

## **Art & Icons of the Midwest**

### *A Tour of the Great Museums and Landmarks of Iowa, Illinois and Missouri*

America's famous cities on the East and West coasts get a lot of attention from travelers from around the world. But if you are seeking to really understand the heart of America, you need to travel to the center. The Art & Icons of the Midwest tour itinerary takes you to Iowa, Illinois and Missouri to see the Midwest's greatest artwork and iconic structures.

Reoccurring themes in the Midwest include agriculture, industriousness and wide open spaces. But there's another prevalent theme in the Midwest: a deep commitment to the arts and architecture. You will see some of America's most famous sights and enjoy some of the top art collections in the world.

### **Day 1: Des Moines, Iowa**

Far from a sleepy rural town, the Des Moines area is a thriving community that over 500,000 people call home. Des Moines boasts a high quality of life and is often recognized for its excellent business environment. It's also home to a number of fantastic venues for the arts, and we're going to visit one of them.

Morning:

Des Moines Art Center  
4700 Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50312  
(515)277-4405

Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday, 11am–4pm  
Thursday, 11am–9pm  
Saturday, 10am–4pm  
Sunday, Noon–4pm  
Closed Monday

World-renowned architects Eli Saarinen, I. M. Pei and Richard Meier each designed one of the major buildings of this innovative art center. The Des Moines Art Center is a world-class museum which emphasizes contemporary art. See the works of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century artists. Highlights include Henri Matisse's *Woman in White*, Jasper Johns' *Tennyson*, Edward Hopper's *Automat*, and Georgia O'Keeffe's *From the Lake No. 1*.

Afternoon:

We'll take a driving tour of Des Moines most important architectural sights, including a tour of the golden-domed Iowa State Capitol Building.

Evening:

Des Moines will put to rest any idea you might have of Iowa as being land of cornfields and farms. This hip community boasts a number of top-notch restaurants and a thriving nightlife. We'll spend the evening enjoying dinner and some of Des Moines unique venues before retiring to our hotel.

## **Day 2: Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

Today, we'll explore Cedar Rapids. After Des Moines, Cedar Rapids is the second largest city in Iowa. Combined with Iowa City, it is part of a metropolitan area of over 350,000.

Morning:

Amana Colonies Heritage Museum  
4310 220th Trail  
Amana, Iowa  
(319) 622-3567

The history of the Amana Colonies dates to the mid-1800s when a religious group known as the Inspirationalists settled in this area and established a successful religious communal society that lasted until the 1930s. Learn about the history of this unique American community at the Amana Colonies Heritage Museum.

Amana Colonies Arts Guild Gallery  
PO Box 114  
Amana, IA 52203  
(319) 622-3678

Located one block north of Highway 220 in High Amana

The Amana Colonies are famed for superior craftsmanship. The gallery, located in High Amana, features arts and crafts made by local artisans, from metalwork and basketry to quilts and rugs.

Afternoon:

Brucemore  
2160 Linden Drive SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403  
(319) 362-7375

This mansion located on a 26-acre estate is a National Trust Historic Site. A visitor center features exhibits detailing the history of the estate as well as the prominent Iowa families that once called Brucemore home. The exhibits are a fascinating glimpse into the industrial growth of the Midwest in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art  
410 Third Avenue SE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401  
(319) 366-7503

Our next stop is the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art. Located in downtown Cedar Rapids, the museum has a permanent collection of more than 5600 works. On display is a selection of art spanning over 200 years of history. The museum is home to the largest collection of art by Iowa native son Grant Wood. After touring the museum, we'll visit Grant Wood's studio, located just a few blocks away at 5 Turner Avenue.

Evening:

After dinner, we'll head back to the hotel early in preparation for our journey to Chicago in the morning.

### **Day 3: Chicago, Illinois**

Morning:

We will leave early and travel eastward to Chicago, the cultural center of the Midwest. Skyscrapers, truly vibrant neighborhoods and an incredible cultural richness make Chicago one of the most exciting places on earth.

Afternoon:

Museum of Contemporary Art  
600 S. Michigan Ave  
Chicago, IL 60611  
(312) 280-2660

Hours  
Monday Closed  
Tuesday 10am–8pm  
Wednesday through Sunday 10am–5pm  
Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day: Closed

Our afternoon will be spent at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art. This unique museum presents one of the freshest and most provocative collections of art in the U.S. Sculpture, painting, video and photograph exhibits push visitors to examine the boundaries of art. One of the highlights of the museum is the café on the premises run by world-famous chef Wolfgang Puck.

Evening:

Chicago is arguable the culinary center of the Midwest. After dinner, we'll spend the night in one of the Chicago area's many excellent hotels.

#### **Day 4: Chicago, Illinois**

Morning:

Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60603-6404

The Art Institute of Chicago is one of the most renowned art museums on earth. Some of the most famous works in the world are housed in the art institute. We'll spend the morning touring the paintings, sculptural works, video, textiles and decorative arts exhibits.

Afternoon:

Chicago's architecture embodies the hardworking attitude and boldness of this great American city. We will travel to the top of the Sears Tower in downtown Chicago and look out over this sprawling metropolis on the shores of Lake Michigan. The Sears Tower is the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere. The view from the Skydeck is absolutely stunning.

Evening:

We'll grab a bite to eat and then head back to the hotel early for our trip to St. Louis in the morning.

\*

#### **Day 5: St. Louis, Missouri**

Morning:

St. Louis is known as the "Gateway to the West," a name that reflects the city's importance in the settling of the western states of the U.S. The greater St. Louis area is home to nearly 3 million people.

Afternoon:

Saint Louis Art Museum  
One Fine Arts Drive  
Forest Park

St. Louis, MO 63110  
(314) 721-0072

More than 30,000 works of art are housed in the Saint Louis Art Museum, which offers free admission, in reflection of its motto of “Dedicated to Art and Free to All.” The museum is best known for its Oceanic art, pre-Columbian art, ancient Chinese bronzes and European and American art from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its collection of 20<sup>th</sup>-century German painting is one of the finest in the world.

Evening:

St. Louis is known for great restaurants, and we’ll choose one of the city’s best for tonight’s dinner.

### **Day 6: St. Louis, Missouri**

Morning:

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial  
11 N. 4th Street  
St. Louis, MO 63102  
(314) 655-1700

Our first stop of the day will be the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, site of the “Gateway Arch” and the Museum of Westward Expansion. A five minute tram ride will take us to the top of the Arch. It’s a fitting place to end our tour, as it is the place where the Midwest connects with the American West.

\*

This itinerary provides a basic sampling of what Iowa, Illinois and Missouri offer motorcoach tours. The art and architecture of this region reflects the core values of the nation as a whole, and it’s the perfect place to discover what’s at the heart of America.