

NEBRASKA

Group Travel Planner



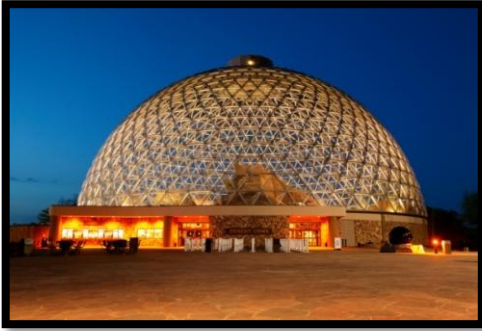
Tour 1

**Day Tours from Omaha, Eastern and
Southeastern Nebraska**

2009

Tour 1: Day Tours from Omaha

Tour 1 Day Tours from Omaha, Eastern and Southeastern Nebraska



Nebraska's largest city, Omaha has a tremendous selection of group tour attractions, shopping experiences, historical and cultural sites, and overnight facilities. [Henry Doorly Zoo](#), 3701 S. 10th St., 402-733-8401, offers a number of impressive attractions, such as the **world's largest indoor rainforest**, the **largest aquarium between Chicago and San Francisco**, the **Desert Dome** (including a sand waterfall),

Kingdoms of the Night beneath the Desert Dome, and **Hubbard Gorilla Valley**. The zoo boasts an outstanding big cat collection, open-air aviary, and the **Lozier IMAX® Theater**. **Orangutan Forest** boasts an impressive outdoor area and a renovated indoor area. Two 65-foot tall, solid concrete Banyan trees, each weighing more than 222,750 pounds with over 15 branches each, are entangled with thousands of feet of man-made vine to create a one-of-a-kind habitat designed especially for these intelligent animals. Your group can enjoy a tram ride around the zoo as well as catered meals and refreshment breaks at the **Tree Tops Restaurant** or concession stands throughout the zoo.

Other attractions in the Omaha area are equally exciting. The historic [Old Market District](#), 402-346-4445, is an eclectic shopping and dining district located near downtown Omaha that features dozens of boutiques, lodging properties, nightclubs, bars, cafes and upscale restaurants. The [Durham Western Heritage Museum](#), 801 S. 10th St., 402-444-5071, is located in a restored Art Deco train station and showcases the history of Omaha and the Union Pacific Railroad. [Joslyn Castle](#), 3902 Davenport St., 402-595-2199, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the state's first historic landmark arboretum. Built in 1903, this Scottish, four-story, 35-room house takes visitors back in time to the turn-of-the-century with its superb craftsmanship and decorative opulence.

The [Hot Shops Art Center](#), 1301 Nicholas St., 402-342-6452, just north of the Old Market, is 92,000-square-feet of art studios, showrooms and gallery space. The center is a first of its kind in Omaha and includes four Hot Shops (Bruning Sculpture, Loken Forge, Crystal Forge and Wilson Custom Tile), 44 art studios, three art galleries, exhibition spaces and a café/coffee shop. Hot Shops Art Center will satisfy the creativity of the hidden artist in everyone on your tour! Located in the heart of historic North Omaha, [Loves Jazz & Arts Center](#), 2510 N. 24th St., 402-502-5291, showcases the wonderful history and culture that African Americans have achieved in the arts, music and humanities. Exciting exhibits, workshops, performances,

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educational programs and other activities highlight and explore the African American experience.

The [Joslyn Art Museum](#), 2200 Dodge St., 402-342-3300, is a world-class museum of exquisite works of art from antiquity to the present, and features European, American, Western American, Native American and Asian art. The museum is especially noted for its collection of American West art. It also is world renown for its collection by Swiss artist Karl Bodmer, whose watercolors and prints document his journey in 1832-1834 to the Missouri River frontier. [El Museo Latino](#), 4701 S. 25th St., 402-731-1137, highlights the important contribution that the Hispanic population has had on the history, culture and development of Omaha. Bilingual guided tours are available to groups of 10 or more.

The 100-acre [Lauritzen Gardens](#), 100 Bancroft St., 402-346-4002, includes an arboretum, bird sanctuary, rose garden, children's garden, herb garden, spring flower walk, Victorian garden, festival garden, and woodland trail. The 5,000-square-foot floral display hall in the visitor and education center offers year-round, ever-changing floral displays. A café and a gift shop also are available. The preserve at the [Neale Woods Nature Center](#), 14323 Edith Marie Ave., 402-731-3140, includes 550 acres of forests, hilltop prairies and riverside woodlands along the Missouri River. Scheduled nature programs are offered, as well as stargazing at the **Millard Observatory**, 402-453-5615. The visitor center features exhibits, animal displays and a gift shop.

Cruise up the scenic Missouri River on the [River City Star Riverboat](#), 402-342-7827, and afterward enjoy live jazz at **Rick's Café Boatyard**, 605 N. 6th St., 402-345-4545, located on **Lewis and Clark Landing**. The **Heartland of America Park** boasts an enjoyable gondola ride around the lake and a 300-foot water fountain, complete with a colorful evening light show. The **Mormon Trail Center at Winter Quarters**, 3215 State St., 402-453-9372, in north Omaha chronicles the hardships faced by the Mormon Pioneers who camped in the area during the harsh winter of 1846-47. The interpretive center offers films and state-of-the-art exhibits about the Mormons and their trek west. **Florence Mill**, 9102 N. 30th St., 402-551-1233, was founded in 1846 as the **Mormon Winter Quarters gristmill**. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Save America's Treasures lists, the mill and grain elevator (1915) served farmers during Nebraska's territorial days through the 1980s. Today it is home to the **Winter Quarters Mill Museum** and **Loft Gallery**. [Historic Florence](#) was built on the ruins of Winter Quarters, and today the mill, bank and depot are open during summer months and by appointment.

If art and culture are your favorite pastimes, Omaha boasts a number of exceptional galleries and theatres, such as the [Omaha Community Playhouse](#), 6915 Cass St., 402-553-0800, (the largest community theatre in the country) and the [Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts](#), 724 S. 12th St., 402-341-7130, in the Old Market.

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Catch a world-class performance at the [Holland Performing Arts Center](#), 1314 Douglas-on-the-Mall, 402-345-0202.

For those in the group who feel no vacation is complete without some hard-core shopping, Omaha features a great selection of shops and retail outlets to suit anyone's taste and budget. The city is home to great shopping malls, such as [Village Pointe](#), 168th and Dodge Sts., 402-505-9773, an outdoor mall in west Omaha that recreates a small-town shopping district. Other equally impressive shopping opportunities are [Nebraska Furniture Mart](#) (the nation's largest furniture store under one roof), 700 S. 72nd St., 402-255-6327, and [Borsheim's](#) (the largest jewelry store under one roof), 120 Regency Parkway, 402-391-0400.

