

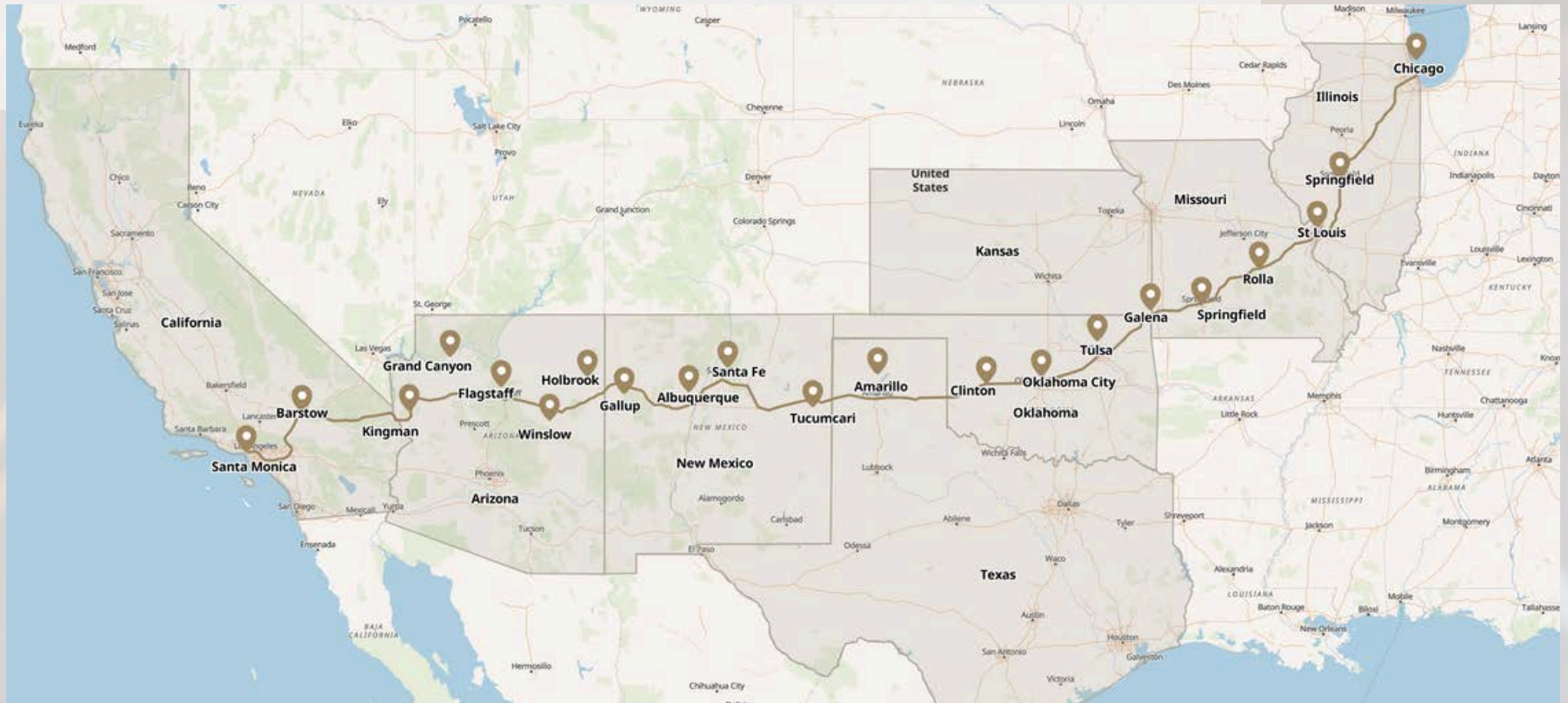


Route 66 - The Mother Road

24 days / 23 nights from NZ \$7,975

Route 66 – The Mother Road

2026 marks the Centennial of Route 66 – the perfect time to experience the ultimate American road trip. This 24-day journey takes you from Chicago to Santa Monica along the legendary “Mother Road,” discovering neon-lit diners, quirky roadside attractions, vintage motels, and small-town Americana across eight states. Begin in Chicago, where blues clubs and deep-dish pizza set the scene before heading south to Missouri, home to St. Louis’ soaring Gateway Arch and Springfield’s Route 66 heritage. In Oklahoma, explore classic diners, historic service stations, and Oklahoma City’s cowboy charm. Cross into Texas to see Amarillo’s Cadillac Ranch and enjoy hearty steakhouse fare. In New Mexico, detour through Santa Fe - part of the original Route 66 - before cruising Albuquerque’s Central Avenue, lined with neon signs, retro motels, and classic diners. Arizona delivers dramatic natural wonders – the Painted Desert, Petrified Forest, Meteor Crater, and a full day at the Grand Canyon – plus nostalgic stops in Winslow, Seligman, and Kingman. Your adventure culminates at Santa Monica Pier, celebrating your achievement at the iconic “End of the Trail” sign while enjoying a breathtaking Pacific sunset. Nostalgia, history, and scenery combine for a once-in-a-lifetime experience every Route 66 traveller dreams of.



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Chicago, IL / Springfield, IL / St. Louis, MO / Springfield, MO / Galena, KS / Tulsa, OK / Oklahoma City, OK / Clinton, OK / Amarillo, TX / Tucumcari, NM / Santa Fe, NM / Albuquerque, NM / Gallup, NM / Holbrook, AZ / Flagstaff, AZ / Grand Canyon, AZ / Kingman, AZ / Barstow, CA / Santa Monica, CA





Chicago Illinois

Chicago welcome city

Welcome to your first city on your adventure, Chicago rated the best big city in the USA 8 years running, by Conde Nast Traveler. Perched on the blue waters of Lake Michigan Chicago is a city like no other. Known for its towering skyline and its bold and wonderful architecture Chicago is sure to wow you. If Jazz and Blues are your thing be sure to catch this, in an evening to remember. With so much to do in the coming days, don't forget to try out Chicago's comfort food, the deep dish pizza!

Day 1: Arrive in Chicago

Arrive in Chicago in the late afternoon or evening and check into your hotel. After settling in, enjoy a leisurely stroll along the **Magnificent Mile**, where glittering city lights illuminate historic architecture and modern landmarks. If time permits, head to Navy Pier for your first glimpse of Lake Michigan and its vibrant evening atmosphere. Dinner is a Chicago must: savour an iconic deep-dish pizza at **Lou Malnati's** or **Giordano's**, two local institutions. Afterwards, round out your first night with live blues at a legendary club such as **Buddy Guy's Legends** or **Kingston Mines**, soaking up the soulful sound the city is famous for. With two full days ahead, there's no rush – you'll have plenty of time to dive deeper into the city before starting your Route 66 adventure. To make the most of your stay, your package includes a 2-day Go City Pass with access to 40+ top attractions, tours, and activities.

