

Tour Guide IOWA



HISTORICAL IOWA

Traveling down the past lane

Special Supplement
LEISURE
GROUP TRAVEL

June 2018

FARM TO FORK

Feasting on Iowa's rich bounty

HIDDEN GEMS

Treasures off the beaten path



Historical IOWA

*Top-notch
attractions
showcase slices
of yesteryear*

With all that's going on in the world these days, sometimes it's comforting to go back in time and commune with the past. Iowa abounds with places where your group can do just that. Here are some museums, historic houses and communities that provide a peek at the way things used to be.

The town of West Branch in Eastern Iowa celebrates a man who went from humble beginnings to being elected America's 31st president. At the **Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum**, visitors learn not only about the White House years (1929-1931) but Hoover's work as a mining

engineer, U.S. commerce secretary and administrator of relief programs to feed Europeans over the course of two world wars. The adjacent National Park Service site contains several buildings from Hoover's youth, including the tiny cottage where he was born in 1874 and Quaker meetinghouse where he worshipped. Herbert and First Lady Lou Hoover are buried near the museum.

Celebrity hounds thirsting for a little Hollywood glamour will find it at the **John Wayne Birthplace and Museum** in Winterset, about 45 minutes southwest of Des Moines. The largest exhibit of artifacts devoted to the actor, best known for his Westerns, features

original movie posters, one of Duke's last customized automobiles, and film wardrobe items and props, including the eye patch that Rooster Cogburn wore to Oscar glory in *True Grit*. In seats originally from Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, you can watch a documentary on Wayne's career. Adjacent to the museum (which opened in 2015) is the modest four-room home where he was born Marion Robert Morrison in 1907.

For another dose of entertainment nostalgia, tour the **Surf Ballroom** in Clear Lake. Known for its place in rock and roll history, it hosted Big Bands in the 1940s and was where in 1959 that Buddy Holly, J.P.



Living History Farms, an open-air museum located near Des Moines, is a 500-acre showplace of rural life in Iowa.

Living History Farms

“the Big Bopper” Richardson and Richie Valens played their final concert just hours before a plane crash north of Clear Lake ended their lives. A record player spindle sculpture honors the trio at Three Stars Plaza in a nearby park.

Some of Iowa’s historical attractions revolve around the European ethnic groups that settled the state in the 1800s. The Dutch-flavored town of **Pella** offers a virtual trip to Holland, with gabled buildings, places to shop for Delftware and other Dutch imports, and plenty of tulips in April and May. Pella Historical Village comprises two dozen artifact-filled buildings, including a working

windmill, country store, log cabin, blacksmith shop and wooden shoe workshop.

Kalona Historical Village, a collection of museums and restored buildings spotlighting Amish and Mennonite culture, occupies a block in the heart of Kalona, 80 miles east of Pella. It consists of an 1879 rail depot, Mennonite museum, quilt galleries, one-room schoolhouse and other reminders of days gone by. The 90-minute “Amish By-Ways Tour” into the countryside sheds light on the largest Amish population west of the Mississippi.

Racks full of traditional crafts and foods produced by Amish families in the Bloomfield area, from baskets and quilts to jams and

candy, greet visitors to the **Amish Country Store and Southern Iowa Welcome Center** in Lamoni, near the Missouri border. Also on site are a Maid-Rite Diner, an Iowa institution known for its loose meat sandwiches, and a one-room schoolhouse.

Another religious group with origins in German-speaking Europe established the **Amana Colonies**, a communal society that lasted until 1932. Located 30 miles north of Kalona, the tourist-friendly Amana Colonies are made up of seven closely united villages. The popular village of Amana is home to artisan shops, a winery, German restaurants and the three-building Amana Heritage

Museum, which shows a video about the settlement's history.

French Icarian Village, a living history museum under development just outside of the southwestern Iowa town of Corning, tells the story of a utopian colony established by immigrants from France in 1852. The museum can arrange a group lunch in the 1878 communal dining hall and visits to the cemetery and 1860 schoolhouse. Future plans call for vineyards, orchards and gardens along with replicas of log cabins, barns and other buildings.

In the Czech Village District of Cedar Rapids, the **National Czech & Slovak Museum** looks at another ethnic group that arrived in Iowa from the Old World. The nation's foremost institution for the preservation of Czech and Slovak history and culture displays folk art and costumes, glass and ceramics, military artifacts and other items. A restored house reflects the lifestyle of immigrants.

