

Route 66 Museum

HISTORIC ROUTE 66 – CURIOS, PIT STOPS AND DINERS

ILLINOIS – MISSOURI – KANSAS – OKLAHOMA – TEXAS – NEW MEXICO – ARIZONA – CALIFORNIA



ROAD
TRIPS
USA

HISTORIC ROUTE 66 – CURIOS, PIT STOPS AND DINERS



Chicago to Springfield, Illinois	3 hours 15 minutes / 326 km
Springfield, Illinois to St. Louis, Missouri	1 hour 25 minutes / 155 km
St. Louis, to Springfield, Missouri	3 hours 20 minutes / 349 km
Springfield, Missouri to Tulsa, Oklahoma	2 hours 45 minutes / 291 km
Tulsa to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	1 hour 30 minutes / 172 km
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Amarillo, Texas	4 hours / 256 km
Amarillo, Texas to Tucumcari, New Mexico	1 hour 45 minutes / 181 km
Tucumcari to Albuquerque, New Mexico	2 hours 40 minutes / 283 km
Albuquerque, New Mexico to Holbrook, Arizona	3 hours 20 minutes / 375 km
Holbrook to Flagstaff, Arizona	1 hour 50 minutes / 168 km
Flagstaff, Arizona to Las Vegas, Nevada	4 hours / 405 km
Las Vegas, Nevada to Santa Monica, California	5 hours / 471 km



Built in 1926, Route 66 is one of the most iconic and famous roads in the world. Stretching from Chicago, Illinois, to Santa Monica, California, this highway makes the perfect setting for the ultimate road trip. Stay on the old two-lane Route 66, avoiding major roads whenever possible, and take a trip back in time to see motels with neon signs, quirky roadside attractions and classic Americana diners.

CHICAGO TO SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Day 1

Start today with breakfast at **Lou Mitchell's**, a Chicago institution which has claimed to be "serving the world's finest coffee" since 1923. There is some dispute about where Route 66 begins in Chicago, but a good place to start is the Route 66 sign on Adams Street, just west of its intersection with Michigan Avenue. The instantly recognizable Route 66 insignia hangs above a sign reading "BEGIN," making this a perfect place to take your first trip selfie.

A great first stop is Joliet, Illinois, where you can explore the **Route 66 Museum** to get to know the "Muffler Men," giant fiberglass statues used along the Route in the 1960s to advertise auto repair shops, diners and other roadside attractions. See your first Muffler Man in Wilmington, the 9-meter **Gemini Giant** promoting the **Launching Pad Drive-In Restaurant**, then head to Dwight for a stop at **Ambler's Texaco Gas Station**, once the oldest continually operated gas station on the route. As you pass through Pontiac, don't miss its collection of murals of President Abraham Lincoln. Be sure to visit Pontiac's **Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum**, with its collection of vintage ads, signs and memorabilia, before arriving at tonight's destination, Springfield.

Accommodation: Springfield, Illinois

Accommodation: Springfield, Illinois



SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

● ● ● 1 hour 25 minutes / 155 km

Day 2

Before leaving Springfield today, visit the **Oak Ridge Cemetery** to see the Lincoln Tomb – the final resting place of President Lincoln. The 35-meter monument that marks his gravesite is decorated by four ornate sculptures that honor Civil War servicemen. Next, head to Litchfield for a quick stop at the **Litchfield Museum & Route 66 Welcome Center** before lunch at the **Ariston Café**. Open since 1935, it is among Route 66's oldest restaurants.

After lunch, make your way to St. Louis, Missouri, crossing the mighty Mississippi River on the **New Chain of Rocks Bridge**. Be sure to stop to explore the now pedestrianized old Chain of Rocks Bridge to enjoy beautiful

greenery along the river. The eye-catching **Gateway Arch National Park** is a perfect first stop upon arriving in St. Louis. Take a 190-meter tram ride to the top of the tallest monument in the United States and be awed by breathtaking views. Explore the **Museum at the Gateway Arch** to learn about the history of the USA and maybe even take a riverboat cruise down the Mississippi. For dinner, explore the St. Louis restaurant scene. Famous for its ribs, the city has plenty of excellent barbeque spots.

Accommodation: St. Louis, Missouri



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SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI TO TULSA, OKLAHOMA

● ● ● ● ● ● 2 hours 45 minutes / 291 km

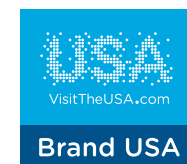
Day 4

Depart Springfield and make a quick stop in Carthage to see the **66 Drive-In Theatre** before heading to Galena, Kansas. While Route 66 only runs through about 20 meters of the state of Kansas, you'll find some key stops along that stretch. **Cars on the Route**, once called Kan-O-Tex Service Station, has been transformed into a whimsical tribute to the animated movie "Cars." Check out the mining boom truck, supposedly the inspiration for the tow truck character Tow Mater. Stop and pick up lunch at **The Old Riverton Store**, which has been operating since the start of Route 66. Take your sandwiches to **Rainbow Bridge**, which

crosses Brush Creek, to admire the only Marsh arch bridge remaining on the route today.

