Overview of Iowa

Between the Mississippi and Missouri river, in the heart of the Corn Belt, lies the state of Iowa. Its reputation reflects that part of the American identity that celebrates small-town life amid the rolling farmland and patch work countryside. It also contains several bustling cities, such as the state capital of Des Moines, where tradition and innovation are perfectly combined.

Nothing is more traditional than visiting one of Iowa's many local's farmers markets. The rural meets the urban in the most popular of the markets, such as the Downtown Farmers Market, which sets up right at the centre of Des Moines, the state capital.

Throughout the state, there are efforts to preserve Iowa's rural heritage and tradition. The Iowa Barn Foundation sponsors the free All-State Barn Tour every September, aimed at saving and restoring these structures.

The Madison County Covered Bridge Festival has been a time-honoured tradition in Madison County since 1970. The Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge has reconstructed the tallgrass prairie ecosystem, complete with bison and elk.

lowans have also embraced innovation in various areas. An initiative to plant alternative crops has resulted in a fledgling wine industry. Today, travellers can explore three different wine trails. At the famous lowa State Fair, the tradition of sculpting a cow from butter remains, but it has been joined by a line-up of the well-known musicians.

Along the Mississippi River, visitors can choose between watching the sunset from the stands at a minor-league baseball game in Davenport and trying their luck aboard a luxury riverboat casino in Dubuque.

For a real taste of America, travellers should head to the Hawkeye State during a presidential election year to witness some good old-fashioned stumping. The Iowa caucus is the country's first major electoral event for candidates seeking their parties' nomination.

So, contenders, one of which is the future US president, make numerous appearances at local diners and town halls, lead parades, host barbecues, and even clamber atop bales of hay to address voters. Around the 4th of July, campaigning reaches a fever pitch, and is not to be missed.

Key Facts

Language:

English is the most common language spoken but Spanish is often heard in the south-western states. **Passport/Visa:**

It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from them travel destination. A visa is required for short visits unless travellers qualify for entry under the Visa Waiver Program. The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) enables citizens of certain countries to travel to the US for a stay of up to 90 days without a visa. Visitors under the VWP need to register online three days before travel and have an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). This allows the US government to screen all visitors before travel. Visitors entering the country under the VWP must have a machine-readable passport (MRP) that has a barcode on the photo page. Travellers under the VWP must have passports that include biometrics if they wish to enter the country without a visa, which means that passports must contain unique personal data such as fingerprints or iris details. All passports must contain a digital photo image in order to travel visa-free. All visitors to the USA have a photograph and two fingerprints taken by an inkless scanner on arrival, including those travelling visa-free under the VWP. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel document to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA, a valid passport is required by immigration authorities. Immigration officials often apply different rules to those stated by travel agents and official sources.

Currency:

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

Electricity:

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. Plugs are mainly the type with two flat pins, though three-pin plugs (two flat parallel pins and a rounded pin) are also widely used. European appliances without dual-voltage capabilities will require an adapter.

By its very nature much of the information in this travel guide is subject to change at short notice and travellers are urged to verify information on which they're relying with the relevant authorities. Travmarket cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or inconvenience to any person as a result of information contained above. Event details can change. Please check with the organizers that an event is happening before making travel arrangements. We cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or inconvenience to any person as a result of information contained above.

Travel to lowa

Climate for Iowa

lowa lies in the humid continental zone and generally has hot summers, cold winters, and wet springs. Summers are warm and humid, with daytime temperatures averaging 74F (23C) in July but varying from region to region. Tropical air masses from the Gulf of Mexico bring frequent thunderstorms, with persistent rain in June. Winters are cold, with January temperatures averaging about 14F (-10C) in the northwest and 22F (-6C) in the southeast. Snowfall is common but light compared to other states.

Health Notes when travelling to United States of America

There are no specific health risks associated with travel within the USA. Medical facilities are excellent, but expensive. Only emergencies are treated without prior payment and treatment can be refused without evidence of insurance or proof of funds. Good medical insurance is essential. Visitors must be fully vaccinated with the primary series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine to travel to the United States by plane if they are non-U.S. citizens.