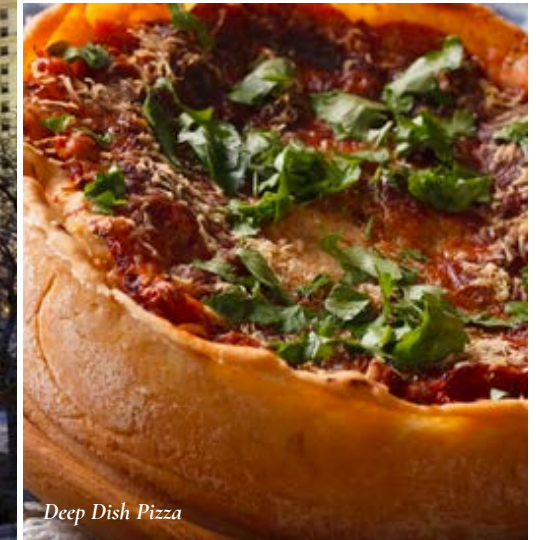
Overnight: Chicago - Arlo Chicago or similar.

Key Highlights:

Magnificent Mile evening stroll / Navy Pier lakefront views / Lou Malnati's or Giordano's dinner / Blues club experience



Magnificent Mile



Deep Dish Pizza



Kingston Mines



Navy Pier



Begin Route 66 Sign



Millennium Park

Day 2: Free day to explore Chicago

Begin your morning at the official “Begin Route 66” sign on Adams Street, the perfect spot for your first photo. Then enjoy breakfast at Lou Mitchell’s, a Route 66 tradition since 1923, where “the world’s finest coffee,” complimentary doughnut holes, and Milk Duds set the tone for the day. Afterwards, explore the city with the Big Bus Hop-On Hop-Off Tour, an easy way to see Chicago’s landmarks while learning its stories. Hop off to discover Millennium Park and the reflective Cloud Gate (“The Bean”), wander through Grant Park, or view masterpieces at the Art Institute of Chicago. Stop at the Willis Tower Skydeck, where glass ledges extend 1,350 feet above the streets for unforgettable views. In the late afternoon, relax on an Architecture River Cruise, offering a unique perspective on the city’s skyline. Round off the day with dinner at a local favourite, from smoky ribs to the classic Italian beef sandwich.

Overnight: Chicago – Arlo Chicago or similar

Key Highlights:

Route 66 Begin sign / Hop On Hop Off Bus Tour / Breakfast at Lou Mitchell’s / Millennium Park & Grant Park / Cloud Gate “The Bean”/Art Institute of Chicago / Willis Tower Skydeck / Architecture River Cruise



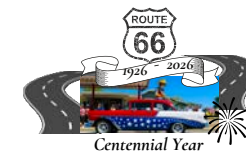
Architecture River Cruise



Willis Tower Skydeck



Cloud Gate (The Bean)



Day 3: Free day to explore Chicago

Spend your last full day in Chicago exploring more of its world-class attractions. Visit the **Shedd Aquarium** or the **Field Museum**, home to Sue – the world’s largest T. rex skeleton – alongside treasures of natural and cultural history. Alternatively, the **Museum of Science and Industry** offers interactive exhibits that showcase innovation and technology. Sports fans can tour iconic **Wrigley Field**, while astronomy enthusiasts may prefer the **Adler Planetarium** for dazzling views of the cosmos and the city skyline. Shoppers can browse **State Street’s** historic department stores, while art lovers will enjoy the contemporary galleries in **River North**. Later, stroll **Millennium Park** again to catch live music or relax along the scenic **Riverwalk**. For dinner, try a classic Chicago-style hot dog at **Portillo’s** – but remember, no ketchup! End your evening at the **Green Mill**, a legendary jazz club once frequented by **Al Capone**, before tomorrow’s **Route 66** adventure begins.

Overnight: Chicago – Arlo Chicago or similar



Adler Planetarium



Green Mill

Key Highlights:

Shedd Aquarium / Field Museum / Museum of Science and Industry / Wrigley Field / Adler Planetarium / State Street shopping / River North galleries & Green Mill jazz



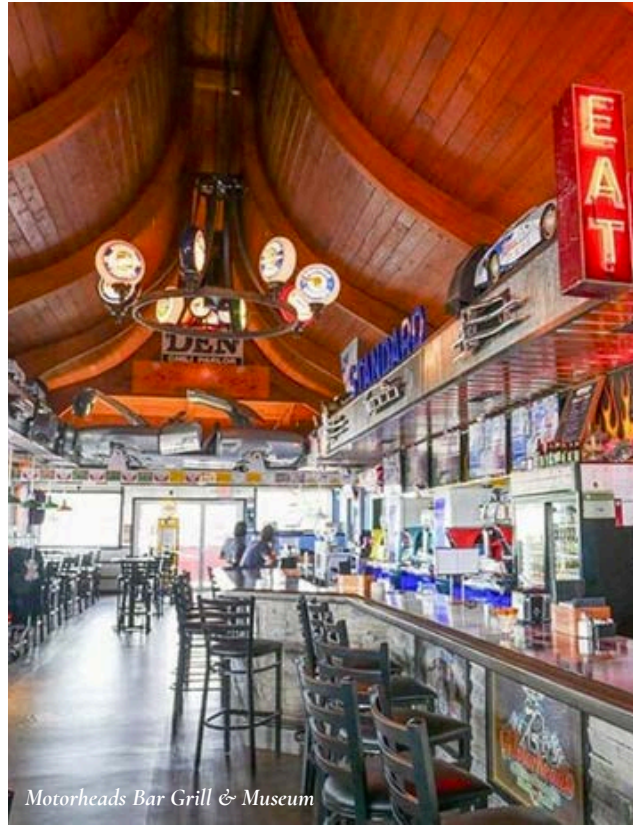
Field Museum



Museum of Science & Industry



Joliet Correctional Centre



Motorheads Bar Grill & Museum

Day 4: Chicago, IL to Springfield, IL (325 km)

Your Route 66 adventure begins after collecting your Alamo rental car. Head southwest to Joliet, where the grand Rialto Square Theatre houses the Route 66 Welcome Centre. TV fans may also recognise the Joliet Correctional Centre, made famous in Prison Break. Continue to Wilmington to meet the towering Gemini Giant, a classic Muffler Man statue. In Dwight, pause at Ambler's Texaco Gas Station, a beautifully restored 1930s-era service station and perfect photo stop. In Braidwood, enjoy a retro bite at the Polk-a-Dot Drive-In, packed with 1950s memorabilia. Pontiac brings the Route 66 Hall of Fame Museum, colourful murals, and vintage advertising signs celebrating the Mother Road's history. Stop in Atlanta to admire the 6-metre Paul Bunyan Hotdog Statue before reaching Springfield. Be sure to stop by the Illinois State Fair Route 66 Experience at dusk to enjoy the historic neon signs and walk through the exhibits. Tonight, enjoy dinner at Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, combining hearty American fare with one of the largest Route 66 memorabilia collections. For a classic roadside bite, the historic Cozy Dog Drive-In also awaits.

