

GRAND ISLAND PLATTE RIVER PLAYGROUND



Groups overnight in Grand Island each night and enjoy exciting day trips to destinations in Grand Island and across central Nebraska.

Day 1 Travel Day

Overnight: Grand Island

Day 2 Grand Island

After breakfast, our first stop will be **Fred's Flying Circus**. This whimsical, 3D art display is the creation of the late Fred Schritt and truly is a unique, "sky-high" art exhibit. Our next stop is **The Chocolate Bar** downtown for a cup of delicious coffee and to try some of their amazing chocolates before heading to **Arts and Drafts** to unleash our inner artist by creating our own sandhill crane painting. Now it is time to go back into the past at **Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer** where we start our exploration with a



delicious lunch of fresh, homemade salads, sandwiches and more at **Stuhr Bistro**. 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. We also will have an opportunity to go behind the scenes to see how the museum stores and catalogues its many acquisitions.

Now it is off to one of Grand Island's coolest attractions, **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. *Overnight: Grand Island*

Day 3 Alda, Hastings

This morning, we head to **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 percent of the world's population of these birds migrate through the Central Nebraska Flyway from Grand Island to North Platte. Now we head south to Hastings to talk 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** before dinner at **Murphy's Wagon Wheel** in downtown Hastings. *Overnight: Grand Island*



Day 4 Kearney, Holdrege

After breakfast, 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 **The American Automobile Experience** 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 **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.

We will enjoy a catered lunch here before heading to Holdrege where our first stop will be **Phelps County Feeders** to learn more about what all it takes to care for and feed cattle at this family-owned feedlot. Next, we take a tour of **Nebraska Star Beef** to learn how they market, sell, and ship their product from central Nebraska to all over the world. We head back into town to visit the **Nebraska Prairie Museum** and view its World War II interpretive center displays, including a scale replica of the original German POW Camp Atlanta, southwest of Holdrege. Before dinner we make a stop at **Lost Way Brewery** to sample their amazing hand-crafted beers and root beer. Afterward it is time for a true Nebraska culinary treat at **The Speakeasy** where we will feast on some of the most mouthwatering steaks you will ever enjoy. *Overnight: Grand Island*



Nebraska Prairie Museum

Day 5 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*

Day 6 Burwell

Today’s destination is deep in the scenic Nebraska Sandhills north of Grand Island. **Calamus Outfitters** at Switzer Ranch offers a wide variety of outdoor activities like tanking down the Calamus River in a horse watering tank. This is a one-of-a-kind Nebraska experience that is perfect for any age group and the perfect way to cool off in the hot summer. After a catered lunch on site, we head out for a guided **Sandhills Ranch Habitat Ecotour** on the Switzer Ranch for a truly unique view of this beautiful Nebraska landscape. We will learn first-hand about the flora and fauna of the area, land management techniques, the ranching way of life, and much more. Before departing back to Grand Island, we will make a dinner stop at **Pizza Palace** for some of the best pizza you will ever taste.

For more information about this and other Nebraska sample group itineraries:

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