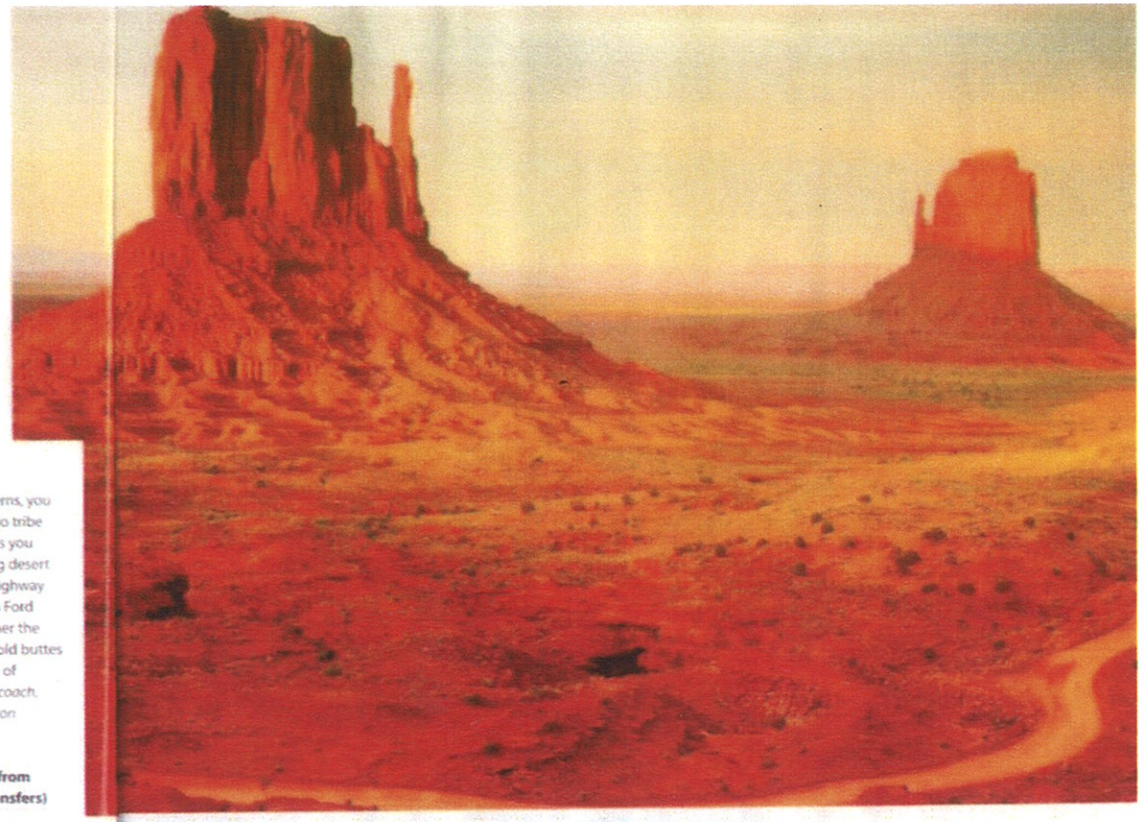
# ON THE ROAD

*From the Deep South to the awesome Rockies in the north, and east to west from the Pacific to the Atlantic,* **Guy Pierce** *looks at America's classic routes*

Whenever and wherever you slam the car door, settle behind the wheel, turn on the ignition and head out on the highway, you sense the romance of the American road. The road trip has been celebrated in books, song and film – from *Thelma and Louise* and *Easy Rider* to Jack Kerouac inspiring the Beat Generation with *On The Road* and Simon & Garfunkel's poignant reflections on a Greyhound bus journey, in their classic hit *America*. Deciding on a touring holiday of the States is the easy part. There's cheap petrol by British forecourt standards (even though the Americans still complain!), budget motels and a wide range of hire vehicles to take your pick from.