Safety Notes when travelling to United States of America

Travel within the United States is generally trouble-free, though travellers should be aware that the US shares with the rest of the world, an increased threat from terrorist incidents. Security has been heightened, particularly at airports. Restrictions on hand luggage apply and travellers are advised to check on the latest situation with airlines in advance. Travellers should also be alert to the dangers of car and street crime in cities and should use common sense and take basic precautions. Hurricanes are common between June and November, putting the southern USA, including the Gulf Coast and the eastern US at risk. There is a risk of wildfires in many dry areas in the US, particularly on the West Coast from March to November.

Customs in United States of America

Laws vary from state to state, including speed limit, fines and punishment. The age at which alcohol may be legally bought and consumed is 21 years.

Duty Free in United States of America

Travellers to the United States who are returning residents of the country do not have to pay duty on articles purchased abroad to the value of \$800 provided their stay was longer than 48 hours and their duty-free allowance was not used in the 30-day period prior. For passengers arriving from Samoa, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a duty-free allowance of \$1,600 is allowed. The following items are included in this: 50 cigarettes and 10 cigars and 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of alcoholic beverages or 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of perfume containing alcohol. Restrictions may apply to goods from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Angola, Liberia and Sudan. It is prohibited to import Cuban cigars from any country.

Travellers to the United States who are non-residents do not have to pay duty on the following items: 50 cigars or 200 cigarettes and gifts to the value of \$100 provided their stay in the USA is not less than 72 hours and that the allowance has not been used in the preceding six-month period.

Prohibited items for residents and non-residents include meat or meat products, poultry, narcotics, absinthe, plants, seeds, vegetables, fruits, soil, live insects and other living plants or animal pests. Fish is prohibited unless it carries disease-free certification. Wildlife and animals or their by-products carry restrictions. Dairy products and eggs from specified countries are not allowed. Firearms and ammunition are not allowed without the necessary license and permit.

Doing Business in United States of America

In such a large country, filled with so many diverse groups, business practices may differ according to each state, however rarely to any large degree. The East Coast is traditionally more formal than the West Coast, though in states such as California, dress code and conservative appearance are as common as they would be in New York. Punctuality is important throughout the country and it is considered rude to be late for a meeting. Gift-giving is uncommon as it may be construed as bribery. Appropriate titles (Mr, Mrs, Ms) are used upon introduction and until otherwise stated. Americans favour politeness and greetings of 'Hello' and 'How are you?' are often expressed with sincerity. Business hours may vary in each state, but an 8am start and 5pm finish Monday to Friday is the most common with an hour over lunch.

Status and age are not necessarily indicative of seniority, nor do they carry much weight in themselves. Those doing business in the States should be mindful of this fact; foreigners should never make assumptions about someone's position or rank. Best practice is to be respectful to all parties. That said, the US upholds a hierarchal business structure, in which 'the boss' is the ultimate decision-maker. Senior leaders have the power of the last word, and can go against the grain just as easily as they can follow popular opinion. Foreigners should concentrate on winning over this individual, even if the greater group seems unsupportive. Americans value a direct style of communication. In this fast-paced, consumer culture 'time is money', and small-talk is viewed as unnecessary and wasteful. It's best for foreigners to get to the point quickly, speak about issues in a frank and open manner, and to avoid taking offence if someone questions or challenges them outright.

Communication in United States of America

The international country dialling code for the United States is +1. Mobile networks cover most of the country, especially all urban areas, and WiFi is widely available.

Tipping in United States of America

A 15 percent tip is expected by taxi drivers, bartenders, hairdressers and waiters, but travellers shouldn't tip in fast-food or self-service restaurants. In expensive restaurants or for large parties, the tip should be 20 percent of the bill. It is normal to tip staff such as valets and porters in hotels; this is discretionary, although a minimum of \$5 is expected. Most services are customarily tipped if the service is good.

Passport/Visa Note

It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from them travel destination. A visa is required for short visits unless travellers qualify for entry under the Visa Waiver Program.

