

O' PIONEERS: EXPLORING SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA



Rejuvenate yourself in southeastern Nebraska and understand why many pioneers considered this part of the Great Plains to be the Promised Land. The mighty Missouri River played a major role in shaping the history and settlement of southeast Nebraska. Today, you can explore a variety of historical and cultural museums, outdoor recreation, shopping, fine dining and world-class wineries throughout this inviting part of the state.

DAY 1

Omaha • Bellevue

MORNING

Begin your adventure through southeast Nebraska at Omaha's **Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium** (allow 1.5 hours) where you can enjoy a backstage experience, visit the world's largest indoor rainforest and the Desert Dome, or get a bird's eye view of the zoo on the Zoofari. Explore the impact African Americans had on Omaha's art and music scene at **Love's Jazz & Arts Center** (allow 1 hour) before heading downtown to the **Durham Museum** (allow 1.5 hours). Located in a restored Art Deco train station, the museum showcases the history of Omaha and the Union Pacific Railroad.

AFTERNOON

Afterward, eat lunch in the adjacent **Old Market** followed by shopping, browsing or simply relaxing in this historic district (allow 1.5 hours). Next stop is **Lauritzen Gardens and Kenefick Park** (allow 1 hour). This 100-acre facility features an arboretum, bird sanctuary and a variety of gardens. Don't miss the year-round floral displays in the visitor center.

The last stop in Omaha is **El Museo Latino** (allow 1 hour), which highlights the important contribution the Hispanic population has had on the city's history, culture and development.

Depart for Bellevue and your first stop, a tour of **Offutt Air Force Base** (allow 1.5 hours). Afterward, take a tour of **Moonstruck Meadery** (allow 1 hour) and taste mead in a variety of flavors, including cherry, blueberry, peach and pepper. This is the first such business in Nebraska. Enjoy a tour and then a wonderful meal and entertainment at **Soaring Wings Vineyard & Brewery** (allow 1.5 hours) before heading to your hotel for the evening.

DAY 2

Nebraska City • Brownville

MORNING

Upon arrival in Nebraska City, begin your tour at **Arbor Lodge State Historical Park and Arboretum** (allow 1 hour), home of J. Sterling Morton, the father of Arbor Day. The 260-acre **Arbor Day Farm** (allow 1.5 hours) is a working farm orchard and forest. Don't forget to pick up a tree seedling at the Lied Greenhouse while there. Experience Lewis and Clark's journey at the **Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail & Visitor Center** (allow 1 hour), an 80-acre facility overlooking the Missouri River and the only center in the country dedicated to the flora, fauna and scientific discoveries along their journey.

AFTERNOON

Enjoy a delicious lunch at one of Nebraska City's fine restaurants before heading to **Kimmel Orchard & Vineyard** (allow 1 hour) to load up on fresh fruits and vegetables. Continue on to historic Brownville where the first stop is at the two-story book store-**Lyceum Café** (allow 45 minutes). **Whiskey Run Creek Vineyard & Winery** (allow 1 hour) is one of the state's oldest wineries and offers a variety of quality wines for tasting and purchase.

EVENING

End your time in Brownville on a leisurely dinner cruise down the Missouri River on the **Spirit of Brownville** (allow 1.5 hours). After dinner, depart for Beatrice for the evening's lodging.

DAY 3

Beatrice • Lincoln • Ashland • Gretna

MORNING

The day starts with a step back into time when this land was first settled by early pioneers. The grounds of **Homestead National Monument of America** (allow 1.5 hours) include the Homestead Heritage Center, hiking trails through virgin prairie grasses and living history demonstrations. Depart for Lincoln where the first stop is the **International Quilt Study Center & Museum** (allow 1 hour), the world's largest publicly held quilt collection with more than 4,000 quilts from more than 25 countries.

Head downtown to the **Sheldon Museum of Art** (allow 1 hour). Designed by internationally acclaimed architect Philip Johnson, the museum is an excellent modern art gallery featuring Twentieth-century American art.

AFTERNOON

Enjoy lunch and then a walking tour of the **Historic Haymarket District** where galleries, restaurants, antique stores, eclectic shops, bars and coffee houses are located in renovated turn-of-the-century buildings (allow 2 hours for lunch and tour). After lunch, enjoy a guided tour of the impressive **State Capitol** (allow 1 hour) building, home to the nation's only one-house legislative body, the Nebraska Unicameral.

Depart Lincoln for Ashland and the **Strategic Air and Space Museum** (allow 1 hour), a 3,000 sq. ft. exhibit space featuring aircraft from various world conflicts. An onsite restoration hanger lets you watch these magnificent machines being restored. End this portion of your southeast Nebraska tour at Nebraska's newest outlet mall, **Nebraska Crossing Outlets** (allow 1.5 hours) near Gretna. With more than 70 outlet stores and eateries, there's something for everyone!

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