Overnight: Springfield - Inn at 835 Boutique Hotel or similar



State Fair Route 66 Experience



Ambler's Texaco Gas Station

Key Highlights:

Joliet Route 66 Welcome Centre / Joliet Prison (Prison Break fame) / Gemini Giant / Ambler's Texaco Gas Station / Polk-a-Dot Drive-In / Route 66 Hall of Fame Museum - Pontiac / Paul Bunyan Hotdog Statue / Illinois State Fair Route 66 Experience / Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum / Cozy Dog Drive-In



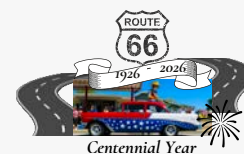
Gemini Giant



Route 66 Hall of Fame Museum



Paul Bunyan



Day 5: Springfield, IL to St. Louis, MO (157 km)

This morning, explore Abraham Lincoln’s Presidential Library, then pay a reflective visit to Oak Ridge Cemetery, the final resting place of Abraham Lincoln, for a poignant connection to history. Afterward, begin your drive toward Missouri. Today’s journey is filled with Route 66 nostalgia - stop in Litchfield for a quick bite at the **Ariston Café**, operating since 1924 and one of the highway’s oldest restaurants. While there, visit the **Litchfield Museum & Route 66 Welcome Centre**, where engaging exhibits showcase small-town Americana and artefacts from the Mother Road’s golden era. Continue south to Collinsville to see the quirky **World’s Largest Catsup Bottle**, a beloved roadside icon. Cross the mighty Mississippi River via the historic **Chain of Rocks Bridge**, once a critical crossing on Route 66. Arriving in St. Louis, ride the tram to the top of the **Gateway Arch**, soaring 190 metres and standing as the tallest monument in the United States.

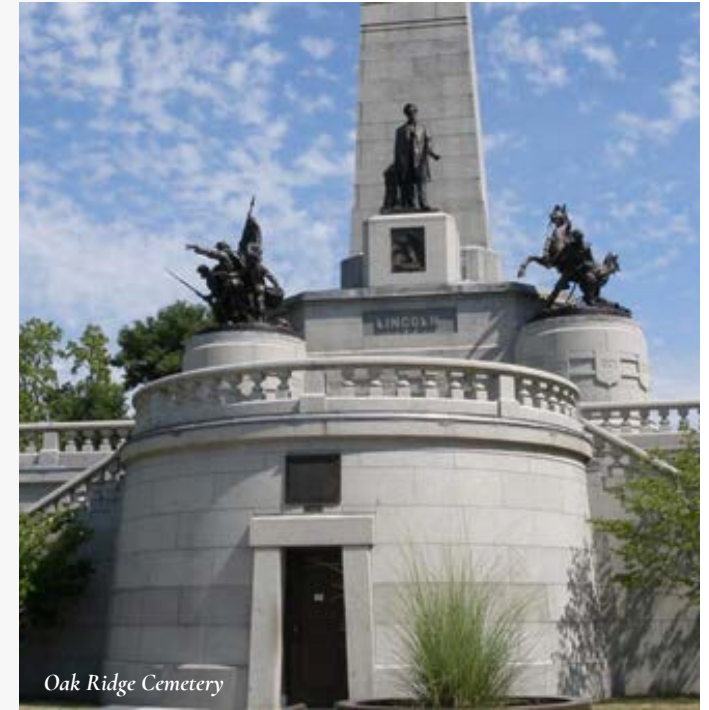
Overnight: St. Louis – Drury Plaza Hotel St. Louis at the Arch or similar

Key Highlights:

Abraham Lincoln’s Presidential Library / Oak Ridge Cemetery / Ariston Cafe / Litchfield Museum & Welcome Centre / World’s Largest Catsup Bottle / Chain of Rocks Bridge / Gateway Arch



World’s Largest Catsup Bottle



Oak Ridge Cemetery



Chain of Rock Bridge



Gateway Arch



Forest Park

Day 6: Explore St. Louis

Spend a full day exploring St. Louis, starting at Forest Park, larger than New York's Central Park and home to the Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri History Museum, and acclaimed Saint Louis Zoo. Beer enthusiasts can tour the Anheuser-Busch Brewery, where the famous Clydesdales still parade proudly, while history buffs may prefer the Old Courthouse, site of the landmark Dred Scott case. Sports fans can explore Busch Stadium, home of the Cardinals. For lunch, try toasted ravioli, a St. Louis speciality. In the afternoon, wander the serene Missouri Botanical Garden or enjoy the cafés, shops, and galleries of the Central West End or the lively Delmar Loop. As evening falls, tuck into smoky St. Louis-style BBQ before catching live blues or jazz in one of the city's iconic clubs. Alternatively, finish the night with a relaxing Riverboat Cruise along the Mississippi, soaking in skyline views under the stars.

Overnight: St. Louis – Drury Plaza Hotel St. Louis at the Arch or similar

Key Highlights:

Forest Park / Art Museum / History Museum / Saint Louis Zoo / Anheuser-Busch Brewery / Old Courthouse / Busch Stadium / Missouri Botanical Garden / Central West End / Delmar Loop / Riverboat Cruise



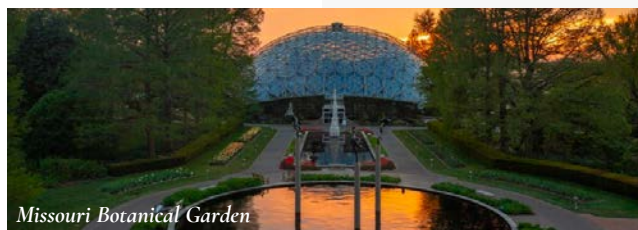
Anheuser-Busch Brewery



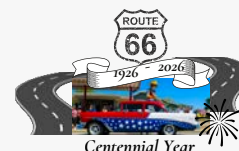
Busch Stadium



Riverboat Cruise



Missouri Botanical Garden



Day 7: St. Louis, MO to Springfield, MO (352 km)

Heading west, make your first stop in Stanton with a visit to the Jesse James Wax Museum or the Meramec Caverns, once a legendary outlaw hideout and now a top Route 66 attraction. Continue to Cuba, famous for its colourful murals and home to the world's largest rocking chair. Stop for lunch at Missouri Hick BBQ, a one-of-a-kind eatery serving classic American barbecue. Don't miss the historic Wagon Wheel Motel, a glowing neon reminder of Route 66's heyday. Further along, pause at Devil's Elbow to admire its classic steel truss bridge spanning the Big Piney River. In Lebanon, the Route 66 Museum features vintage cars, recreated diners, and interactive exhibits. Pass through Uranus, a playful stop full of neon and humour, before arriving in Springfield, the "Birthplace of Route 66." where highlights include the Route 66 Car Museum, the History Museum on the Square, neon-lit motels, retro diners, and the iconic Steak 'n Shake. Overnight at the Best Western Route 66 Rail Haven and check out the Elvis Suite (Suite 409), celebrating Elvis Presley's 1956 stay.

