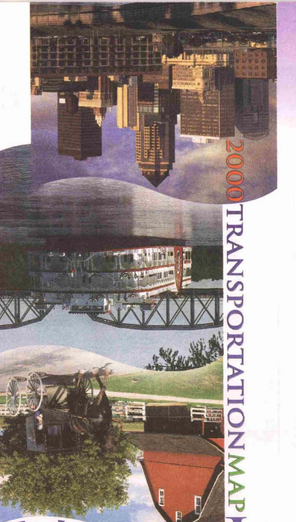


KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE

Iowa's Cultural and Ethnic Heritage

To travel across Iowa is to journey into many lands. We are a people from distant places and long ago. Our communities are rich in treasured traditions that were carried across prairies by natives and across oceans by immigrants who had little else. Our architecture, arts, crafts and foods celebrate our roots and ancient rites. Nationally acclaimed museums and historic sites preserve our past. Generation to generation, our people keep tradition alive — a legacy that helps shape our future.

We invite you to explore our history, join us as we celebrate our heritage, and share our pride in keeping traditions alive. Use this *Iowa Transportation Map* and the *Iowa Travel Guide* on your journey, and **Come Be Our Guest.**™

Welcome To Iowa!

Our state map is full of treasures because Iowa has more communities — large and small — than almost any other state in the nation. As you travel our highways, we urge you to take time for side trips to explore Iowa's many historic and cultural attractions.

Iowa is rich in college towns and river towns, in wonderful architecture and unique geography. From border to border, our many recreational opportunities include large lakes and reservoirs and an extensive network of bike trails.

Iowa's people are proud of our state. They are renowned for their friendliness and sense of community. As you travel in Iowa, make a point of stopping often and experiencing Iowa hospitality firsthand.

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Governor of Iowa

The Honorable Sally J. Pederson
Lt. Governor of Iowa

Fields of Opportunities

PRINTED WITH SOY INK 2000 IOWA MAP FOR **FREE DISTRIBUTION ONLY**

Iowa invites you to **Come Be Our Guest.**™ To make your travel planning easy, we offer a host of **FREE** travel information.

The ***Iowa Travel Guide*** is 176 big colorful pages filled with everything you need to know for planning your Iowa visit. This is your travel guide to friendly communities, historic sites, fun family attractions, scenic trails, and outdoor adventures. You'll also find helpful lists of accommodations — from comfortable hotels and motels to modern campgrounds and charming bed-and-breakfast inns — for staying the night or spending a while.

The ***Iowa Calendar of Events*** is your month-by-month social planner for good times happening in Iowa. Learn about festivals, events and holidays that highlight Iowa's sensational seasons, amazing arts, fantastic foods and friendly folks.

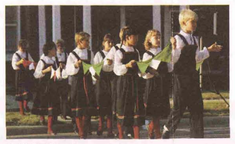
To order any of these FREE Iowa travel materials, call toll-free:
800-345-IOWA
or call **515-242-4705**.

Visit our Web site at:
www.traveliowa.com.

Or write to us at:
Iowa Department of Economic Development
Division of Tourism
200 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Call **712-764-700** for information about museum hours and special events at the Danish Immigrant Museum. The Danish Immigrant Museum is located at 2212 Washington Street, on the western edge of Elk Horn.

To visit **Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum 3** in Decorah is to relive the saga of Norwegian immigrant life in America. Vesterheim, which means "western home" in Norwegian, is the nation's largest and oldest museum dedicated to a single immigrant group. The museum's main building — an elegant hotel, built in 1877 — houses a breathtaking, three-story skip gallery that puts the perils of an Atlantic crossing in perspective. Here, too, Norwegian textiles and traditional clothing display the "fabric" of life for immigrants — brave men and women making their way in a new land, clad in the customs of the Old World. Displays of traditional decorative painting, called rosemaling, contrast with the Spartan pioneer furnishings of their new western homes.



Nordic Fest, Decorah

Vesterheim offers many other historic buildings and places of interest to tour, including a restored 1851 stone mill, two pioneer log houses, a house and grist mill from Norway, a blacksmith shop, a log school, a prairie house, a Lutheran church, and a farmstead.