West Omaha is home to the world-famous [Father Flanagan's Boys Town](#) (renamed Girls and Boys Town), 137th and Dodge Sts., 402-498-1140. Boys Town, an actual working town, is an inspirational stop for any group tour. With prior arrangements step-on guides are available, often a boy or girl who lives at Boys Town. You can see the Oscar that Spencer Tracy won for portraying Father Flanagan, stroll through the garden inspired by the Bible, and see the world's largest ball of stamps in the gift shop. A fun group tour opportunity is "Dinner with Father Flanagan" where your group tour enjoys a traditional family style dinner while portraying the life of one of the children who called Boys Town home. Afterward, they can go to the Wall of History to see the outcome of their child. A visit by Father Flanagan also is included. Self-guided tour information and on-site café are available.

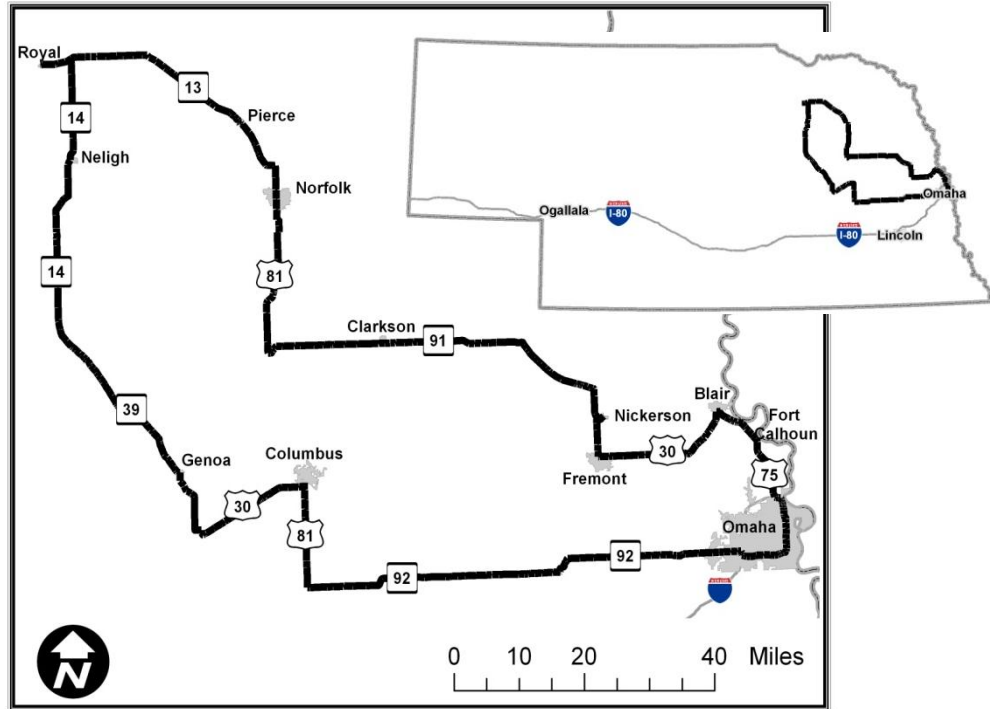
Bellevue, Nebraska's third largest city is south of Omaha on Highway 75. The **Lewis and Clark Children's Interpretive Art Wall** is located in Haworth Park, 402-332-5999, along the Missouri River in Bellevue. The many stories of the Lewis and Clark expedition are told in art through the eyes of children from across the country.

South of Omaha, [Fontenelle Forest Nature Center](#), 1111 N. Bellevue Blvd., 402-731-3140, shows evidence of diverse American Indian cultures with 70 known sites of Indian lodges and mounds from the Nebraska Phase culture of 1100-1400 A.D. The forest also boasts more than 1,400 acres of woods, wetlands and waterways with deep ravines, loess ridges, more than 40 varieties of trees, and more than 200 species of birds along 17 miles of walking paths. The **Katherine and Fred Buffett Forest Learning Center** is a beautiful facility that features permanent historical and children's exhibit galleries, including new exhibits of the historic Lewis and Clark Trail. The National Park Service declared Fontenelle Forest in Bellevue an official site on the National Historic Lewis & Clark Trail.



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Tour A: The Pathfinder Tour



Enjoy the view along the **Lewis and Clark Scenic Byway** as you make your way to Fort Calhoun and [Fort Atkinson State Historical Park](#), 402-468-5611. It is one of the first established and largest parks in the Great Plains region, and offers visitors many fun-filled living history demonstrations. Lewis and Clark had their first meeting with American Indians at Council Bluff during their exploration up the Missouri River. Taste Nebraska wines and experience a little history and art in the 1904 brick building that houses [Too Far North](#), 111 N. 14th St., 402-468-9463. Wine is available by the ounce, glass or bottle, as are custom-made labels for all occasions.

Nebraska and Iowa share [DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge](#), 402-533-4455. Located near Blair, Neb., the refuge is a great place to view Missouri River wildlife. Also located in the refuge's visitor center is a premier archaeological display of artifacts from the Steamboat **Bertrand**, which sank in the Missouri River in 1865. More than one million artifacts were recovered from the wreckage, and many are in remarkable condition to this day.

Fremont has a great selection of antique shops in its historic downtown district, and a lovely county museum—the [Louis E. May Museum](#)—is housed in a stately mansion, 1643 N. Nye Ave., 402-721-4515. After spending time shopping and visiting the museum, climb aboard the [Fremont & Elkhorn Valley Railroad](#), 1835 N. Somers Ave., 402-727-0615, for a picturesque 16-mile ride through northeast Nebraska in a diesel powered train. The tour includes a half-hour stop in Nickerson. Between May and October, you can depart on an exciting two-hour journey. Caboose

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and climate-controlled group coach charters are available year-round. The [Fremont Dinner Train](#), 650 North H St., 402-727-4245, can provide a full dining and riding experience for your group. Special events include murder mysteries, USO shows, dinner theatre, winetasting and seasonal shows.

Good times will be had by all as your tour speeds down the Platte River, the wind blowing through their hair. Admire eagles as they soar overhead looking for food or a comfy branch to watch you tear down the river. Wildlife, great scenery, relaxation and a rip roarin' good time are at [Bryson's Airboat Tours](#), 402-968-8534. Spend some quality time surrounded by the arts at **Gallery 92 West**, 92 W. 6th St., 402-721-7779. Enjoy a good time at [John C. Fremont Days](#), 402-727-9428, each July.