Overnight: Springfield - Best Western Route 66 Rail Haven or similar

Key Highlights:

Jesse James Wax Museum / Meramec Caverns / Cuba murals / Fanning's Route 66 Outpost / Missouri Hick BBQ / Wagon Wheel Motel / Devil's Elbow steel bridge / Route 66 Museum - Lebanon / Uranus roadside stop / Route 66 Car Museum - Springfield / Steak 'n Shake / Elvis Suite Rm 409



Best Western Route 66 Rail Haven



Meramec Caverns



Devil's Elbow



Elvis Suite Rm 409

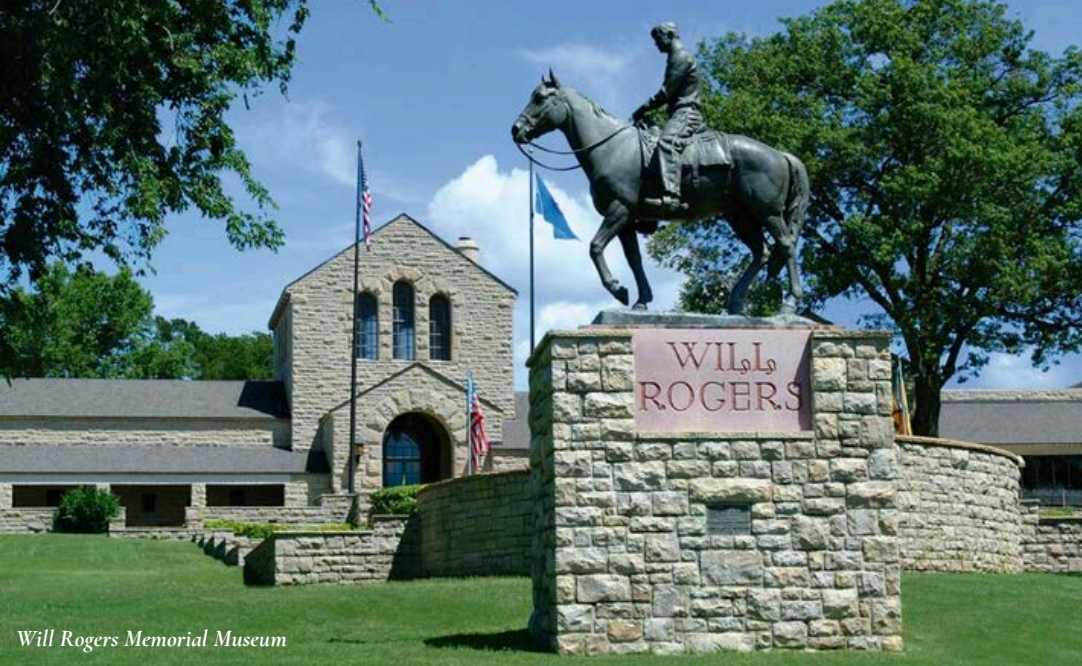


Missouri Hick BBQ



Route 66 Car Museum





Will Rogers Memorial Museum

Day 8: Springfield, MO to Tulsa, OK (293 km)

Travel west into Oklahoma with plenty of classic Route 66 stops. In Carthage, Missouri, visit the retro 66 Drive-In Theatre, still showing films on weekends, and spot classic cars cruising the Mother Road. In Joplin, admire colourful murals and roadside statues celebrating the highway's history and automotive culture. The short Kansas stretch through Galena, Riverton, and Baxter Springs is full of small-town charm, including the restored 1920s Cars on the Route gas station in Galena - a perfect photo stop for car enthusiasts. Enjoy lunch at a vintage diner in Galena, serving hearty American classics amid neon décor. Crossing into Oklahoma, consider a detour to Claremore to visit the Will Rogers Memorial Museum, honouring the beloved humorist and cowboy. Then continue on to Catoosa to see the quirky Blue Whale, a kitschy Route 66 icon. Arrive in Tulsa and explore the Blue Dome District, with neon lights, historic oil-boom architecture, cafés, and restaurants.

Overnight: Tulsa - The Campbell Hotel on Route 66 or similar

Key Highlights:

Drive-In Theatre / Joplin murals / Cars on the Route gas station / Will Rogers Memorial Museum / Blue Whale of Catoosa / Tulsa Blue Dome District



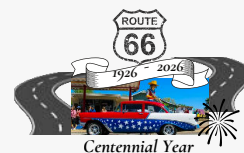
Cars on the Route Gas Station



Drive-In Theatre



Blue Whale of Catoosa



Tulsa



Buck Adams Cosmic Curios



Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum



Cyrus Avery Centennial Plaza

Day 9: Tulsa, OK to Oklahoma City, OK (172 km)

Today's Route 66 journey is packed with iconic stops and quirky Americana. Begin in Tulsa with visits to Buck Atom's Cosmic Curios, a quirky roadside attraction, and the Golden Driller, a towering 22-metre statue celebrating the city's oil heritage. Pause at Cyrus Avery Centennial Plaza, where a striking sculpture and interpretive plaques honour the "Father of Route 66," alongside a nearby historic bridge that once carried travellers along the Mother Road. Head to Foyil to explore Ed Galloway's Totem Pole Park, home to the world's largest concrete totem pole and a vibrant folk-art display. Continue to Stroud for lunch at the historic Rock Café, opened in 1939 and said to have inspired Pixar's Cars. In Arcadia, marvel at the 1898 Round Barn, then stop at POPS 66 Soda Ranch, showcasing over 700 sodas beneath a glowing 20-metre neon bottle. Arriving in Oklahoma City, pay a reflective visit to the National Memorial & Museum before dinner featuring Oklahoma-style onion burgers.

Overnight: Oklahoma City - Colcord Hotel Oklahoma City or similar

Key Highlights:

Buck Atom's Cosmic Curios / Golden Driller / Cyrus Avery Centennial Plaza / Ed Galloway's Totem Pole Park / Rock Café - Stroud / 1898 Round Barn / POPS 66 Soda Ranch / Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum



POPS 66 Soda Ranch



Day 10: Oklahoma City, OK to Clinton, OK (137 km)

Spend the morning in Oklahoma City exploring the Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, strolling Bricktown's lively canal district, or visiting the Oklahoma State Capitol. Don't miss the quirky Milk Bottle Grocery, an instantly recognisable Route 66 landmark. This afternoon continue your Route 66 journey west, stopping in El Reno, famed for its onion-fried burgers and historic roadside charm. Continue to Weatherford to visit the Stafford Air & Space Museum, celebrating NASA, aviation, and engineering achievements. Arrive in Clinton to explore the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, where interactive exhibits, vintage cars, neon signs, and historic gas pumps bring the highway's past vividly to life. Wander downtown Clinton, browsing retro diners, Route 66 memorabilia shops, and small-town Americana. Tonight, enjoy dinner in a classic diner or local café, soaking up the nostalgia, neon glow, and charm that make Route 66 such an unforgettable American road trip.

