

# Tour Guide IOWA

JUNE 2020

*Iowa Made*

Products, people and art  
from our state

*Uniquely Iowa*

Factories, farms  
and restaurants that  
call the Hawkeye  
State home

*Small Town  
Charm*

Welcoming town squares,  
family-owned businesses and  
distinct museums



Special Supplement

LEISURE

GROUP TRAVEL

# Greetings!

Charming small towns, cosmopolitan cities and gorgeous, open-air prairies distinguish Iowa as a terrific option for group tours. *Leisure Group Travel* is proud to showcase the Hawkeye State's many attractions in this year's *Iowa Tour Guide*—a collaboration with the Iowa Group Travel Association (IGTA). An excellent resource for groups planning their next Midwestern itinerary, the *Iowa Tour Guide* is brimming with information you won't want to miss.

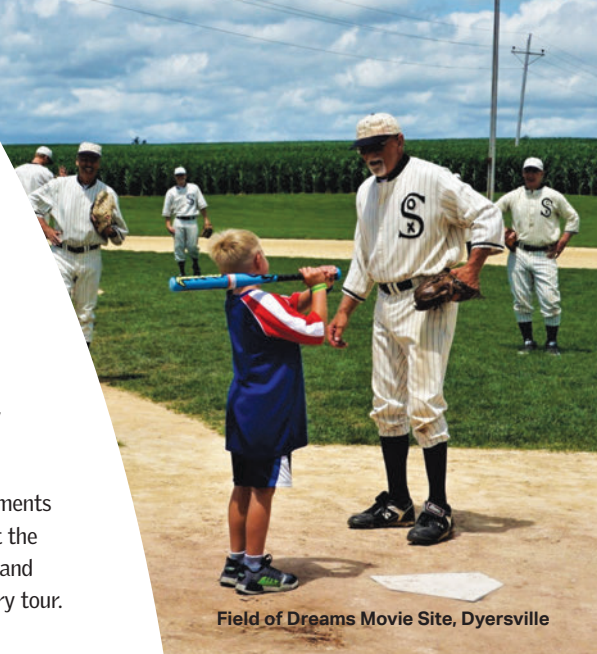
In "Iowa Originals," we highlight the products, people and delicious food created by hardworking Iowans. From extraordinary effigy mounds that date back a millennium to settlements that honor the state's German immigrant heritage, there are numerous attractions throughout the state open for groups to tour. Sample Blue Bunny ice cream, walk in the steps of John Wayne and learn the extraordinary technological advances made in agriculture during a John Deere factory tour.

We live in an era when some travelers may have trepidation about spending time in densely populated area or large buildings. Fortunately, the heart of Iowa lies in its small towns, and there are numerous communities across the state that boast open-air town squares, intimate restaurants and plenty of green space. They're also home to exceptional attractions, from Johnny Carson's childhood home in Corning to the baseball diamond from *Field of Dreams* in Dyersville. Learn about many more of these areas in "Small Town Charm." If your group seeks the hustle and bustle of larger cities, Iowa can also accommodate. In "Urban Experiences in Iowa," we highlight the Frank Lloyd Wright architecture of Mason City, hip neighborhoods of Des Moines and a farm-to-table restaurant in Dubuque.

While Iowa is internationally known for its charming villages and award-winning agriculture, did you know that the state is also home to lakeshore beaches, a bison ranch and an acclaimed motorcycle museum? "Unique Iowa" enlightens you on some of the state's unexpected treasures, from a Smithsonian-affiliated aquarium to a museum dedicated to Iowa's once-thriving lumber industry.

We hope you enjoy the 2020 *Iowa Tour Guide* and know that IGTA is committed to creating an authentic and comprehensive group tour experience.

Thanks for reading,



Field of Dreams Movie Site, Dyersville



Okoboji

## 3 URBAN EXPERIENCES IN IOWA

*These urban areas in Iowa boast cosmopolitan entertainment districts, fine dining and historic avenues to engage visiting groups*

## 6 IOWA'S SMALL TOWN CHARM

*Welcoming town squares, family-owned businesses and distinct museums characterize these destinations*

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*Delicious food, iconic art and famous celebrities that trace their origins to Iowa*