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Airports in Iowa

Des Moines International Airport (DSM)

Des Moines International Airport

www.dsmairport.com

Location: Des Moines The airport is located five miles (8km) from downtown Des Moines.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 515 256 5050

Getting to the city: The Des Moines Area Transit Authority (DART) Route 8 offers service to and from the airport to downtown Des Moines. A one-way fare is \$1.75. The Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) provides door-to-door service to all counties within the Greater Des Moines Metro Area, while intercity connections can be made via the Greyhound, Jefferson, or Trailways bus lines. Car rental and taxi options are available.

Car rental: Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, Hertz, National, and Thrifty counters are located in the baggage claim area.

Airport Taxis: Metered taxis are available from the airport. Officially recommended companies include Capito and Yellow Cab. Both Uber and Lyft operate at the airport.

Facilities: Facilities at the airport include restaurants, a food court, shops, a meet and greet area, ATMs, and conference rooms. Disabled facilities are good.

Parking: Several parking garages are located adjacent to the terminal, with rates starting at \$1 per 20 minutes and \$15 per day in the long-term parking lot, and \$1 per 20 minutes or \$36 per day for short-term parking. A free shuttle service operates from the economy lots, which offer lower rates starting from \$2 per hour up to \$6 per day. Cash and major credit cards are accepted.

Eastern Iowa Airport (CID)

Eastern Iowa Airport

www.flycid.com

Location: Cedar Rapids The airport is about eight miles (13km) from Cedar Rapids.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Contacts: (319) 362 8336 or email info@flyCID.com

Getting to the city: Cedar Rapids Transit Route 11 provides service to the airport roughly every half hour between around 5.40am and 6.40pm on weekdays, and once per hour between around 8.40am and 4.40pm on Saturdays, depending on demand. One way fares are \$1.50 and correct change is required.

Car rental: Car rental companies at the airport include Avis, Budget, Hertz, Alamo, National, and Enterprise.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available at the airport. Officially recommended companies include American Class, Yellow Cab and Master Cab.

Facilities: Airport facilities include an ATM, a business centre, charging stations, a gift shop, restaurants and bars, an information centre, a lost and found, a mothers' room, and public phones.

Parking: Short and long-term parking is located adjacent to the terminal building; the first 20 minutes are free. Short-term rates are \$2 for 30 minutes, \$3 for the first hour and \$1 for each subsequent 30 minutes up to a daily rate of \$14. Long-term parking has a daily rate of \$8.

Iowa City

Deep in the American heartland lies Iowa City, a college town on the Iowa River with sidewalk cafes and leafy neighbourhoods of old homes. However, beneath its small-town surface pulses a vibrant cultural scene.

The city is a giant in the literary world, thanks to the Iowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa. The Workshop counts notables like Flannery O'Connor, John Irving, and Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Cunningham among its alumni.

The best way to enjoy Iowa City is on foot, starting with the Iowa Avenue Literary Walk, which is the Midwest's version of the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Panels along the sidewalk celebrate the many writers with Iowa connections.

Downtown in the Old Capitol District is the place to be. The Pedestrian Plaza is a stage ground for numerous events, especially during Summer of the Arts, which includes the Iowa Arts Festival, Iowa City Jazz Festival, Friday Night Concert Series, and Saturday Night Free Movie Series. Visitors can also catch great performances at the Hancher Auditorium, Englert Civic Theater and intimate Riverside Theater, which hosts an outdoor Shakespeare festival.

At Prairie Lights, one of the best independent bookstores in the country, world-renowned authors frequently give readings. If this sounds too stuffy, keep an eye out for the live bands that often play at the many local bars.

At the University of Iowa Pentacrest, site of the original capitol building before the state capital was switched to Des Moines, visitors can admire the Old Capitol Museum before crossing over the river on a footpath to enjoy the walking trails of City Park.

Des Moines

An oasis of modernity amidst miles of rolling farmland, Des Moines is the biggest city in Iowa and its cultural capital. The city's skyline houses a major business centre for the Midwest, and visitors expecting a country town will come away with a vastly different impression of their holiday in Des Moines.

Located at the intersection of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, the city was formed in 1843 when settlers built a fort for trading with the local Sauk and Meskwaki Indians. The city grew rapidly, and today is home to more than 200,000 people.

It has a number of historic buildings, including the gold-domed Capitol Building, the Tudor-style Salisbury House, and the Governor's residence at Terrace Hill. Other Des Moines attractions include the Des Moines Art Center, the State Historical Society, and Hoyt Sherman Place.