The [Apple Barn at Fontenelle Orchard](#), 402-727-5272, in Nickerson features fresh, tree-ripe fruit that you can pick yourself. Tours of the orchard are available upon request.

Clarkson enjoys two major claims to fame—its rich Czech heritage and the renowned [Bluebird Nursery](#), 519 Cherry St., 402-892-3457. The Clarkson Chamber of Commerce can arrange a Czech breakfast for your group (make sure you eat a kolach, a delicious Czech pastry) and arrange a tour of the outstanding nursery. The Bluebird Nursery is one of the largest in the Midwest, and they ship seeds and plants around the globe. As you tour the community, you'll notice the influence that the nursery has had on it. Clarkson is one of Nebraska's more colorful communities and boasts some of the best-kept gardens and green spaces in the state.

Norfolk, northeast Nebraska's largest city, offers a fine selection of overnight and dining facilities that cater to the group tour market. While in town be sure to visit the [Elkhorn Valley Historical Museum](#), 515 Queen City Blvd., 402-371-3886. Here you'll see a great collection of historic artifacts relating to the area, including one of the few remaining antique square turn tractors that can make a full square turn so as not to waste field space to turn around. Memorabilia on Norfolk's two famous sons—*Tonight Show* host Johnny Carson and Thural Ravenscroft, the voice of Kellogg's™ "Tony the Tiger" are on display.

A must see is the **Johnny Carson Exhibit**. Norfolk was the boyhood home of Johnny Carson from age eight through high school. Mr. Carson donated a large collection of personal items to the museum, including videotapes, early boyhood photos and vintage photos of his stage and radio days, as well as many personal items. A display of Carson's special awards—six Emmy Awards, Kennedy Center Honors Medallion, Presidential Medal of Freedom, Television Hall of Fame, and many more are on display. A "Best Of" home theater showing favorite *Tonight Show* episodes and monologues chosen by Johnny himself for the museum are part of this impressive collection. A full-sized, life-like Carson mannequin delivers the monologues when visitors step close to the exhibit. In the immortal words of Ed McMahon, "Heeeeeeeere's Johnny!"

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Also be sure to check out the **Willetta Lueschen Bird Library** at the museum. With prior arrangements, museum staff can take your group to the nearby cave for a “cool” break. Located close to the museum is the [Norfolk Arts Center](#), 305 N. 5th St., 402-371-7199. This beautiful facility features an ever-changing traveling exhibit gallery, as well as showcases the works of local and regional artists.

While in Norfolk, take a short trip south of town to Madison for a delightful tour of the [Madison County Museum](#), 210 W. 3rd St., 402-454-2827.

Wine making in Nebraska? You betcha! Located northeast of Pierce is Nebraska’s first vineyard—[Cuthills Vineyards](#), 54663 853 Road, 402-329-4181. Walking tours of the vineyards are available, and depending on what time of year your group stops, you may be able to witness the winemaking progress. Fun things to do at the winery include sampling wines, relaxing on the spacious patio overlooking the vineyards, and eating a delicious catered meal in the historic barn.



Relive your childhood days under the circus big top! The [Plainview Clown Doll Museum](#), 402-582-4433, in Plainview boasts an impressive collection of more than 2,400 clown dolls. Guided tours are available upon request.

Scientists claim that [Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park](#), 402-893-2000, near Royal is one of the richest fossil finds of its kind in the northern hemisphere. Millions of years ago, a giant volcano in Idaho spewed volcanic ash into the area for several months, suffocating thousands of camels, horses and other prehistoric mammals. The ash encased the animals intact, and today visitors can go to the “Rhino Barn” to watch staff diligently uncover whole skeletons. An addition to the building is planned to open in spring 2009. There also is a visitor center/gift shop at the facility.

Home to one of the few remaining water-powered mills in the state, [Neligh Mills State Historical Site](#), 402-887-4303, in Neligh takes groups back to a time when the mill was the center of commerce for many towns. The mill’s colorful history is displayed throughout the facility. The Neligh Chamber of Commerce, 202 W. 4th St., 402-887-4195, can recommend several local spots for lunch. The [Pierson Wildlife Museum Learning Center](#), 205 E. Fifth St., 402-887-4212, features one of the largest private wild game collections in the U.S., all in one exhibit that includes 100 full mounts and 50 head mounts from around the world.

The [Genoa Indian School Museum](#), 209 E. Webster Ave., 402-993-6636, in Genoa is the site of the former Indian Industrial School where American Indian youth were housed and educated for assimilation into white society. The students who attended

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the school were from ten states and more than 20 tribes. Tours of the Manual Training Building are available throughout the year by appointment. The [Genoa Historical Museum](#), 402 Willard Ave., 402-993-2330, boasts a nice collection of tribal and Mormon Trail exhibits. An original diary from Mormon Trail pioneer Henry Hudson is on exhibit. Original Mormon Trail wagon ruts are visible south of town.

Columbus offers a wide variety of tours to fit the tastes of any group, from history buffs to modern technology enthusiasts. A 1904 steam locomotive, Quicentenary Belltower, and the [Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial](#), 2001 A.J. Higgins Road, 402-564-2769, are a few reasons to tour Freedom Park. The center point of the park is a life-size replica of the Higgins landing craft that he designed and built to help win WWII. The craft's ramp is down to let visitors walk inside, while sand samples collected from invasion beaches across the globe are mixed with the sand that surrounds the craft. Equally impressive is the bronze eagle with a seven-foot wingspan that sits atop a steel structure made from material from the 2001 World Trade Center disaster. The [Platte County Historical Society Museum](#), 2916 16th St., 402-564-4553, features an 1857 log cabin complete with period furnishings.



