

Eastern Nebraska Encounters



Eastern Nebraska is chock full of exciting and fun-filled group friendly destinations to delight any adventurer to this land west of the mighty Missouri River. From the cosmopolitan buzz of Omaha and Lincoln to the wide-open spaces of northeast and southeast Nebraska, your journey will show you why this region of Nebraska is truly an untapped destination for any size or type of group.

Day 1 Omaha

Our first activity this morning is a **guided city tour of Omaha** where we will visit many of Nebraska's largest city's hot spots and noteworthy locations before heading to **St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church**, Omaha's only Greek Orthodox Byzantine-style church, for a tour and a traditional Greek lunch and lessons in Greek dancing. *Opa!* Next, we venture to **Durham Museum** in the former Union Station to explore the history and settlement of Omaha. Make sure to head to the platform downstairs for the chance to walk through authentic train cars and other exhibits.

Founded in 1917, **Father Flanagan's Boys Town** in west Omaha is an exceptional heartwarming story of how Father Flanagan worked to create a haven for wayward boys, and now girls, on the outskirts of Omaha. For dinner tonight, we explore Germany and experience the German concept of *Gemütlichkeit* (coziness) at the **German American Society**. Delicious comfort food followed by traditional German entertainment is on the menu. *Willkommen in Deutschland! Overnight: Omaha*



Day 2 Omaha, Tekamah, Stanton, Norfolk

After breakfast it is time to explore the 92,000-square-foot **Hot Shops Art Center**. This unique living art museum is home to more than 70 artists in residence specializing in a wide variety of artistic media, from glass blowing and pottery to bronze casting and blacksmithing. Now we head to see how Omaha's upper crust lived with a tour through the 35-room Scottish Baronial **Joslyn Castle**, stately home of George and Sarah Joslyn, located in Omaha's Gold Coast Historic District. Afterward we drive north along the Lewis and Clark Scenic Byway for a wonderful lunch and to discover the delicious world of chocolates, baked goods, scented candles, and so much more at **Master's Hand Candles** in Tekamah.



Once we fill up on sweets it is time to head to **Red Road Herbs** near Stanton to reconnect with nature and learn all about herbs and how to use them in our everyday lives. Wander through the more than 100 herbs growing in cultivated gardens in this cozy woodland setting and take part in hands-on learning experiences about herbs. We head now to Norfolk, and the Home of Johnny Carson where our first stop is the **Elkhorn Valley Museum**. Here we can learn more about Johnny Carson and his impressively long television career. On display are many of his personal items, including videotapes, vintage photographs, and his six Emmy Awards. An interactive home theater also shows selected *Tonight Show* episodes and monologues.

The next Johnny Carson stop is a visit to his **boyhood home** where the current property owner will be on site to talk about the house and the renovations that have been done. He has videos featuring Johnny Carson and offers a pre-dinner cocktail hour before heading to **Black Cow Fat Pig**, one of the premier steakhouses in northeast Nebraska, with an emphasis on locally sourced food and a scratch kitchen. *Overnight: Norfolk*

Day 3 Creston, Columbus, Genoa, York, Lincoln

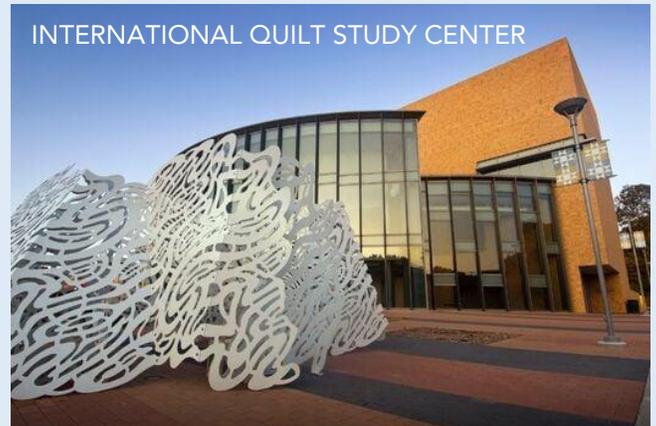
Our first stop this morning is to explore Nebraska's agricultural side at **Larson Dairy Farm** near Creston. There we learn more about modern, innovative farming technology at this fully automated dairy farm, one of only three robotic dairies in Nebraska. We now head south to Columbus to visit the **Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial** and its full-size steel replica of a LCVP (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel), also known as the "Higgins Boat," which helped the Allies win World War II. Bronze statues, sand from D-Day beaches where these boats landed, and a bronze eagle atop steel from the World Trade Center complete the memorial.

