

KANSAS OKLAHOMA

The HEARTLAND STATES *of* AMERICA



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KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA

Ewo Special States

IN THE BROAD EXPANSES OF THE GREAT PLAINS, THE GRASSY PRAIRIE BETWEEN THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY AND THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, THE VAST HORIZON STRETCHES ENDLESSLY AND BREEZES PLAY CONSTANTLY. AT THE HEART OF THE USA, IN THE MIDDLE OF A SEA OF GRASS, LIE KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA. These two neighbouring states are modest and unassuming; unlike the Southwest, at first sight they have no dramatic landscapes nor mega-large glittering cities on offer, but instead a broad palette of natural and cultural experiences hard to find elsewhere. The people in the Heartlands, the centre of the USA, are also unusually special: reserved and warm-hearted, hospitable and full of humour. "Cowboys and Indians" are not tourist attractions here, they are features of everyday life.

The state of Kansas is named after the Kanza, or Kaw, who call themselves the "People of the South Wind". Decimated by smallpox epidemics and banished to ever-shrinking reservations during the 19th century, in 1873 they suffered the same fate as many other Native American peoples and were forcibly relocated to Oklahoma.

The 46th state takes its name from "Oklahomma", the Red People, the name given by the Choctaw people to the native population. Oklahoma was included in the Union in 1907.

At the beginning of the 19th century, **Kansas** was still known as the Great American Desert, the name bestowed upon it by the explorer Zebulon Pike. Officially established in 1861, it came to be known as the "breadbasket" of the USA. Kansas is characterised by a diverse landscape, with massive livestock ranches and hypnotic fields of grain. The largest city is Wichita, a centre for aircraft manufacturing and just a stone's throw away from Oklahoma to the south where in the 1920s the discovery of large reserves of oil and gas led the way into the modern era.



From 1803, when President Thomas Jefferson bought vast stretches of land between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains from Napoleon, **Oklahoma** was "Indian Territory". This deal, known as the "Louisiana Purchase" not only doubled the size of the young nation, but also opened up new trade routes and access to raw materials. Part of the land was supposed to belong to the native inhabitants, but, as the Trail of Tears demonstrated, the relocation exercise was not always undertaken peacefully nor voluntarily. The Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Muskogees (Creek) and Seminoles were soon joined by more Native American nations; today there are 39 nations headquartered in Oklahoma, the highest number in the USA. Curiously, however, 14% of the people in Oklahoma and over 30% in Kansas are of German extraction and they make up the largest ethnic group today.

ON THE ROAD

A Trip through Kansas and Oklahoma

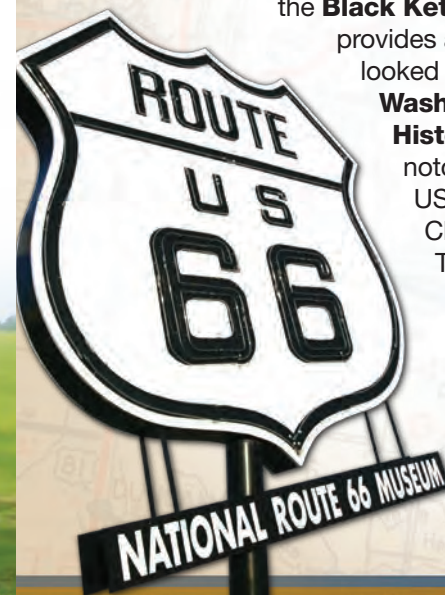
OKLAHOMA CITY IS THE IDEAL STARTING POINT AND DESTINATION FOR A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY THROUGH KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA. Several interesting museums in the small university town of **Norman**, which lies just a few kilometres southwards, make it a good place to begin a journey towards the South of Oklahoma, where the **Arbuckle Mountains** with the **Turner Falls** and also the **Chickasaw National Recreational Area** are located. A visit to the **Chickasaw Cultural Center** in that tribe's homelands between the towns of **Davis** and **Sulphur** is recommended.

The **Chisholm Trail** runs to the west of the Arbuckle Mountains. It was used from the 1860s to the 1880s for cattle drives between Texas and Kansas. The small town of **Duncan** was once a station on the trail and is now home to the **Chisholm Trail Heritage Center**. Further to the West, in the **Wichita Mountains**, lies the oldest wildlife reserve in the USA, home to bison and longhorn cattle. **Medicine Park**, a small town at the foot of the Wichita Mountains, is a popular holiday destination. The home of the Comanche people is close to Lawton and **Fort Sill** is the final resting place of the legendary Apache leader Geronimo.

Travelling northwards, the route crosses the I-40 highway, which runs parallel to **Route 66**. Traces of the historic road still remain, but it is mainly commemorated in the **Oklahoma Route 66 Museum** in **Clinton** and the **National Route 66 Museum**, with its open-air replica buildings, in **Elk City** to the west. In the vicinity of Elk City, the **Black Kettle National Grassland** provides an idea of how the prairie looked once upon a time, whilst the **Washita Battlefield National Historic Site** commemorates a notorious chapter in history: the US Army's attack on a peaceful Cheyenne village in 1868. The route on US highway 283 continues northwards through the sparsely

populated prairie to Kansas. The Wild West lives on in **Dodge City** and this is also where you will find traces of the oldest trade route in the South west, the **Santa Fe Trail**. Further eastwards, an almost perfectly preserved US Army border post can be explored at **Fort Larned National Historic Site**. An unusual eco-system lies to the east of the small town of **Great Bend**: the **Kansas Wetlands** consist of **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge** and **Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife** area. It is hard to believe that the soil of the area around the small town of **Hutchinson** conceals one of the largest salt domes in the world. You can find out more about how salt is extracted at **Stratton - Kansas Underground Salt Museum** and the **Kansas Cosmosphere Space Museum and Space Center** gives visitors an insight into the universe.

There are finds to be made by art and antique fans close to the town of **Salina** to the north of Hutchinson: thanks to the artist Birger Sandzén who once lived here, **Lindsborg**, which was founded by Swedish immigrants, has developed into an artists' colony. A little further to the west, **Lucas**, on the other hand, proudly proclaims itself as a centre of folk art, the Grassroots Art Capital of America.



A journey through Kansas and Oklahoma leads you straight to the heart of the USA, into a land full of originality, a region inhabited by a special kind of people. It also delights in an unexpectedly wide range of cities, attractions and natural landscapes.

The I-70 highway eastwards takes the traveller past a host of interesting cities: **Abilene**, the location of the Eisenhower Presidential Library, one of the USA's eight Presidential Libraries; **Manhattan**, the home of Kansas State University; **Topeka**, the dignified capital of Kansas and **Lawrence**, home of the largest university in the State, the University of Kansas. The trip ends at **Kansas City**, which lies on the Missouri River and also partly in the neighbouring state of Missouri. **Fort Leavenworth** to the north is one of the oldest military stations still in operation west of the Mississippi and location of a Legendary Federal prison.

Atchison came to fame as the starting point of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway and of the Pony Express; it was also home to the pioneering pilot Amelia Earhart. South of "K.C.", towns such as **Fort Scott** commemorate the events of the Civil War, 1861-1865.

Travelling on the Santa Fe Trail (Highway 56) west of Kansas City, one reaches the **Flint Hills**, home of the **Symphony in the Flint Hills**. The Scenic Byway of the same name leads through a section of almost untouched tallgrass prairie to the small town of **Cottonwood Falls**. The route southwards on the return to Oklahoma takes in **Wichita**, which has developed from a Western town to a centre for aircraft manufacturing.

Cattle grazed throughout northern Oklahoma – until oil was discovered at the beginning of the 20th century. Two towns, Ponca City and Bartlesville, are connected by the **Osage Hills National Scenic Byways**, and still bear all the hallmarks of the oil industry. In **Ponca City**, famous for the **Standing Bear Powwow**, the oil baron E.W. Marland built himself a castle: **Marland Mansion**. His rival Frank Phillips lived slightly more modestly in **Bartlesville**, but also owned a ranch called **Woolaroc**, located outside of the town and well worth a visit. He kept collections of exotic animals and Western art there. Bartlesville has earned an entry in architecture text books with the **Price Tower**, Frank L. Wright's only skyscraper which he built in 1956.