Columbus boasts one of the best restaurants in Nebraska, [Dusters and the Gottberg Brew Pub](#), 2804 13th St., 402-564-8338. Even though the menu is full of delicious dishes, and you can't go wrong with anything you chose, try the Chicken Kiev. You won't regret it! Columbus is known as the most industrialized city per capita in Nebraska, and the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau, 764 33rd Ave., 402-564-2769, can arrange industrial tours for your group. The attractive **St. Michael's Catholic Church**, 309 3rd St., 402-428-2675, in nearby Tarnov is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

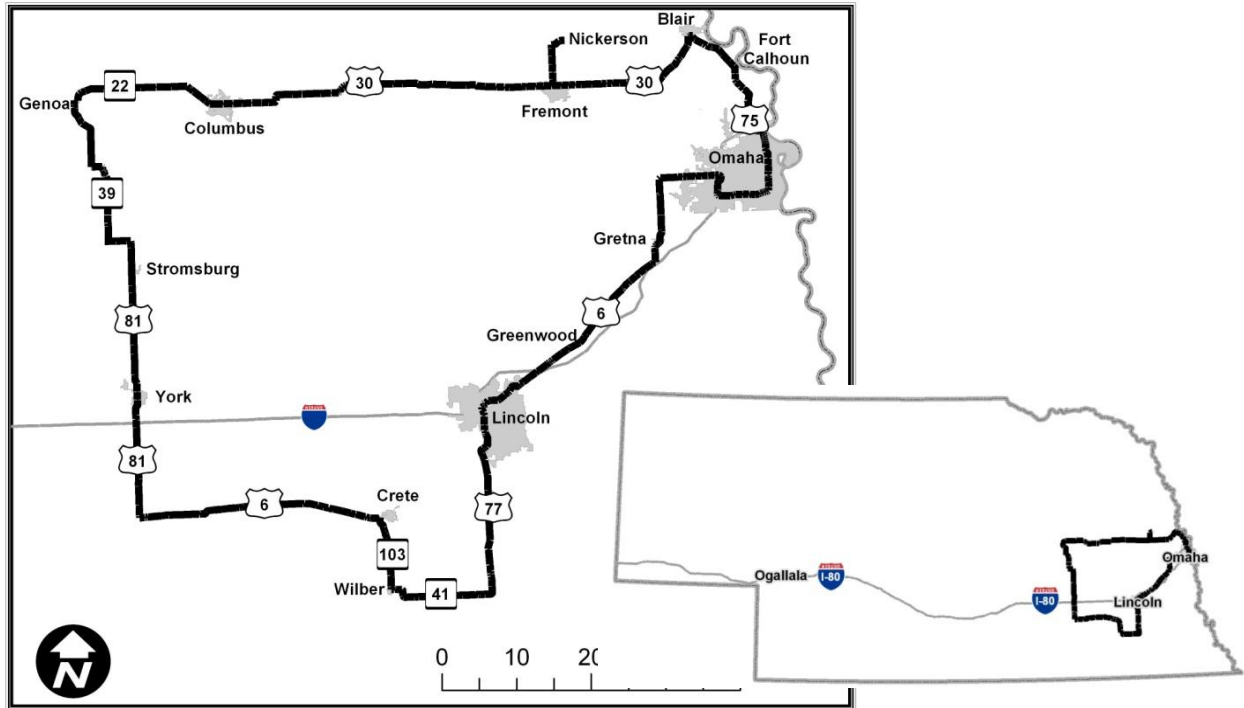
Wahoo is the former home office of *Late Night with David Letterman*. Although the "office" is a downtown phone booth, folks in Wahoo have a lot of fun with it. Wahoo also is the hometown of Oscar-winning filmmaker Darryl F. Zanuck, co-founder of the 20th Century-Fox Studios. An exhibit on his life is displayed at the [Saunders County Historical Museum](#), 240 N. Walnut St., 402-443-3090. The museum not only has an outstanding collection, but hosts many wonderful events throughout the year, including a Prairie Christmas in December.

In addition to Zanuck, Wahoo is the home of four other famous sons: Baseball Hall-of-Famer Samuel "Wahoo Sam" Crawford, Pulitzer Prize winner Dr. Howard Hanson, artist and author Clarence W. "Herk" Anderson, and Nobel Prize winner Dr. George Beadle. The **Howard Hanson House**, 402-443-4217, has been fully restored and features memorabilia about him and Wahoo's other famous residents. For a

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nostalgic step back in time, stop by the [Wigwam Café](#), 146 E. 5th St., 402-443-5575, in downtown Wahoo. It's a classic original diner that is sure to be a big hit with your group.

Tour B: A Capital Tour



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Välkommen till Stromsburg! Nebraska's Swedish Capitol, 402-764-2561, hosts a great Swedish Festival in mid-June, complete with a giant smorgasbord! You can get a real sense of the Swedish heritage in Stromsburg by having your group stroll through the quaint shops in the downtown district. With prior notice, the Stromsburg Community Club, 402-764-2101, can prepare a host of Swedish delicacies and serve them in the town square or nearby Buckley Park.

The big balloon tells you that you are nearing York. This community of just over 8,000 offers an outstanding array of restaurants and fast-food facilities. But it is best known for [Chances "R" Restaurant and Lounge](#), 124 W. 5th St., 402-362-7755, in downtown York. The "R," as it is known locally, hosts more group tours than any other private restaurant in Nebraska—and for good reason—huge portions at reasonable rates and good food made from scratch. If you happen to be in York on a Sunday morning, the "R" offers an outstanding Sunday brunch—a treat worth fasting for.



While in York, your group will be amazed by **Lee's Legendary Marbles and Collectables**, 3120 S. Lincoln Ave., 402-362-0103. More than a half-million marbles are on display, including some very rare examples. Two other very nice York attractions are the **Anna Beemis Historical Museum**, 211 E 7th St., 402-363-2630, which features historic artifacts and the [Yorkshire Playhouse](#), 402-362-7060, which offers a taste of Broadway in small town Nebraska. Four productions are scheduled throughout the year, as well as special seasonal events and children's theater productions. The theater is handicap accessible and group rates are available for performances.

While in York, spend time browsing through the shelves of [Four Winds Indian Books](#), 402-362-5654, the world's largest American Indian bookstore. Everything you've ever wanted to know about American Indian arts and crafts, languages, culture, history, lifestyle, tribes, cooking, clothing and hundreds of other topics is at your fingertips.

Your tour simply can't go through Geneva without first doing a little shopping at one of the many specialty shops downtown that surround the historic courthouse. If you're looking for antiques and collectibles, [Patrice's Specialties](#), 455 S. 13th St., 402-366-9511, won't steer you wrong. It's a treasure trove of things from

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yesteryear! Spend time at the **Cesky Bratri Cemetery and Pioneer Chapel**, 402-759-4910, in nearby Milligan. This was the first Catholic church in the county, and many of the gravestones date back to the late 1800s.