Living History Farms, an open-air museum near Des Moines, is a 500-acre showplace of rural life with interpreters in period dress recreating daily routines of early Iowans. Visit the 1700 Ioway Indian Farm, 1850 Pioneer Farm, 1875 Town of Walnut, 1900 Horse-Powered Farm and modern Exhibit Center.

Tractors played a key role in the development of the Midwest as an agricultural powerhouse, and the history of their design and manufacturing is on display at the **John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum** in Waterloo. The museum, which opened in late 2014 on the site of the first very first John Deere tractor factory, traces the company's growth over time and engages guests through rare artifacts and interactive features.

The gift shop has John Deere apparel, toys and collectibles.

For another look at America's industrial heritage, visit the **Union Pacific Railroad Museum** in Council Bluffs, once the fifth-largest rail center in the U.S. Housed in a 1903 Carnegie library, it chronicles the history of the Union Pacific company, from the building of its first transcontinental railroad to modern-day operations. Highlights include an exhibit featuring video-game technology and one on the heyday of passenger rail travel.

In Dubuque, Iowa's oldest city, the restored 1934 dredge boat **William M. Black** preserves another chapter in transportation history. The National Historic Landmark, one of the few surviving steam-powered dredges, is open for tours as part of the 10-acre riverfront campus

of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium.

In Central Iowa, pioneer history comes alive at the **Fort Museum & Frontier Village** in Fort Dodge. Collections of military, pioneer and Native American artifacts are displayed in 18 original and replica buildings, including a livery stable, drugstore, jail and 1850s fort.

More military history awaits at the **Sullivan Brothers Iowa Veterans Museum** in Waterloo. Covering conflicts from the Civil War to the present, it is named after the five Waterloo brothers who died aboard a Navy cruiser in World War II. Filled with interactive exhibits, the shrine to veterans is part of the Grout Museum District, which includes the Grout Museum of History & Science, Bluedorn Science Imaginarium and Rensselaer Russell House Museum. The latter, an 1861 Victorian brick mansion restored to the 1890s, was the showplace of the community and features an 1889 Steinway grand piano.

Among Iowa's other historic house museums is the **1885 W.A. McHenry House** in Denison. Noted for its gingerbread architecture, beautiful woodwork, parquet floors and stained-glass windows, it contains four floors of local artifacts, including the Oscar of hometown girl Donna Reed.

The historic house most associated with Iowa is just steps from the **American Gothic House Center**, a tourist attraction in Eldon, a town of 1,700 southwest of Iowa City. You can pose in front of the actual 1881 white frame house that Iowa artist Grant Wood chose for his *American Gothic*, a painting that depicts a farmer and his spinster daughter. In nearby **Albia**, old house lovers and antique hounds will find plenty of Victorian charm in the 92-building district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

For groups wishing to travel in the past lane, Iowa offers a bounty of attractions that preserves its proud heritage. **TCT**



Iowa favorites: John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum in Waterloo and a museum honoring President Hoover in West Branch.



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IOWA

Farm-to-Fork Experiences

A crossroads for centuries, Iowa blends the new ideas of visitors with the practical Midwest spirit of its residents. The result is distinct contributions in the fields of art, education, technology and—most deliciously—food. An unprecedented interest in locally sourced ingredients and seasonal menus has resulted in an explosion of farm-to-table restaurants throughout the nation, and Iowa's rich agricultural tradition has fueled the growth in hyper-local culinary opportunities throughout the state. These restaurants and markets provide a unique window into Iowa's farms and culinary culture.

Iowa restaurants and farmers markets take advantage of the state's rich agricultural resources

Groups seeking a behind-the-scenes glimpse of an operating dairy farm and an accompanying meal should consider the family-owned **Cinnamon Ridge** in Donahue, where over 200 Jersey cows graze freely. Educational tours allow visitors to touch baby animals, learn about the farm's state-of-the-

art milking technology and ride on a tractor for an up-close look at corn harvesting. Tours conclude at the Country Cupboard, the farm's adjoining store that features cheese samples aged on site, hormone-free bacon and cheese curds awarded the top prize at the Iowa State Fair.