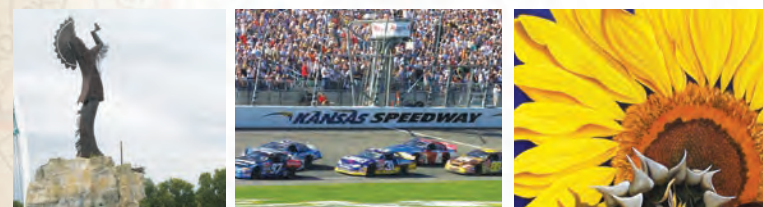
The North East of Oklahoma is called the "**Green Country**" on account of its forests, lakes and rivers. After the Cherokee were driven out of the South east of the USA in 1831, this region became their new home. Today, 100,000 Cherokee live around the small capital city **Tahlequah**, east of Tulsa. The Cherokee Heritage Center is located here and close by is **Fort Gibson**, a partial replica of a military post in Indian Territory. **The Will Rogers Memorial Museum** in **Claremore**, which commemorates Oklahoma's favourite son, is not to be missed. Nor should one pass by **Tulsa**, the second largest city in the State.

The return journey to Oklahoma City on Route 66 leads through **Arcadia** with the famous Roundbarn and POPS, a futuristic petrol station and diner. It is worth making a short detour to **Guthrie**, just before reaching Oklahoma City. This town, which was established in just 24 hours during the Land Rush of 1889, when the government released Indian territory for settlement, is the largest cultural conservation area in the USA.

A Trip through Kansas and Oklahoma



"Cowboys and Indians" are characteristic features of both Kansas and Oklahoma States, but not, as is the case elsewhere, as folksy make believe for visitors. On the contrary, "Cowboy Culture" and "Native America" are what sets these states apart and makes them particularly interesting.



TOWNS AND CITIES IN OKLAHOMA

The Stockyards in **Oklahoma City**, the largest cattle market in the world, and the Historic Stockyard City with its restaurants and shops are well worth a visit. In contrast, **Bricktown**, once a busy warehouse district, has a thriving new existence as a nightspot. The **Oklahoma City National Memorial Park** with its Museum is a moving reminder of the 1995 attack; other excellent museums are the **Oklahoma History Center** and the **National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum**.

Tulsa rejoices in the nickname "Terracotta City" which is justified by a host of well-preserved art deco buildings in the city centre. The **Gilcrease Museum**, a high-calibre collection of Western art, the **Philbrook Museum** with a range of different art forms, and the **Woody Guthrie Center** are all must sees. The 23m high **Golden Driller** on Expo Square commemorates the town's oil boom.

TOWNS AND CITIES IN KANSAS

Wichita is a modern city at the confluence of the Little Arkansas and Arkansas Rivers. Not only does the sculpture of the "Keeper of the Plains" (with a Native American museum) provide a reminder of the past; the Wild West also lives on in **Old Cowtown Museum**. The hostelrys of **Old Town** are a favourite meeting place in the renovated brick district, where the strange, but fun, **Museum of World Treasures** is also located.

The **Rosedale Arch**, a smaller replica of the Arc de Triomphe, is an unusual sight in **Kansas City**; major attractions include the **Kansas Speedway**, a well-known Nascar race track, and **Verrückt**, the World's largest, tallest, fastest water slide. **Overland Park** was not designated a city until 1960 and offers the **Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Gardens** and the **Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead**, an agricultural museum of interest to the whole family.



NATIVE AMERICA

A visit to Indian Territory

OKLAHOMA IS NAMED AFTER THE "OKLA HOMMA", THE RED PEOPLE WHICH WAS THE NAME GIVEN BY THE CHOCTAW INDIANS TO THE NATIVE POPULATION. It is home to 39 of the 562 Indian nations officially acknowledged by the USA. The reason why so many Indian nations retreated to Oklahoma in particular can be traced back to President Jefferson who earmarked the land west of the Mississippi as **Indian Territory** at the beginning of the 19th century. However, the relocation rarely proceeded peacefully – consider, for example, the **Trail of Tears** whereby the "Five Civilized Tribes" (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole) were forcibly removed from the South east.

The **Washunga Days** each June, for example, commemorate the fact that most of the tribes did not leave their old homelands voluntarily. The Kaw or Kanza Indians return to their old homelands around **Council Grove/KS** from which they were forcibly removed in 1873. **The Standing Bear Powwow** in **Ponca City**, where hundreds of

Native Americans come together at the end of September, is known way

beyond the borders of Oklahoma.

An almost 7m high statue and a museum commemorate Standing Bear (1834-1908), the famous leader of the Ponca, who in 1879 litigated in the US District

Court against the forcible relocation of his people and won his case. **The Indian Peace Treaty Pageant**, held in September and celebrated in **Medicine Lodge/KS** (www.peacetreaty.org) since 1917, attests that there were also peaceful agreements. It commemorates the peace treaty signed in 1867 by the US Government and representatives of the Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Cheyenne and Arapaho people.

Over 50 **powwows** take place each year in Kansas and Oklahoma, many of which are open to the public. In addition to the Standing Bear Powwow, the **Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival** at the beginning of June in **Oklahoma City** (www.redearth.org/red-earth-festival) is another highlight in the events calendar. The term "powwow" or "pow wow" is derived from the word "powwaw" (spiritual leader) in the language of the Narragansett people. Nowadays it has two meanings: a traditional meeting or a dancing contest at which money and other prizes can be won.

Indian Territory



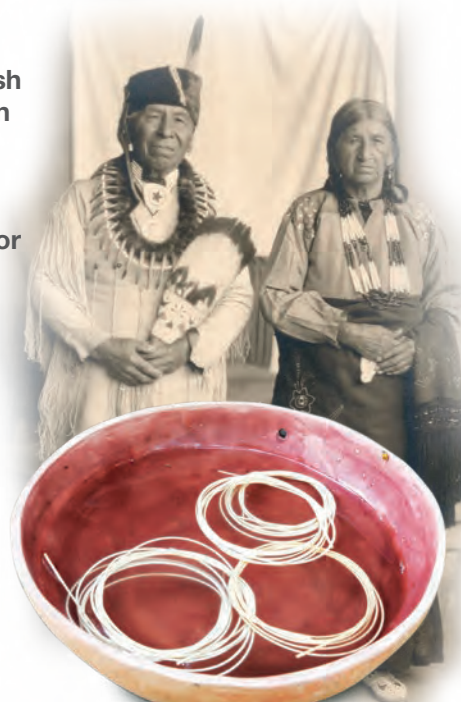
Family members come together from near and far, they erect teepees, park caravans and organise picnics. Stands selling traditional food and crafts are placed around the dance arena and audience seating areas; there is a ceremonial parade, the **Grand Entry**, and **associated events** such as a "Miss Indian" competition, awards to veterans, and sometimes rodeos.

The focus is on the **dances**, which are performed in separate categories: senior citizens (over 50s), men and women from 18-49, teenagers (13-17) and children (6-12). There is a further distinction between **Southern** and **Northern Dances**: The former were cultivated by the tribes in and around Oklahoma while the latter originate in the more northern areas. The dances are accompanied by different **Drums** in turn. These are groups of at least five singers, including a Lead Singer, who sit at the edge of the dance area around a large drum and accompany their cultural songs with rhythmic beats. Their performance is also judged by a jury.

Powwows are ideal for getting to know the characteristics and cultures of the Native Americans. The museums for each of the tribes also offer insight into their history and traditions. The largest nation is the **Cherokee** (approximately 100,000 members) who live around the small capital city of **Tahlequah**, southeast of Tulsa. Visitors are welcomed to the **Cherokee Heritage Center** (www.cherokeeheritage.org) and **Cherokee Cultural Tours** also offer opportunities to learn about the way the Cherokee live today. The **Chickasaw** Nation is to a modern multimedia cultural centre in **Sulphur**, south of Oklahoma City, which architecturally and conceptually is one of the most interesting Native American museums in the USA (www.chickasawculturalcenter.com). The **Comanche National Museum** is in **Lawton** (www.comanchemuseum.com) and the **American Indian Cultural Center & Museum** is still under construction in **Oklahoma City**.

POWWOW ETIQUETTE

At first sight, a powwow might look like a funfair, but for the Native Americans it is a sacred event held in accordance with certain rules. A **Master of Ceremonies** oversees the event which always takes place in a **circular dance arena**, frequently open to the air. There is seating around the arena with seats under cover reserved for the participants and the elders. When the US and tribal flags are presented or when prayers are said, the members of the audience must stand and remove their hats. The audience may also join in the **intertribal dance**. As a rule, **photography** is permitted, but it is forbidden to use a flash during the competition and to make video recordings. **Information:** www.powwow-power.com or www.powwows.com





COWBOY CULTURE

Where the myth of the Cowboy is part of everyday life



IN 1872, THE POET BREWSTER HIGLEY WROTE "HOME, HOME ON THE RANGE ...", the first words of what was eventually to become the **Kansas State** Song, extolling the freedom of life in the wide expanses of the prairies. In both Kansas and Oklahoma, cowboys, cattle drives and cow towns are

not just part of the legendary image of the Wild West; they are an important cultural element.



