



Entrance and program fees may go toward caring for the resident animals and saving new ones.

Seeking Sanctuary

Take refuge in these unique havens for animal lovers.

BY CHRISTINA VERCELLETTO

1. Animal Ark

Reno, NV animalark.org

Local residents Wolves, bobcats, lions, tigers, bears and more—like Ivan, a turkey vulture, and Cordelia, a great horned owl.

Your family will love This education-focused haven for non-releasable predators aims to create enclosures that replicate each animal's natural environment. Year-round special events include the Cheetah Dash (cheetahs running in the desert), Wolf Howl Night (a full-moon evening listening to wolves and coyotes) and Harvest Festival.

Good to know For the best shot at seeing nocturnal predators, be there at opening time. Plus, bears get fed in the morning.

2. Farm Sanctuary

Watkins Glen, NY (two other locations in California)

farmsanctuary.org

Local residents Cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and other barnyard beauties.

Your family will love Going into pastures and barns for a meet and greet with the animals. You might even get to kiss a cow! Kids 12 to 18 can volunteer (with an accompanying adult) to clean barns, paint, garden and more.

Good to know Rent one of the tiny houses—decorated by animal activist and author Tracey Stewart—and stay on the property. Watkins Glen State Park (19 waterfalls!) and the Corning Museum of Glass are nearby.

3. The Turtle Hospital

Marathon, FL turtlehospital.org

Local residents Green, loggerhead, Kemp's ridley and hawksbill sea turtles recuperating from viruses, swallowing plastic bags or balloons, or incidents like run-ins with boats or fishing gear.

Your family will love The 90-minute behind-the-scenes tours. Since it's a working hospital, you may get a peek at an ongoing surgery. Turtles are sometimes released to their natural habitat as a public event. **Good to know** It's located in the Florida Keys, about a 2.5-hour drive from Miami. Call for tour reservations. Check the website for public turtle release schedule.

4. Elm Creek Stables' Frio Canyon Horse Rescue

Concan, TX visitvaldecountry.com

Local residents Equines saved from neglect and abandonment. The petting zoo is home to a pea hen, donkey and blind deer plus miniature horses and a tribe of goats.

Your family will love Trail rides wending through Texas Hill Country's river region and pony rides for the little ones. You can feed the goats and donkey and groom the horses.

Good to know Trail rides require reservations, and some include breakfast or dinner. Horses can be sponsored—you'll receive pictures and updates.

5. Pigs Peace Sanctuary

Stanwood, WA pigspeace.org

Local residents Runts (*Charlotte's Web* alert!) and abandoned, disabled and rescued pigs of all ages, sizes and breeds, with names running the gamut from Albert to Ziggy.

Your family will love Tour groups that are limited in size. Guests may get a chance to interact with the piggies and perhaps scratch a tummy or pose for selfies.

Good to know Located about an hour north of Seattle, the sanctuary is usually closed to visitors November through April.