For a thorough agritourism experience, stay for Cinnamon Ridge's **Farm to Table** event, an evening of food, drink and education provided by the friendly Cinnamon Ridge farmers. Groups will dine on white tablecloths outside the farmhouse and can sample local produce, ride farm equipment and chat with local growers in between courses.



Farmer's Table welcomes a rotating lineup of chefs and local farmers to dine with groups and discuss the culinary process in a relaxed setting.

Living History Farms in Urbandale, a 500-acre outdoor museum that chronicles Iowa's development since 1700, recreates entire villages populated with historic reenactors and authentic farming equipment. Several villages also host multi-course meals where guests dine with period-accurate utensils and chefs use 19th century technology. After an afternoon of touring the museum campus, stroll along the lamp-lit boardwalks of Walnut Hill to the 1875 Tangen House. Here you'll sip spiced punch beside the fireplace before indulging in a meal of stuffed ham roast, locally grown vegetables and rolls with churned butter. For a Victorian dining experience, consider the Flynn Mansion Dinner, where your group will be waited on by servants in proper 1870s clothing and learn proper high-dining etiquette. For a lighter meal, the mansion also hosts Victorian Tea, where ladies and gentlemen can experience

tea service with sandwiches and cakes.

For a more rustic farm-to-table experience, choose Living History's 1900 Farm Dinner. A horse-drawn wagon carries visitors to a farmhouse where they can read the Montgomery Ward Catalog, play parlor games and embark on a lantern-lit tour of the historic barn. The locally sourced meal resembles what Iowa prairie families ate in the late 1800s, with courses that include roasted chicken, Flemish carrots and homemade apple pie.

Decades before the farm-to-table trend emerged, the **Machine Shed** endeavored to provide American comfort food from locally sourced ingredients. Since opening its first location in Urbandale in 1978, the restaurant has expanded to six locations throughout the Midwest, and use local dairy, meat and produce to provide delicious food with low environmental impact. A waitstaff dressed in overalls will serve your group salads with Iowa Maytag Blue Cheese, classic fried chicken and roast pork loin that won the Great Iowa Pork Off.

In **Kalona**, home to Iowa's largest Amish colony, enjoy a hearty meal for groups of 10 or more. Served family-style in a Conservative Mennonite home, the spread includes Amish staples like chicken or roast beef, dressing or noodles, mashed potatoes and gravy, salad, vegetables, tapioca pudding and home-baked bread with apple butter or Amish-style peanut butter. Save room for angel food cake with fruit topping or peanut butter pie. The meal can be combined with a full-day tour of Amish Country for an in-depth exploration of the Mennonite and Amish lifestyles.

Let your group wander and savor Des Moines' **Downtown Farmers' Market**, held every Saturday morning from May through October. Producers from 51 Iowa counties sell everything from herbs, flowers and fresh-picked fruits and vegetables to cheeses, wines and baked goods. Recognized as one of America's best farmers' markets, it spans nine city blocks in the Historic Court District and attracts an average of 20,000 visitors and more than 200 vendors.

Home to the University of Iowa's innovative agricultural program, Iowa City is a hotbed for organic cuisine and farm-to-fork experiences. To admire the city's historic downtown and taste the full spectrum of its restaurant scene, come in August for the annual **Farm-to-Street Dinner**. Entire sections of downtown are blocked off for this showcase for local chefs and growers. A coordinated effort by the Iowa City Farmers Market, Downtown Distract

and local restaurants, the event consists of six courses that integrate local corn, pork and lettuce.

For a farm-fresh (and indoor) tapas experience, head to **Devotay** in Iowa City. A diverse array of small-plate options emphasizes sustainable cuisine and features grass-fed meats, locally made tofu and vegetarian options with Spanish flair. Groups can enjoy Iowa lamb meatballs, roasted parsnips and braised pork shank. The area's other innovative dining experience is **Farmer's Table**, the brainchild of local chefs Chris and DeeAnn Grebner. A rotating lineup of hosts welcomes groups to dine on the property and enjoy a prix fixe menu customized by a local chef



Devotay in Iowa City specializes in fresh entrees like paella, a traditional Spanish dish of rice, clams and shrimp.

or farmer. Guests are encouraged to ask questions and will learn how produce arrives on their plate from the field.

