



Buffet, Birds, and Beef

We'll start our tour in Omaha, Nebraska's largest city and home to Warren Buffett (the Oracle of Omaha), where we'll visit many of this business magnate, investor, and philanthropist's favorite points of interest and hang outs. The birding part of our tour takes us to Lincoln and then the Central Flyway where we'll come face-to-face with more than 500,000 Sandhill cranes who use this part of the Platte River during their annual spring migration. A guided sunset tour and sunrise tour give us two different perspectives of these unique birds, also known as living dinosaurs. We'll spend time in southwest Nebraska where we'll watch up-close as male prairie chickens compete for dominance and mating rights with female hens on a *lek* in the open prairie. Their unique booming call and stomping makes it worth getting up before sunrise to see. As far as the beef portion of the tour goes, we'll venture to North Platte to learn where our beef comes from and how it's processed, followed by a full meal consisting of five cuts of delicious Nebraska beef.

DAY 1 Omaha

We'll start our tour off right with a breakfast stop at **Warren Buffett's favorite McDonald's** restaurant before embarking on a **Warren Buffett Driving Tour** where an informative step-on guide will take us to many of Buffett's favorite Omaha points of interests. Some of the sites include Berkshire Hathaway Headquarters, Borsheim's Fine Jewelry, Omaha-World Herald Building, and Dundee Presbyterian Church. Next we head south of Omaha to Bellevue for lunch followed by a stop at **Fontenelle Forest Nature Center** where we'll learn more about the facility's dedication to help injured birds of prey through their **Raptor Rescue Program**. We'll explore the **Raptor Woodland Refuge** where owls, hawks, falcons, and other species that no longer can survive in the wild live within "homes" that are designed according to their natural habitat.

Afterward, we return to Omaha to visit the **Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center** where healing is more than medicine. The Healing Arts program exists to create environments that support and comfort people through diverse art opportunities and experiences to help reduce pain perception, anxiety, stress, loneliness and depression and to provide new insight and clarify feelings about a cancer diagnosis and treatment. Dinner tonight is at one of Warren Buffett's favorite restaurants. **Gorat's Steakhouse** has been an Omaha tradition for more than 70 years and has hosted celebrities and dignitaries from around the world.

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DAY 2

Omaha • Lincoln

Our breakfast stop this morning is the **Lithuanian Bakery** where we'll hear the inspirational story of the Machevicius family about how their family escaped Germany in WWII and moved to Omaha to start a bakery business. We'll taste some of the bakery's famous breads and enjoy their signature dessert which takes three days to make. Now it's time for a tour of the largest furnishing store in North America, **Nebraska Furniture Mart**. Founded in 1937 by Belarus-born Rose Blumkin, also known as Mrs. B, she sold a majority interest of the business to Warren Buffett in 1983. Lunch today is at another one of Warren Buffett's places, **Dairy Queen**. After lunch we'll explore **The Rose Theatre**, which has been at the heart of Omaha's dramatic and arts scene since 1948. The purpose of the theatre is to enrich the lives of children and their families through live theatre and the arts. Our last stop in Omaha is a behind-the-scenes tour of the **Omaha Community Playhouse**, the largest community theater in the country where we'll learn all about the process of putting on a large stage production including set and costume design. including an annual summer and fall Broadway musical. Now we head to Lincoln, Nebraska's capitol city, and dinner at **The Green Gateau**. This upper-scale neighborhood restaurant in the heart of downtown combines French-influenced American contemporary cuisine in a cozy, European country inn setting.

DAY 3

Lincoln • Grand Island

After breakfast, we head to our first birding stop on our tour. Located southwest of Lincoln, the **Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center** is an 850-acre tallgrass prairie nature preserve home to more than 220 bird species, 30 mammal species, 350 plants, and 50 butterfly species. **Lazlo's Brewery & Grill**, Nebraska's first brewpub, is our lunch stop in Lincoln's Historic Haymarket District. After lunch, we head to central Nebraska and the heart of the **Central Flyway**. Our first stop is Grand Island for an introductory program about the Sandhill cranes given by an experienced guide at the **1937 Art-Deco Grand Theatre**. For dinner, we dine at **Tommy Gunz Bistro** where we'll enjoy hand-prepared entrees within a prohibition era speakeasy experience. Our Sandhill crane adventure continues at **Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center** along the Platte River where we'll have an up-close evening VIP crane viewing experience.