Overnight: Clinton - La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Clinton Historic Route 66 or similar

Key Highlights:

Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum / Bricktown canal district / Oklahoma State Capitol / Milk Bottle Grocery / Stafford Air & Space Museum / Oklahoma Route 66 Museum





The Leaning Tower of Texas Photo Liz Sinclair



National Route 66 Museum

Day II: Clinton, OK to Amarillo, TX (281 km)

Cross the final stretch of Oklahoma into the Texas Panhandle. Stop in Elk City and visit the National Route 66 Museum complex, featuring vintage cars, historic signage, and interactive exhibits that celebrate the Mother Road's heyday. Cross the border into the Lone Star State, stopping in Shamrock to admire the restored Tower Station & U-Drop Inn Café, a stunning 1930s art-deco landmark and popular photo opportunity. In Groom, take a moment to admire the quirky Leaning Tower of Texas, a playful and iconic roadside oddity. Arrive in Amarillo and start exploring the city's Route 66 and Western heritage. Cap the day with dinner at the Big Texan Steak Ranch, home of the legendary 72-ounce steak challenge - finish it within an hour, and the meal is free! Overnight in the attached Big Texan Motel, a neon-lit Route 66 property that perfectly captures the spirit, history, and retro charm of America's iconic highway.

Overnight: Amarillo - The Big Texan Motel or similar

Key Highlights:

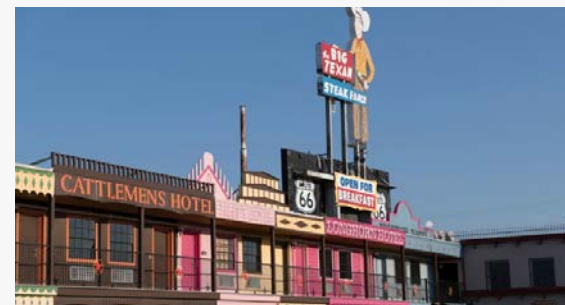
National Route 66 Museum / Tower Station & U-Drop Inn Cafe / Leaning Tower of Texas / Big Texan Steak Ranch / Big Texan Motel



Big Texan Steak Ranch Photo Jaime Hudson



Tower Station & U-Drop Inn Cafe
Photo Liz Sinclair



The Big Texan Motel



Day 12: Amarillo, TX to Tucumcari, NM (181 km)

After leaving Clinton, stop at Cadillac Ranch, a legendary Route 66 landmark where ten Cadillacs are buried nose-first in the ground—a must-see photo stop and interactive art experience. Continue west through the wide-open landscapes of the Texas Panhandle, with endless skies and classic roadside scenery. Pit stop at Adrian’s Midpoint Café, the official halfway point of Route 66, famous for its “Ugly Crust Pies” and quirky memorabilia. Crossing into New Mexico, take in the desert vistas, red mesas, and unique roadside attractions that define the Mother Road. Arrive in Tucumcari, renowned for its more than 50 neon signs and 30 murals celebrating Route 66 history. Check in for an overnight stay at the Blue Swallow Motel, a family-owned throwback to the ‘good old days’ with lovingly restored vintage neon. For dinner, choose from Del’s Restaurant, a classic diner with neon glow and vintage booths, or Watson’s BBQ, a rustic roadside favourite serving smoky flavours in a laid-back, Americana setting.

Overnight: Tucumcari - Blue Swallow Motel or similar

Key Highlights:

Cadillac Ranch / Adrian’s Midpoint Café / Tucumcari neon signs & murals / Blue Swallow Motel / Del’s Restaurant or Watson’s BBQ



*Adrian - Midway Point of Route 66
Photo Jackie Phommahaxy Murguia*

Del's Restaurant

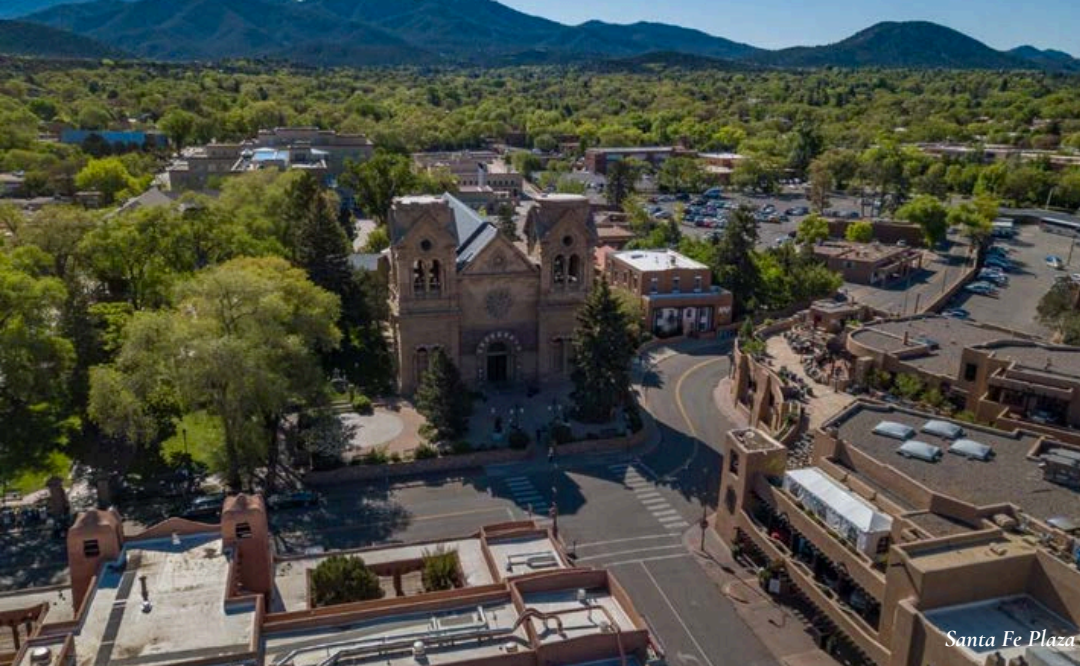


Cadillac Ranch



Blue Swallow Motel





Santa Fe Plaza

Day 13: Tucumcari, NM to Santa Fe, NM (269 km)

Head west this morning with a stop in Santa Rosa, where you can explore the **Route 66 Auto Museum**, showcasing over 30 gleaming classic cars, or cool off with a swim at the famous **Blue Hole**, a 24-metre-deep natural spring. Continue across New Mexico's desert landscapes before detouring north to Santa Fe, part of the original Route 66 alignment until 1938. Known for its adobe architecture, Spanish and Native American heritage, and vibrant arts scene, Santa Fe offers plenty to explore. Stroll through the historic **Santa Fe Plaza**, wander **Canyon Road's** galleries and studios, or visit the **Georgia O'Keeffe Museum** to see works inspired by the striking New Mexico landscapes. Don't miss the oldest **State Capitol** in the U.S. and browse unique boutiques and local crafts. As evening falls, enjoy Santa Fe's celebrated dining, from traditional New Mexican cuisine to contemporary flavours, before relaxing under starry desert skies.

