



Iowa's Great Lakes Favorites 3-Day Tour Northwest Iowa

Day 1: Travel to the Iowa Great Lakes – a.m.

Driving Directions:

From North – Exit 64 south off of I90 onto Hwy 86, 16 miles south on Hwy 86 to Hwy 9, 4 miles east on Hwy 9 to Hwy 71, 4 miles south on Hwy 71 to Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center at 1405 Hwy 71 in Okoboji.

From South – Starting at Hwys 18 and 71 (Spencer, IA) – 12 miles north on Hwy 71 to Milford, IA, continue on Hwy 71 through Arnolds Park 4 miles to Okoboji and to Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center at 1405 Hwy 71.

Total afternoon Tour Time: 4 hours (Additional dinner time of 1 hr after rest time at hotel)

- Begin with a sailing excursion. Step back into time as you step aboard the replica steamship that is a Lake Okoboji tradition. Be transported back to another time as you depart from the [Historic Arnolds Park](#) pier as you relax and take in the beauty of this clear blue, spring fed lake and listen to a historical tour of the area's rich heritage. Tour time: 90 minutes
- Following your arrival back to port, take time to stroll the pier and enjoy an old fashioned ice cream treat – a long time traditional favorite and spend an hour stretching your legs and browsing the unique offering of shops and boutiques. From Okoboji memorabilia to old-fashioned candies, specialty gifts and one-of-a-kind keepsakes, there is something for everyone.
- Discover the rare artifacts and immerse yourself in the lore of area as you enjoy an hour in a maritime museum.
- Arrive at [Arrowwood Resort](#) and take a bit to relax, refresh and enjoy the casual elegance of your room. Enjoy a cocktail or specialty coffee in the onsite Minervas Restaurant and Lounge before joining your group for an old-fashioned Iowa pork BBQ on the sundeck of Minervas.

Evening Tour Time – 2 ½ hours

- Depart for a wonderful night of entertainment. The summer theatre, just ½ mile north of Arrowwood Resort on Hwy 71, brings spectacular professional theater to the area summer after summer. College students and guest professional actors offer a unique big-city experience in the quaint air-conditioned, comfortable atmosphere of their recently remodeled summer theatre, a tradition in the area for over 50 years!
- Return to Arrowwood following the performance for a great night's sleep.

Day 2: Total Tour time: 6 – 7 hours

- Breakfast is served buffet style in a lovely banquet room at the resort. If you're an early bird you can hop on the area's trail system just across the street and go for a leisurely walk, use the hotel's exercise room, browse the hotel's shopping or enjoy your coffee on the sun deck overlooking the early morning golfers on National Golf Course located at Arrowwood Resort.
- Feel like a kid again as you return to Historic Arnolds Park following breakfast and take in the timeless rides and attractions that will transport you back to your youth...the Tilt-a-Whirl, Scrambler, Ferris Wheel, Mirror Maze, Topsy House and other favorites. For the daring, take a spin on The Legend Roller Coaster...and bring back a giant stuffed animal you may be lucky enough to win playing old-fashioned carnival games. If the rides are bit too much excitement, perhaps a leisurely round of mini-golf, more shopping in or watching the candy makers create mouthwatering salt water taffy and fudges and perhaps indulging in a bite or two!
- No trip to Historic Arnolds Park would be complete without a trip to the Snack Shack! How about a corn dog, cotton candy or nachos? If you crave more formal dining, many options are available for your dining options.
- After lunch take in the Rock and Roll Museum at Historic Arnolds Park Amusement Park. Explore the rich musical history of a bygone era and the treasures of its Iowa roots. Arnolds Park hosts free concert series and your trip may include a wonderful concert in the Roof Garden or on Preservation Plaza.

- Before you return to the hotel plan a quick visit to a pioneer cabin just next door to Arnolds Park. A brief glimpse into the settling of the area and the rich history of its early years.
- Rest and rejuvenate back in the comfortable luxury of your room before enjoying the famous four-star dining of Minervas Pasta night bar. The exciting action station features our chefs preparing your favorite pastas to order right in front of you! Save some room after the all-you-can eat pasta for a piece of that award-winning tiramisu or a rich after-dinner ice cream specialty drink. Enjoy a quiet evening of visiting with your fellow travelers and a welcome from an Okoboji Tourism area historian or venture out on your own to explore the famous Okoboji nightlife.

Day 3: Total Tour Time: 6 -8 hours depending on travel time.

- Breakfast buffet in the hotel and a chance to hear from a local lake authority from the [Okoboji Tourism Committee](#) on the ecological makeup of the area before finishing your Iowa Great Lakes tour with a visit to one of our area nature centers. Choose from a hatchery, lakeside labs or the nature center. All provide a glimpse into the plants, animals and the history of the glacial-carved lakes, sandy beaches and abundant wild life that call this area home. Enjoy a light boxed lunch provided by Minervas at the nature center or on the tour bus as you wave goodbye leaving the blue water and sunny skies of the Iowa Great Lakes behind you.
- Depart for West Bend, IA following lunch. Drive north on Hwy 71 to Hwy 9 for 4 miles. Drive east on Hwy 9 for 16 miles. Turn south on Hwy 4 for 20 miles. Turn east on Hwy 18 for 18 miles. Turn right at 10th Ave./IA 15 S for 8 miles. Turn right at 4th Street NE and take the second left onto N Broadway Ave. Grotto of the Redemption is located at 300 N Broadway Ave. in West Bend.
- Witness the miracle in stone, the [Grotto of the Redemption](#) in West Bend, IA. Guided tours are available May through October and video tours available year round. The largest grotto in the world, often called the “Eight Wonder of the World”, the Grotto represents a vast collection of minerals and stone, petrified wood, crystals and much more. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places this unique attraction, gift shop and cafe offers a unique finish to your northwest Iowa visit. Tour time: 1 – 2 hours including time to visit the gift shop.