Everyone in Wilber is Czech—at least during the first weekend of August when the town hosts thousands for the Annual Wilber Czech Festival. The U.S. Congress proclaimed Wilber the National Czech Capitol and folks in Wilber take that seriously. However, you can get a sense of Czech heritage anytime you come to town. The **Wilber Czech Museum**, 102 W 3rd St., 402-821-2183, contains detailed information on the heritage of those who founded Wilber and on their homeland of Czechoslovakia. There is usually a quilting bee going on at the museum, and the ladies are always delighted to chat with you and show you around.

Located next door to the museum is the **Wilber Bakery**, 104 W 3rd St., 402-821-2995, where your group must sample a kolach, also known as “Czech Danish.” Around the corner is the beautifully restored **Hotel Wilber**, 203 S. Wilson St., 402-821-2020, a wonderful bed and breakfast. Your group can tour the facility and grab a bite to eat. *Vitame Vas!* With advance notice, costumed guides are available to escort your group along walking tours of Wilber. These tours include a meal.

Lincoln is Nebraska’s state capital and second largest city. As you travel along the interstate north of the city, look south to see the impressive **State Capitol** building, 1445 K St., 402-471-0448, looming on the horizon. A guided tour of the building is a must while in the Star City. It is Nebraska’s pride and joy and features many outstanding works of art that depict the political and cultural development of the state. It also is known for being the nation’s only one-house legislative body—the Nebraska Unicameral. After exploring the State Capitol building, make sure to visit the **Nebraska Governor’s Mansion**, 1425 H St., 402-471-3466, across the street. Guided tours are available Thursday afternoons. Reservations are required for groups of more than 10.

You can wile away your evenings enjoying Lincoln’s exciting **Haymarket District**, 402-435-7496. This historic downtown district offers a wide variety of galleries, restaurants, antique stores, shops, bars and coffee houses in turn-of-the-century buildings in what was once Lincoln’s warehouse and farmer’s market district. Today it is home to the state’s largest farmers market held on Saturday mornings from May-October. Your group can prearrange a group meal at one of the Haymarket’s many great restaurants, or you can encourage your group to find their own favorite spot. Lincoln also boasts many fine lodging properties that cater to the group tour market.

If you’re looking for Nebraska-made products, look no further than **From Nebraska**, 140 N. 8th St., 402-476-2455, in the Haymarket. You’re sure to find something special to take home to remember your trip. Licorice lovers will want to spend time sampling some of the world’s best licorice at **Licorice International**, 803 Q St., Suite

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300, 402-542-6742. This store offers licorice from across the globe, including France, Germany, the U.S., Denmark, Australia, Switzerland, and the U.K.

Many other exciting attractions are located throughout Lincoln. The [Sheldon Museum of Art](#), 402-472-2461, is an excellent modern art gallery that houses 20th century American art. Located on the University of Nebraska Main Campus, the building was designed by internationally famous architect Philip Johnson. The [Lincoln Children's Zoo](#), 402-475-6741, is in a lovely park-like setting where you can experience a close encounter with more than 300 animals and a variety of beautiful flowers. The [National Museum of Roller Skating](#), 4730 South St., 402-483-7551, is the only one of its kind in the country and features many rare examples of skates. Admire the larger than life sculpture, “**Torn Notebook**,” a piece of art created in steel and aluminum that was commissioned by the Sheldon Museum of Art from world-renowned artists Claes Oldenberg and Coosje van Bruggen.

Located on the University of Nebraska Main Campus, the [Great Plains Art Museum](#), 1115 Q St., 402-472-6220, features changing exhibits and collections of western art. The [Hyde Memorial Observatory](#), 3701 S. 70th St., 402-441-7895, lets your group tour explore the nighttime sky. Asian culture and history come alive through beautiful exhibitions of Asian art and artifacts at the [Lentz Center for Asian Culture](#), 1155 Q St., 402-472-5841, in downtown Lincoln. The [University of Nebraska State Museum of Natural History](#), 402-471-4754, features a world-class collection of fossil elephants, American Indian art, folk art, dinosaurs, wildlife dioramas, a hands-on discovery center and planetarium. Other exhibits chronicle life on the Great Plains for more than 12,000 years, such as the “American Indian Gallery,” “The First Nebraskans,” “Nebraska Joins the Union,” and “Building the State.” People on your tour can laugh out loud, cry, and be thoroughly entertained at one of the [Lied Center for Performing Arts](#), 301 N. 12th St., 402-472-4700, many fun-filled and high quality presentations.

The [International Quilt Study Center](#), 402-472-6549, on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's East Campus, features 950 quilts from the Ardis and Robert James Collection. It also is home to more than 1,600 quilts from the Robert Cargo Collection of African American Quilts, the Jonathan Holstein Collection, and the Sara Miller Collection of Amish Crib Quilts. The [American Historical Society of Germans from Russia Museum](#), 631 D St., 402-474-3363, preserves the history and culture of Germans who first immigrated to Russia, and then to America. The Heritage Center includes a summer kitchen, chapel, general store, blacksmith, railroad caboose, and residences that were turned into exhibits.

The [Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center](#), 11700 SW 100th St., 402-797-2301, south of Lincoln, includes more than 600 acres of rare, native tall grass prairie, springs, wetlands, ponds and other natural environments. It offers visitors an unparalleled opportunity to experience Nebraska's tall grass prairie. The center boasts more than 350 species of plants and more than 170 bird species. [Prime](#)