Hosted by **Bloomsbury Farm** near **Cedar Rapids**, the **Cuisine in the Corn** event invites groups to dine directly in the fields. After a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres hour in the Party Barn, guests are transported by hayrack to the heart of Bloomsbury's cornfields for a candlelit sunset dinner. The four-course meal includes a fresh green salad, cold corn chowder, pork chops and cupcakes. Chefs and farmers are on-hand throughout the evening to explain techniques, and live piano music accompanies the meal. If your group is unable to attend this August event, Bloomsbury also hosts bonfires and wine tastings throughout the warm-weather months. **IGT**

Hidden Gems of IOWA

A baker's dozen travel ideas provide just the right ingredients for cooking up a creative tour

Field of Dreams Movie Site

Dyersville Chamber

Many surprises await travelers who stray from the beaten path. Here is just a sampling of overlooked Iowa treasures that merit your attention.

REIMAN GARDENS AMES

Located on the campus of Iowa State University, this 17-acre horticultural wonderland is a beautiful place to stroll and relax. Enhanced by a lake and other water features, it has 26 distinct gardens that include rose, herb and children's gardens. A tropical conservatory houses seasonal displays and a wing with hundreds of live butterflies from six continents.

NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM ANAMOSA

Anyone with a passion for the open road will revel in the display of more than 400 rare and vintage machines from around the world, one dating as far back as 1902. Visitors to this Anamosa attraction also will see thousands of photos, posters and advertising art, a large collection of antique toy motorcycles and other memorabilia.

BIG TREEHOUSE MARSHALLTOWN

Located at Shady Oaks Campground just east of Marshalltown, the Big Treehouse is the six-story, 12-level hobby of Mick Jurgensen and his family. Begun in 1983, it boasts more than 5,500 square feet of floor space. Features include music, electricity, running water, telephone, refrigerator, grill, spiral stairway and 13 porch swings. Guided tours are available.

ALGONA NATIVITY SCENE ALGONA

The grouping of 65 half-size figures, built by six German prisoners of Camp Algona during World War II, tells the biblical story of Jesus' birth, complete with Mary, Joseph, the manger, wise men, shepherds and camels. Made of concrete over wood-and-wire frames, the pieces range from 12 to 56 inches high, and some are finished with hand-carved plaster. For the six Germans who worked



on the scene, it was a way to connect to their families back home. To the people of Algona, it represented a common faith and humanity shared with the captives living outside their town. The Nativity scene was donated to the community when the war ended. Today it is housed in a building at the Kossuth County Fairgrounds and cared for by the Men's Club of the First United Methodist Church of Algona. The scene is open in December and by appointment year-round. Groups also can visit the Camp Algona POW Museum.

FIELD OF DREAMS MOVIE SITE DYERSVILLE

Set among cornfields northeast of town is the baseball diamond used in *Field of Dreams*, the 1989 film starring Kevin Costner. Visitors can sit in the bleachers, bat balls, play catch and walk the bases. Groups can arrange a guided tour of the field and farmhouse.

BOONE & SCENIC VALLEY RAILROAD & MUSEUM BOONE

Besides viewing videos and artifacts from the glory days of railroading, visitors can take an excursion in 1920s-era coach cars pulled by diesel or steam locomotives, traveling from Boone to the old coal mining town of Fraser. Operating daily from Memorial Day weekend through October, the trip through the Des Moines River Valley lasts an hour and 45 minutes. One highlight of the 15-mile roundtrip is crossing a 156-foot-high trestle. A dinner train option on the same route (two hours and 15 minutes) features 1950s passenger cars used on Union Pacific Railroad's famous City of Los Angeles and City of San Francisco streamliners that traveled between Chicago and the West Coast.

DUNNING'S SPRINGS PARK DECORAH

Minutes from downtown Decorah, this park features hiking trails, picnic areas and one of the great photo spots in northeast Iowa—a spectacular 200-foot waterfall that cascades over the rocks. Just down the road, the adventurous will want to check out the Ice Cave, which features ice deposits that last until late summer.

MANNING HAUSBARN

MANNING

The town of Manning celebrates its German roots at the Manning Hausbarn-Heritage Park, whose centerpiece is a combination house and barn that was disassembled in Germany and reconstructed onsite in the 1990s. With its striking thatch and brickwork, the hausbarn from the Schleswig-Holstein region dates from 1660, a time when it was not unusual for families and livestock to live under the same roof. The park also has a restored 1915 farmstead with a bungalow, carriage house, barn and outbuildings.