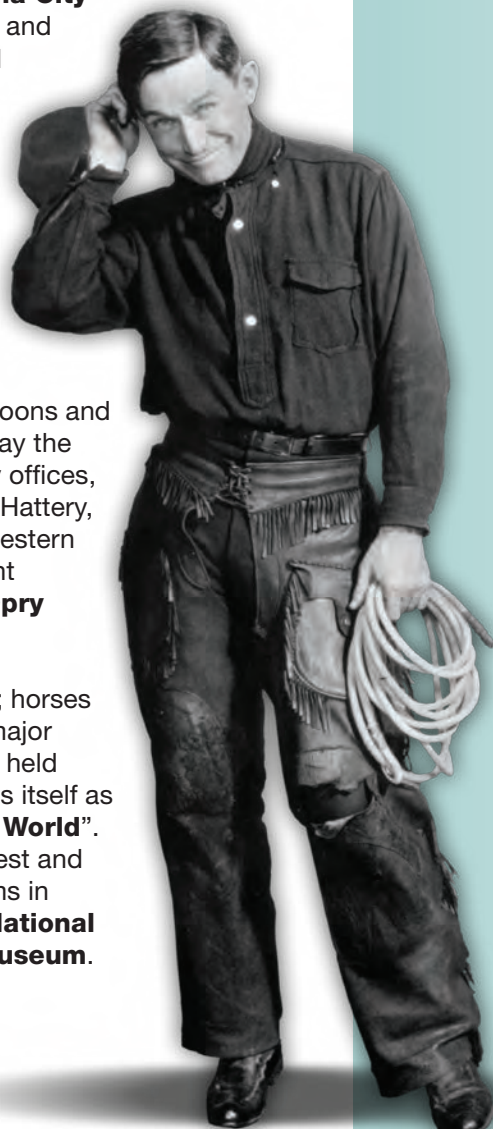
Hats and boots, lassos and chaps, spurs and saddles - the cowboy myth is longstanding and universally known. It was shaped by the bold "cow punchers" who in the years between 1860 and 1880 drove around 20 million cows, mostly longhorns, from Texas up to the North, to the railway stations in Kansas and beyond. It is still possible to follow some of these legendary



cattle trails; one such, and the most significant, is the **Chisholm Trail**. The US highway 81 tracks it for over 1000 kilometres through the middle of the Heartland between Fort Worth/ TX and Abilene/KS. Halfway along, a stop in the small town of **Duncan/OK** is essential, as the **Chisholm Trail Heritage Center** located here is well worth a visit.

Today, **cattle breeding** is still a feature of western Kansas and Oklahoma; farmers are keeping longhorns again and it is even possible to see bison on the endless grassy flatlands of the prairie. Cattle have changed hands at one of the largest auctions in the country, at the **Oklahoma National Stockyards** in **Oklahoma City** since 1910. Nowadays only calves and fat stock are sold on Mondays and Tuesdays - as many as 10,000 each day! Once the work is over, the buyers and sellers, cowboys and ranchers go to the **Cattlemen's Café and Steakhouse**. This establishment has been here as long as the cattle market and is considered an institution in the Historic Stockyard City. Once upon a time there were rows of saloons and brothels, bars and hotels here; today the restored buildings are occupied by offices, pubs and shops, such as Shorty's Hattery, Little Joe Boots and Langston's (western wear) - and places of entertainment such as the **Centennial Rodeo Opry** (Country Music).

Cattle are one mainstay of the city; horses are the other. Each year up to 15 major horse shows and competitions are held here and Oklahoma City designates itself as the "**Horse Show Capital of the World**". It is also fitting that one of the largest and most important Wild West museums in the world can be found here: the **National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum**.



With the discovery of oil in the 1920s, some citizens quickly became rich, but the oil barons generously allowed the rest of the populace to share in their prosperity. For example, the Creek Indian Thomas Gilcrease handed over the **Gilcrease Museum** to the city of **Tulsa** in 1955. This holds a collection of high quality Western Art with works by major artists such as Charles M. Russell and Frederick Remington. The oil baron Frank Phillips was also interested in the Wild West and collected exotic animals and every genre of Western Art at his ranch named "Woolaroc" (short for woods, lakes and rocks) which he had built south of **Bartlesville** in 1925. The museum, which was set up in the 1940s, is famous for the world's largest collection of Colts (guns). Phillips' brother, Waite, on the other hand, was more interested in the art of many different regions and eras; it can still be admired today in the **Philbrook Museum** in Tulsa.

Old Cowtown in Wichita also thrives on the memories of the good old days. Today the largest town in Kansas with over 350,000 inhabitants, Wichita was founded in 1871 as a typically Western town. These origins are commemorated in this open-air museum with a combination of original and replica buildings. Living history is portrayed throughout the town in many pioneer homes, the farmstead, and main street businesses.

US Marshall Matt Dillon and his deputy Festus Haggen rigorously imposed law and order in the legendary **Dodge City** between 1955 and 1975. They have been immortalised as the heroes of "Gunsmoke", the longest-running Western series on television. Between 1967 and 1997, 228 episodes were shown in Europe and 635 in the USA (plus five feature-length films). "Gunsmoke" and the 1939 Western "Dodge City" indelibly stamped the small town of 25,000 inhabitants, which was established in 1871 in the South West of Kansas, as a Western town. The Colts still smoke during the **Dodge City Days** at the end of July and in the **Boot Hill Museum**. Today, Dodge City is mainly a centre for beef processing.



The heyday of the cattle trails, when cow punchers drove their herds of placid longhorns northwards towards the railroad, lasted just three decades - yet that was enough to give rise to the myth of the cowboy.

Where the myth of the Cowboy is part of everyday life

RODEOS ARE THE PLACE TO EXPERIENCE COWBOY CULTURE AT FIRST HAND. They are the cowboys' national sport. The season lasts from April to November and in addition to **professional rodeos** (www.prorodeo.com), Kansas and Oklahoma can offer a host of small **ranch rodeos** (www.ranchrodeo.net) which are just as interesting; these events are more for families, involving fun, BBQ and music. One of the best known is the **Kansas Championship Ranch Rodeo in Medicine Lodge/KS**. Initially a weekend pastime on the ranches, the individual disciplines developed from the daily events of a cowboys' life – bronco riding (breaking in wild horses), cutting, catching or steer wrestling – into very lucrative competitions.

Barbeques, chuck wagon cooking and music are inseparably associated with rodeos and other cowboy events. Alongside **Country Music**, traditional cowboy music, **Western music**, is gaining in popularity with many young artists and bands, who nevertheless are still open to modern influences. Well-known representatives of this "**Red Dirt**" music are the Red Dirt Rangers, The Great Divide and Cross Canadian Ragweed.

Becoming a cowboy or a cowgirl for a time is no longer an unfulfillable dream. Oklahoma and Kansas have specialised in providing this kind of "holiday on the farm". Guests can, and indeed are expected to, contribute actively on **working ranches**. Luxury and VIP treatment are in rather short supply;

on the other hand, guests rapidly become part of the outfit, learning to carry out the regular work of the ranch. This might range from moving herds, branding and vaccinating to separating out calves and catching and breaking in horses. The **Island Guest Ranch**, Northwest of Oklahoma City (www.islandgustranch.com), the **Flying W Ranch** in the Flint Hills of Kansas (www.flinthillsflyingw.com) are some examples of working ranches as are the **Moore Ranch** (www.moorelonghornranch.com) south of Dodge City/KS, where longhorns and working horses are bred and it is possible to take part in cattle drives lasting several days.

Generally speaking **dude** or **guest ranches** are ranches which do not rear animals. The focus here is on R&R, experiencing nature, riding and other outdoor activities. These ranches are also the right choice for families. They include the **Meadowlake Ranch** (Tulsa/OK, www.meadowlakeranch.com), the **Tatanka Ranch** (Stroud, OK, www.thetatankaranch.com) which offers wide range of activities and the **Circle S Ranch & Country Inn** (Lawrence/KS, http://www.circlesranch.com) which offers fabulous food, décor, and country living atmosphere. These holidays almost always feature full-board and romantic evenings around the camp fire, excursions and activities.

