**Rhode Island текст 1**

A jewel like corner of New England, steeped in history

The smallest state in the country Rhode Island measures a modest 47 miles from north to south and only 40 miles from east to west. But it has the surprising variety of destinations within its borders - emerald forests, eye-soothing farmland, dynamic cities, and spectacular seasides.

In northwestern Rhode Island, forests of birch and cedar are dotted with shining lakes and ponds. Country roads pass by sprawling dairy and poultry farms, recalling the early years when outlying towns were called plantations and the state was given the official name State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

In the northeastern part of the state, the Blackstone River courses south to Pawtucket. Here Samuel Slater built the first waterpowered cotton mill in 1790, ushering in an industrial revolution that drew legions of immigrants to Rhode Island.

South of Slater's restored mill in Pawtucket lies Rhode Island's cosmopolitan capital, Providence. Roger Williams founded the city in 1636, and in the next two centuries it became one of the East Coast's busiest ports. The Providence of today, though a busy urban center, is filled with reminders of the past. Dozens of elegant 18th century homes, each with a bronze plaque recording the date it was built and the name of its first owner, are found along Benefit Street and the area surrounding Brown University on College Hill.

Sweeping from the Atlantic Ocean all the way inland to Providence is Rhode Island's most impressive natural treasure — gigantic Narragansett Bay, which endows the tiny state with a staggering, 400-mile coastline. On the bay are some 35 islands, known by such quaint and quirky names as Hog, Hen, Rabbit, Patience, Hope, and Despair. The largest is named Rhode Island but to avoid confusion residents use the island's Indian name, Aquidneck.

On the southern end of Aquidneck lies the celebrated resort town of Newport. 200 years ago it was an active port and a center for shipping. But in the last century Newport has become a symbol of opulence with luxurious yachts and mansions.

Rhode Island was the first colony to declare its independence from England in 1776. In 1790 it joined the Union as the 13th state.

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**Vermont текст 2**

Its nickname: Green Mountain State.

Green mountains, green valleys - America's northern Eden

To find solace from the hectic life of cities and suburbs, Americans often head to places where, it is said, "time seems to have stopped." In Vermont, time not only stopped, it went backward. Hills and valleys that were once stripped bare of trees for agriculture turned green again as forests reclaimed abandoned fields and pastures. Moose, salmon, and the peregrine falcon, which were chased from the region decades ago, have started to come back.

The poet Robert Frost, who lived for a while in South Shaftsbury in the 1920's, said that Vermont is "a state in a natural state."

Vermonters had Ice Age glaciers to thank for the abundance of stones in their soil. The glaciers also carved the Green Mountains into a gentle range forming a kindly mountamscape.

Although the Green Mountains give the state its character, they do not completely dominate its topography. More than half of the state's western border is formed by Lake Champlain, the sixth-largest lake in the country. Beyond its shores lie the Lake Champlain lowlands. Not only is this area the most fertile farmland in the state, it is one of Vermont's most picturesque places.

The northeastern corner of the state is another world entirely. Isolated, with very few roads, this sparsely settled expanse of 2,000 square miles is called the Northeast Kingdom. White and black spruce flourish in its cold climate. The timber industry provides employment for the few people who make their home here.

Vermont is a meeting ground of temperate-zone and arctic plant life. Dogwoods flower in the state's milder areas, while in the north one can find holdouts of alpine tundra left over from the Ice Age.

Today the sugar maple is the most common hardwood species in Vermont. It is sap from this tree that gives Vermont its maple syrup and it is the sugar maple that puts on the spectacular show of reds and purples for which the state is famous. Botanists who have studies the secret workings of autumnal beauty have discovered that an accumulation of sugar gives these leaves their vibrant colors.

Vermont boasts the country's marble production. The world's largest granite quarry, 350 feet deep and covering 20 acres, is in Barre. The Lincoln Memorial is made of Vermont marble. The state also produces over 100 million pounds of cheese a year, including its famous Cheddar.

In 1791 Vermont joined the Union as the 14th state.

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**Arizona текст 3**

Although home to the ruins of an age-old culture, Arizona is one of the youngest states: the nation's lawmakers held off granting statehood until 1912, making it the last of the contiguous 48 to be admitted to the Union. And that is only one of Arizona's paradoxes. Though much of it appears barren, the state is rich in wildlife, vegetation, and minerals. Though dry, it was formed by ancient seas, and rushing rivers carved its breathtaking canyons.

In the northern part of the state the Colorado Plateau is flat and sparsely vegetated. The fabled Grand Canyon is perhaps the most famous natural wonder on earth. The rock of its inner gorge is 2 billion years old but the huge abyss is relatively young, since the Colorado River began chiseling it out only about 5 million years ago.

South of the central mountains, the desert claims most of the land. But not all. The city of Phoenix sprawls across one of the region's saucer-shaped valleys. Clean, dry air was among the drawing cards that lured people to Phoenix and turned it into a capital of high-tech industry in the 1980's.

Titan of the Arizona desert is the saguaro cactus. Towering in the air, arms reaching toward the sun, these plants probably more than any other are etched into the popular imagination as a symbol of the desert Southwest.

Americans have come to the oases on the desert first for the good life of year-round sun, and second for jobs. From a largely extractive economy (its big "C's" were once cattle, copper, cotton, climate, and citrus) Arizona has been transformed into a manufacturing state. Until the 1980's, Arizona was the greatest copper mining state. Earnest growth in research and industry has made manufacturing the economic mainstay of the state. Electronics has become the real boom industry in the 1980's.

After California and Oklahoma, Arizona has the third-highest Indian population in the U.S. Indians are most rural people. Some 20 million acres — more than a quarter of the entire state — are set aside for their reservations; among these is the great Navajo Reservation, which spills over into New Mexico and is so large that other Indians say it functions almost like a state. Thirteen tribes of Indians live in Arizona, each with a distinct culture.

Arizona entered the Union in 1912 as the 48th state.

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**Nevada текст 4**

Well into the first half of the 19th century, the lonely land just east of Sierra Nevada remained an enigma. While some explorers returned with the stories of snow-covered mountains, pine forests, and rushing trout streams, others described the land as hell's antechamber.

Nevada's mineral wealth became uncontested fact when two miners prospecting outside present-day Reno discovered gold and high-grade silver sulfide. Virginia City became a rich mining town. Gold and silver still contribute to Nevada's economy today. But the state's most valuable asset is its allure for tourists - the neon-lit casinos of Las Vegas, the resorts of Lake Tahoe, and the beauty of the very desert that early explorers deemed a wasteland. Taxes from gambling provide nearly 40 percent of Nevada's general revenues. Las Vegas is not only the nation's gambling capital but its marriage capital as well; the city boasts some 50 wedding chapels.

Despite receiving less than 10 inches of rain a year, Nevada has an amazing diversity of plants and wildlife. Cactus, yucca, sage and other brush plants blossom every spring.

It is Lake Tahoe, however, that is Nevada's most precious gem. Set amid alpine meadows in the Sierra Nevada, the lake is surrounded by snowcapped mountain peaks. In 1861 Samuel Clemens (who would adopt the name Mark Twain a year later) arrived from Missouri to look for gold and discovered that Nevada's real treasure was the beauty and serenity of Lake Tahoe.

The driest of all the 50 states, Nevada relies on a number of man-made lakes and underground sources to augment its meager water supply.

Each year thousands of cowboys and other ranch hands gather in Eiko to perform poems and songs they have written to pass the time on the range.

Nevada joined the Union in 1864 as the 36th state.

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