

10 great 5K runs to build a vacation around

Larry Bleiberg, Special for USA TODAY



These 5K runs feature spectacular scenery

Runners may have difficulty watching the road because of the distractions floating overhead at Running with the Balloons in Readington, N.J. balloonfestival.com

Work in a work out on your next vacation by building a trip around a scenic 5K. Runs through wilderness areas, historic sites and big cities allow participants to combine exercise with sightseeing, says **Michael Epstein** of MESP, the executive producer of September's [Nautica Malibu Triathlon](#). While triathlons are demanding, many runs in similarly spectacular areas feature less-daunting five-kilometer (3.1-mile) courses. "They are very doable. You've got a lot of people running, or even walking these events," he says. Epstein shares some favorites with **Larry Bleiberg** for USA TODAY.

But register early because many sell out.

Running with the Balloons

Readington, N.J.

Runners may have difficulty watching the road because of the distractions floating overhead at this event about 50 miles west of New York City. It's part of the annual QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning, which features mass ascensions of up to 100 hot air-fueled craft. "The finish line is right in the middle of the festival," Epstein says. "Balloons decorate the sky and the male and female winners each get a free ride." Race date: July 31. balloonfestival.com