

# Grand Island: South Central Adventures



South central Nebraska is chock-full of history! Day-trip your way around Grand Island and its surrounding cities to see a living history far, Native American artifacts and a collection of unique museums.

## Day 1 Grand Island

After breakfast, we venture to downtown Grand Island to meet the owners of **Zabuni Coffee** to hear their unique and inspiring story of how they are supporting local coffee growers and producers in Kenya to bring their product to Nebraska. Once we finish downtown, it is time to head to **Raising Nebraska** at Fonner Park. This 25,000-square-foot interactive museum connects consumers with 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.



Now it is time for lunch and to go back into the past at **Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer**. Declared one of the top ten living history museums in the country, this amazing museum transports us back to the early pioneer and settlement days of Nebraska. **Fonner Rotunda** houses one of the state’s finest collections of cowboy and Native American art and artifacts while the annual “Wings over the Platte” exhibit during the spring sandhill crane migration displays artwork by artists from across the country highlighting the migration and is a “must-see” for any bird lover. Our last stop is **Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center** near Alda where we will learn more about one of nature’s most amazing natural phenomena. Each spring more than 600,000 sandhill cranes, 90

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percent of the world's population of these birds migrate through the Central Nebraska Flyway from Grand Island to North Platte. *Overnight: Grand Island*

## Day 2 Kearney, Hastings

This morning we head north of Kearney to Pleasanton to tour one of Nebraska's newest agricultural industries, the cultivations and processing of hemp for therapeutic uses at **Sweetwater Hemp Company**. The owners will explain the process of extracting and handling hemp to create products for medicinal purposes, such as depression, pain, and other ailments. We return to Kearney for a tour of **Classic Car Collection** where we can wander through more than 200 classic cars that highlight the evolution and art of the automobile and its impact on our lives.

Afterward lunch is at **Alley Rose** in downtown Kearney to feast on one of its delicious locally prepared signature dishes. Next, we are off to **The Archway**, an impressive interactive museum that commemorates the nation's westward expansion through interactive exhibits and self-guided audio tours. On a side note, at a height of 310 feet, this is the only tourist attraction in the country to span a federal interstate highway. Now we head south to Hastings to take a walk on the wild side at the **Bigfoot Crossroads of America Museum** where we explore the many Bigfoot sightings and stories from Nebraska and around the world. Next, we experience three floors of natural and cultural history exhibits and view full dome astronomy shows in the Planetarium at the **Hastings Museum of Natural & Cultural History** before dinner in town. *Overnight: Grand Island*

## Day 3 Aurora, York, Henderson

We start off today at the **Edgerton Explorit Center** in Aurora. Named after Harold "Doc" Edgerton, the inventor of the strobe light, this hands-on facility brings the joy of learning and science to visitors through experiences that encourage discovery through play. Our next stop in town is the **Plainsman Museum**, which houses more than 50,000 artifacts on its six-acre campus, focusing on the time 1860 to 1950. Now it is time for lunch at **Chances "R,"** one of York's most popular group dining destinations before we step back into the Ancient World at the **Clayton Museum of Ancient History**. This unique museum highlights the ancient world of Mesopotamia, Rome, and other great civilizations where you also can spend a few moments reflecting in front of an accurate reproduction of the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Do not forget to write your prayer and leave in it the wall.



Next, we head to **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. **Mennonite Heritage Park** in nearby Henderson is the ideal destination to hear costumed storytellers recount stories about the Henderson Mennonites and explain how this group is connected to the Amish and Old-Mennonites in Pennsylvania, and why these Germans from Russia immigrated to Nebraska. *Overnight: Grand Island*

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