

Introduction: The RV Life & Reasons to Hit the Road **xiii**

You Set the Lifestyle *xiv*

RVing for Travelers with Disabilities *xvii*

PART I:

GETTING READY TO HIT THE ROAD **I**

1 Life on the Road: A Personal & Public History of RVing **3**

Excerpts from a Road Diary; or, If We Can Do This, Anyone Can **3**

How to Give Backing-Up Directions without Destroying
Your Marriage **7**

RV History: The Tin Can Tourists **8**

Thirteen Notable Dates in RV History **11**

Six Common Misperceptions about RVs & Their Owners **12**

2 Getting Prepared: RVing Tips & Hints **15**

Driving Schools **15**

Learning Your Vital Statistics **16**

Making a List, Checking It Twice . . . **16**

What Kind of Wardrobe Is Right? **17**

Stocking the Larder **17**

Don't Drink the Water **26**

Trimming Costs: Eight Money-Saving Tips for the Road **27**

Safety, Sanity & Insurance **28**

Ain't Misbehavin': Road Etiquette **29**

The Community of Man: Getting Together with Other RVers **32**

3 Where to Sleep: Campgrounds & RV Parks **35**

Campground Glossary **35**

Should You Sleep by the Side of the Road? **36**

Campsites: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly **37**

Using the Directories to Find a Campground **39**

A Recommended Guide from Frommer's **40**

Ten Ways to Save Money on Campgrounds **40**

Membership Campgrounds **42**

- Special Camping Situations 44
- Ain't Misbehavin': Campground Etiquette* 46
- Ten Tips for Cozy Winter Camping 47
- How to Become Campground Hosts 48
- Plugging in Your Rig 49

PART 2: **RV ADVENTURES 51**

- 4 The California Desert & Las Vegas 53**
 - RVing in the California Desert & Las Vegas 56
 - Travel Essentials 57
 - The Best Desert Sights, Tastes & Experiences 59
 - On the Road 66
 - Ten Scenic Side Trips 84
- 5 Utah's Parks & Canyons 89**
 - RVing Utah's National Park Country 93
 - Travel Essentials 95
 - The Best Utah Sights, Tastes & Experiences 98
 - Talkin' Utah: A Glossary* 105
 - On the Road 107
 - Showtime . . . & a Tasty Dinner, Too!* 113
 - About Edward Abbey* 124
 - Ten Scenic Side Trips 130
- 6 Driving the Alaska Highway 133**
 - RVing Along the Alaska Highway 137
 - Travel Essentials 138
 - The Best Alaska Highway Sights, Tastes & Experiences 142
 - A Crash Course in Speaking Alaskan* 145
 - On the Road 148
 - Seven Tough Side Trips & Three Easy Ones 159
- 7 The Dakotas: Black Hills & Buffalo Burgers 163**
 - RVing the Dakotas 163
 - Travel Essentials 167
 - The Best Dakotas Sights, Tastes & Experiences 169
 - On the Road: South Dakota 181
 - The Custer Connection* 184

- South Dakota Nightlife* 186
- On the Road: North Dakota 191
- A Dozen Terrific Side Trips in the Dakotas 197

8 The Rio Grande Valley & the Wilds of West Texas 201

- RVing along the Rio Grande 201
- Travel Essentials 204
- The Best Sights, Tastes & Experiences of the Rio Grande 206
- I See by Your Outfit That You Are a Cowboy . . .* 209
- Horses, Dogs, Bulls & Goats* 215
- On the Road 216
- Texas Talk* 220
- The Comanche Moon* 221
- The Sounds of the Rio Grande* 223
- Five Ways to Enter Terlingua's International Chili Cook-Off* 230
- Six Special Side Trips 232

9 In the Heart of the Heartland: Iowa, Illinois & Indiana 235

- RVing in the Heartland 238
- Travel Essentials 241
- The Best Heartland Sights, Tastes & Experiences 243
- On the Road 250
- Moonlight Serenade* 254
- Classic Americana* 257
- Tender Tenderloins* 275
- A Box of Popcorn* 282

10 The Florida Keys (with Side Trips to the Everglades & Orlando) 285

- RVing the Keys 285
- Travel Essentials 286
- The Best Sights, Tastes & Experiences of the Keys 289
- Talkin' Conch: A Keys Glossary* 293
- On the Road 297
- And Then I Wrote . . .* 306
- Two Great Side Trips 308

11 The Blue Ridge Parkway & Skyline Drive 313

- RVing the Blue Ridge Parkway & Skyline Drive 316
- Travel Essentials 316

The Best Blue Ridge Sights, Tastes & Experiences 319

Southern Accents: A Glossary 329

On the Road 330

Literary Lights 336

Great Smoky Mountains RV Safety Tips 344

12 The Lobster Coast: New England & the Canadian Maritimes 345

RVing in New England & the Maritimes 347

Travel Essentials 348

Best Sights, Tastes & Experiences of the Lobster Coast 351

Lobster Trivia Quiz 363

On the Road 369

Investing with the Mashantucket Pequot 370

The Museum of Family Camping 375

The Beans of Freeport, Maine (& More) 376

A Dollar Is a Dollar 377

The Loyalists & the Acadians 380

Anne of Green Gables Sites 382

Five Side Trips 383

PART 3:

HARRY & SHIRLEY'S RV BUYING & RENTING GUIDE 385

13 RV Types & Terms 387

The ABCs of RVs: A Glossary of Common RV Terms 388

Types of RVs 391

14 To Rent or Buy? 407

Three Ways to Check Out Campground Life without an RV 407

Renting 408

Insider Tip: Plan Ahead 408

Buying 412

Useful RV Websites 415

Index 417

LIST OF MAPS

- Major Interstate Highways viii
- California Desert Highlights 54
- California/Nevada Desert
Campgrounds 68
- Palm Springs 72
- Las Vegas 82
- Utah Highlights 90
- Southern Utah Campgrounds 108
- Zion National Park 110
- Bryce Canyon National Park 115
- Capitol Reef National Park 120
- Canyonlands National Park 123
- Northern Utah Campgrounds 129
- Alaska Highlights 134
- Western Canada Highlights &
Campgrounds 150
- Alaska Campgrounds 154
- Denali National Park 158
- North Dakota Highlights 164
- South Dakota Highlights 165
- Little Bighorn Battlefield National
Monument 184
- Black Hills 187
- South Dakota Campgrounds 188
- Theodore Roosevelt
National Park 192
- North Dakota Campgrounds 196
- South Texas Highlights 202
- South Texas Campgrounds 218
- Big Bend National Park 224
- Iowa Highlights 236
- Illinois Highlights 237
- Indiana Highlights 239
- Iowa Campgrounds 253
- Northern Illinois Campgrounds 260
- Lincolndale Campgrounds 262
- Southern Illinois Campgrounds 269
- Southern Indiana Campgrounds 273
- Northern/Central Indiana
Campgrounds 281
- Florida Keys Highlights 287
- Florida Keys Campgrounds 301
- Key West Highlights 303
- Everglades National Park 309
- Orlando/Disney Area 311
- Virginia Highlights 314
- Blue Ridge Highlights &
Campgrounds 320
- Virginia Campgrounds 333
- Great Smoky Mountains
National Park 341
- Highlights of the New England
Coast 346
- Canadian Maritime Highlights 350
- New England Coast
Campgrounds 371
- Canadian Maritime Campgrounds 379