NATIONAL DAY OF THE COWBOY
Since 2004, the "National Day of the Cowboy" has been celebrated throughout the US on the 4th Saturday in July with all kinds of events related to cowboy culture.

Information: www.nationaldayofthecowboy.com



EVENTS What's happening where?

IN THE LAND OF "COWBOYS AND INDIANS", RODEOS AND POWWOWS REPRESENT HIGH SPOTS ON THE CALENDAR, BUT THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF EVENTS ON OFFER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. **Music festivals, motorcycle rallies, art exhibitions, culinary events like BBQs and chuck wagon cook-offs, state fairs** (agricultural shows) and **riding competitions**.

For example, Oklahoma City has made a name for itself in the world of horses, particularly in Western Riding, as the "**Horse Show Capital of the World**". Up to 15 events take place annually. They are highly regarded throughout the world and include the AQHA World Championship Show and the National Reining Horse Futurity, and also barrel races, rodeos and conformation shows.

One not-to-be-missed event is the **Symphony in the Flint Hills** (www.symphonynintheflinthills.org). Every year in the middle of June, the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra gives an open-air concert in a grassy field of a mega ranch within the splendid Flint Hills. But it is more than just a concert – It is also a remarkable cowboy event with rides in a covered wagon, a horse show, barbecues, stands, ranger-guided tours and lectures on natural history.

The **Dodge City Days** (www.dodgecitydays.com) at the end of July/beginning of August are for fans of the Wild West. Cowboy culture comes to life again in Dodge City/KS with parades, rodeos and concerts. The spotlight is also on cowboys at the **Western Spirit Celebration** (3rd weekend in September, www.onthechisholmtrail.com/calendar) in Duncan/OK while at the end of September cowboys compete in their "national sport" at the **Kansas Championship Ranch Rodeo** in Medicine Lodge/KS (www.peacetreaty.org/rodeo.htm). BBQ fans must not miss the **Kansas Masters BBQ Championship** in Wichita/KS in the middle of June. Want to find out more about the natural world in Oklahoma and its animals? Go to the **Oklahoma Wildlife Expo** (www.wildlifedepartment.com/wildlifeexpo.htm) at the end of September at the Lazy E Ranch near Guthrie.

For more **information** on all these events, go to
• www.travelks.com/calendar-of-events
• www.travelok.com/festival_and_events

A SELECTION OF RECOMMENDED EVENTS

April and May

- Wings N Wetlands (Great Bend/KS)
- Great American Barbecue Contest (Kansas City/KS)
- Santa Fe Trail Days (Fort Larned/KS)
- Mayor's Red Dirt Ball (Medicine Park/OK)

June

- Battle of Blackjack (Lawrence/KS)
- Red Earth Native American Festival (Oklahoma City/OK)
- Wichita River Festival (Wichita/KS)
- Wah-Shun-Gah Days, Kaw Intertribal PowWow (Council Grove/KS)
- Country Stampede (Manhattan/KS)
- Pawnee Bill's Original Wild West Show (Pawnee/OK)
- Smoky Hill River Festival (Salina/KS)

July and August

- Amelia Earhart Festival (Atchison/KS)
- Woody Guthrie Folk Festival (Okemah/OK)
- Cherokee Homecoming Art Show (Tahlequah/OK)
- Fiddling & Picking Championships (Lawrence/KS)
- Powwow of Champions (Tulsa/OK)
- Civil War on the Western Frontier (Lawrence/KS)

September

- Ancient Cherokee Days (Tahlequah/OK)
- Kansas State Fair (Hutchinson/KS)
- Oklahoma State Fair (Oklahoma City/OK)
- Tulsa State Fair (Tulsa/OK)
- Leavenworth BBQ Cook-Off (Leavenworth/KS)
- Standing Bear PowWow (Ponca City/OK)
- Wichita Aviation Festival (Wichita/KS)
- Haskell Indian Art Market (Lawrence/KS)
- Cow Girl Weekend (Bucklin/KS)
- Cherokee Strip Cook-Off (Ponca City/OK)
- Bluegrass and Chili Festival (Claremore/OK)

October

- Cherokee Art Market (Tulsa/OK)
- Oklahoma Int'l Bluegrass Festival (Guthrie/OK)
- Kaw Valley Farm Tour (Lawrence/KS)
- Smokin' The Fort BBQ & Bluegrass Festival (Fort Gibson/OK)
- Chickasaw Annual Meeting & Festival (Sulphur and Tishomingo/OK)
- Prairie Harvest Festival and Barn Dance (Strong City/KS)
- Fall Traders Encampment (Bartlesville/OK)
- Mountain Man Rendezvous (Canton/KS)
- Fall Short Cattle Drive (Bucklin/KS)



INFORMATION AND TIPS IN BRIEF

Climate and time to travel

“Big Sky Country” – endless horizons and constant breezes are the hallmarks of Oklahoma and Kansas. With so many stars visible in such enormous skies, these two states are ideal for stargazing and you are unlikely to experience such impressive thunderstorms anywhere else. The months of May and July are the best time to travel, when the prairies are full of flowers and blossom, and the days especially long, but September and October are also eminently suitable. To enjoy a host of summer events, come between June and August.

The average annual temperature is around 18° C; in winter (January) it can fall to -8° C and climb above 30° C in the summer (July). Depending on the area, the summers can be warm or even hot and in order to avoid drought, there are many reservoirs. As a rule, winters are mild in the southern areas, but snow can lie for longer in the North. As the centre of North America lacks a mountain range to stand between the cold polar air in the North and the warm wet air over the Gulf of Mexico, the area can experience exciting yet also fearsome climatic extremes on occasion, such as tornados and hail storms.

Time zones

Kansas and Oklahoma are in two time zones: Central Daylight Time/CDT – a difference of 6 hours (behind) our GMT and Mountain Standard Time/MST (7 hours) in the western parts of Kansas. Daylight Saving Time/DST applies from the 2nd Sunday in March to the 2nd Sunday in November.

How to get there

The main airports for Kansas are Kansas City International and Wichita Mid Continent Airport. In Oklahoma, you can fly to Tulsa International and Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City. It is not possible to fly directly to any of these airports from Europe, making it necessary to change planes once.

On the Road

A hire car is essential for independent travellers. Hire car companies such as Avis, Hertz and Alamo

have offices at the airports. It is advisable from a financial and an insurance point of view to reserve a rental car from home. As a rule, the charges are lower and the packages on offer include flat rate insurance deals, free kilometres and other costs. Mini-SUVS are a good choice for the area to ensure comfort and convenience. The speed limit is 75mph/120 km/h (interstate) or 70 mph/112 km/h (city approaches) in OK and 70 mph/112 km/h everywhere in KS.

One special experience is a motorcycle tour on one of 17 scenic byways and on Route 66. There are reliable companies which rent out motorcycles: EagleRider has a rental office in Oklahoma City/OK (www.eaglerider.com).

A little more forward planning and organizational expertise is required to explore the Heartland by camper van. Reservation in advance is required. Major suppliers are El Monte RV, Cruise America and Moturis. There are sufficient camp sites with all the facilities (full hook-up and cabins) (www.ksrvparks.com and www.outdoorsok.com/Oklahoma/Campgrounds).

Overnight accommodation

Both states offer a wide range from simple motels, historic and modern hotels, guest and working ranches, inns and resorts to romantic and atmospheric bed and breakfasts. For information on all kinds of accommodation, go to www.TravelKS.com (Lodging) and www.TravelOK.com (Hotels&Lodging“).

INFORMATION:

On the Internet:
www.travelks.com | www.travelok.com
www.travelksok.co.uk | www.travelksok.ie

Kansas/Oklahoma Travel & Tourism
UK & Ireland Information Service
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 and from many **travel agents**.