Head to Commerce, Oklahoma, for dessert at **Dairy King**, a family-owned drive-through housed in a charming old gas station. Next is one of the highlights of your journey: **Ribbon Road**, the narrowest and oldest segment of Route 66. As you near Tulsa today, you will pass through the town of Catoosa, home to the **Blue Whale**, a nostalgic roadside landmark.

Accommodation: *Tulsa, Oklahoma*



TULSA TO OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

● ● ● ● ● 1 hour 30 minutes / 172 km

Day 5

Have a leisurely start to your journey this morning as you enjoy the many Route 66 sites in Tulsa. At **Buck Atom's Cosmic Curios**, a former gas station on the route, go memento shopping and snap a selfie with Muffler Man **Buck Atom: Space Cowboy**. Another famous Muffler Man nearby is the **Golden Driller**, a 22-meter-tall monument to Tulsa's rich oil history. Stop for lunch at **Flo's Burger Diner** and try their Signature Bomb Burger. As you leave town, make a stop at the **Cyrus Avery Centennial Plaza**, which pays homage to the Tulsa resident known as the "Father of Route 66." Stroll the observation walkway for incredible views of the historic **Route 66 Bridge** as it stretches across the Arkansas River.

As you pass through Stroud, stop at the **Skyliner Motel** for a photo under their towering red arrow sign. In Arcadia, visiting **Pops 66 Soda Ranch** is a must. Fuel up at the gas station and grab a bite at the restaurant, which offers over 600 choices of soda pop. If you're driving past at night, you can't miss this place: A giant soda bottle covered in neon lights stands outside.

Accommodation: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Day 6

Today, explore state capital Oklahoma City and trace the routes of the original Route 66. Just off 23rd Street, right in the middle of Classen Boulevard, stands one of the city's most iconic Route 66 landmarks – **The Milk Bottle Grocery**. Snap a photo of the giant milk bottle that sits atop the building. Don't miss the **Oklahoma State Capitol**. The remarkable dome on top features a bronze statue of a Native American figure, standing over 5 meters tall and depicting characteristics of each of the state's 38 federally recognized tribal nations. Tonight, explore the historic **Uptown 23rd District**. Discover the nostalgic neon signs along the old route and stop for dinner at one of the many Asian-owned area restaurants, or try **Cheever's Café**, famous for its upscale comfort food.

Accommodation: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Golden Driller, Tulsa, Oklahoma



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OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA TO AMARILLO, TEXAS

● ● ● ● ● 4 hours / 256 km

Day 7

Depart Oklahoma City, and cross the steel truss bridge over Lake Overholser as you leave town. Continuing along Route 66, stop in Clinton's **Route 66 Museum** to experience the story of the Mother Road as you listen to the big band music of the era, sit in a booth at a 1950s diner and learn about life on the road through images and sounds. As you cross the state line into Texas, stop at the gorgeous **Tower Station and U-Drop Inn Café**. This art deco edifice was once a popular gas station and café among Route 66 travelers. Today, it has been fully restored and houses a museum and gift shop. Make a quick photo stop in Groom, at the whimsical **Leaning Tower of Texas**, an unconventional water tower built to look like it will come crashing down at any moment. Tonight, in Amarillo, visit **The Big Texan Steak Ranch**, famous for its quirky architecture and its flame-grilled steaks. If you have a big appetite, take on the 72oz Steak Challenge.

Accommodation: Amarillo, Texas

AMARILLO, TEXAS TO TUCUMCARI, NEW MEXICO

● ● ● ● ● 1 hour 45 minutes / 181 km

Day 8

A short drive west of Amarillo is the famous **Cadillac Ranch**, a striking installation made up of ten graffiti-covered Cadillacs buried halfway in the dirt in the Texas desert. This psychedelic ode to cars is an iconic photo op. A short distance west, celebrate your arrival halfway down Route 66 at the **Midpoint Café** in Adrian. After lunch, travel west to the historic ghost town of Glenrio. The **Glenrio Historic District** straddles the border of Texas and New Mexico, and locals maintain that it was a filming location for the 1940 movie "The Grapes of Wrath." You can still see the old Route 66 roadbed among the many now-unused historic buildings. Enjoy dinner tonight at **Del's Restaurant** in Tucumcari, New Mexico; it's easy to find due to the giant cow outside. With its neon signs, kitschy Americana architecture and locally owned motels, Tucumcari is home to a cornucopia of photo ops showcasing what Route 66 is all about. Take time to explore historic landmarks this evening, being sure to visit the **Blue Swallow Motel**.