After lunch at **Glur's Tavern** (established 1876), the oldest continually operated tavern west of the Missouri River, we head to Genoa to hear the fateful stories of the **Genoa Indian School**. In operator from 1884 to 1934, this was one of the nation's 16 Indian Boarding Schools established by the federal government. While there, we will gain a deeper understanding of what everyday life was like at the school for its students. Our last stops before heading to Lincoln are in York. First, we visit **Wessels Living History Farm** to learn first-hand how farm life and agriculture have changed from the 1920s to modern day farming techniques and technologies at this interactive and educational working farm before dining at **Chances "R,"** one of York's most popular group dining destinations. Upon arrival in Lincoln, we tour one of the city's most interesting and fascinating places,

Robber's Cave where we learn more about the cave's storied past and colorful characters from an experienced guide. *Overnight: Lincoln*

Day 4 Lincoln

Today's first destination is the iconic **Nebraska State Capitol**. At 15 stories and 400-feet-tall this is the second-tallest statehouse in the country and offers a spectacular view of the city from its 14th floor observation level. After lunch, we make our way to **Larsen Tractor Test Museum** on the University of Nebraska East Campus to visit the only tractor testing museum and tractor test laboratory in the world. On display are more than 25 tractors highlighting the advancements in tractor testing technology, which established power and performance standards and solved agricultural problems around the world. While on campus, we will make a short stop at the **UNL Dairy Store** for a tour



of the cheese making facility and a tasty afternoon ice cream treat. Our next destination is the **International Quilt Study Center** where we will discover the many stories and religious contexts woven into quilts at the world's largest publicly held quilt collection. The behind-the-scenes tour takes visitors face to face with quilts that are hundreds of years old.

Next, is a visit to the **Museum of American Speed**, a 135,000-square-foot museum that highlights the chronology of automotive racing and speed equipment development while preserving, interpreting, and displaying items significant in racing and automotive history. Tonight's dinner and entertainment is **Screamer's Dining & Cabaret** where we will dine on delicious homemade fare while the restaurant's talented staff entertain us with songs and laughter. *Overnight: Lincoln*

Day 5 Beatrice, Nebraska City



This morning we take a short drive south of Lincoln and return to a time when the Homestead Act of 1862 enticed millions of people to move to the frontier and cultivate this often-harsh landscape. **Homestead National Historical Park** in Beatrice is a testament to the pioneer spirit that helped settle the West. While there, we explore the Homestead Heritage Center, hiking trails through virgin prairie grasses, and living history demonstrations. Our first stop in Nebraska, the Home of Arbor Day, is **Arbor Day Farm**, a 260-acre working farm orchard and forest, which also is a National Historic Landmark, with an experienced nature interpreter. We can

visit the 50-foot-high Tree Adventure treehouse for an amazing view of the farm and take home a tree seedling from the Lied Greenhouse.



After lunch, we visit **Arbor Lodge State Historical Park**, the beautiful estate of J. Sterling Morton, founder of Arbor Day. Built in 1855, this four-room frame house was remodeled over the years to become the magnificent 52-room mansion it is today. The mansion's rooms are filled with authentic furnishings and displays that capture the life and times of this great Nebraska visionary. Afterward, we tour Our final stop in Nebraska City is **Kimmel Orchard & Vineyard**. This working orchard and vineyard is the best destination for fresh, locally grown produce and other homegrown Nebraska products. *Overnight: Omaha*

Day 6 Ashland, Bellevue, Papillion

Today's first stop is at the **Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum**, a 300,000-square-foot museum that features aircraft from various world conflicts, an impressive array of aircraft that helped preserve peace during the Cold War, an onsite restoration hanger, and several spacecraft exhibits highlighting our nation's missions to space. Next, we head to Bellevue, south of Omaha to browse exceptional varieties of Bohemian glass, hand decorated eggs, glass Christmas tree ornaments, and more from the Old Country at the **Czech and Slovak Educational Centre & Cultural Museum** before feasting on traditional Polish dishes and enjoying entertainment at the **Polish Heritage Society of Nebraska** for lunch. *Na zdrowie! (Cheers!)*