MATCHSTICK MARVELS

GLADBROOK

Gladbrook master craftsman Patrick Acton has created some 70 works of art constructed entirely of ordinary wooden matchsticks. Scale models at the Matchstick Marvels Tourist Center include the Challenger spacecraft, Notre Dame Cathedral, U.S. Capitol and a 13-foot-long model of the battleship USS Iowa. The larger pieces involve hundreds of thousands of matchsticks and take hundreds of hours to complete. Many of Acton's models are on display at Ripley's Believe It or Not museums around the world.

BROWNS CENTURY THEATER

LE MARS

Groups enjoy Branson-style entertainment in a new venue housed in a former bank building. Shows staged by the talented Brown family feature the best in patriotic, gospel, country, Celtic and Christmas music. A buffet meal is served in the Browns' newly renovated Central Event Center across the street.

WHITewater PARKS

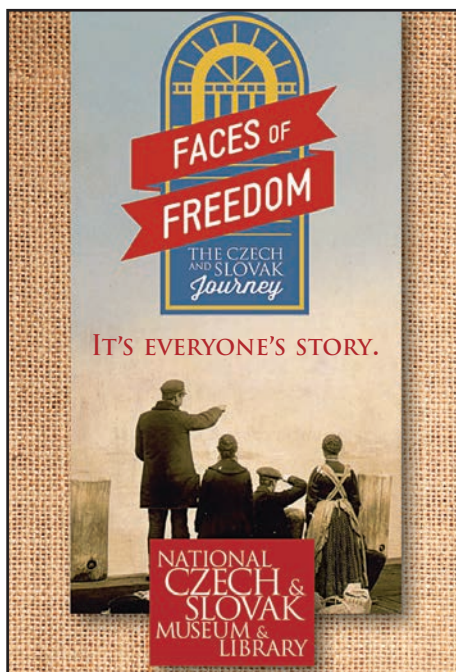
MANCHESTER AND CHARLES CITY

Raging rapids in Iowa? You'll find them at two of the Midwest's premier whitewater parks. In Manchester, over an 800-foot of the Maquoketa River, the course at Manchester Whitewater Park has been constructed to include a series of six, 18-inch drops that thrill kayakers, canoeists and tube riders. The quarter-mile course at Charles City Whitewater, on the Cedar River at Riverfront Park, has three distinct features for paddlers of all abilities. Both parks are free and open seven days a week year-round. Local rentals are available.

LAKE RESORTS

OKOBOJI

The Okoboji resort area in the state's northwest corner features six interconnected lakes that offer summer vacation fun. Boating, fishing and other water activities are available, and the Queen II departs from Arnolds Park Amusement Park for narrated 60-minute cruises on West Lake Okoboji.



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CLARK TOWER

WINTERSET

You'll feel like you've traveled back to medieval times when you climb to the top of Clark Tower in Winterset City Park, a castle-like structure erected in 1926 as a memorial to Madison County's first pioneer family by its descendants. Constructed of native limestone, it stands 25 feet high and offers a commanding view of the Middle River Valley.

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Pella's Tulip Time celebrates Dutch culture with traditional dancing, a cheese market and floral arrangement demonstrations.

IOWA FESTIVALS

Where Memories are Made

TULIP TIME

PELLA, MAY 2-5, 2019

Pella's authentic 1850s Vermeer Mill and Low Country architecture reinforces its Dutch heritage, which is proudly honored with Tulip Time. This spring bloom festival celebrates the Netherlands' rich culture with a costume style show, cheese market demonstration and presentation of the Tulip Queen and her court. Visitors also have the opportunity to participate in Dutch dancing, tour the Pella Opera House and watch floral arrangement demonstrations.

NORTH IOWA BAND FESTIVAL

MASON CITY, MAY 23-27, 2019

Hometown of *The Music Man* composer Meredith Wilson, Mason City honors the show's legacy with the annual North Iowa Band Festival. Celebrating its 80th anniversary in 2018, this event is the largest free marching band competition in the Midwest. Young performers from around the nation showcase their talent at Mason City High School stage and a parade through the business district. Other activities include an open-air musician marketplace, memorial race and performances by local rock bands.



PUMPKINFEST

ANAMOSA, OCTOBER 6-7, 2018

The pumpkin capital of Iowa, Anamosa welcomes autumn with a weekend of food, crafts and one of the state's largest parades. Activities include a 5K run, giant pumpkin weigh-off, a pumpkin recipe contest and carving exhibit that showcases the elaborate designs of local artisans.