SCENIC BYWAYS | www.ksbyways.org

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Flint Hills | 7 Prairie Trail |
| 2 Frontier Military | 8 Smoky Valley |
| 3 Glacial Hills | 9 Western Vistas |
| 4 Gypsum Hills | 10 Wetlands & Wildlife |
| 5 Native Stone | 11 Route 66 |
| 6 Post Rock | |

- Area: approx. 213,000 km² (no. 15 of 50 US states)
- Population: approx. 2.8 million (no. 33)
- State established in: 1861 (34th state)
- Highest point: Mt. Sunflower (1231m)
- Lowest point: Verdigris River (208m)
- Approximately 90% of the land is in agricultural use: wheat (no. 1 in the USA), milo (a type of millet), soy beans and maize, no. 2 in cattle rearing, and also bison
- Famous inhabitants: Walter P. Chrysler (automobile industry), Bob Dole (politician), Amelia Earhart (flying pioneer), Dwight D. Eisenhower (US President), Melissa Etheridge (musician), Buster Keaton (comic actor), Laura Ingalls Wilder (writer)



OKLAHOMA NATIVE AMERICA

- Area: approx. 182,000 km² (no. 20 in the 50 states)
- Population: approx. 3.7 million (no. 28)
- State established in: 1907 (46th state)
- Highest point: Black Mesa (1516m)
- Lowest point: Little River near Idabel (88m)
- Famous inhabitants: Quanah Parker (Comanche leader), Will Rodgers (cowboy and entertainer), Gene Autry (actor), James Garner (actor), Brad Pitt (actor), Garth Brooks (musician), Toby Keith (musician), Woody Guthrie (musician), J.J. Cale (musician), Reba McEntire (musician), Tony Hillerman (writer), Ed Ruscha (artist), Thomas P. Stafford (astronaut)

SCENIC BYWAYS | www.okscenicbyways.org

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 Cherokee Hills | 5 Osage Nation |
| 2 Mountain Gateway | 6 Route 66 |
| 3 Mountain Pass | 7 Talimena |
| 4 Wichita Mountains | |



SCENIC BYWAYS AND HISTORIC TRAILS

discoveries off the beaten track

SCENIC BYWAYS AND HISTORIC TRAILS OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW THE LANDSCAPE AND THE PEOPLE IN GREATER DEPTH. One of the best known is the **Santa Fe Trail** (www.nps.gov/safe and www.santafetrail.org), the first “highway” to the West, which was first used by William Becknell in 1822 who used a caravan of mules to transport goods to Santa Fe (New Mexico) which at the time was still in Mexico. The route between Kansas City and Santa Fe extended over 1900km. It disappeared from the

map around 1880 with the advent of the railway. Today it is possible to travel on it through Kansas starting from Kansas City, passing Council Grove, Great Bend and Dodge City; a short section also takes in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

As traders moved into the South West on the Santa Fe Trail, between 1841 and 1869, the year the transcontinental

railway was completed, innumerable settlers trekked on the **Oregon/California Trail** (www.nps.gov/oreg or www.nps.gov/cali) into the “Promised Land” of the West. It is also possible to trace this route starting from Kansas City, past Lawrence and Topeka and through north-eastern Kansas. The legendary **Pony Express** also crossed the same area in 1860/61 (www.ponyexpress.org), a courier service by horse which delivered post over a distance of 3200km between St. Joseph/Missouri or neighbouring Atchison/Kansas to Sacramento in California. The horses were changed at stops every 15 to 20 km. The couriers – of whom the most famous is alleged to be Buffalo Bill Cody – were relieved after 300km.

The **Frontier Military Scenic Byway** runs through eastern Kansas. From Fort Leavenworth in the North, this route extends as far as Fort Scott in the South and commemorates the bloody battles of the Civil War 1861-1865.



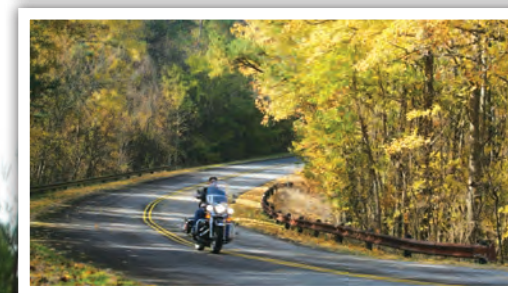
Diversity of landscape and ecology is a feature of three byways in Kansas. The **Flint Hills National Scenic Byway** crosses the remains of the tallgrass prairie (Flint Hills) for 75 km between the quiet towns of Manhattan, Council Grove, Cottonwood Falls, and Cassoday. Parts of the tallgrass prairie form a protected nature reserve. The **Wetlands and Wildlife National Scenic Byway** on the other hand passes through around 125 km of the Cheyenne Bottoms and the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, an area of important marshland and a paradise for birds. The **Post Rock Scenic Byway** snakes through the Smoky Hills, past Wilson Lake on sandstone cliffs and grassland in central Kansas. Although a mere 30 km long, it is exceptionally picturesque.

Running for over 160km between Scott City and Sharon Springs, the **Western Vistas Historic Byway** in western Kansas offers not only the Scott Lake State Park, but also the El Quarteijo Pueblo Ruins and the unique Monument Rocks formations, known as the “badlands” of Kansas. It also passes through the small township of Oakley, where Buffalo Bill Cody’s prowess as a hunter earned him his nickname.

The **Chisholm Trail** recalls the history of the cattle trails on which cowboys drove longhorn cattle northwards (www.thechisholmtrail.com). It runs through the middle of the Heartland between Fort Worth/Texas, Duncan/OK and Oklahoma City/OK and also Wichita/KS, Dodge City/KS, and Abilene/KS. The US highway 81 follows more or less the same route today.

The 140km **Cherokee Hills Scenic Byway** reveals the diversity of the landscape in eastern Oklahoma as it hugs the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. Thick forests alternate with magnificent views, such as those over Lake Tenkiller or the Illinois River. The small town of Tahlequah provides insight into the history of the Cherokee people who live here.

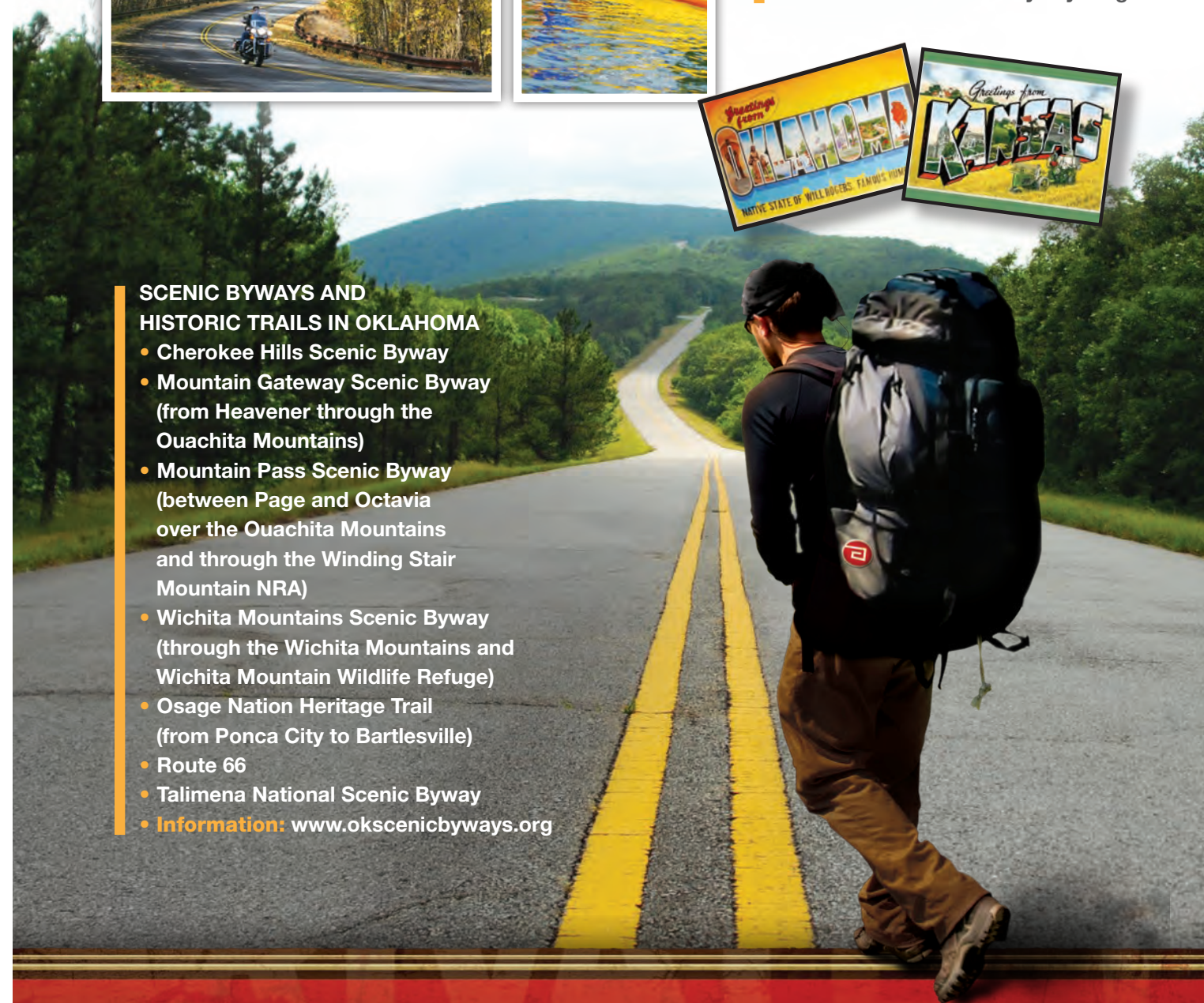
Travelling along the almost 90 km **Talimena National Scenic Byway** in south-eastern Oklahoma it is perhaps possible to understand why this landscape reminds the Cherokees of their former homelands. The forested **Kiamichi Mountains**, one of the highest mountain ranges between the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachians, are similar to the Great Smoky Mountains in the Southeast of the USA.