## 10 UNIQUE IOWA

*These 7 distinct experiences can only be found in the Hawkeye State*



John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum, Waterloo



Fenelon Place Elevator, Dubuque

## 1. DUBUQUE

Dubuque, located in northeastern Iowa's rolling driftless area, offers sumptuous Beaux-Arts architecture, Mississippi River views and the world's steepest railway. The Fenelon Place Elevator is a 296-foot-long cable car that offers beautiful views of the Port of Dubuque and the city's skyline, and the Cable Car Square District at the railway's base is populated by charming shops and boutiques. Looking for a different view of the river? The American Lady riverboat offers group-rate lunch and dinner cruises, while Stone Cliff Winery offers tastings and river views from a restored brewery building. Foodies will enjoy Dubuque's revitalized Millwork District, where you can enjoy a hearty ale at 7 Hills Brewing Company and farm-to-table meals at Brazen Open Kitchen, whose head chef Kevin Scharpf was recently featured on Bravo's *Top Chef*.

# URBAN EXPERIENCES

THESE URBAN AREAS IN IOWA BOAST COSMOPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS, FINE DINING AND HISTORIC AVENUES TO ENGAGE VISITING GROUPS

*in Iowa*

## 2. DAVENPORT

Davenport's downtown has amazing views of the storied Mississippi River. You'll find plenty of diverse restaurants, pubs, unique local shops and entertainment options that are all walkable from downtown hotels. Deeply rooted in its heritage, Davenport has a variety of museums to tour and a culture of creativity to share. Home to craft breweries, nightlife, live music venues, world-class festivals, outdoor adventures, river cruises and a casino resort, Davenport is the largest city in the family of communities of the Quad Cities.



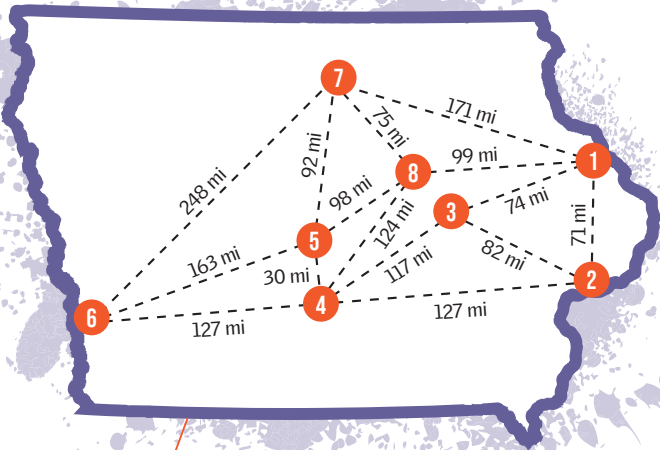
Modern Woodmen Park, Davenport



NewBo City Market, Cedar Rapids

## 3. CEDAR RAPIDS

Elegant mansions and cultural museums call Cedar Rapids home. Discover rich history at the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library, where visitors encounter rotating exhibitions that celebrate the lives of Eastern European immigrants. Cedar Rapids attractions include the Brucemore (a Queen Anne-style mansion) and the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art and the Grant Wood Studio (where you can learn the backstory of Wood's iconic *American Gothic* painting).



- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1 DUBUQUE      | 5 AMES           |
| 2 DAVENPORT    | 6 COUNCIL BLUFFS |
| 3 CEDAR RAPIDS | 7 MASON CITY     |
| 4 DES MOINES   | 8 CEDAR FALLS    |

## 5. AMES

Ames' thriving Main Street Cultural District entices groups with the Octagon Center, varied brews at Torrent Brewing Company and Broadway-caliber musicals at the Ames City Auditorium. Take time to experience beautiful Iowa State University, where you can embark on visit the Reiman Gardens (a 17-acre area that includes a tropical plant conservatory) or step off campus for a tour of the BioCentury Research Farm to learn about cutting-edge agriculture techniques.



Reiman Gardens, Ames



Pappajohn Sculpture Park, Des Moines

## 4. DES MOINES

Group-friendly activities in Iowa's capital include a tour of the gold-domed Capitol Building, seeing hand-made products come to life at West End Architectural Salvage (made famous by their reality show) or visiting historic locations such as the Historic Jordan House, which was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Leisurely excursions include the Pappajohn Sculpture Park (a four-acre landscape of immense artwork) and the domed Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden (which houses over 1,200 species).

## 6. COUNCIL BLUFFS

The legacy of American transportation and westward expansion looms large over Council Bluffs, which is located across the Missouri River from Omaha. Learn about this heritage at the Union Pacific Railroad Museum, where interactive exhibits and video game technology chronicle the railroad's history, and the Lewis & Clark Monument Scenic Overlook, where the Corps of Discovery met with local Otoe and Missouri tribes to give Council Bluffs its name.