Overnight: Santa Fe – Hotel Chimayo de Santa Fe or similar

Key Highlights:

Route 66 Auto Museum / Blue Hole / Santa Fe Plaza / Canyon Road / Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / State Capitol



Blue Hole



Canyon Road

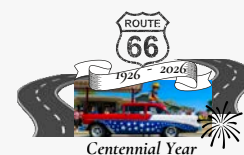


Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

Central Park, New York



Route 66 Auto Museum



Day 14: Santa Fe, NM to Albuquerque, NM (104 km)

Leave Santa Fe this morning via the scenic **Turquoise Trail**, one of New Mexico's most picturesque drives. Pass through Los Cerrillos and Madrid, once rough-and-tumble mining towns now reinvented with colourful galleries, quirky cafés, and a relaxed artistic spirit perfect for a short stop. Continue south into Albuquerque, a city rich in Route 66 history and a vibrant mix of Native American, Spanish, and modern culture. Fans of **Breaking Bad** will recognise filming locations such as Walter White's car wash, Twisters (Los Pollos Hermanos), and the neon-lit Dog House Drive-In. Once in Albuquerque, wander **Old Town** with its adobe buildings, 300-year-old Spanish plaza, artisan shops, and cultural museums, including the **Rattlesnake Museum**, home to live snakes and fascinating exhibits. In the afternoon, ride the **Sandia Peak Tramway** for sweeping views over the Rio Grande Valley. Finish the day with dinner along neon-bright Central Avenue, soaking up classic Route 66 atmosphere.

Overnight: Albuquerque – Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town or similar



Sandia Peak Tramway



Old Town Albuquerque

Key Highlights:

Turquoise Trail / Madrid / Old Town Albuquerque / Breaking Bad locations / Rattlesnake Museum / Sandia Peak Tramway



Rattlesnake Museum





Hotel El Ranch

Day 15: Albuquerque, NM to Gallup, NM (222 km)

Explore more of Albuquerque this morning with a choice of museums: the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History, offering a unique look at science and technology, or the Albuquerque Museum, where local art, history, and Route 66 heritage come together. Continue along Route 66 to Laguna Pueblo, where traditional crafts showcase Native American culture, or take a detour to Acoma Sky City, a dramatic mesa-top community inhabited for centuries. As the plains stretch wide, arrive in Gallup, long known as the “Indian Capital of the World.” Spend the afternoon browsing Trading Posts filled with Navajo and Pueblo jewellery, rugs, and pottery. Overnight at the Hotel El Rancho, once the retreat of Hollywood stars filming Westerns. For dinner, enjoy authentic Southwestern cuisine at a local favourite, or tuck into hearty fare at a classic Route 66 diner. Neon-lit streets and vintage signs cap the evening.

Overnight: Gallup - Hotel El Rancho or similar

Key Highlights:

National Museum of Nuclear Science & History / Albuquerque Museum / Laguna Pueblo / Acoma Sky City / Gallup trading posts / Hotel El Rancho / Route 66 Diner



Acoma Sky City



Albuquerque Museum



Route 66 Diner



National Museum of Nuclear Science & History



Park, New York

Day 16: Gallup, NM to Holbrook, AZ (156 km)

Cross into Arizona, where wide-open desert landscapes and colourful mesas dominate the scenery. Stop at **Petrified Forest National Park**, the only national park crossed by Route 66, to see ancient, fossilised trees, petroglyphs, and the striking hues of the **Painted Desert**. Continue west to Joseph City for a stop at the quirky **Jack Rabbit Trading Post**, a legendary Route 66 pit-stop made famous by its giant “Here It Is” billboard. Arrive in Holbrook, one of the Mother Road’s most nostalgic towns. Check into the **Wigwam Motel**, where guests sleep inside concrete teepees – a quirky Route 66 classic that’s become a bucket-list stay. Spend the afternoon exploring Holbrook’s historic district, where vintage motels, neon signs, roadside dinosaurs, and old trading posts capture the town’s frontier character. Dinner at a local diner rounds out the evening with hearty Southwestern comfort food before settling in for a truly retro overnight.

Overnight: Holbrook - Wigwam Motel or similar

Key Highlights:

Petrified Forest National Park / Painted Desert / Jack Rabbit Trading Post / Wigwam Motel



Wigwam Motel



Painted Desert



Jack Rabbit Trading Post



Petrified Forest National Park



Day 17: Holbrook, AZ to Flagstaff, AZ (149 km)

Start the day early and head east to Meteor Crater, one of the world's best-preserved impact sites. Walk along the rim and explore the visitor centre to learn about its 50,000-year-old history. Afterward, continue west into Winslow for lunch at the historic Turquoise Room in the La Posada Hotel, a beautifully restored Route 66 landmark. Post-lunch, explore Standin' on the Corner Park, featuring a statue, murals, and interpretive signs celebrating the Eagles' song Take It Easy, which immortalised the town. Then drive to Flagstaff, a mountain town steeped in Route 66 nostalgia. Spend the afternoon exploring the Railroad District with boutique shops, cafés, and historic buildings. For a more active option, hike the trails of Coconino National Forest, taking in towering ponderosa pines and scenic vistas. Don't miss the Lowell Observatory, where you can explore the universe and view the night sky through historic telescopes. With two nights in Flagstaff you have all day tomorrow to visit the Grand Canyon!
Overnight: Flagstaff – Little America Hotel Flagstaff or similar

Key Highlights:

Meteor Crater / La Posada Hotel / Standin' on the Corner in Winslow Arizona / Flagstaff historic Railroad District / Coconino National Forest / Lowell Observatory

Meteor Crater



Day 18: Full day to explore the Grand Canyon (260 km round trip)

From your Flagstaff base, set out on a day trip to the Grand Canyon South Rim, approximately 130 km (about 1.5 - 2 hours) north. Arrive early to take in panoramic views from iconic viewpoints like Mather Point, Yavapai Observation Station, and Desert View Watchtower, where the Colorado River snakes far below. The South Rim is ideal for both casual exploration and more active adventures – be sure to check out the Grand Canyon Visitors Centre when you arrive for more information. Stroll along the Rim Trail for breathtaking overlooks, or venture down sections of the **Bright Angel Trail** for a taste of the canyon's depth - remember to plan turnaround points to suit your fitness. Ranger-led programmes provide fascinating insights into geology, wildlife, and Native American history. Consider a shuttle or a mule ride to experience the canyon from a different perspective. With two nights in Flagstaff, you have time to explore the South Rim at a relaxed pace, enjoying sunrise or sunset views, photo opportunities, and the serenity of this natural wonder.

