

## Electric Avenue

JOHN DAVIS: The routine of charging up at home or work, taking advantage of times when their vehicle is parked for long periods of time, is commonplace for electric vehicle owners. But as more and more charging stations are installed at leisure and recreation destinations, the concept of EV tourism has now taken hold.

In addition to the numerous phone apps already available, many states are including charge station locators and suggested touring routes on their official tourism websites, encouraging EV drivers to get out and explore. You'll find places to plug in at wineries, historic landmarks, theme parks and sporting venues, and thousands of other places where drivers are likely to park for an hour or more while visiting.

Just in time for their centennial in 2016, the national park service is ramping up their initiative to install public charging stations at parks across the country.

Along with the increased use of alternative fuel vehicles by the parks themselves, encouraging low-emission tourism among the national parks 292 million annual visitors will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over one million pounds each year and help to preserve our pristine wilderness areas.

Another side benefit we found recently, when charging up at Muir Woods National Monument, was the primo parking locations often reserved for electric vehicles. In this case, just steps away from the towering redwood forest trails and at San Francisco's Crissy Field, EV drivers can recharge right next to the beach while they refresh themselves in the cool bay breeze.

GEOFF QUINN: Every time I drive in here, it's empty, and I think this is charging at like something like 15 miles an hour, which you know, it's not great, but it's good enough. So yeah, this is a deal.

JOHN DAVIS: Don't have an electric vehicle of your own? Several national car rental agencies offer EV rentals, and taking a zero-emission vacation is a great way to try one out before buying.

Through an initiative called "Drive Electric Orlando," visitors to this vacation capitol, the largest car rental market in the country, can conveniently rent EV's at the airport, then recharge while the family enjoys the rides and attractions at many local theme parks.

Several Orlando hotels have partnered with the project as well, offering electric vehicle charging stations for their guests. This trend is popping up all over the country, as hotels compete for eco-tourism bookings.

If you prefer to get up close with Mother Nature, most RV campgrounds have high-amperage electric outlets available that can easily handle electric vehicle charging.

With some research, flexible scheduling and a little imagination, it's easy to turn range anxiety into EV enjoyment, nearly anywhere the road leads.

Just ask Brian Kent. In August of 2015, he set out on a 100-day all-electric jaunt across the USA in his stock Nissan Leaf, with plans to plant a tree in every state to offset his carbon footprint.

BRIAN KENT: Also, I wanted to go to all the capitals, if at all possible, and all the most populous cities and the reason why that was was because I thought to myself, if I drive within 20, 25 miles where virtually everyone in the United State lives, then I'm proving the point of, if they own one of these cars, in their area, they can essentially take it any place I took it.

JOHN DAVIS: While we may not go to the extremes of that charged-up road trip, Brian's experience and our own EV adventures prove that not only is long-distance electric car travel possible, it can be downright fun too!