DAY 4

Grand Island • Kearney

Breakfast this morning is at **The Chocolate Bar** in downtown Grand Island, a trendy café with a big city ambiance. We'll follow this by getting in touch with our inner artists at **Studio K Gallery** for a Sandhills crane painting experience. We now head to Fonner Park for a tour at **Raising Nebraska**. This 25,000 sq. ft. interactive museum connects consumers with the farmers who raise their food by explaining the steps from "farm to fork." Experience a virtual combine harvest experience, full-sized pivot irrigation system, a 50-foot-long interactive floor map of Nebraska, and an interactive dinner table. Lunch will be in the exhibit's demonstration kitchen. Grand Island is home to the **Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer**. Noted as one of the top ten living history museums in the country, the museum complex transports us back to the early pioneer and settlement days of Nebraska. The **Fonner Rotunda** houses one of the state's finest collections of cowboy and Native American art and artifacts.

During Sandhill crane season the museum's "**Wings Over the Platte**" exhibit displays artwork by artists from across Nebraska and the country that is specific to the annual spring migration. The exhibit has been celebrating the crane migration for more than 30 years and is a "must-see" for any bird lover. Now it's time to depart Grand Island and head to Kearney to **The Archway** where we'll explore this impressive interactive museum that commemorates the nation's westward expansion. At a height of 310 feet, the Archway is the only tourist attraction in the country to span a federal interstate highway. Before turning in for the evening, we'll enjoy an elegant dinner at **Alley Rose**, one of Kearney's best restaurants, serving a variety of locally prepared dishes.

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DAY 5

Kearney • North Platte

We start the morning pre-dawn as we make our way to **Rowe Sanctuary** for a guided sunrise Sandhill crane viewing on the banks of Platte River. We'll watch as thousands of cranes start their morning routine getting ready to head into the fields around the area to forage. Then we head to North Platte where our first stop will be **Buffalo Bill State Historical Park**, home of Colonel William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Here we'll meet him and his wife who will give us a tour of their place and talk about their interesting adventures. We'll hop aboard a wagon that will take us from the park to the **Lincoln County Historical Museum** where we'll enjoy a deliciously prepared Dutch oven lunch and a guided tour of the facility. We'll explore the recreated town and learn more about the story of the famous **North Platte Canteen** during World War II.

One thing to watch out for on the ride to the museum from Buffalo Bill's house though is masked robbers who have their eye on the money you'll also be carrying with you on the wagon. Our first stop this afternoon is **Golden Spike Tower & Visitor Center** where we'll take in a bird's eye view of the world's largest railroad classification yard from atop the 7th floor open air observation deck or the 8th floor enclosed deck. An impressive gift shop and courtyard displaying flags from the 23 states served by the Union Pacific Railroad also are on-site. Next we learn where our beef comes from on the **"Here's the Beef"** tour at the West Central Research and Extension Office. Extension educators and the chef from Another Round Restaurant will explain the steps that are taken to raise and process beef from pasture to the table. Dinner will be a full meal including five cuts of beef. Now we depart for McCook for a short orientation at the hotel where an experienced naturalist will give a presentation on the Greater Prairie Chicken, viewing blind etiquette, and how the following morning's tour will take place.

DAY 6

McCook

The final stop on our Buffet, Birds, and Beef tour requires us to get up before sunrise to head to the *lek* where we'll be able to view the unique **Prairie Chicken Dance** from inside a protective viewing trailer. Male prairie chickens will spar for dominance and mating rights by stomping on the ground, jumping, and sounding their trademark booming call. After the tour, we head back to McCook for breakfast before departing Nebraska.

Departure note: Groups that flew into Omaha can fly out of North Platte Regional Airport or Denver International Airport.

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

Warren Buffet's Favorite McDonald's (Breakfast)
Warren Buffet Omaha Driving Tour
Bellevue (Lunch)
Fontenelle Forest Nature Center/Raptor Woodland Refuge
Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center
Gorat's Steakhouse (Dinner)

Day 2

Lithuanian Bakery (Breakfast)
Nebraska Furniture Mart
Dairy Queen (Lunch)
The Rose Theatre
Omaha Community Playhouse
The Green Gateau (Dinner)

Day 3

Breakfast in Lincoln
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
Lazlo's Brewery & Grill (Lunch)
1937 Grand Theatre
Tommy Gunz Bistro (Dinner)
Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center

Day 4

The Chocolate Bar (Breakfast)
Studio K Gallery
Raising Nebraska (Lunch)
Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer
The Archway
Alley Rose (Dinner)

Day 5

Breakfast in Kearney
Rowe Sanctuary
Buffalo Bill State Historical Park
Lincoln County Historical Museum (Lunch)
Golden Spike Tower & Visitor Center
"Here's the Beef" Tour (Dinner)

Day 6

Prairie Chicken Dance Trail
Breakfast in McCook



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