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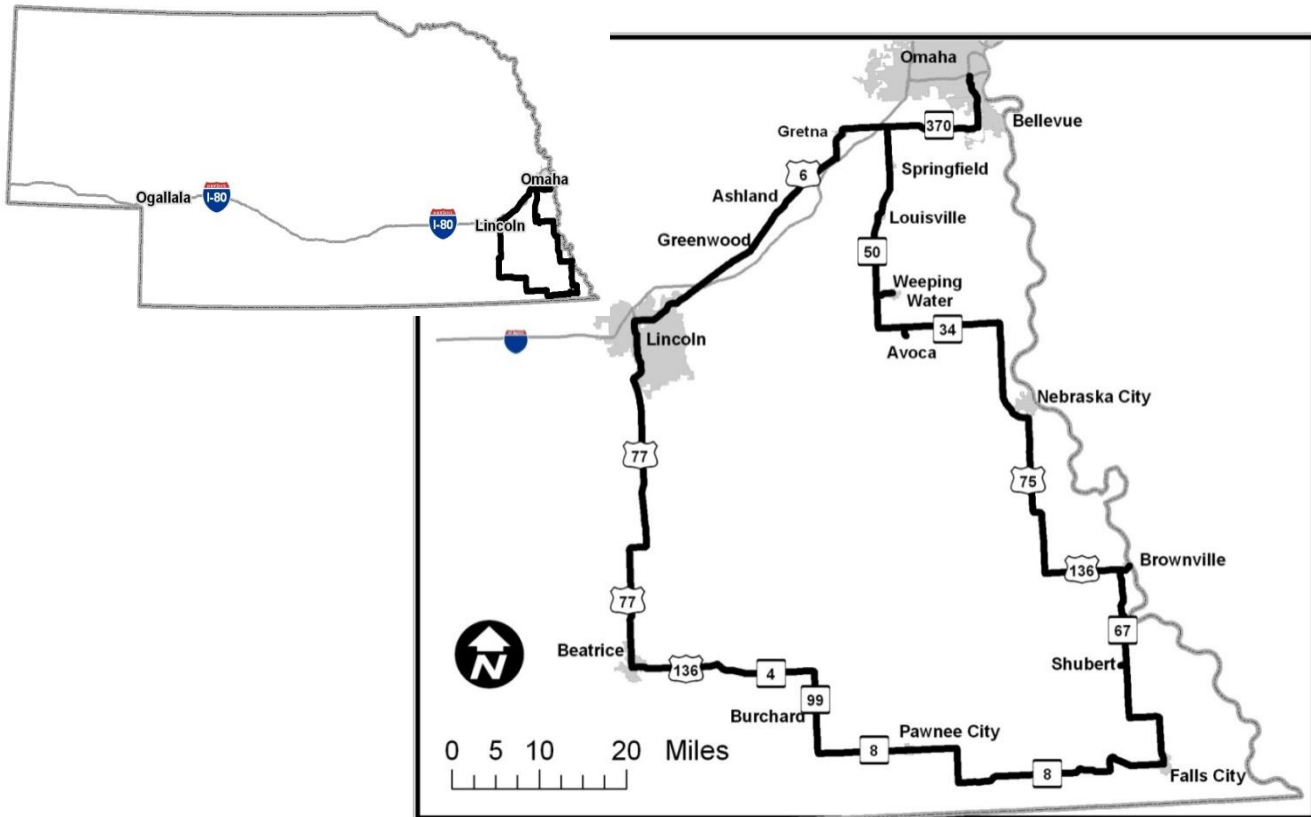
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Tour C: Branch Out in Southeast Nebraska



Springfield will delight your group tour with its many attractions. In addition to a beautiful view of the surrounding countryside, the [Soaring Wings Winery](#), 17111 S. 138th St., 402-253-2479, offers wine tastings, tours and a gift shop. Experience an eclectic two-acre sculpture garden at the [Carl Weiss Sculpture Studio](#), 402-680-0642. The formal and informal gardens are dotted with sculptures from local and regional artists, including Carl Weiss' landscape concepts, bronze sculptures and artwork. Meander quietly along the walking paths at [Springcreek Gardens & Nursery](#), 12275 Main St., 402-253-3045, where a new plant or surprise is around every corner. The full service nursery and landscape design center offers more than 450 varieties of perennials, shrubs and landscape trees.

Enjoy an ice cream shake and remember old times at the **Springfield Old Fashioned Soda Fountain**, 205 Main St., 402-253-2000.

The [Louisville Art Gallery](#), 230 Main St., 402-234-2867, features more than 3,500-square-feet of exhibition space for sculptures, paintings, ceramics, pottery and fine art photography. **The Gallery Shop**, 127 Main St., 402-234-2669, is home to **Art Chicks**—where singing, dancing and frivolity are encouraged. You might find yourself wearing a feather boa and brandishing a magic wand as you explore the

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two shops and garden that make up the gallery. You can select a whimsical art piece and then indulge in a gourmet lunch. Call ahead for tours.

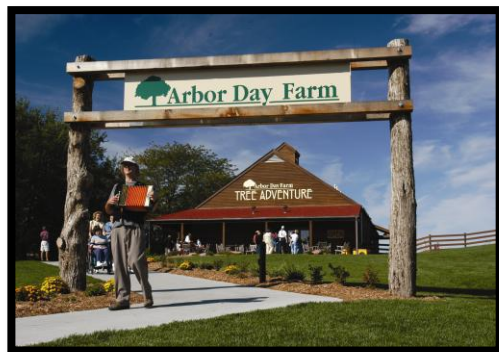
A short drive from Omaha will bring you to the [Loft Community Theatre](#), 402-267-5400, near Weeping Water. Located in a converted 1924 hog barn, the “Born in a Barn” players have produced more than 300 plays since 1977. Four major productions run from May to October each year. Freshen your house and your life from a selection of more than 70 delicious candle scents at [Cryin’ Creek Candles](#), 402-267-3235. But it’s more than simply a candle store. Enjoy a glass of Nebraska wine or beer as you shop, or stop in the Farmhouse Lounge for a wine tasting. Candles and wine—what more could you ask for?

Spend a leisurely afternoon trying new wines in a French Country House setting at [Slattery Vintage Estates](#), 8925 Adams St., 402-267-5267, in Nehawka. Afterwards, take your glass outside to enjoy bird watching in a relaxing courtyard.

Pumpkins, fall produce and decorations, a wooded walking trail, picnic grounds, antiques, and gifts await your group tour at an 1881 family farmstead. **Bloom Where You’re Planted Pumpkin Patch & Barn Store**, 911 108th St., 402-267-4104, is a great escape back to the farm!

Nebraska City boasts a variety of exciting attractions and activities, plenty of history, shopping opportunities and beautiful scenery—all in one charming community. Nebraska City’s pride and joy is [Arbor Lodge State Historical Park and Arboretum](#), 2600 2nd Ave., 402-873-7222. Home of J. Sterling and Carolyn Morton, the 52-room Victorian-style mansion is a memorable stop for any group visit. J. Sterling Morton was the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture under President Grover Cleveland and helped establish Arbor Day as a holiday.

Yes, it’s true...Nebraska is the home of Arbor Day! The historic 260-acre [Arbor Day Farm](#), 100 Arbor Ave., is a working farm orchard and forest, and a unique place in the world where trees are king! Explore **Tree Adventure’s** 50-foot Canopy Treehouse, Nature Explore Classroom, and hiking and biking trails. At the Lied Greenhouse, each visitor receives a tree seedling. If you plan your group tour during the summer and fall, enjoy picking your own harvest of garden vegetables, pumpkins and Nebraska City’s famous apples. Finish your stay at Arbor Day Farm with a wine sampling at the **Apple House**.