- ### SCENIC BYWAYS AND HISTORIC TRAILS IN KANSAS
- Flint Hills Scenic Byway
 - Frontier Military Scenic Byway
 - Glacial Hills Scenic Byway (northwards from Leavenworth along the Missouri River)
 - Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway (between Medicine Lodge and Coldwater)
 - Native Stone Scenic Byway (through the valleys of Mission Creek and Mill Creek/Flint Hills)
 - Post Rock Scenic Byway
 - Prairie Trail Scenic Byway (from Canton through the western Flint Hills)
 - Smoky Valley Scenic Byway (Smoky Hill River Valley)
 - Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway
 - **Information:** www.ksbyways.org



- ### SCENIC BYWAYS AND HISTORIC TRAILS IN OKLAHOMA
- Cherokee Hills Scenic Byway
 - Mountain Gateway Scenic Byway (from Heavener through the Ouachita Mountains)
 - Mountain Pass Scenic Byway (between Page and Octavia over the Ouachita Mountains and through the Winding Stair Mountain NRA)
 - Wichita Mountains Scenic Byway (through the Wichita Mountains and Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge)
 - Osage Nation Heritage Trail (from Ponca City to Bartlesville)
 - Route 66
 - Talimena National Scenic Byway
 - **Information:** www.okscenicbyways.org





GET YOUR KICKS ON ROUTE 66

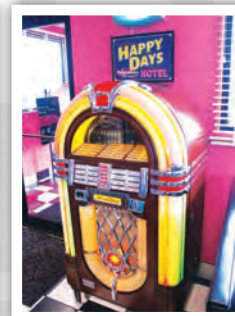
Travelling on the Mother Road

"AMERICA'S MAIN STREET", "QUEEN OF HIGHWAYS" OR "MOTHER ROAD" - ROUTE 66,

America's most famous road has many names and a mythical ring associated with Harleys and Classic Cars, with vast distances and with the setting sun. Although it was officially decommissioned in 1985 and swallowed up by the modern highway system, 640 km of the "Mother of all Roads" can still be found in **Oklahoma**, with another short section in southeast **Kansas**.

Nowadays it is not easy to imagine the significance of this simple country road but even in the early 20th century there were only a few fully constructed roads in the centre of the USA; instead there were dusty tracks such as the Santa Fe, Oregon, California and Mormon Pioneer Trails. It was not until 1915 that a road connected the East and West coasts, running for 5400 km between New York and San Francisco: the Lincoln Highway. Inspired by this, from 1927 Cyrus Avery from Tulsa and John Woodruff from Missouri planned the almost 4000km route between Chicago and Los Angeles. The aim was not to find the shortest way, but to connect as many settlements as possible into the road system. In 1938, the route was fully surfaced, the traffic increased steadily and an infrastructure developed with motels, diners, petrol stations and workshops and also symbolic figures sending a strong advertising message - today these **roadside attractions** and historical sights at the side of the road draw many visitors.

In 1939, the winner of the Nobel prize for Literature, John Steinbeck (1902-1968) described Route 66 in "The Grapes of Wrath" as "a long concrete path through the country," as the "path of a people in flight" and called it the "Mother Road" for the first time. During the economic crisis and the "Dust Bowl", a natural catastrophe of the 1930s, hundreds of thousands of farmers and cowboys packed their meager possessions into rickety pick-up trucks and left the Mid-West for the "Promised Land" - California - to make a new start.



One of the many who have travelled on Route 66 was Robert William "Bobby" Troup Jr. from Harrisburg/Pennsylvania. Once the pianist in the Tommy Dorsey Band, he composed the catchy "**Get Your Kicks on Route 66**" which first hit the air waves in 1946 on a record by Nat King Cole; the song was made world-famous by the Rolling Stones in 1964.

Each of the eight states along the road has its own Route 66 Association. In 1999 President Bill Clinton signed a law to protect it and made funds available. This is why, since September 2005, some sections of Route 66 in the states of Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona are shown as "**Historic Route 66**" and a **National Scenic Byway**.

get your kicks

Experts consider the **Oklahoma section of Route 66**, which follows the path of the I-44 highway to Oklahoma City and then the I-40 further westwards, one of the best preserved between Chicago and Los Angeles. A lazy country drive passes neon-lit diners, Mom & Pop stores and old petrol stations. Even on the short 21km section in **Kansas** between **Galena, Riverton** and **Baxter Springs**, there are attractions, such as **Four Women on the Route**, a diner in an old petrol station in **Galena** and the **Rainbow Marsh Arch Bridge** near Riverton.

Three museums on the Route offer a perfect introduction to its history and mythology: the **National Route 66 Museum** in **Elk City**, the **Oklahoma Route 66 Museum** in **Clinton**, and the **Route 66 Interpretive Center** in Chandler. Eye-catching curiosities to be seen elsewhere on Route 66 are the **Blue Whale** in **Catoosa**, a strange water slide, the **Totem Pole Park** in **Foyil**, the **Rock Café** and **Hotel Lincoln** in **Stroud**, the **Round Barn** in **Arcadia**, **Waylan's Ku-Ku Burger** in **Miami**, **Robert's Grill** in **El Reno**, **Lucille's Roadhouse Diner** in **Weatherford** and the **Mohawk Lodge Indian Store** in **Clinton**.

Within sight of the historic **Round Barn** in **Arcadia**, a small town east of Oklahoma City, is an unusual, modern Route 66 attraction, marked by a 20m high illuminated fizzy drink bottle: **POPS**. This petrol station/diner hybrid is not only a biker destination of architectural note, it also offers a special feature: almost 600 soft drinks from all over the world to accompany the hamburgers and hotdogs, sorted by colour and taste. Also available in six-packs to take away.

INFORMATION AND FACTS FOR ROUTE 66

Built: 1926-1938

Length: 2448 miles (3939km)

Route: From Chicago (Adams St./Michigan Ave., Grand Park) through 8 US states (Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California) and three time zones to Los Angeles (Santa Monica Pier).

Designated "Historic Route 66"

(National Scenic Byway) all the sections in Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico and some sections in Arizona are under historic monument protection.

Information:

www.historic66.com,
www.national66.com,
www.legendsofamerica.com/66-main.html, www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/route66

A SEA OF GRASS

Landscapes and ecosystems

THE NORTH AMERICAN PRAIRIE IS THE DEFINING FEATURE OF THE LANDSCAPE IN OKLAHOMA AND KANSAS. "Prairie" is the general term for the wide expanses of land between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi valley. It is referred to as grassland, this being the vegetation that originally grew there. The grass varies in type and height, providing a feature with which to distinguish the different areas: short, tall or mixed. A distinction is made between the relatively wet **Central Plains** or the **Tallgrass Prairie** – around Mississippi, the Missouri River and its tributaries – and the **Great Plains**. These stretch between the Missouri Valley and the Rocky Mountains and are classified into dry **shortgrass prairie** in the rain shadow of the Rockies and **mixed-grass prairie** in the centre.



The prairie might appear uniform at first sight, but the "Sea of Grass" is criss-crossed by river valleys and mountains and characterized by a diverse range of vegetation. For example, in **Oklahoma**, there are six different types of landscape: **Central** or **Frontier Country** (mixed grass), **Northeast** or **Green Country** (hilly and forested), **Northwest** or **Red Carpet Country** (short grass), **South Central** (forests and lakes), **Southeast** or **Kiamichi Country** (forest) and **Southwest** or **Great Plains Country** (mixed grass and short

grass). In **Kansas** there are three geographical regions: **wooded hills** in the East, **tallgrass prairie** in the centre and **high plains** (mixed grass and short grass) in the West.