Special exhibits and special events make Vesterheim's calendar inviting. Join in the celebration of Scandinavian heritage at the Nordic Fest, Syttende Mai (Norwegian Independence Day), Norwegian Christmas and Scandinavian Food Fest.

Call **319-382-9681** for information about museum hours and special events at Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum. Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum is located at 523 West Water Street in Decorah.

Immigrant Museums Honor Iowa's Heritage

Iowa's newest ethnic museum, the **National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library 1** was dedicated in 1995 by the presidents of the United States, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Located in Cedar Rapids' charming Czech Village, this national museum features a 4,000-square-foot multimedia exhibit entitled *Homelands: The Story of the Czech and Slovak People*. The theme reaches beyond the exhibit, expressing the essence of this place of pride.

National Czech & Slovak Museum, Cedar Rapids

The museum collection includes the largest array of authentic handmade national costumes outside the Czech and Slovak republics — nearly 50 costumes representing all regions of the country that was Czechoslovakia.

The museum is designed with multiple pitched roofs, arches and colored brick typical of the architecture of Czech cities. Next door, a restored immigrant home allows visitors to walk in the footsteps of new Americans of the 19th century. Beyond the home, treasure-filled gift shops and fragrances from the Czech bakery and ethnic restaurants invite exploration of the neighborhood.

Call **319-362-8500** for information about museum hours and special events at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is located at 30 16th Avenue SW in Cedar Rapids.

A visit to the **Danish Immigrant Museum 2** in Elk Horn is a journey "across oceans, across time." That's the promise made by this international cultural center, which is "protected" by the queen of Denmark. Here Danish artifacts and traditions are collected, preserved, studied and interpreted in order to preserve a rich heritage.

Many of the 360,000 Danes who immigrated to America are recognized on the museum's Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor. Descendants seeking their roots come to the museum's Family History and Genealogy Center from all over the nation. Their heritage thrives in the neighboring villages of Elk Horn and Kimballton — the largest rural Danish settlement in the United States.

Tivoli Fest, Elk Horn & Kimballton

Elk Horn and Kimballton are two miles apart and an ocean away from their Danish homeland, yet these twin villages celebrate their heritage on a daily basis. Twice a year the celebration reaches a peak of pride: Tivoli Fest in May and Julefest in November.

Any Iowa-style Danish journey is incomplete without: a climb to the top of the massive 1808 windmill that also came from Denmark; a shopping spree in the largest Danish import gift shop; and a visit to Bedstemor's House — "grandmother's" Danish-American home.

The **Todd House 4** — built in 1853 — was Iowa's most famous station on the Underground Railroad. Here insurrectionist John Brown stored arms and ammunition. Brown also trained his freedom fighters in Tabor for action in Kansas. The Todd House is located at 705 Park Street in Tabor. Call **712-629-2675** for tour information.

The stately Victorian **Jordan House 5** is one of the oldest structures in Polk County and the oldest in West Des Moines. This historic, "haunted" home was built by West Des Moines' first white settler. In a time of secrecy, when most participants were anonymous, Jordan was regarded as Polk County's "chief conductor" for the Underground Railroad. His home became a secret stopover, where "passengers" and movement leader John Brown stayed. The Jordan House is located at 2001 Fuller Road in West Des Moines. Call **515-225-1286** for tour information.

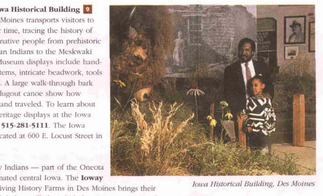
Jordan House, West Des Moines

Tribal Traditions Preserve Native Pride

The **Meskwaki Indian Settlement 6** in Tama, home of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi, hosts its annual Powwow. Now in its 85th year, the Powwow is a colorful celebration of the traditions, music, dance and heritage of the Meskwaki people, who purchased their Iowa land in 1857. Call **515-484-6767** for information, or write to 349 Meskwaki Road, Tama, Iowa 52339.

Iowa's only American Indian settlement also offers visitors a Las Vegas-style casino hotel and an authentic souvenir trading post. The Tama County Historical Museum, located at 200 N. Broadway in nearby Toledo, provides American Indian displays.