Children will have plenty to see and do in Des Moines as well, such as feeding the giraffes at the Blank Park Zoo, playing in Bubble Bay at the Science Center of Iowa, and riding the roller coasters at Adventureland Park.

Des Moines has a busy and eclectic arts community, with many theatres and live music venues; the city boasts its own symphony, ballet, and opera. The East Village has a broad range of buildings, shops, restaurants, and art galleries, and is a pleasant neighbourhood to explore.

The Court Avenue Entertainment District is the heart of Des Moines' nightlife, with a number of restaurants and nightclubs. The city hosts several festivals over the summer, including the Des Moines Arts Festival and the World Food and Music Festival, among many others dedicated to food, wine, film, music, and more.

Getting around in Des Moines

Getting around in Des Moines is simple thanks to the Des Moines River, which flows through the centre of town and acts as an orienting landmark. Streets east of the river are prefixed with 'East', and those west of it have 'West' or no prefix at all. The streets are easy to navigate. However, driving in winter is not something to be attempted lightly, as snow and ice make conditions difficult for inexperienced winter drivers. The Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) system has a network of buses covering most of the city, and service that runs into the evening. There are several taxi companies available 24 hours, but cabs must be called in advance. Rideshare services include Lyft and Uber.

Climate in Des Moines

Iowa lies in the humid continental zone and generally has hot summers, cold winters, and a wet springtime. Des Moines is located far from any large bodies of water and has warm and humid summers, with daytime high temperatures averaging 86F (30C) in July. Tropical air masses from the Gulf of Mexico bring frequent thunderstorms, with persistent rain in June. Winters are cold, with January temperatures averaging between 14F (-10C) and 31F (-1C). Snowfall is light compared to other states. Autumn (late September to early November) is a pleasant time to visit Des Moines, as the colourful fall foliage can be spectacular.

Events in Des Moines

Iowa State Fair Thursday August 13, 2020 to Sunday August 23, 2020 (13 - 23 August 2020)

Where: State Fairgrounds, Des Moines

Over one million attendees, over 11 days, the lowa State Fair is an experience other states cannot compare to. Held every year in August, the fair includes notable traditions like a cow statue carved from butter, and the crowning of the Fair Queen. There are also offbeat competitions like cow chip throwing, pigeon rolling, pie eating, rooster crowing, and monster arm wrestling. The Iowa State Fair has its roots firmly planted on the many farms in Iowa, and the heart of the event is in the livestock shows, food and craft competitions, and trade shows. However, city slickers won't be bored with the midway rides, concerts, parades, and endless food to be found at the fair.

http://www.iowastatefair.com

Des Moines Arts Festival Friday June 26, 2020 to Sunday June 28, 2020 (26 - 28 June 2020)

Where: Western Gateway Park

The Des Moines Arts Festival is an annual arts festival held in Western Gateway Park in the state capital of Des Moines. The festival is a three-day affair drawing in more than 200,000 people, and is ranked among the most notable festivals in the United States. Now an international phenomenon, the festival had evolved dramatically since its start in 1958. It now encompasses a diverse selection of the arts; everything from classic visual arts, live performance in music and theatre, to interactive arts and a film festival. As well as an array of outstanding art on show, there is also a large selection of eclectic food booths and trucks to choose from, as well as a beer tent. This all makes for a full day of fun and entertainment for the whole family.

http://www.desmoinesartsfestival.org

Airports in Des Moines

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West Okoboji Lake

The most popular area in the Iowa Great Lakes region, West Okoboji Lake is known for its clear blue waters. A popular weekend getaway destination in the Midwest, the lake offers aquatic activities such as fishing, waterskiing, boating, and swimming. Onshore entertainment includes golf, tennis, and hiking, as well as winter activities such as ice fishing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling.

West Okoboji Lake is home to several cities, including Arnolds Park, Okoboji, West Okoboji, and Wahpeton, which ring its shore. They offer accommodation, shops, and restaurants for holidaymakers, with a relaxing small-town atmosphere.