Travelling through the two states, it is possible to get to know the diversity of the prairie in various nature reserves. The **Flint Hills** are a highlight: this is the hilly grassland between Wichita and Kansas City which is the largest contiguous natural conservation area of North American **tallgrass prairie**. There are just a few towns scattered over the Flint Hills and they have retained their own "small-town American" atmosphere. The **Flint Hills Scenic Byway** passes south from Manhattan (Flint Hills Discovery Center) to **Council Grove**, which resembles an open-air museum, through hilly grassland to **Cottonwood Falls** with its historic courthouse, which is well worth visiting. At the centre of the region is the 10,894 acre **Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve** (www.nps.gov/tapr) with a historic ranch. Many thousands of head of cattle have been grazed here over the years, and now bison have been reintroduced.

The **Kansas Wetlands** in the centre of the state present a completely different picture. East of **Great Bend** two wetland areas extend across the country, the home or temporary stopover for countless birds. They are: the **Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area** (www.visitgreatbend.com/Cheyenne_Bottoms.asp) and the **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge** (www.fws.gov/quivira). They are linked by the **Wetland and Wildlife National Scenic Byway** and are ideal locations for watching birds and wild animals.

In the North of Oklahoma, halfway between Dodge City and Oklahoma City is an almost unbelievable sight: sand dunes as far as the eye can see! The **Little Sahara State Park** (www.duneguide.com/sand_dune_guide_little_sahara_ok.htm) covers an area of around 6 km². Visitors can explore the sandy environment in a dune buggy.

Many-faceted prairie



As you continue on your travels south on US Hwy 281, you will soon see the **Wichita Mountains** rising in the distance. There is a road up **Mt Scott**, which at 751 meters is the second-highest mountain in this sandstone range. From the top, there are extensive views over southwest Oklahoma and the small picturesque holiday resort **Medicine Park** (www.medicinpark.com), the largest town in the region, **Lawton**, historic **Fort Sill** and the Comanche Nation. The mountains are surrounded by the almost 420 km² **Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge** (www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/oklahoma/wichitamountains) which was established in 1901, and is the oldest wildlife reserve in the USA. It is home to bison and longhorns.

Eastern Oklahoma with its woods and hills, lakes and rivers lies in a transitional area between the prairie and the Mississippi valley. The South East is known as "**Lake Country**", with the largest manmade lake in the USA **Lake Texoma**, a paradise for watersports and fishing. Three rivers, the **Red**, the **Blue** and the **Washita River**, meander

through the Chickasaw Nation. The scenery is dominated by the **Arbuckle Mountains** which rise to 500 meters and in which the **Turner Falls** (www.turnerfallspark.com) are located, offering a very special natural spectacle. These 23 meter high waterfalls along with the two largest towns in the area, **Davis** and **Sulphur**, are popular attractions in Oklahoma. In the **Kiamichi Country** to the East, the diversity of the landscape is highlighted by the valley of the Mountain Fork River, the Broken Bow Lake and the Robbers Cave State Park. The North East on the other hand is known as the "**Green Country**". Here in the homelands of the Cherokee Nation, east of Tulsa, the route leads through thickly forested mountain landscapes.



THIS & THAT

Strange and unusual



While **Wichita's Old Cowtown Museum** brings the city's heyday back to life, Dr Jon and Lorna Kardatzke's **Museum of World Treasures** (www.worldtreasures.org) offers an unusually diverse collection of documents and art treasures from all over the world.

Tourist attractions

From "Ropin' Willie" and a spectacular skyscraper, unique museums and collections of curiosities to salt domes and memorial monuments, there is a broad spectrum of sights to be seen in Oklahoma and Kansas.

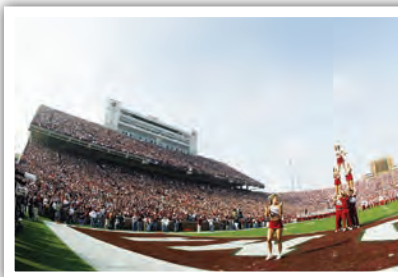


"COWBOYS AND NATIVE AMERICANS" ARE JUST ONE ASPECT OF THESE TWO STATES. They both offer a number of other unusual attractions. For example, the **Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore**, north of Tulsa was dedicated to the cowboy turned entertainer and Oklahoma's best-known son in 1935, just three years after his death. "Ropin' Willie" made his name as a showman, comedian, singer, actor and author throughout the world.

In nearby **Bartlesville** and visible from far away, an unusual building looms over the otherwise modest town: the **Price Tower** (<http://pricetower.org>). This skyscraper was built by the leading American architect Frank L. Wright for the H.C. Price Pipeline Company in 1956. Later, Wright's only high-rise served as the headquarters of the Phillips oil company before it was renovated in 2001 and found a new purpose as the Price Tower Arts Center. It also contains a recommended boutique hotel (<http://pricetower.org>).

Founded in 1890, the **University of Oklahoma** has been located on a large campus in the small town of **Norman**, just a few kilometres south of Oklahoma City. Two museums at the University are particularly rewarding to visit: The **F. Jones Jr. Museum of Art** (www.ou.edu/fjima/home.html) holds a comprehensive collection of modern art in two buildings, while the **S. Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History** (www.snomnh.ou.edu), established in 1899, offers an extremely entertaining and informative introduction to the history of the natural world and the population in Oklahoma.

Adjacent to the State Capitol in **Oklahoma City** is the **Oklahoma History Center** (www.okhistorycenter.org), where it is possible to take an absorbing journey into the past thanks to a range of multimedia facilities. The "ONEOK – We are who we were" section on the 39 Native American tribes to which Oklahoma is now home is particularly worth seeing. **Oklahoma City National Memorial** (www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org, www.nps.gov/okci) and Museum commemorates a sad chapter in the city's history: In the morning of 19 April 1995, two right-wing radicals blew up a multi-storey office block, killing 168 people.

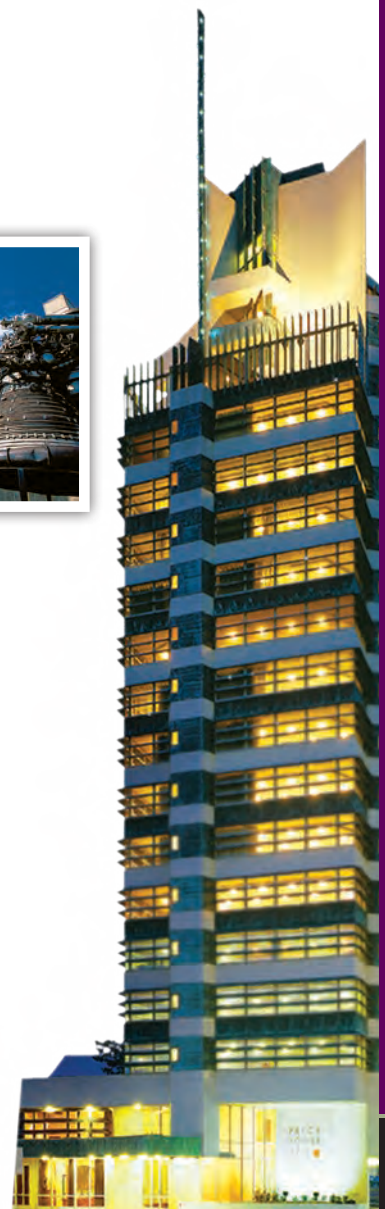
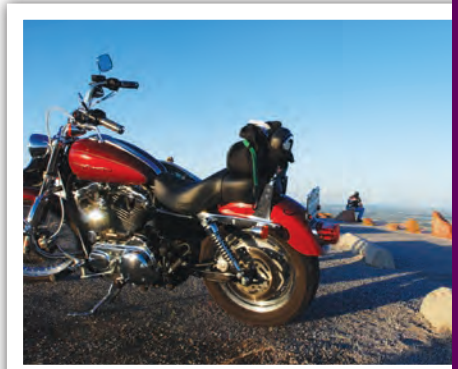


Visitors are drawn to Hutchinson in the Northwest by the **Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center** (www.cosmo.org) a space museum which was created as a private planetarium and now collaborates with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington. Historical events and personalities from before the start of the space age until the end of the Apollo mission can be explored. "Hutch" is also known as the "Salt Capital". In the **Kansas Underground Salt Museum** (www.undergroundmuseum.org) visitors descend almost 400m below ground into a salt mine. It is a huge salt dome quarried mainly for road salt. Important documents, film reels from Hollywood and treasures from all over the world have also been stored in the parts of the mine that have already been excavated.

