

Uniquely Eastern Nebraska



Eastern Nebraska is home to the state's two largest cities, Omaha and Lincoln, Native American history and culture, and a beautiful landscape of rolling hills and small town charm. On this itinerary, we'll explore and learn more about the region's rich and diverse, dine on amazing ethnic and locally prepared meals, get a first-hand view of America's military might, come face-to-face with wild animals from around the world, and experience everyday life as a cowboy on a real working ranch.

DAY 1

Omaha

After breakfast, our first Omaha stop this morning is the **National Park Service Visitor Center** where Meriwether Lewis will meet us and talk about his journey up the Missouri River with William Clark before we embark on an exciting **guided city tour of Omaha**. Our lunch destination is **Big Mama's Kitchen & Catering**, which was featured on Food Network's "Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives." This family-owned and operated restaurant serves mouthwatering soul food and traditional American cuisine, such as oven-fried chicken and sweet potato pie ice cream. Afterward we head to west Omaha and **Father Flanagan's Boys Town** where an experienced guide will give an insider's view of life in the Village and recount the many inspiring stories of Father Flanagan and his vision to help wayward boys. Tonight's dinner and entertainment is a traditional German meal and entertainment with **Omaha's German American Society**. After dinner, we'll enjoy a performance by the German men's choir who will lead us in a traditional German sing-a-long.

DAY 2

Bellevue • Tekamah • Bancroft • Winnebago Nation • South Sioux City

At our first stop today is a short drive south of Omaha to the headquarters of the U. S. Strategic Command, Air Force Weather Agency, and the 55th Wing of the Air Combat Command at **Offutt Air Force Base** in Bellevue. After our departure from Omaha, we take a short drive north to **Master's Hand Candles** in Tekamah where we'll enjoy a delicious lunch before browsing through the displays of chocolate, candles and so much more. Next stop is Bancroft and the **John G. Neihardt Center**. He was the author of *Black Elk Speaks* and the center highlights his life and works. Now it's time to enter the Winnebago Nation, one of Nebraska's four Native American tribes, where we'll visit the **Angel DeCora Museum & Research Center** to learn more about the tribe and its history and culture in Nebraska. Upon arrival in South Sioux City,

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the Gateway to Northeast Nebraska, we make a stop at the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall** in Freedom Park to remember our nation's fallen soldiers. South Sioux City offers a variety of dining and entertainment options for the evening.

DAY 3

Fordyce • Santee Sioux Nation • Norfolk • Stanton

We start our day living the life of a true western cowboy at **WJ Ranch** near Fordyce. Horsemanship demonstrations, everyday ranch tasks, and a ride in a horse drawn buggy and a 1924 Model T Ford truck are some of the many interactive experiences we'll enjoy as we learn more about the ranching life. Next we head to the Santee Sioux Nation where we'll enjoy a delicious lunch at the **Ohiya Casino & Resort** before trying our luck at one of the casino's more than 400 state-of-the-art machines. We start our morning in Norfolk at the **Elkhorn Valley Museum & Research Center** where we'll meet a younger Johnny Carson who will show us the exhibit dedicated to his long television career. On display is an impressive collection of his personal items, including videotapes, vintage photographs and his six Emmy Awards. An interactive home theater shows selected *Tonight Show* episodes and monologues.

Now it's time to head to Norfolk to tour **Johnny Carson's childhood home**. Owner, Jim McKenzie, will speak about the history of the house and items found along the way while bringing it back to its original condition. Next, we'll reconnect with nature at **Red Road Herbs** near Stanton where we'll learn all about herbs and how to use them in our everyday life. More than 100 herbs grow in cultivated gardens in a cozy woodland setting. Dinner tonight is a **Black Cow Fat Pig**, one of the premier steak restaurants in northeast Nebraska.

DAY 4

Genoa • Monroe • Columbus • Schuyler • Fremont

Our first stop this morning is a history lesson at the **Genoa Indian School** in Genoa. In operation from 1884 to 1934, this was one of the nation's 16 Indian Boarding Schools established by the federal government. Gain a deeper understanding of what everyday life was like at the school for its students. Next we head to **Horn T Zoo** in Monroe for an up-close and personal experience at this small family-owned and operated zoo, which works to connect visitors with animals from around the world and Nebraska. After lunch at **Dusters Restaurant** in Columbus, we head to the **Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial** in Pawnee Park to view a life-size replica of the Higgins landing craft that helped the Allies win the Second World War. A bronze eagle statue sits atop a steel structure made from material salvaged from the 2001 World Trade Center disaster. Now it's off to Fremont for an exciting afternoon speeding down the Platte River on an **airboat tour**. It's an experience you won't easily forget. Tonight's dinner is a **J's Steakhouse** in Fremont where we'll dine on delicious Nebraska steaks.

DAY 5

Lincoln • Beatrice • Nebraska City

Our first stop this morning in Lincoln is a tour of the impressive **Nebraska State Capitol**. At 15 stories and 400 feet tall, it is the second-tallest statehouse in the country and offers a spectacular view of the city from the observation. Our next stop is the **International Quilt Study Center**, which houses the world's largest publicly held quilt collection. We'll tour its high-tech storage facility and quilt exhibitions before going "behind the scenes" to view quilts that are hundreds of years old. After lunch in Beatrice at the **Black Crow**, we head to the National Park Service's **Homestead National Monument of America** where we'll step back to a time when the Homestead Act of 1862 enticed millions of people to move to the frontier and cultivate this often-harsh landscape. Explore the Homestead Heritage Center, hiking trails through virgin prairie grasses, and living history demonstrations.

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Afterward, we go to Nebraska City, the Home of Arbor Day and **Arbor Day Farm** and **Arbor Lodge State Historical Park**. We'll spend time at this working farm orchard and forest where an experienced Nature Interpreter will guide us through this 260-acre National Historic Landmark, which concludes with a visit to the 50-foot-high Tree Adventure for an amazing view of the farm. While there, we'll enjoy dinner at the **Timber Dining Room**, located in the impressive **Lied Lodge & Conference Center**, one of the best examples of environmental stewardship in building design and use.

For more information about this itinerary and other exciting group tour opportunities, contact Micheal Collins, Group Tour Manager, with the Nebraska Tourism Commission at micheal.collins@nebraska.gov or 402-471-3795.

Day 1

Breakfast in Omaha
National Park Service Visitor Center
Guided City Tour of Omaha
Big Mama's Kitchen & Catering (Lunch)
Father Flanagan's Boys Town
Omaha's German American Society (Dinner)

Day 2

Breakfast in Omaha
Offutt Air Force Base
Master's Hand Candles (Lunch)
John G. Neihardt Center
Angel DeCora Museum & Research Center
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall
Dinner in South Sioux City

Day 3

Breakfast in South Sioux City
WJ Ranch
Ohiya Casino & Resort (Lunch)
Elkhorn Valley Museum & Research Center

Johnny Carson's Childhood Home
Red Road Herbs
Black Cow Fat Pig (Dinner)

Day 4

Breakfast in Norfolk
Genoa Indian School
Horn T Zoo
Dusters Restaurant (Lunch)
Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial
Platte River Airboat Tour
J's Steakhouse (Dinner)

Day 5

Breakfast in Fremont
Nebraska State Capitol
International Quilt Study Center
Black Crow (Lunch)
Homestead National Monument of America
Arbor Day Farm
Arbor Lodge State Historical Park
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