



NORTH PLATTE

North Platte: Explore Southwest Nebraska

Head to North Platte and trek the state's southwest region for cowboy reenactments, pioneer and railroad history tours and sips from local vineyards and breweries.

Day 1 North Platte

Start the day off right with a special treat of an ice cream donut sandwich, waffle sundae, or other tasty concoction at **Double Dips Ice Creamery**, located in North Platte's historic Canteen District before heading to **Golden Spike Tower & Visitor Center** for a bird's eye view of the world's largest railroad classification yard from the 7th floor open air observation deck or the 8th floor enclosed deck. Afterward, we climb aboard Union Pacific's steam locomotive at **Cody Park Railroad Museum** where we also can see UP's #6922, the largest diesel locomotive ever made, peek inside the historic Hershey Depot, and climb aboard a mail car and caboose to view historic railroad memorabilia.

After lunch at **Pals Brewing Company**, we take a stroll through salvaged and repurposed historic grain bins to forage out that perfect antique treasure at **Grain Bin Antique Town** before heading to **Fort Cody Trading Post**, one of Nebraska's most eclectic gift and souvenir shops. Do not miss the working 20,000-piece miniature replica of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and tour Old West exhibits in the newly renovated museum. North Platte's "**Here's the Beef**" tour at the West Central Research & Extension Office has educators and a chef from a local restaurant available to explain the steps needed to raise and process



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beef from pasture to the table. Afterward, we can feast on a delicious Nebraska beef dinner prepared on site. We will end our day in North Platte with **"Wine with the Stars"** sipping local wines at **Feather River Vineyard** under the wide-open Nebraska skies. A local astronomer will be onsite with telescopes to highlight the celestial bodies you are viewing in the night sky. *Overnight: North Platte*

Day 2 Lewellen, Ogallala, Paxton

We start the morning with a short drive west along the Western Trails Scenic & Historic Byway to Lewellen where sweet spring water made **Ash Hollow State Historical Park** a major stopover on the Oregon and California trails. Ruts etched by west-bound wagons are still visible and today the area's beauty continues to make this a popular historical, archaeological, and paleontological destination. Afterward, we make our way to Ogallala, once known as the "town too tough for Texans" where our first stop will be north of town at Lake McConaughy, Nebraska's largest reservoir at more than 22 miles long. We will visit the state's first water center, **Lake McConaughy Visitor/Water Interpretive Center** to learn more about the importance of water to the state's past, present, and future.



A drive across the dam and photo opportunities rounds out our water experience before heading back to Ogallala for an authentic western style lunch in the **Crystal Palace Saloon** at **Front Street and Cowboy Museum**, a recreation of an 1880s Old West main street. From June to mid-August, do not miss the **Crystal Palace Revue**, a rootin' tootin' western shootout, complete with cowboys and showgirls. Across the street is the **Petrified Wood and Art Gallery** where we can explore Native American artifacts and delicate works of art and carvings formed from pieces of ancient, petrified wood from around the world. Our final stop in Ogallala is to catch a glimpse into how Ogallala's upper-class residents lived at **Mansion on the Hill**, a fully furnished Victorian-style mansion. As we head back to North Platte, our dinner stop will be at **Ole's Big Game Steakhouse** in Paxton where we enjoy

a delicious Nebraska dinner amidst more than 200 big game trophies and mementos from Ole's worldwide safaris. *Overnight: North Platte*

Day 3 Kearney, North Platte

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. Upon arrival back in North Platte, it is time to **"Ride with the Wild Bunch."** We will meet Colonel William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and his wife to hear about their lives and their interesting adventures. Afterward, hop aboard a horse drawn wagon to nearby **Lincoln County Historical Museum** and

a deliciously prepared Dutch oven dinner. A tour of the museum, including an authentic recreated Old West town and artifacts highlighting the story of the famous World War II North Platte Canteen round out your day.
Overnight: North Platte

Day 4 North Platte

After breakfast, it is time to get wet at **Dusty Trails** for a truly Nebraskan activity, leisurely floating down the North Platte River in a horse watering tank. Chairs and coolers can be placed in the tanks for an even more enjoyable time. Lunch today is at one of North Platte's newest restaurants, **The Cedar Room**, an American Fusion restaurant and the first of its kind in North Platte.