River's Edge Pavilion, Council Bluffs



River City Sculptures on Parade,  
Mason City

## 7. MASON CITY

Step into Broadway history in Mason City—the birthplace of *The Music Man* composer Meredith Willson and site of Music Man Square. Mason City is also the largest concentration of Prairie School buildings in Iowa, and notable buildings include the Stockman House & Interpretive Center (where you can see Frank Lloyd Wright’s furnishing designs) and the Historic Park Inn Hotel (a 27-room boutique lodging option and the only surviving Wright-designed hotel).



Sturgis Falls Celebration, Cedar Falls

## 8. CEDAR FALLS

Cedar Falls and surrounding Black Hawk County offer plenty for motorcoaches. Barn quilts—folk art designs that adorn outbuildings throughout the county—are easily visible from public roads, and many families welcome groups with advanced notice. Notable attractions in the city include the Cedar Falls Ice House (a preserved round barn where visitors can discover Black Hawk County and women’s suffrage history) and the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center (which stages plays and orchestral performances throughout the year). ■

# SEE YOU IN CEDAR FALLS!

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# LIFE.



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# Iowa's SMALL TOWN CHARM

**WELCOMING TOWN SQUARES, FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES AND DISTINCT MUSEUMS CHARACTERIZE THESE DESTINATIONS**

Iowa derives much character from its small towns—welcoming communities that boast pedestrian-friendly main streets, knowledgeable locals and group-friendly attractions. For elegant Victorian homes, tour the historic districts of Alba, or challenge the whitewater rapids of Charles City. Whether you want to walk in the humble beginnings of famous Americans, sip locally sourced wine or discover regional history, Iowa's small towns have something to offer.

## DYERSVILLE

Boasting a charming downtown that includes numerous family-owned restaurants and the award-winning Textile Brewery, Dyersville offers authenticity and easy access to area wineries and the Heritage Trail (which runs 26 miles to Dubuque). Group-friendly attractions include the National Farm Toy Museum (which houses over 30,000 playthings), the Basilica of St. Francis Xavier (a towering Neo-Gothic



Glenn Miller Birthplace Society, Clarinda

structure rare outside large cities) and the Plaza Antique Mall (where you can browse over 250 booths). The town's most famous attraction is the *Field of Dreams* Movie Site, where your group can learn about baseball history and anecdotes about the 1989 film's production.

## BLOOMFIELD

Use this city as a hub-and-spoke to explore Iowa's largest Amish community. Browse a wide selection of Amish-made furniture, quilts and handicrafts at T-Corner Woodworking and Yoder Kountry Korner, tour the community's greenhouses to sample fresh produce or admire the heritage barn quilts hung throughout Davis County.

## CLARINDA

Clarinda is most famous for its native son—Glenn Miller—but the city is a thriving community that hosts craft fairs, minor league baseball games and acclaimed band festivals. Begin with a tour of the Glenn Miller Birthplace Home & Museum, which chronicles the bandleader's influence during the Big Bang era, World War II service and contributions to jazz. Afterwards, enjoy other attractions like the Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum (a renovated library that houses an acclaimed collection of contemporary art) and the Nodaway Valley Historical Museum.



Corning Opera House



Johnny Carson's Birthplace, Corning

## CORNING

With a downtown that features an elegant opera house, old-fashioned sundaes served at McMahon's Drug Store and family-owned art galleries, Corning harkens back to a quainter, friendlier era. Visitors can stop at the childhood home of "The King of Late Night Television" Johnny Carson, which has been restored to its 1920s appearance and features a *Tonight Show* desk where you can pose with a Carson cutout. Other surrounding Adams County attractions include the French Icarian Village (the site of a 19th century utopian commune) and Corning Winery (which features a "floating" tasting room).

## ALGONA

Blocks from the Kossuth County Courthouse is the Camp Algona POW Museum, which documents a facility that housed up to 10,000 German soldiers from 1944 to 1946. Nearby is the Algona Nativity Scene, a grouping of 65 half-sized biblical figures created by German POWs that include Mary, Joseph, the Three Wise Men and barnyard animals.