Accommodation:
Tucumcari, New Mexico





TUCUMCARI TO ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

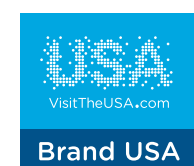
● ● ● ● ● ● ● 2 hours 40 minutes / 283 km

Day 9

Before you leave town today, stop at the **Tee Pee Curios** gift shop, marked by the colorful concrete tepee outside. Stop for breakfast at retro diner **Kix on 66**; be sure to try the Kingman breakfast platter and the giant cinnamon rolls. Heading west, stop in the historic town of Santa Rosa to take a dip in the famous **Blue Hole**. Sightsee in the downtown plaza dominated by the stunning **Guadalupe County Courthouse**. Take the original Route 66 out of town, heading northwest to reach downtown Santa Fe. Explore the **Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi** and the luxurious **La Fonda on the Plaza** hotel, then enjoy lunch at **La Plazuela** in the hotel's courtyard.

Departing Santa Fe en route to Albuquerque was once one of the most challenging parts of the journey, as the road descended 150 meters in just three kilometers thanks to 26 incredibly steep switchbacks. Start your Albuquerque experience with a relaxed dinner at the **66 Diner**, housed in an old Phillips gas station. Try the Green Chile Cheeseburger, making sure to save room for a slice of house-made pie.

Accommodation: Albuquerque, New Mexico



ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Day 10

This morning, tour the **Old Town** and **Downtown** areas of Albuquerque along the stretch of Old Route 66 now known as Central Avenue. Must-sees include the **KiMo Theater**, a marvel of Pueblo Deco architecture, and the **San Felipe de Neri Church**, one of the oldest surviving buildings in the city. Stop for lunch at the **Dog House Drive In**, which television buffs may recognize from “Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul.” After over 50 years, this restaurant remains much the same, serving hot dogs, hamburgers and milkshakes from a modest brick shack. The Dog House bears one of the most recognizable neon signs along the route, delighting

visitors with its depiction of an elongated dachshund wagging its tail and chewing on a string of sausages. After lunch, visit the **Historic Nob Hill** neighborhood to explore Central Avenue, with its glowing neon lights and signs marking the location of Old Route 66. This area is well-known for its colorful nightlife and diverse restaurants; if you like Mexican cuisine, try the whimsical **Range Café**.

Accommodation: Albuquerque, New Mexico



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Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico

HOLBROOK TO FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

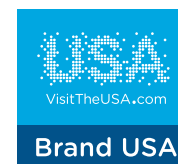
● ● ● ● ● 1 hour 50 minutes / 168km

Day 12

Depart Holbrook and enjoy a late breakfast in nearby Winslow at **La Posada Hotel** in the famous Turquoise Room. Opened in 1930 as one of the most luxurious hotels in the Southwest, this Arizona gem was restored to its former glory in the 1990s and is still one of the most popular stops along Route 66. The town of Winslow is full of treasures both historic and modern. Visit the **Standin' on the Corner Park** on the corner of Kinsley and East 2nd Street, established to commemorate USA band The Eagles' first hit single, "Take it Easy," which mentions Winslow by name. The park brings the song's lyrics to life with a statue of a guitar-bearing singer and a mural of "a girl" sitting "in a flatbed Ford" truck.

Just outside of Winslow, stop to view **Meteor Crater**, where a meteorite fell to Earth some 50,000 years ago. Then make your way toward Flagstaff, being sure to stop for lunch at **Miz Zip's**, a retro Route 66 institution serving up burgers and pies. After lunch, view the block-long mural at **South San Francisco Street**, or, if you want to explore more, take the self-guided tour from the **Visitor Center**. This afternoon, take the 90-minute drive to **Grand Canyon National Park** to admire the unforgettable beauty of the **South Rim**. Watch as the sun sets over the red rocks of the Grand Canyon for a truly awe-inspiring experience. Return to Flagstaff to see many iconic neon signs still lit, including the exciting moving wagon and horses that decorate the **Western Hills Motel**.

Accommodation: Flagstaff, Arizona





LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Day 14

Las Vegas, Nevada, has something for everyone. If you want to discover the origins of Las Vegas, then head downtown and visit the **Mob Museum** to explore the history organized crime in the USA. Take time for lunch at **Atomic Liquors**, whose roof was once a viewing spot to watch the atomic explosions in the Nevada desert. Check out **The Neon Museum Las Vegas**, where iconic signs from

past hotels have been brought back to life. To close out your day, visit the **Las Vegas Strip** to take in the neon lights and unforgettable nightlife that has made this exciting city world-famous.

Accommodation: Las Vegas, Nevada