Amusement parks such as Ranch Okoboji, Treasure Village, and Arnolds Park Amusement Park provide entertainment for kids in West Okoboji Lake, while natural parks such as Dickinson County Recreational Trails and Horseshoe Bend County Wildlife Preserve have excellent picnic areas and hiking trails.

Currency

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

Exchange rate for 1 USD - U.S. Dollar

0.93 EUR

39.40 UAH

0.00 OMR

58.11 DOP

Dominican Peso

Omani Rial

0.00 FJD

938.44 CLP

Chilean Peso

10.88 NOK

5.09 BRL

0.00 XCD

Brazilian Real

Norwegian Krone

3,920.00 COP

Colombian Peso

91.39 RUB

57.28 PHP

0.00 ANG

Philippine Peso

Neth. Antillean Guilder Brunei Dollar

Russian Rouble

3.72 ILS

Fiji Dollar

Euro

0.00 BMD Bermudan Dollar

1.52 AUD Australian Dollar

0.00 NPR

Nepalese Rupee

0.00 VEF

Venezuelan Bolivar

0.00 BSD Bahamian Dollar

3.72 PEN

Peruvian Nuevo Sol

12,582.40 UZS Uzbekistan Sum

0.00 NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba

3.66 AED

U.A.E Dirham 878.36 ARS

Argentine Peso

1.70 AZN

Azerbaijan Manat 47.95 EGP

Egyptian Pound

277.87 PKR

Pakistani Rupee

32.33 TRY Turkish Lira

0.00 JMD

Jamaican Dollar

3.49 TMT

83.42 INR New Turkmenistan Manat Indian Rupee

0.80 GBP U.K. Pound Sterling 443.91 KZT Ukrainian Hryvnia Kazakhstani Tenge 0.00 QAR Qatari Rial 0.00 HRK Croatian Kuna 0.00 HNL Honduran Lempira 386.84 AMD Armenia Dram 0.71 JOD Israeli New Sheqel Jordanian Dinar 4.03 PLN Polish Zloty 4.63 RON 0.00 GTQ East Caribbean Dollar Guatemalan Quetzal Moroccan Dirham Bahrain Dinar 88.42 KGS Kyrgyzstan Som 1,358.84 KRW 7,456.52 PYG South Korean Won 18.51 ZAR South African Rand 32.31 TWD

New Taiwan Dollar

0.00 BND

152.99 JPY Japanese Yen 93.075.00 LBP 4.86 LYD Lebanese Pound Libyan Dinar 1.35 SGD Singapore Dollar Swedish Krona 16.95 MXN Mexican Peso 133.87 DZD Algerian Dinar 23.29 CZK Czech Koruna 0.00 KWD Kuwaiti Dinar 3.75 SAR Saudi Riyal 7.81 HKD Romanian New Leu Hong Kong Dollar Central African CFA Franc Vietnamese Dong 10.06 MAD 362.00 HUF Hungarian Forint 4.74 MYR

3.13 TND

Nigerian Naira

108.90 RSD

Serbian Dinar

0.00 BHD 10.89 TJS Tajikistan Ruble 508.31 CRC Paraguayan Guaraní Malaysian Ringgit Costa Rican Colón 0.00 BBD **Tunisian Dinar**

1.37 CAD

Canadian Dollar

10.82 SEK

610.53 XOF

0.00 MMK

Myanma Kyat

17.63 MDL

Moldova Lei

38.15 UYU

0.00 LKR

Uruguayan Peso

Sri Lanka Rupee

610.53 XAF

West African CFA Franc

Barbadian Dollar 1.164.84 NGN 0.00 XPF **CFP** Franc

7.24 CNY Chinese Yuan 0.91 CHF Swiss Franc 6.86 BOB **Bolivian Boliviano** 0.00 TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar 0.00 PGK Papua New Guinean kina 0.00 BWP Botswana Pula 139.89 ISK Icelandic Krona 0.00 MUR Mauritian Rupee 36.79 THB Thai Baht 25,405.70 VND 1.00 PAB Panamanian Balboa 16,073.70 IDR Indonesian Rupiah 1.67 NZD New Zealand Dollar

1.82 BGN **Bulgarian Lev**

0.00 GHS Ghanaian Cedi

6.94 DKK Danish Krone

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