## CHARLES CITY

This scenic river town offers thrills at the Charles City Whitewater at Riverfront Park, a free paddling trail on the Cedar River that can accommodate kayaks, inner tubes and stand-up paddleboards (local rentals available). The one-quarter-mile rodeo course is rated at Class II and Class III levels, with three distinct features for

paddlers of all abilities. Visitors will also want to stop by the Carrie Lane Chapman Catt Girlhood Home and Museum (which offers insight into the famous suffragette's early years) and the Mooney Art Collection (where you can see work by Dali, Rembrandt and Picasso). ■



**Come see why people confuse Dyersville with Heaven:**

Home of the *Field of Dreams* Movie Site, Basilica of St. Francis Xavier, National Farm Toy Museum, Dyer-Botsford House & Doll Museum, Becker Woodcarving Plaza Antique Mall, TOMY Outlet Store, Textile Brewery, plus wineries, coffee shop, specialty shops, boutiques, family-owned restaurants, B&B's and hotels, and the trailhead for the 26-miles Heritage Trail.  
**Coming May 2020: Movie & Ghost Player Museum!**

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## DELICIOUS FOOD, ICONIC ART AND FAMOUS CELEBRITIES THAT TRACE THEIR ORIGINS TO IOWA

**A** state can have many home-grown treasures hidden among the highways and cities to explore and visit. Iowa offers an exciting variety of experiences in local history such as tasting classic Blue Bunny ice cream, photographs with the house from the famous painting *American Gothic*, historical furniture and even hundreds of Native mounds shaped as animals. Take a group trip to see the art, history and innovations developed and remembered in Iowa.

### EFFIGY MOUNDS

More than 1,000 years ago, Eastern Woodland people built thousands of earthen mounds spanning the states of Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Now protected as a national monument, these sacred mounds can be explored along hiking trails at Effigy Mounds National Monument. Over 200 mounds, some shaped as animals, can be seen in addition to forests, tallgrass prairies, wetlands and rivers.

### AMANA COLONIES

Traverse the Seven Villages built in 1855, which were established by German immigrants seeking religious freedom for their communal society. Lively events include Winterfest, Maifest, Wurst Festival, Oktoberfest, Tannenbaum Forest and Prelude Christmas. The Amana Colonies offer different types of accommodations including hotels, inns, bed & breakfasts, RV parks and campgrounds. They have a series of shops with food, antiques, locally made goods, quilting and needlework, furniture and fashion.

### IOWA QUILT MUSEUM

With rotating exhibits featuring American artists and their amazing blankets, this Winterset museum follows the history and creation of a unique and practical art form in a storefront that used to be a JC Penney. The exhibits are exchanged through the year, with the current one focused on male artists and their quilt creations. Upcoming exhibits include "Out of Control," a feature of wild quilts from two Kansas quilt collectors with out-of-the-ordinary quilts.

### JOHN WAYNE BIRTHPLACE

Just down the road from the Iowa Quilt Museum in Winterset, discover the history and impact of American legend John Wayne in his birthplace. In the only museum in the world dedicated to John Wayne, enjoy a movie theater with a documentary of his film career. The facility also houses artifacts from John Wayne's career including movie posters, costumes, scripts, handwritten letters, artwork, sculptures and one of the Oscar winner's customized automobiles. Tours of the museum and birthplace house are self-guided and handicap accessible.

### HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

This prestigious library in West Branch honors America's 31st president and is just one of 14 presidential libraries that is run by the National Archives and Records Administration. The Research Room holds copies of selected records from the National Archives from agencies and individuals that corresponded with Herbert Hoover, along with the personal letters of the former president.

### BLUE BUNNY ICE CREAM PARLOR

Travel to Le Mars to discover the "Ice Cream Capital of the World." The Wells Visitor Center & Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor offers much more than sweet treats and over 40 flavors of ice cream. The virtual soda fountain allows you to create a personalized sundae. The second floor holds a virtual production line so you can see how they produce more than 150 million gallons of



Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor, Le Mars



ice cream per year. Become an ice cream expert as you enjoy the ice cream photo booth and an interactive flavor personality quiz.

### AMERICAN GOTHIC HOUSE MUSEUM

In a place that inspired an famous art piece, witness the same building featured in Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. This painting was finished 90 years ago, yet the iconic house behind the farmer and his wife still stands in Eldon as an excellent photo opportunity. The house offers unique experiences for groups, including tours through the museum and nearby prairie gardens. Along with the tour, there are educational films available on the legacy of Grant Wood.