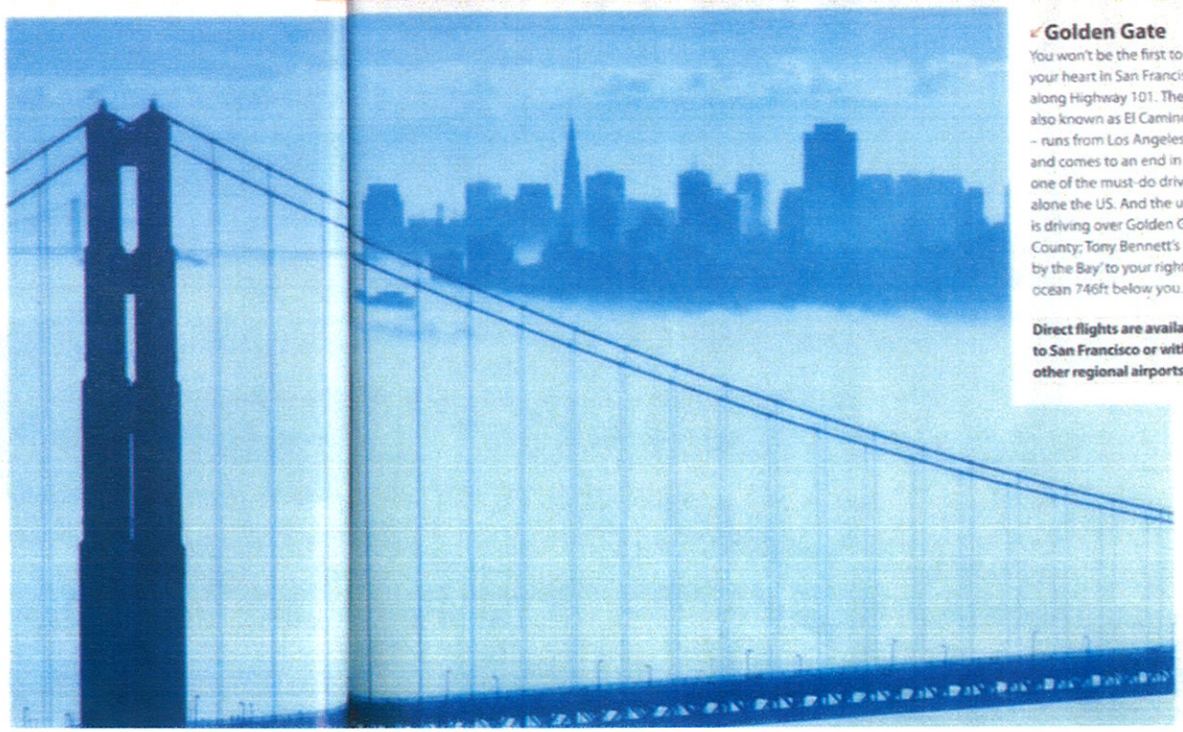
They couldn't make it easier, so now comes the tough part. Where do you go? A country of 3,794,066 square miles is going to take some covering and with state speed limits varying between 65 and 80mph you won't squeeze it all into a fortnight's fly-drive holiday. Not even with the multitude of multi-lane north-south, east-west interstate highways at your disposal. But wherever you choose, it won't disappoint. Even New York State, Florida and California can throw up unexpected surprises and secrets which you can discover simply by turning off the main highway into a backroad. Just remember, you can't do it all this time. That's what next year is for...



### →Monument Valley

When you think John Wayne Westerns, you think Monument Valley – the Navajo tribe call it the 'valley of the rocks'. And as you approach southern Utah's imposing desert rock formations from Arizona on Highway 163, you can see why director John Ford was so inspired. He brought together the majestic landscape-defining red-gold buttes (right), with the towering presence of 'The Duke' in classics such as *Stagecoach*, *Fort Apache*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* and *The Searchers*.

**Fly to Grand Junction, Colorado from various UK airports (with two transfers)**



### ↙Golden Gate

You won't be the first to be tempted to leave your heart in San Francisco as you travel north along Highway 101. The Pacific Highway – also known as El Camino Real, 'the royal road' – runs from Los Angeles, up through Oregon and comes to an end in Washington state. It's one of the must-do drives in the world, let alone the US. And the undoubted highlight is driving over Golden Gate Bridge into Marin County; Tony Bennett's mist-shrouded 'city by the Bay' to your right and the glittering ocean 746ft below you.

**Direct flights are available from Heathrow to San Francisco or with a transfer from other regional airports**