Indianapolis offers vibrant outdoor experiences in summer, highlighted by Eagle Creek Park, one of the nation's largest city parks, perfect for hiking, boating, and ziplining amid lush greenery. In downtown, visitors can stroll or pedal along the picturesque Canal Walk in White River State Park, enjoying scenic views and urban ambiance. Families seeking educational fun will find endless adventures at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, the largest children's museum in the world—with immersive exhibits and interactive experiences to delight all ages.

Historical enthusiasts will appreciate exploring Monument Circle, anchored by the iconic Soldiers and Sailors Monument, celebrating Indiana’s rich history and honoring veterans. Nearby, the Indiana State Museum and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians & Western Art showcase unique cultural artifacts and artwork. Meanwhile, art lovers can savor summer evenings under the stars at Newfields, where outdoor movie nights and concerts enhance the beauty of its expansive gardens and art installations.

Sports fans won't want to miss catching an Indianapolis Indians baseball game at the downtown Victory Field, celebrated for its lively atmosphere and impressive skyline views. Motorsports aficionados can explore the recently revamped Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum, now offering state-of-the-art interactive exhibits celebrating racing heritage. Culinary adventurers can indulge at historic St. Elmo Steak House—famous for its fiery shrimp cocktail—or explore diverse global flavors at The Garage Food Hall, a vibrant dining destination in the stylish Bottleworks District. Finish the night with craft beers or rooftop cocktails along bustling Massachusetts Avenue, capturing the energy of an Indy summer evening.

BEYOND THE CITY

BROWN COUNTY STATE PARK & NASHVILLE, INDIANA
Just an hour south of Indianapolis, Brown County State Park is Indiana's largest state park and one of its most beautiful natural destinations. Known affectionately as Indiana's "Little Smokies," the park features rolling hills, lush hardwood forests, and sweeping panoramic views. Families can enjoy exploring trails ranging from leisurely walks to more challenging hikes, horseback rides along shaded paths, or a refreshing swim at the Abe Martin Lodge pool. For lunch, head into the nearby town of Nashville, a charming artists' village lined with quaint shops, galleries, and delightful restaurants. Adults might enjoy sampling local craft beer at Big Woods Brewery, and children will love Nashville's homemade fudge and old-fashioned candy shops.

TURKEY RUN STATE PARK, INDIANA
About ninety minutes west of Indianapolis, Turkey Run State Park offers adventure-filled exploration through rugged sandstone ravines, shaded forest trails, and the gentle waters of Sugar Creek. Famous trails like the Ladders Trail invite hikers to climb wooden ladders through deep canyons, creating an exciting experience. Alternatively, rent canoes or tubes and float leisurely down Sugar Creek beneath historic covered bridges. Afterward, visit Turkey Run Inn for a comforting lunch, or head to nearby towns like Rockville for local favorites such as burgers and ice-cold beverages at rustic eateries.

INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK, INDIANA
Two and a half hours north brings you to the unexpected beauty of Indiana Dunes National Park, where miles of sandy beaches meet the expansive waters of Lake Michigan. Spend a day relaxing on the beach, building sandcastles, or swimming in calm, shallow waters perfect for children. Active families can tackle the Three Dune Challenge, a hike rewarding climbers with spectacular views of the lake and distant Chicago skyline. Nearby Chesterton offers cozy eateries, local breweries, and charming ice cream parlors—perfect for a relaxing finish after a sunny day at the shore.