### ISABEL BLOOM

Grant Wood not only created amazing art in *American Gothic*, he also created a space that inspired others to create. The Stone City Art Colony might have only lasted two summers, but it greatly influenced an artist named Isabel Bloom. Once she perfected her technique to create amazing sculptures, her company Isabel Bloom emerged. Now, in the name of her legacy, the Davenport-based company creates hand-crafted creations with many whimsical designs. The studio offers free tours for a behind-the-scenes look at the iconic Isabel Bloom sculptures, with an exclusive souvenir purchase opportunity.

### KINZE INNOVATION CENTER


Take an opportunity for a unique tour of one of the largest privately-owned farm equipment centers in America. Formed back in 1965 by Jon Kinzenbaw, a small welding shop grew as he began to patent his inventions. One of his most advantageous innovations came in the form of the first single axle low-profile grain cart in 1971, which revolutionized grain handling. At the Innovation Center in Williamsburg, explore the technological advancements of the company along with towering farm equipment with educational programming for adults and children.

### JOHN DEERE TRACTOR & ENGINE MUSEUM

The first John Deere factory features wonderful displays and interactive exhibits for kids and adults. From a horse-drawn plow to modern working machines, groups can discover how innovations through the company powered the development of the farming industry. Admission to this Waterloo attraction offers free guided tours. Combine farming equipment with fun at the John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum.

### RVP 1875

Step back into history in this Jefferson workshop and museum. This attraction showcases historically built furniture using tools available to furniture craftsmen in 1875, including large equipment from the 1800s. The owner, Robby Pederson, has created over 800 pieces of historical furniture, and has a unique story to share about each of the pieces displayed in the RVP 1875 showroom. The large workshop can accommodate large groups, and offer tours and experiences with meal options. ■



**IOWA QUILT Museum**

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# Unique IOWA

THESE 7 DISTINCT EXPERIENCES CAN ONLY BE FOUND IN THE HAWKEYE STATE

**W**ho knew you could unlock your inner lumberjack, embark on a cruise and sample fresh mozzarella all in one state? Iowa is filled with fascinating museums and welcoming farms that are an excellent addition to any group itinerary.

## HAWKEYE BUFFALO RANCH, FREDERICKSBURG

This small, family-owned farm in northeastern Iowa has been operated by the same family for the past 150 years. The ranch sells bison meat from the farm and offers public tours by appointment. Experiences include bison domestication history, a chance to see the farm and a Lakota Sioux smudge ceremony. Tours also allow visitors to take a wagon ride into the woods to hand-feed the buffalo on the property.



## NATIONAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER MUSEUM & AQUARIUM, DUBUQUE

This part-aquarium, part-museum Smithsonian affiliate prides itself on creating inspirational and educational experiences that encourage stewardship by making history and rivers come to life. Exhibits educate visitors on the river's role in Native American and pioneer history, while animal enclosures simulate bayous, marshes and the Gulf of Mexico.

## BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY

Made famous by the popular novel and hit 1995 Clint Eastwood/Meryl Streep film, the bridges of Madison County are six extant structures that cross the county's creeks and display exceptional 19th century building techniques. Guided tours can stop by all six bridges to explain the life of their designer Eli Cox and how locally sourced components (sand from local creeks and lime burnt in Madison County kilns) contributed to their endurance.

## NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM, ANAMOSA

Founded in 1989, the National Motorcycle Museum celebrates the history and passion of motorcycling. The museum houses over 400 vintage motorbikes (one dating back to 1902) in addition to thousands of photographs, clothing items, advertisements and other memorabilia that documents the rich history of motorcycling.



### FUN FACTS

- The Red Delicious apple was developed in Iowa. Jesse Hiatt, a farmer in Madison County, entered his "Hawkeye" apple in a fruit fair, where it was catapulted to America's favorite apple.
- Iowa boasts the nation's highest literacy rate (over 99%). From creative writing at the University of Iowa to Laura Ingalls Wilder history in Burr Oak, the state is teeming with literary attractions.
- There are more golf courses per capita in Iowa than any other state. Over 440 private and public courses are available for a tee time bookings for groups seeking a fairway escape.

## OKOBOJI

Visitors may not associate Iowa with beautiful waterfronts, but travelers in northwestern Iowa can enjoy Iowa's largest natural lake, Spirit Lake, and the five interconnected lakes of West Lake Okoboji, East Lake Okoboji, Upper Gar, Lower Ga and Minnewashta. This chain of glacier-carved lakes acts as the gorgeous background for a Queen II cruise, which departs from Arnolds Park Amusement Park and offers hour-long scenic excursions.