NATIONAL BALLOON CLASSIC

INDIANOLA, JULY 27-AUGUST 4, 2018

Nearly 100 balloons dot the summer sky during the National Balloon Classic, an annual celebration of flight held in Indianola. Balloon styles range from the traditional inverted teardrop to the wacky Flying Purple People Eater, and visitors can admire either the morning Dawn Patrol or evening Nite Glow while listening to live music. With advanced planning, your group can even book a hot air balloon ride with stunning views of the festival grounds.

WORLD FOOD & MUSIC FESTIVAL

DES MOINES, SEPTEMBER 14-16, 2018

A selection of Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Caribbean, Bosnian and Greek cuisine greets visitors as downtown Des Moines is transformed into a global village. Whether it's gallo pinto from El Salvador, dumplings from Korea or wine from New Zealand, your group will be sure to discover a brand new flavor. In addition to international offerings from over 50 food vendors, the festival supplies world music performances and cooking demonstrations throughout the weekend.

NELSON PIONEER FARM FESTIVAL
OSKALOOSA, SEPTEMBER 15, 2018

Hosted on the grounds of Nelson Pioneer Farm, this festival transports visitors to the “Good Old Days” of the pre-industrial Midwest. Over 30 exhibits and demonstrations provide hands-on activities such as butter churning and rope-making, while other stalls allow guests to thresh oats, shuck corn and craft soap. A parade, country dinner and old-fashioned children’s game session round out the activities. Live entertainment includes a fiddle contest that attracts musicians from across the state.

OKTOBERFEST
AMANA COLONIES, OCTOBER 5-7, 2018

Eastern Iowa transforms into Bavaria every autumn for Oktoberfest—a celebration of German culture and cuisine. After the official keg-tapping ceremony (where free beer is served until the keg is drained), live oom-pah music and plentiful schnitzel accompanies a weekend of dancing and craft exhibitions in the Festhalle. Visitors can also tour the Amana Colonies with a horse-and-buggy ride and sample German-inspired beer from the Millstream Brewing Co.

IOWA IRISH FEST
WATERLOO, AUGUST 3-5, 2018

The spirit of the Emerald Isle visits Waterloo for a weekend festival that celebrates Irish cuisine, music and sport. The Lincoln Park festival grounds include a merchandise mart, food court serving Irish comfort food and stage showcasing Irish dancers and pub bands throughout the weekend. Other activities include a rugby match, whiskey tasting and Sunday mass accompanied by Celtic folk music.

IOWA STATE FAIR
DES MOINES, AUGUST 9-19, 2018

Where else can you witness a tractor race, taste award-winning pie and test your mettle on a thrill ride in one place? The Iowa State Fair, one of the largest in the nation, welcomes over 1.1 million annual visitors over its two weeks and honors the Hawkeye State’s rich agricultural and livestock heritage with hundreds of booths and demo stages. The fair’s most famous attraction since 1911 is the Butter Cow, a life-sized bovine sculpted from 600 pounds of climate-controlled butter. Other areas popular with groups include the new Thrill Zone (which features roller coasters and bumper cars) and the Anne and Bill Riley Stage, which hosts an annual talent search.

GLENN MILLER FESTIVAL
CLARINDA, JUNE 7-11, 2018

International visitors and entertainers converge in Clarinda every June to celebrate the life of American composer and band-leader Glenn Miller. The trombonist scored more No. 1 hits than Elvis Presley and influenced generations of jazz musicians, many of whom perform over four days at Clarinda High School. Visitors can tour the Glenn Miller Birthplace Museum, admire WWII historical displays and move to the Great American Songbook on a temporary dance floor.

MADISON COUNTY COVERED BRIDGE FESTIVAL
WINTERSET, OCTOBER 13-14, 2018

Winterset, home to the John Wayne Birthplace Museum, also showcases six extant covered bridges made internationally famous by the hit novel and 1995 Clint Eastwood/Meryl Streep film. Guided bus tours stop at each bridge to explain their architecture and the life of designer Eli Cox. Lumber from nearby mills, sand from local creeks and lime burnt in Madison County kilns are all integrated into these iconic structures. In addition, visitors can enjoy a weekend of live music, cannon-firing and sheep-shearing demonstrations.

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