



## Agriculture Adventures 5-Day Tour Representing Eastern Iowa

### **Day 1:** Tour Time 5 hours – **Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area**

- Lunch in Waterloo
- Factory tour at a tractor assembly plant. Hop aboard a tram piloted by a former employee as you follow the building of the “Green and Gold” tractors famous the world over. Amazing technology is the watchword here as you learn how it all fits together. Stop in the gift store on the way out.
- Tour a family dairy farm, near Hudson, Iowa, which is a family run operation (five kids involved!) including their own on-farm bottling and ice cream plant. Sample the fresh milk and get some exercise as you make your own batch of ice cream and eat the results. Also see their cute wallabies (yes, wallabies in Iowa!).
- Overnight at **Heartland Inn** in Waterloo

### **Day 2:** Tour Time 8 hours

- Arrive in the Hubbard, IA area to tour farms that sell their meats and eggs directly to consumers. These cutting edge farmers are operating their farms according to modern “sustainable agriculture principles” that include issues of humane animal treatment (no animal confinement), soil and water conservation issues and reduction of chemical inputs. Also learn about how modern genetic selection can affect the tenderness of the products.
- Hands on activities include trying your hand at “candling” (looking for embryos inside) eggs the old-fashioned way.
- Enjoy lunch at country club of all-Iowa products. Now you get a chance to taste test the products you just saw being grown! Eat a gourmet-chef produced lunch of pork and egg products along with fresh Iowa produce. Interview the chef about his choice of products and methods.

- Tour a Private Art Gallery on a farm. After a leisurely drive through the sprawling farms east of Iowa Falls, you'll arrive at a small farm and—surprise! It's an art gallery in the countryside! This Artist produces highly realistic paintings and prints of farm and railroad scenes. You might find a print of Dad's tractor here or bring back memories of that train ride when you were a kid. Enjoy coffee and sweets, compliments of the artist.
- Return to Waterloo **Heartland Inn**

**Day 3:** Tour Time 10 hours

- Art center activities. Recently remodeled, the WCA hosts your group for two hours of fun and educational hands-on arts and crafts. Take time to see paintings by famed "American Gothic" Iowan Grant Woods.
- Buffalo farm tour and lunch. Arrive at ranch south of Fredericksburg. Enjoy a catered lunch including the surprisingly tasty bison meat.
- Participate in a Native American blessing ceremony before boarding the wagons for a ride out into the buffalo herd where you'll actually feed these giant shaggy beasts ears of corn right out of your hand.
- On the way out you can look over the "artifact" room and take along some buffalo jerky if you're game enough!
- Clock Museum, Spillville, Iowa. Visit the famed collection of fantastically carved clocks, some of them over 7 feet tall. These two bachelor Czech farmers left their lifetime collection of sometimes-bizarre timepieces to the town when they died. You have never seen clocks like these! Docent led tour is featured in the March 2006 issue of Travel + Leisure magazine.
- **Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum** tour. The largest museum devoted to a single ethnicity, Vesterheim (means "western home") interprets the immigrant experience through a variety of displays and an outdoor section with many restored pioneer homes as well as a church and buildings brought over from Norway.
- Tour the museum, have coffee and try your hand at Norwegian "rosemaling" decorative painting on wooden artifact and take result with you.
- Overnight at Decorah hotel, dinner at attached restaurant and bar.

**Day 4:** Tour Time 10-11 hours

- Museum of famed TV family, Burr Oak, Iowa, which includes a tour of the museum and the home of the family when they were in Iowa. Wilders ran a small hotel that has been turned into a charming little museum interpreting the family's odyssey as they headed west.
- Heirloom vegetable preservation gardens, Decorah, Iowa, a world-renowned facility for tour of genetic preservation gardens started 25 years ago. See a short film on the fantastic diversity of the vegetable world. The Beautiful bluffs & creek and the rare White Park cattle dating to the Roman era. Purchase packets of rare vegetables to take home to plant if you wish.
- Board a boat on Mississippi, with a catered box lunch for a 5 hour tour. A naturalist that makes this a real learning tour leads you through a wonderful ecological river trip. This stretch of the upper Mississippi from Lansing to Prairie du Chien, WI, is often described as the most beautiful stretch of the Mississippi. Experience breathtaking views of fantastic limestone bluffs, eagle nests and other of nature's wonders.
- Coach pickup at Prairie du Chien, WI. Landing.
- Dinner at restaurant in Luana, Iowa, a longtime restaurant in small Iowa village is a popular regional stop. A great German-based cuisine with American favorites as well.
- Return to Decorah hotel for overnight

**Day 5:** Tour Time 5-6 hours

- Grain Terminal Tour. After a scenic drive through the farmlands, you arrive at a grain terminal where the coach goes inside the old silica mine to see some of the 10 million bushels of corn stored here. Fourteen miles of underground roads are used to store grain and over 2 million tires. Also see barge-loading equipment. Step on guide is provided.
- Lunch at **Breitbach's Country Dining** in Balltown, Iowa. Iowa's oldest continuously operating restaurant. The large yummy buffet includes several meats and the décor is unbelievable. There are artifacts hanging everywhere and the bar has old firearms hanging all over the place. A truly unusual restaurant and an Iowa treasure will surely be the talk of the tour! Getting there

is half the fun because the road to Balltown is arguably the most scenic road in the entire state.

- [National Mississippi River Museum](#), in Dubuque, Iowa. Tour this highly interactive and aquariums featuring otters, fish, snakes, and more. Try your hand at a virtual river barge tugboat and see if you can steer it under a bridge. Watch the multi-media presentations in two theaters, as well as their model of the river as it floods with real water.
- Depart Iowa