Overnight: Flagstaff – Little America Hotel Flagstaff or similar



Grand Canyon South Rim

Key Highlights:

Grand Canyon South Rim / Mather Point / Yavapai Observation Station / Desert View Watchtower / Bright Angel Trail



Mather Point Grand Canyon



Desert View Watchtower





D'z Route 66 Diner



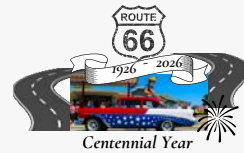
Arizona Route 66 Museum



Hackberry General Store



Kingman Route 66 Photo Stop



Day 19: Flagstaff, AZ to Kingman, AZ (235 km)

Depart Flagstaff in the morning and enjoy a scenic drive through high desert landscapes framed by pine-covered hills. Your first stop is Williams, the “Gateway to the Grand Canyon,” where vintage diners, historic train depots, and colourful neon signs evoke a nostalgic Route 66 feel. Continue west to Seligman, a quintessential Mother Road town; don’t miss Delgadillo’s Snow Cap Drive-In, a whimsical eatery brimming with Route 66 memorabilia. Stop at Hackberry General Store, a must-visit roadside attraction with vintage signs, classic cars, and retro souvenirs. Journey onward to Kingman, the “Heart of Historic Route 66,” where you can explore the Arizona Route 66 Museum celebrating the Mother Road’s history or take a scenic drive into the Hualapai Mountains. Cap the day with dinner at D’z Route 66 Diner, enjoying classic American comfort food amid retro décor. Overnight at a classic Route 66 motel, soaking up the neon-lit nostalgia and charm that defines this iconic highway.

Overnight: Kingman - Best Western Plus A Wayfarer’s Inn or similar

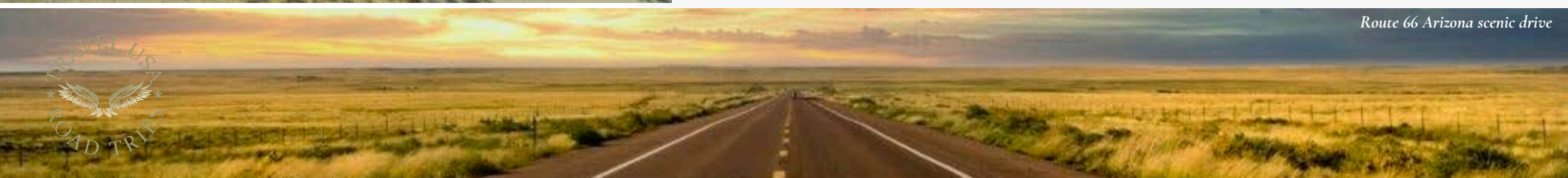
Key Highlights:

Williams / Delgadillo’s Snow Cap Drive-In / Hackberry General Store / Arizona Route 66 Museum - Kingman / Hualapai Mountains / D’z Route 66 Diner



Delgadillo’s Snow Cap Drive-In

Route 66 Arizona scenic drive



Day 20: Kingman, AZ to Barstow, CA (331 km)

Enjoy one of Route 66's most scenic drives today as you travel from Kingman to Barstow. Begin in Oatman, a historic gold-mining town preserved in Old West style. Stroll the main street where wild burros roam freely and watch staged gunfights bring the frontier spirit to life. Browse quirky shops for Route 66 souvenirs, handmade crafts, and unique mementos. From Oatman to Needles, descend into the Colorado River valley, taking in desert vistas along this iconic stretch of the Mother Road. Cross into California at Needles, a desert town with classic motels, vintage signs, and small-town charm. Continue west to Amboy, where you may like to stop and snap photos at Roy's Motel & Café, a neon Route 66 landmark, or take a short hike to Amboy Crater, an extinct volcano. Arrive in Barstow, in time to explore the Route 66 Mother Road Museum and historic downtown.

Overnight: Barstow - Comfort Suites Barstow or similar



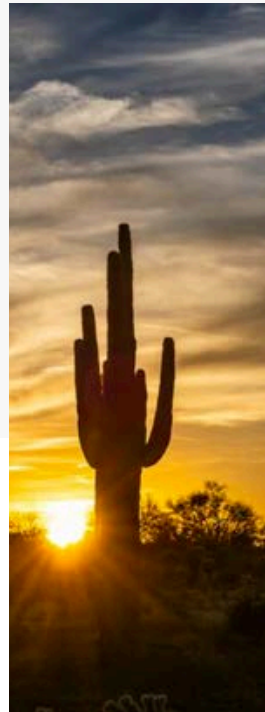
Oatman Post Office

Key Highlights:

Oatman gold-mining town / Wild burros & gunfights / Needles Route 66 history / Roy's Motel & Café / Amboy Crater / Route 66 Mother Road Museum



Roy's Motel & Cafe



Wild Burros roam freely



Route 66 Murals in Needles



Oatman Gold-mining Town





TCL Chinese Theatre

Day 21: Barstow, CA to Santa Monica, CA via San Bernardino (275 km)

Drive west along the final stretch of Route 66 through the Mojave Desert and Victorville. Stop at Elmer's Bottle Tree Ranch, a whimsical forest of colourful glass bottles mounted on steel poles - a perfect quirky photo opportunity. Continue into San Bernardino to visit the Historic Original McDonald's Museum, exploring the birthplace of the fast-food giant and its nostalgic memorabilia. Snap photos at the restored Wigwam Motel and the historic Cucamonga Service Station, classic Route 66 landmarks. From here, follow the original Mother Road into Los Angeles, passing through Hollywood. Drive along Sunset Boulevard through Beverly Hills or stroll the famous streets, pausing at the Hollywood Walk of Fame and TCL Chinese Theatre. Continue to Santa Monica, reaching the iconic "End of the Trail" sign at the pier. Celebrate completing your journey with a ride on the Ferris wheel, a beachside stroll, or dinner overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Overnight: Santa Monica – Palihouse Santa Monica or similar

Key Highlights:

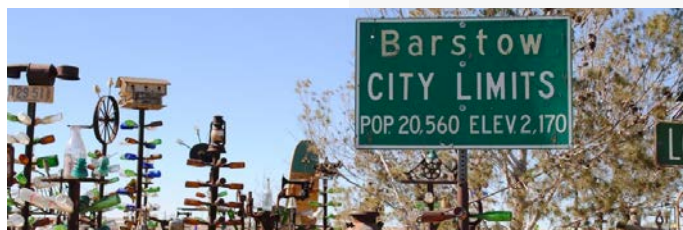
Elmer's Bottle Tree Ranch / Historic Original McDonald's Museum / Wigwam Motel - San Bernardino / Cucamonga Service Station / Hollywood Walk of Fame & TCL Chinese Theatre / Santa Monica Pier – End of Route 66