The **Iowa Historical Building 7** in Des Moines transports visitors to another time, tracing the history of Iowa's native people from prehistoric American Indians to the Meskwaki tribe. Museum displays include handmade items, intricate beadwork, tools and ceremonial artifacts. A large walk-through bark lodge and replica of a dugout canoe show how American Indians lived and traveled. To learn about these and other Iowa heritage displays at the Iowa Historical Building, call **515-281-5111**. The Iowa Historical Building is located at 600 E. Locust Street in Des Moines.



Iowa Historical Building, Des Moines

Around 1700, the Ioway Indians — part of the Oneota Indian Culture — dominated central Iowa. The **Ioway Indian Village 10** at Living History Farms in Des Moines brings their culture to life. Oval bark lodges called "wakishurhan," pottery, and tools of stone and bone show how Iowa's "first farmers" lived. The Ioway were admired for their gardening skills, and a major theme of this interpreted site is American Indian food. To learn about special events and other attractions at Living History Farms, call **515-278-5286**. Living History Farms is located at 2600 NW 111th Street in Urbandale, a suburb of Des Moines.

Iowa's Underground Railroad Stations Celebrate the Spirit of Freedom

Sympathetic Iowans opened their hearts and homes to fugitive slaves who passed through Iowa on their way to freedom. Breaking the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1854, Iowans sent secret signals in the language of the Underground Railroad — which was neither underground nor a railroad — to indicate safe shelter.

Today, travelers retrace the historic "tracks" by visiting a number of Iowa "stations" open to the public on the escape route that carried "passengers." Each Underground Railroad home offers unique insight into the times and antislavery sentiments that helped precipitate the Civil War.

Considered the "main office" of the Underground Railroad, the **Lewelling House Quaker Shrine 8** is one of the best-known stations on the escape route. Visitors follow the stone steps leading underground from the Civil War-era kitchen to the hiding place in the cellar. With little imagination, one can almost hear the buying bloodhounds and angry shouts of armed slave owners approaching the Lewelling House in an attempt to reclaim their human property. The Lewelling House is located at 401 S. Main in Salem. Call **800-421-4282** for tour information.

Hitchcock House, Lewis

The **Hitchcock House 9** is located at the hub of numerous historic trails, offering a unique perspective on the settlement of the American West. The Pottawattamie Indian Trail, the Iowa annex of the Oregon Trail, and the famous Mormon Trail of 1846 ran close to the house. Prospectors lured by silver in Colorado and gold in California also passed nearby, but it was the unknown travelers and their abolitionist friends who gave the Hitchcock House its historic significance. Hitchcock House is located about one mile west of Lewis on State Road 44. Call **712-769-2325** for tour information, or write to the Hitchcock House at P.O. Box 5, Lewis, Iowa 51544.

Iowa Festivals Celebrate Tradition

Seasons change, but traditions endure in Iowa. Every season invites new reason to celebrate — old cultures to rediscover, new customs to explore. Sample the calendar of festivals below, then order your FREE copy of the *Iowa Calendar of Events* for hundreds of event invitations to **Come Be Our Guest.**™ Call **800-345-IOWA** (Extension 616), or order from the Iowa Tourism Web site at **www.traveliowa.com**. Find specific events on the Web *Calendar of Events* by subject or month.

SPRING

Spring arrives in Iowa with shamrocks and tulips. Saint Patrick's Day "springs" out the Irish in everyone. March 17th isn't the only day for Gaelic pride and Celtic celebration in Iowa; check the *Iowa Calendar of Events* — in print or on the Web — for fun-filled Irish festivals, including Emmetsburg's *St. Patrick's Celebration*, Dyersville's *St. Patrick's Day Parade and Gaelic Gallop*, and Davenport's *Irish Heritage Day*.

Tulip Time in Orange City

Czech and Slovak Easter Customs and Traditions in Cedar Rapids brings colorful Old World crafts to traditional Easter celebrations.

Two Dutch-influenced communities — Pella and Orange City — celebrate the arrival of spring with colorful tributes to the Netherlands. Circle May on your calendar for the *Pella Tulip Time Festival* and Orange City's *Annual Tulip Festival*. Join Belmond in welcoming May 5th with *Cinco de Mayo Mexican Celebration*. In Decorah, Norwegian Independence Day, *Syttende Mai*, is cause for celebration. *Marfest* in Davenport this year marks the official opening of the German American Heritage Center.