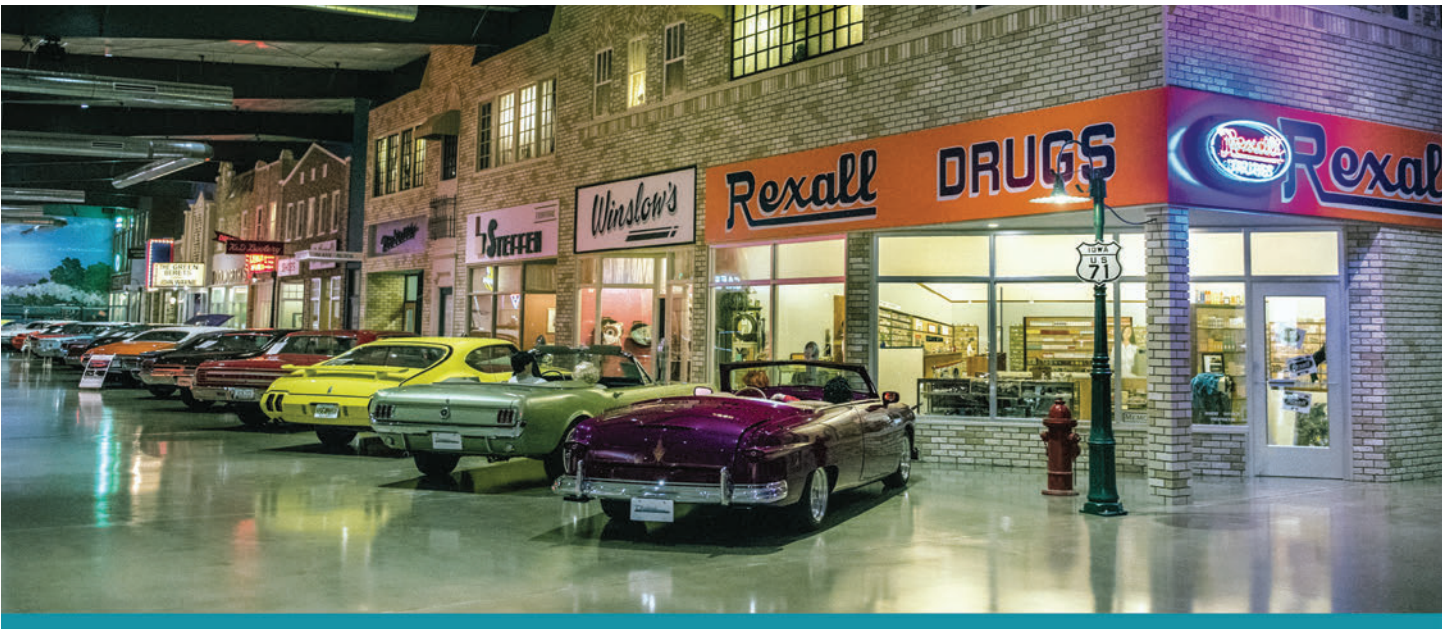


## CINNAMON RIDGE DAIRY FARM, DONAHUE

Hundreds of Jersey cows roam freely at this family-owned dairy farm that offers behind-the-scenes tours of the property. Group members can learn about state-of-the-art milking technology, touch baby animals and ride a tractor through the farm's fields. After shopping at the Country Cupboard store, sample hormone-free bacon, mozzarella cheese aged on site and award-winning cheese curds.

## THE SAWMILL MUSEUM, CLINTON

The Sawmill Museum tells the story of Clinton's industrial prominence from the 1850s to the 1890s, when the city was the "Lumber Capital of the World." Lumber from Clinton's mills helped fuel westward expansion and accounted for the country's highest number of millionaires per capita during the period. The museum features a wide variety of dynamic exhibits, including animatronic lumber barons, a lumberjack camp and authentic Struve Mill equipment from the 19th century. ■



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VACATION  
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# IOWA

## HOME GROWN ADVENTURE

From family farms to vibrant metro areas, Iowa offers safe activities that engage travelers of any age. Enjoy Midwest hospitality and tranquility as you explore a range of authentic Iowa experiences that take you off the beaten path into America's heartland.



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