Lindsborg was founded by Swedish immigrants (www.lindsborg.org). The local artist **Birger Sandzén** (1871 - 1954) is commemorated not only in the **Birger Sandzén Memorial Art Gallery**, but also in the **Mingenback Art Center** in Bethany College. With numerous art galleries, including the **Red Barn Studio Museum**, which is dedicated to the local artist Lester Rayme, the **Small World Gallery**, the **Courtyard Gallery** and the **Oil Springs Schoolhouse Gallery**, the town is today considered an **artists' colony**.

Nearby **Lucas** numbers only a few hundred inhabitants, but is known in the art world as the "**Grassroots Arts Capital**". The Grassroots Art Center of America, a museum for folk art (www.grassrootsart.net) and the **Garden of Eden**, a house converted into a art installation by Sam Dinsmoor by 1933 (www.garden-of-eden-lucas-kansas.com) offer insight. The **World's Largest Collection of the World's Smallest Versions of the World's Largest Things Traveling Roadside Attraction and Museum** (www.worldslargestthings.com) is a folk art collection belonging to local artist Erika Nelson and can be admired in a small minibus which travels around the country.

Lucas is easily reached from **Salina**, the county seat and centre of the world's largest wheat-growing area. Wheat, ok – but vineyards? There are now over **20 vineyards** in each of Kansas and Oklahoma offering good wines (www.kansasfarmwineries.com). There are also wine trails, such as the **Northeast Kansas Wine Trail** and wine festivals.



BBQ, STEAKS, CORNBREAD AND MORE

The flavor of Kansas and Oklahoma



EACH US STATE HAS NOT ONLY ITS OWN FLAG, but also state symbols such as flowers, birds and songs. **Oklahoma** even has an official **state meal** and **Kansas** boasts an indisputable reputation as a **BBQ leader**. There is good value, “fingerlickin’ good food” to be had in

diners, BBQ joints and steakhouses. It’s a mistake to judge the establishments by their exterior appearances; in most cases the best are concealed behind modest façades.

The people in the Heartland share a huge passion: barbecuing. It is mainly beef and pork, steaks and ribs that are cooked over the charcoal, but also, thanks to German immigrants, sausages. The **Kansas City BBQ** is famous, but in both states the menus feature ribs, pulled pork, beef brisket, smoked sausage, chicken and turkey – large portions with generous amounts of sauce and a range of side orders, also served as mixed platters. At **Smokin Joe’s Rib Ranch**, in Davis/OK, for example.

Between May and September there are numerous **BBQ contests** open to the public in both states. One of the largest is

the **Kansas Masters BBQ Championship** in June in Wichita. Strictly speaking, a barbecue (also “Bar-B-Que”, “barbeque” and “BBQ”) is a method whereby marinated pieces of meat are slow cooked until tender in special barrels or smokers

over an open wood fire, preferably mesquite, slowly at a moderate temperature. However, BBQ is also a way of life and everyone has their own secret recipe for marinades, cooking time, type of grills, wood and seasoning. Only the **grill master** knows how to make the meat tender and juicy, even huge pieces of beef brisket. There is a host of recipes for **BBQ sauce** to cater for every taste: spicy, sweet, thick or thin.

Exceptionally prime-cut steak is available all over Kansas and Oklahoma. **T-Bone, sirloin, filet mignon, strip** and **rib-eye**, dry or wet-aged, different grades and sizes; just reading a steakhouse menu is mouth-watering – and confusing. A rib eye or a T-bone steak is never the wrong choice; as general rule, 12 oz are enough and ordering the steak “medium rare” or “medium” is recommended, as the meat will only develop its full taste when still pink in the middle. Another rather exotic specialty is served in some steakhouses such as **Cattlemen’s** in Oklahoma City: **lamb fries, prairie oysters, cowboy caviar** or **swinging beef** (all names for deep-fried bullock or calf testicles).



Today's Special

Besides BBQ, fried chicken and chicken-fried steak smothered with white gravy, corn-on-the-cob, green beans and fried okra are also very popular.

And let’s not forget the **burgers**! Normal burgers, bison burgers, or, a specialty from El Reno/OK, **onion burgers**, in which chopped onion is mixed with the ground beef, are a low-cost and filling treat. The regional cuisine in Kansas and Oklahoma can also offer meat-free elements, such as okra, pumpkin, beans or corn dishes. **Grits**, a kind of polenta or **cornbread, biscuits** and the **wheaten bread** from Kansas, are popular side dishes. **Dutch oven cooking** derives from the old cowboy lifestyle. The food, which might be biscuits, pies, beans or casseroles is placed in a thick-walled cast iron pot and cooked slowly from below and above with glowing charcoal.

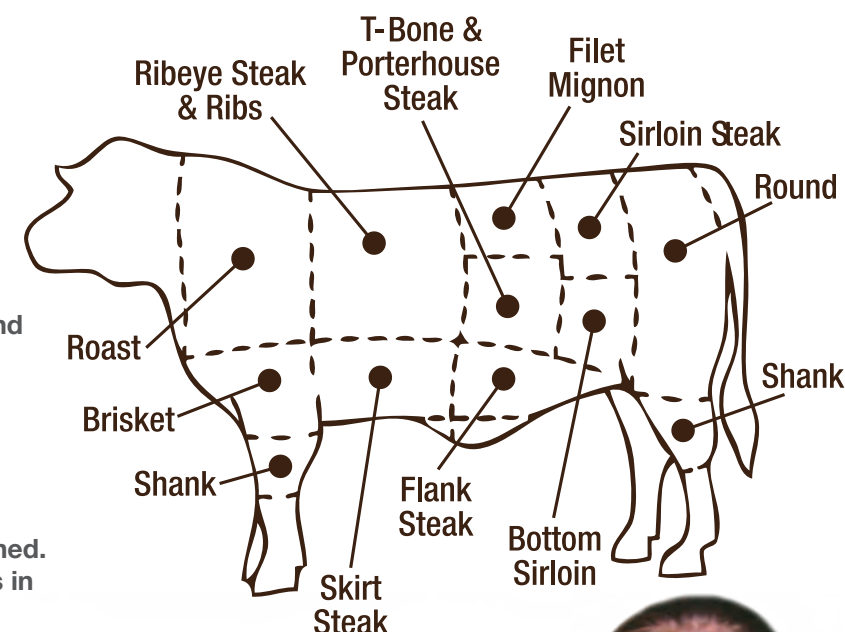
And after all that, can you still manage a dessert? You won’t want to miss the sweet treats, such as **peach cobbler** and every kind of **pie**, open or closed, baked or fried, like those at **Arbuckle Fried Pies** in Davis/OK. The appropriate drink would be a cool **root beer**, a non-alcoholic beverage brewed from the root bark of the sassafras tree which also comes as a dessert in the form of a **root beer float** with vanilla ice cream.



KC-STYLE BBQ SAUCE

Measure into a saucepan
 700ml ketchup
 100g tomato paste
 200g brown sugar
 200ml apple vinegar
 50ml water
 50ml molasses
 1tbs Dijon mustard
 1tbs Worcestershire sauce
 2tsp garlic powder
 1tsp each of salt and pepper
 Chili powder, cayenne pepper and paprika to taste.
 Mix all the ingredients and bring them to the boil.
 Simmer over a low heat to reduce for about an hour stirring frequently and check the seasoning when finished.
 Can be kept for approx. 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

CUTS OF BEEF AND STEAKS



A SELECTION OF RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS

- BBQ:** Guy & Mae’s Tavern (Williamsburg/KS), Smokin Joes Rib Ranch (Davis/OK)
- Fried Chicken:** Ann’s Chicken Fry House (Oklahoma City/OK), Chicken Annie’s Original and Chicken Mary’s (Pittsburg/KS)
- Onion Burger:** Cozy Inn (Salina/KS), Robert’s Grill (El Reno/OK)
- Cafe/Diner:** Old Mill Tasty Shop (Wichita/KS), POPS (Arcadia/OK)
- Steakhouse:** Cattlemen’s Steak House (Oklahoma City/OK), Grand Central Hotel Grill (Cottonwood Falls/KS), Casey’s Cowtown (Dodge City/KS)
- Local Flavour:** Arbuckle Fried Pies (Davis/OK), Hays House 1857 Restaurant & Tavern (Hays/KS), White River Fish Market & Seafood (Tulsa/OK)





OKLAHOMA

NATIVE AMERICA



- Route 66**
- Chisholm Trail**
- Santa Fe Trail**
- Oregon Trail**
- Pony Express**
- I-35**
- I-70**
- I-40**

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