



Covered Bridges

SCENIC BYWAY

Group Travel Itinerary



Madison County, Iowa

Step into the stories of authentic American heroes and cultural icons in South Central Iowa





CBSB Group Travel Itinerary

The Covered Bridges Scenic Byway is an 82-mile route where you'll find stories of famous Hollywood icons, historical heroes and some of the world's most innovative legends. From the romantic Bridges of Madison County to the gritty John Wayne to the inventive George Washington Carver, there's a place and a story to entertain any traveler. On this route, you'll experience life on the plains, and enjoy the abundant natural resources which made Madison County so desirable for settlers and continue to contribute to the scenic quality of this lovely area.

Unique Adventures

First, tour the only museum in the world dedicated to Hollywood legend John Wayne, as well as his birthplace home. The world-class **John Wayne Birthplace & Museum** honors Winterset's own in grand style and features the largest private collection of John Wayne memorabilia in existence. Be sure to pose with the full-size bronze statue out front.

Pop in to **Bare Bison Ranch** in Van Meter, a 350-acre bison ranch with nearly 300 head of Plains and Woods bison. Take a tour of the ranch, get up close to these magnificent animals, and purchase heart-healthy, wholesome bison products to take home.

Stop and shop at the **Winterset Historic Courthouse Square Commercial District**. Consisting of 83 buildings, it is one of the most historically intact downtown environments in Iowa. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. The courthouse square is home to a thriving retail district with over 20 shops, which recently won the 2019 Iowa Tourism Award for "Outstanding Retail Experience".

Scenic Spots

Winterset is the **Covered Bridge Capital of Iowa**, with the highest concentration of covered bridges west of the Mississippi. The bridges were the setting of the 1992 novel "The Bridges of Madison County" and the 1995 film of the same name. Book a guided tour to view six of the original nineteen covered bridges located throughout Madison County that have been lovingly preserved.

Fans can visit many of the set locations, including the **Roseman & Holliwell Covered Bridges**.

More of the outdoor type? Explore one of the first state parks in Iowa. The 350-acre **Pammel State Park** is home to Iowa's oldest oak tree, Backbone Ridge and the 1858 Harmon Tunnel. The park includes modern campgrounds and yurt cabins, the Makoke Birding Trail and access to the popular Middle River Water Trail. Hiking, camping, fishing, kayaking and wildlife viewing are all very popular here.

If you're looking for glorious scenery, **Cumming Road** vistas have it all. Beginning at Exit 65 off of I-35 to Highway 169 just north of Winterset, travelers can view rolling hills and valleys covered with native grasses, botanical gardens, native stands of oak and hickory forests, wetlands, century farms and equestrian ranches - a very "Iowan" view.

Relax at **City Park**, a 76-acre public park located in Winterset. Established in the early 1900s, it is home to the **Cutler-Donahoe Covered Bridge**, which was moved to the park in 1970. **Clark Tower**, one of Iowa's hidden gems, is a three-story limestone structure built in tribute to one of the town's earliest settlers. There's also an English-style hedge maze, limestone picnic shelters, foot bridges, a campground, playgrounds and a monument to the discovery of the first Red Delicious apple tree in Madison County.

Points of Discovery

Check out the only museum in Iowa dedicated exclusively to the art and history of quilting. The **Iowa Quilt Museum** in Winterset has alternating themed exhibits every few months. Then be sure to stop at the award-winning Piece Works Quilt Shop and Ben Franklin store to further your craft.

Local Flavors

You can't go wrong with comfort food. Operating since 1928, the **Northside Café** offers Midwestern favorites such as beef and noodles, pork tenderloin sandwiches and hot beef sandwiches, alongside salads and homemade desserts. If you're a "Bridges of Madison County" fanatic, you'll recognize this restaurant from the movie.

Lodging Locales

Cobblestone Inn & Suites (Winterset)
Covered Bridge Inn (Winterset)



For More Group Tour Options

Contact

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