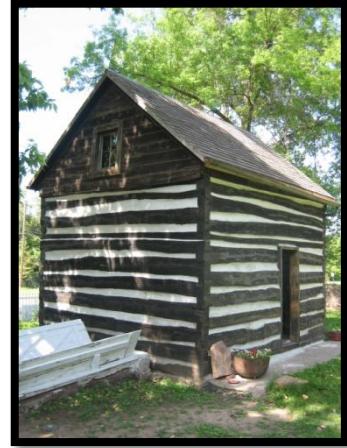


A fine example of Victorian architecture is the **Wildwood Center Historic House and The Barn Art Gallery**, 420 Steinhart Park Road, 402-873-6340. Built in 1869,

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Wildwood was home to Jasper Ware, an early banker in Nebraska City. All home furnishings are of the Victorian Era, and behind the house is a gallery that displays artwork of many Nebraska artisans.

Another major Nebraska City attraction is **Mayhew Cabin and Historical Village**, 2012 4th Corso, 402- 873-3115. Part of the Underground Railroad for slaves, this restored site has many historical artifacts on display, as well as a restored village. You also can walk through the underground cave on the grounds. Private tours can be arranged upon request.



Downtown Nebraska City is a treasure trove of antique and specialty retail stores where you can find clothing, crafts and works of art, Christmas decorations, books and specialty foods. With advance reservations, 402-269-3737, a trolley can take your group around town. With its abundance of changing leaves and apple harvests, fall is one of the most beautiful seasons to visit Nebraska City.

For a comfortable overnight stay or one-of-a-kind meal, look no further than the [Lied Lodge and Conference Center](#), 2700 Sylvan Road, 402-873-8733. This environmentally friendly, Adirondack style facility offers state-of-the-art meeting rooms, spacious guest rooms and excellent meals.

Experience firsthand the journey of Lewis and Clark at the [Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center](#), 100 Valmont Dr., 402-874-9900, which sits atop an 80-acre site overlooking the Missouri River. The center focuses on the recorded scientific discoveries of plants and animals made during the tour. Enjoy hands-on exploration activities, interactive exhibits, a life-size replica of the keelboat used by Lewis and Clark, and a 45-foot American Indian Earth Lodge. The [River Country Nature Center](#), 114 S. 6th St., 402-873-3000, is open by appointment only and houses more than 400 preserved specimens of native Nebraska birds, mammals, fish, amphibians and reptiles in replicas of their natural habitats.

Free your mind and explore the artistic side of Nebraska City at the [Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts](#), 801 3rd Corso, 402-874-9600. The center is an art retreat for visual artists, writers, art scholars, choreographers and artists from across the nation. A main gallery and exhibition rooms display works of art for public viewing, and are changed approximately every two months. Art classes held at the center are offered throughout the year and open to the public.

Apples, peaches, cherries, plums, grapes, cauliflower, lettuce, onions, pumpkins, squash, peppers, and more...oh my! Load up on delicious fresh fruits and vegetables at [Kimmel Orchard & Vineyard](#), 6045 G Road, 402-873-5293. Your group tour can

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learn the exciting story about the history and operation of the 6.5-acre vineyard before heading to the Apple Barn Tasting Room for a sampling of Nebraska grape and fruit wines. Don't forget to stop by the Kimmel Kitchen for homemade pies, apple donuts, caramel apples, jams and jellies. Benches, scenic resting spots, and picnic areas dot the vineyard to let your tour enjoy spring's blossoms or the beautiful autumn colors.

Go ahead. Get your shop on at [Factory Stores of America Outlet Mall](#), Highways 75 and 2, 402-873-7727. You won't regret it! Bon Worth, Craft Works, G.H. Bass, and a host of other great stores and great prices might wear out your credit card, but definitely will give you some great deals in return! If searching for antiques and collectibles is more your style, head to Nebraska City's historic downtown district where you're sure to find a bargain or two that you simply cannot live without.

At one time the bustling community of Brownville was to serve as Nebraska's "Gateway City," but when the railroad decided to locate to Omaha, Brownville's future looked grim. Fortunately the spunky locals refused to let their community die, and today's Brownville has become a genuine tourism destination. Your group can cruise down the Missouri River on the [Spirit of Brownville](#), 402-825-4211, take in a play or concert at the **Brownville Village Theatre**, 402-825-4121, or **Brownville Concert Hall**, 402-825-3331, shop in the quaint downtown, or sip wine at sunset on the deck of [Whiskey Run Creek Winery](#), 702 Main St., 402-825-4601. The **Captain Bailey House**, **Carson House** and **Furnas House**, 402-825-6001, are some of the many restored historic homes that are open to the public.

The **Meriwether Lewis Museum of Missouri River History**, 402-825-3341, a decommissioned U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredge boat, now houses a museum dedicated to the Missouri River. The **Governor Furnas Connector Trail** connects the **Governor Furnas Arboretum**, 402-825-6637, to the Missouri River. The trail boasts more than 200 types of trees, shrubs and flowers for you to enjoy. The **Brownville Lyceum**, 225 Main St., 402-825-4321, is a haven for booklovers with used books to purchase, reading rooms to relax in and read, and a small café that serves tasty, locally-prepared dishes.

If you're visiting Brownville in late April and are looking for something out-of-the-ordinary, look no further than [The Great Nebraska Mushroom Festival](#) just a short drive north in Peru.

[Indian Cave State Park](#), 402-883-2575, near Shubert includes more than 3,000 acres along the Missouri River. This pristine area is home to a variety of activities, such as camping, hiking, backpacking, picnicking, and nature and wilderness activities. There are 20 miles of hiking trails in the park. The fall months are particularly spectacular, and history buffs will enjoy the restored schoolhouse and general store from the old river town of St. Deroin. During the summer months, old-

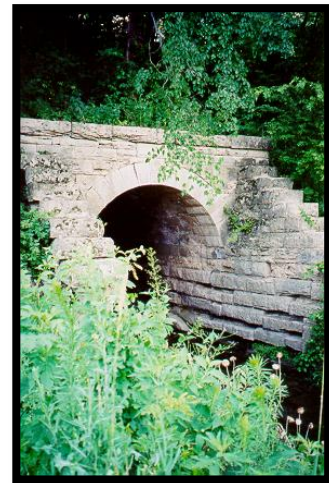
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time crafts are demonstrated to visitors. You can reserve a group picnic shelter if needed.

Two of Falls City's best attractions are the **Bell-Jenne House**, 402-245-3481, and the **Richardson County Historical Museum**, 402-245-3481. The Bell-Jenne House is an impressive two-story brick Italianate-style house built in 1881 and features eight period piece rooms to give your group tour a glimpse into life in the late 19th century. The Richardson County Historical Museum highlights the history and people of Falls City and the region. With advance planning, tours of both facilities can be scheduled.

