeous, cloth hardcover book. *36 Hours: 150 Weekends in the USA & Canada* is divided by region with tons of photos, handy ribboned bookmarks by region, and an index that goes for pages.



My domestic road trip bible!

Even if you're not into road trips, you'll find many manageable day-trips, business travel side trips, and local adventures in this book. The Northeast section alone covers more than 35 cities—most of which are within a 12-hour drive of our house—St. John's and Halifax might be a bit further afield. Here's a small sampling of the featured locations in my neck of the woods:

- Cape May
- Princeton
- Philadelphia
- The Brandywine Valley
- Annapolis
- The Laurel Highlands
- Providence
- Burlington
- Portland (ME)
- Pittsburgh