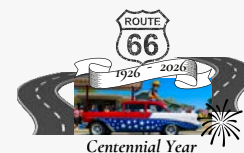
Hollywood Walk of Fame



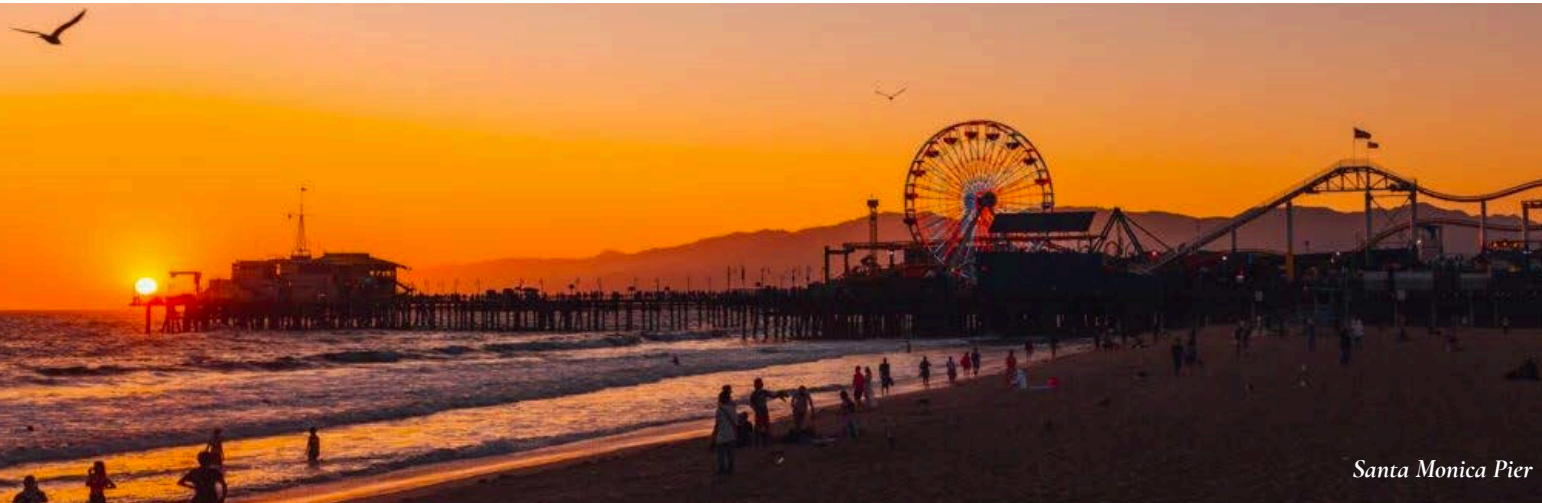
Wigwam Motel



Elmer's Bottle Tree Ranch



Santa Monica End of Trail



Santa Monica Pier

Day 22: Relax at Santa Monica & Venice Beach

La Jolly Coze

After a few weeks on the road, take a well-deserved day and relax along Southern California’s iconic coastline. In **Santa Monica**, take a stroll along the sandy beach or visit the bustling pier, where the “End of the Trail” Route 66 sign marked the completion of your journey yesterday. Rent a bike or walk along the beachfront path to **Venice Beach**, known for its street performers, **Muscle Beach**, and quirky boardwalk shops filled with souvenirs and local art. Stop for a coffee or smoothie at one of the many cafés along the way, soaking in the lively atmosphere. Back in Santa Monica, browse boutique stores, lounge by your hotel pool, or simply unwind on the sand, watching the waves roll in. For dinner, you may like to enjoy fresh seafood at **The Lobster**, California cuisine at **Blue Plate Taco**, or classic American dishes at **The Albright** on the pier - each offering ocean views and a relaxed atmosphere.

Overnight: Santa Monica – Palihouse Santa Monica or similar

Key Highlights:

Santa Monica Pier / Santa Monica beachfront & cafés / Venice Beach boardwalk & Muscle Beach / Oceanfront dining



Venice beach





Hollywood Sign

Day 23: Create Your Own Los Angeles Adventure

Today is your chance to create your own Los Angeles adventure. Choose how to spend the day: thrill-seekers can head to Universal Studios Hollywood for rides, shows, and the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, or venture further south to Disneyland Resort in Anaheim for a magical full-day experience. For a more relaxed pace, explore Griffith Observatory for sweeping city views and the iconic Hollywood Sign, or spend time in Beverly Hills and along Rodeo Drive browsing designer boutiques and historic streets. Art, culture, and hidden gems await in LA's museums, galleries, and beachside districts, perfect for those seeking a quieter day. Alternatively, spend another day relaxing along Santa Monica or Venice Beach, stroll the boardwalk, or rent a bike to enjoy the coast. Tonight is your final night - enjoy a classic California sunset over the Pacific and dine at one of Santa Monica's many excellent restaurants, rounding off your 24-day Route 66 adventure in style.

Overnight: Santa Monica – Palihouse Santa Monica or similar

Key Highlights:

Universal Studios Hollywood / Disneyland Resort / Griffith Observatory / Hollywood Sign / Beverly Hills & Rodeo Drive / LA's museums / Santa Monica & Venice Beach



Beverly Hills & Rodeo Drive



Universal Studios



Griffith Observatory

Day 24: The End of the Trail

Your incredible 24-day Route 66 adventure concludes today. Start the morning at a relaxed pace, perhaps with a final stroll along **Santa Monica Beach** or a coffee while watching the Pacific waves. Reflect on the miles travelled, quirky roadside attractions, and small-town Americana that have made this adventure unforgettable. Pack up, check out, and allow ample time to return your rental car at the Los Angeles International Airport Alamo depot. If time permits, take one last scenic coastal drive or pause to soak in the California sun. As you head to the airport for your onward flight or journey home, cherish the memories of neon signs, classic diners, desert vistas, mountain towns, and coastal sunsets. From Chicago to Santa Monica, the Mother Road has shared its stories - and now, you carry them with you. The spirit, nostalgia, and freedom of Route 66 will linger long after the final mile!



What's Included?

- 3 night's accommodation at the Arlo Hotel, Chicago IL
- 2-day all-inclusive Chicago Go City Pass
- 21 day Alamo rental car in a full-size vehicle
- 2 night's accommodation at the Drury Plaza Hotel, St. Louis at the Arch, St. Louis MO
- 1 night's accommodation in the following locations: Springfield IL, Springfield MO, Tulsa OK, Oklahoma City OK, Clinton OK, Amarillo TX, Tucumcari NM, Santa Fe NM, Albuquerque NM, Gallup NM, Holbrook AZ, Kingman AZ, Barstow CA
- 2 night's accommodation at the Little America Hotel, Flagstaff AZ
- 3 night's accommodation at the Palihouse, Santa Monica CA
- N.B. Petrol, road tolls, parking, resort fees and one-way rental car charges are not included and are payable direct to the relevant providers whilst travelling

Pricing:

All of our pricing is based on dynamic rates meaning we will provide you with the best of the day at the time of booking. Our suggested itinerary has been created using fully refundable rates. Final pricing will depend on factors like month of travel, how early you book, availability and whether you choose non-refundable or fully refundable rates.

Our suggested itinerary combines a mix of upscale, historic, quirky, and fun properties that capture the true spirit of Route 66. One night you might stay in a stylish 4-star hotel in downtown Chicago, and the next, an iconic 2.5–3-star roadside motel—evoking the nostalgic charm of travelling across America in the “good old days.” Each stop has been thoughtfully selected for its character and connection to the Mother Road. During the trip planning process, we'll review the accommodation options with you, giving you the flexibility to tailor them to your personal preferences.

NZ\$ pricing for our 24 day / 23 night package

- From \$7,975 - \$9,175 pp depending on the month of travel

Terms & Conditions apply - [CLICK HERE](#) or go to www.travelusa.co.nz for more details

This is a suggested itinerary based on our recommendations. There are no fixed departure dates or schedules so you can customise the itinerary to suit your personal preferences and needs. Contact us with your proposed dates and we will create a personalised travel package just for you.