In keeping with German tradition, Iowa celebrates fall with German music, beer and brats at *Oktoberfests* in many communities throughout the state, including the Amana Colonies. In nearby Cedar Rapids, October is all things Scottish and highland traditions at *Celtic Fest*. Decorah's *Scandinavian Food Fest* is Norwegian-American hospitality at its best.

SUMMER

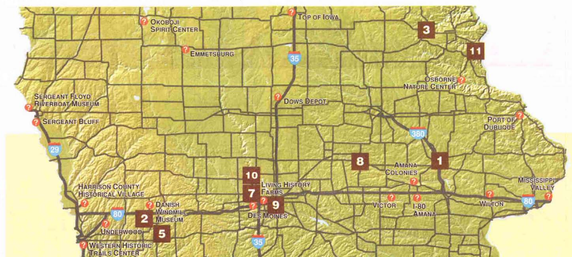
Each year, Des Moines' Greek families invite the public to celebrate their heritage with them at the *Greek Food Fair*. Folk dancing and ethnic food in Story City highlight that community's heritage at *Scandinavian Days*. In St. Olaf, *Uff Da Days* promises Swedish meatballs and a Lefsa throwing contest. Summer also brings *Juneteenth*, a celebration of African American emancipation, in Burlington and Des Moines.

Traditional music, native dance and colorful costumes express the proud heritage of the people in Protivin at *Czech Days* and in Tama — Iowa's American Indian settlement — at the *Meskwaki Powwow*. These annual events transport visitors to another time and place.

FALL

Iowa's harvest days are a harvest of festivals, too. *Italian-American Heritage Day* in Oelwein features Italian food and a bocce ball tournament. Muscatine's *Fiesta 2000* offers authentic Mexican food, music and dance on the riverfront. In eastern Iowa, the accent is on German heritage. *German-American Oktoberfest* in Bettendorf, *Germanfest* in Guttenberg and *Schnebelfeuer* in St. Donatus.

Meskwaki Powwow, Tama



"Welcome!" Centers

Welcome Centers are friendly places where Iowans welcome your travel questions about area travel attractions, accommodations and routes. The centers are open year-round unless indicated seasonal.

Amana Colonies
Hwys. 151 and 220
Amana

Danish Windmill Museum and Welcome Center
4038 Main St.
Elk Horn

Davis City
I-35 north of Exit 4

Davis County Welcome Center
301 N. Washington
Bloomfield

Des Moines
I-80 west of Exit 121
Des Moines
Open seasonally

Dows Depot Welcome Center
West Train and Depot Sts.
Dows

Emmetsburg
1121 Broadway St.
Emmetsburg

Harrison County Historical Village and Welcome Center
Hwy. 30, three miles east of Missouri Valley

I-80 Amana
I-80, Exit 225 east of Williamsburg

Living History Farms Welcome Center
I-80/I-35 and Hickman Rd.
Des Moines

Mississippi Valley Welcome Center
900 Eagle Ridge Rd.
Le Claire

Okoboji Spirit Center
243 W. Broadway
Arnolds Park

Osborne Nature and Welcome Center
Hwy. 15, five miles south of Elkader

Port of Burlington Welcome Center
400 Front St.
Burlington

Port of Dubuque, Iowa, Welcome Center
Third St. and Ice Harbor
Dubuque

Sergeant Bluff
I-29 south of Exit 141
Sioux City

Sergeant Floyd Welcome Center and Museum
1000 Larsen Park Rd.
Sioux City

Southern Iowa Gateway Welcome Center
I-35, Exit 4 and Hwy. 69
Lamoni

Top of Iowa Welcome Center
I-35, Exit 220
Northwood

Underwood
I-80 north of Exit 17
Council Bluffs
Open seasonally

Victor
I-80 east of Exit 205, west of Iowa City
Open seasonally

Western Historic Trails Center
I-80, Exit 1B
Council Bluffs

Wilton
I-80 west of Exit 271, west of Davenport

IOWA
Come Be Our Guest.

Regardless of cultural or ethnic heritage, Iowans all practice one very important tradition: hospitality. You are invited to experience Iowa-style hospitality online or in person. Visit us at **www.traveliowa.com**, *or travel our "home site" between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.*

PARK AND RECREATION AREA DIRECTORY

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