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In Good Taste Denver

Good Neighbors: Lincoln, Nebraska

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Part 1: Lincoln

On a recent visit to Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska, our neighbors to the east, I discovered sophisticated cities that honor their agricultural legacy but don't let it limit who they are. It's a reasonable day's drive to both Lincoln and Omaha and it's a short, direct flight to Omaha from Denver, making it only right that we get to know the folks next door. Here, let's take a peek at Lincoln and examine things you just have to do when you're there:



The Historic Haymarket district – Denverites will appreciate the way Lincoln took this formally-industrial area and renovated it into condos, shops and restaurants.

Don't Miss This in Lincoln:

1. The **Historic Haymarket** district is a renovated warehouse area adjacent to the Railyard district. It's now hip and happening with shops, restaurants, galleries and the Pinnacle Bank Arena with 16,000 seats.



You can shop for a wide variety of goods throughout the Haymarket. I ducked into this charming antique shop, drawn in by this colorful window display.

Licorice International sells “anything licorice” that’s currently imported into the U.S. The friendly staff will offer samples galore, letting you choose your favorites. Ours was the Morette all’arancia from Italy – little buds of orange and licorice that are as soothing as they are tasty.

The Railyard surrounds a 10,000 square foot plaza that hosts concerts, festivals, outdoor markets, movie nights and a fun skating rink in the winter.



Trains were a very important part of Lincoln's history. They are honored in the Railyard, which is still vibrant, just in new ways.

Nebraska Crossing Outlets Located nearby in Gretna, this outdoor mall is logically-laid out, with a wide variety of shops for different budgets. Restaurants are incorporated throughout. There's easy access to restrooms, lots of parking and live entertainment. My favorites were Forever 21 with great bargains and a huge selection and Crabtree & Evelyn where I bought the prettiest periwinkle blue nail polish ever.

The Lincoln Children's Zoo is just the right size, allowing time to really enjoy each animal and the wonderful interactions the animals have with their trusted keepers.



What a poser at the Lincoln Children's Zoo, where the motto is "Learn Firsthand."

Stay here:

I stayed at **The Cornhusker** which has 300 very nice rooms and suites within easy walking distance of the University of Nebraska campus, Memorial Stadium, the State Capitol, the Haymarket, and the Pinnacle Bank Arena. Enjoy on-site dining at The Miller Time Pub & Grill or The Cafe at The Cornhusker.

Bring Your Eating Pants:

Le Quartier Bakery & Café Two brothers own this café, baking croissants, pain au chocolat, cranberry-lemon scones, macaroons, quiche and more, using all-natural ingredients. They were schooled in the French/Canadian method which still goes for perfection but with some leeway.



The brothers who own Le Quartier Bakery & Cafe are at work in the wee hours of the morning making these tasty works of art.

Cultiva Roasting Company The small kitchen puts as much effort and artistry into the designs in the latte foam as it does into monster-size pancakes, in this friendly, neighborhood hangout. Give both locations a try.

Lazlo's Brewery & Grill It's a restaurant first and foremost but at its core is its brewery (Empyrean Brewing Company) history. It was the first brewery in Nebraska after prohibition. In 24 years, they've never had to advertise, thanks to word of mouth.



Pork tenderloin on polenta served family-style at MoMo Pizzeria & Ristorante, elegant but comfortable.

http://ingoodtastedenver.com/lincoln-nebraska/

MoMo Pizzeria & Ristorante specializes in traditional Italian dishes. Whether pizza, pasta, salads, sandwiches or entrees, the food is scratch-cooked and seasonal. Their pizza is a must.

SchillingBridge Cork & Tap House An off-shoot of the Schilling Winery, this casual eatery features beer and wine (try a flight) along with a varied menu including pizza, burgers and sandwiches.



Which of this family-owned winery's products will you like the most?

The Other Room (so secret, there isn't even a website for me to provide). There's no food here but for cocktails and the overall experience, it makes our list. There's an unpublished address for this back-alley, extremely exclusive speakeasy. Ask around – they'll tell you where to go. Your potential long wait outside will be greatly rewarded inside.

We've only scratched the surface of all that Nebraska has to offer. It's such an easy trip! Don't be shy, meet Colorado's neighbors. Also get to know, in the great words of Peyton Manning, "Omaha!" in Part 2 of our Nebraska travel posts. For more information about Nebraska, visit: http://visitnebraska.com/ and for details about Lincoln, specifically, visit: http://www.lincoln.org/.