Home of film stars Irish McCalla and Harold Lloyd, Pawnee City also is home to a very impressive historical museum complex. The [Pawnee County Historical Museum](#), 402-852-3131, is comprised of 16 historic buildings that display antique furnishings, tools, vintage vehicles, rare photos, books, unique handcraft items and a variety of other artifacts. The **Toy Pedal Clinic**, 402-852-2655, is a museum dedicated to this fun toy of yesteryear. The museum displays more than 450 toy pedal cars, tractors, airplanes and a host of other small toys. Other collections at the museum include a John Deere room, kiddie car collection, kerosene lamps, quilts, bicycles, salt and pepper shakers and doll collection. Your tour also can observe museum staff while they restore old pedal cars.

Enjoy the only winery and microbrewery in Nebraska! The [Schilling Bridge Winery and Microbrewery](#), 62193 710th Rd., 402-852-2400, offers Nebraska produced wines and handcrafted microbrews surrounded by more than eight acres of grapevines. Make sure to ask for a sample of Silent Star wine or Git-R-Done beer. The centerpiece of the landscape is an 1890 Limestone Rock Island Railroad bridge.



Also check out the **restored Harold Lloyd home**, 402-852-3131, in Burchard, 12 miles west of Pawnee City. The front room of the house contains memorabilia from Lloyd's life and acting career. Upon request, you can set up time for your group to watch a Harold Lloyd movie in his former home. Don't forget the popcorn!

Beatrice is a growing city with a wonderful heritage. One of Nebraska's most outstanding attractions is located near Beatrice—[Homestead National Monument of America](#), 8523 W. Highway 4, 402-223-3514. President Abraham Lincoln signed the country's first Homestead Act, which gave Americans free plots of land as long as they agreed to farm it for a specific period of time. One of the first homesteaders to sign up was Daniel Freeman who settled in the area now encompassed by Homestead National Monument of America. Visitors can see artifacts from early pioneer life and learn what it was like to live in the often-harsh environment. There

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are hiking trails through virgin prairie grasses that have never been plowed, and living history demonstrations to delight and educate you.

The **Homestead Heritage Center** brings to life the homesteading story and the importance that the Homestead Act of 1862 had on the settlement of Nebraska through state-of-the-art and interactive displays and exhibits. An outstanding bookstore that boasts an impressive variety of books for all ages is located on-site.

The [Gage County Museum](#), 402-228-1679, in Beatrice houses many outstanding collections pertaining to the area, such as an exhibit on Beatrice native and Hollywood actor Robert Taylor. The city's excellent selection of restaurants and fine community theatre naturally cater to the group tour market. **Cedar Creek Pottery**, 37639 S. 80th Road, 402-228-0138, housed in an old country church, is filled with handcrafted pottery and floral creations. Demonstrations are provided upon request. Downtown Beatrice boasts a thriving downtown district that offers a variety of different shopping opportunities.

Lincoln is Nebraska's state capital and second largest city. As you travel along the interstate north of the city, look south to see the impressive [State Capitol](#) building, 1445 K St., 402-471-0448, looming on the horizon. A guided tour of the building is a must while in the Star City. It is Nebraska's pride and joy and features many outstanding works of art that depict the political and cultural development of the state. It also is known for being the nation's only one-house legislative body—the Nebraska Unicameral. After exploring the State Capitol building, make sure to visit the **Nebraska Governor's Mansion**, 1425 H St., 402-471-3466, across the street. Guided tours are available Thursday afternoons. Reservations are required for groups of more than 10.

You can wile away your evenings enjoying Lincoln's exciting [Haymarket District](#), 402-435-7496. This historic downtown district offers a wide variety of galleries, restaurants, antique stores, shops, bars and coffee houses in turn-of-the-century buildings in what was once Lincoln's warehouse and farmer's market district. Today it is home to the state's largest farmers market held on Saturday mornings from May-October. Your group can prearrange a group meal at one of the Haymarket's many great restaurants, or you can encourage your group to find their own favorite spot. Lincoln also boasts many fine lodging properties that cater to the group tour market.



If you're looking for Nebraska-made products, look no further than [From Nebraska](#), 140 N. 8th St., 402-476-2455, in the Haymarket. You're sure to find something special to take home to remember your trip. Licorice lovers will want to spend time sampling some of the world's best licorice at [Licorice International](#), 803 Q St., Suite

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300, 402-542-6742. This store offers licorice from across the globe, including France, Germany, the U.S., Denmark, Australia, Switzerland, and the U.K.

Many other exciting attractions are located throughout Lincoln. The [Sheldon Museum of Art](#), 402-472-2461, is an excellent modern art gallery that houses 20th century American art. Located on the University of Nebraska Main Campus, the building was designed by internationally famous architect Philip Johnson. The [Lincoln Children's Zoo](#), 402-475-6741, is in a lovely park-like setting where you can experience a close encounter with more than 300 animals and a variety of beautiful flowers. The [National Museum of Roller Skating](#), 4730 South St., 402-483-7551, is the only one of its kind in the country and features many rare examples of skates. Admire the larger than life sculpture, “**Torn Notebook**,” a piece of art created in steel and aluminum that was commissioned by the Sheldon Museum of Art from world-renowned artists Claes Oldenberg and Coosje van Bruggen.

Located on the University of Nebraska Main Campus, the [Great Plains Art Museum](#), 1115 Q St., 402-472-6220, features changing exhibits and collections of western art. The [Hyde Memorial Observatory](#), 3701 S. 70th St., 402-441-7895, lets your group tour explore the nighttime sky. Asian culture and history come alive through beautiful exhibitions of Asian art and artifacts at the [Lentz Center for Asian Culture](#), 1155 Q St., 402-472-5841, in downtown Lincoln. The [University of Nebraska State Museum of Natural History](#), 402-471-4754, features a world-class collection of fossil elephants, American Indian art, folk art, dinosaurs, wildlife dioramas, a hands-on discovery center and planetarium. Other exhibits chronicle life on the Great Plains for more than 12,000 years, such as the “American Indian Gallery,” “The First Nebraskans,” “Nebraska Joins the Union,” and “Building the State.” People on your tour can laugh out loud, cry, and be thoroughly entertained at one of the [Lied Center for Performing Arts](#), 301 N. 12th St., 402-472-4700, many fun-filled and high quality presentations.

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