14-Day Route 66 Essentials Itinerary with Times and Overnight Stays

This 14-day Route 66 itinerary is designed for travelers who want to slow down and savor the journey. With extra nights in Springfield, Tucumcari, Albuquerque, and Flagstaff, you'll have more time to explore quirky roadside attractions, historic landmarks, and authentic motels along the way.

Day 1: Chicago -> Springfield, IL (~200 miles, ~3-4 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
08:00 AM	Breakfast at Lou Mitchell's, Chicago	Classic Route 66 start
09:00 AM	Depart Chicago	Stop in Joliet for Route 66 Welcome Center
11:00 AM	Pontiac Route 66 Museum & murals	Photo ops
02:00 PM	Arrive Springfield	Cozy Dog Drive-In

Overnight: Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, Springfield

Day 2: Springfield (local day)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
10:00 AM	Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library	Historic exhibits
12:00 PM	Lunch downtown Springfield	Local eats
02:00 PM	Route 66 Drive-In Theater	Retro experience

Overnight: Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, Springfield

Day 3: Springfield -> St. Louis (~100 miles, ~2 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
09:00 AM	Depart Springfield	Easy drive
11:00 AM	Chain of Rocks Bridge	Photo stop
01:00 PM	Lunch downtown St. Louis	Local eats
02:00 PM	Gateway Arch	Iconic landmark

Overnight: Holiday Inn Route 66, La Quinta Inn, Wayside Motel

Day 4: St. Louis -> Rolla (~110 miles, ~2 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
09:00 AM	Depart St. Louis	Scenic drive
10:00 AM	Meramec Caverns	Cave tour
12:00 PM	Lunch in Cuba, MO	Murals + Wagon Wheel Motel café
02:00 PM	Arrive Rolla	Explore local Route 66 sites

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Overnight: Wagon Wheel Motel, Cuba

Day 5: Rolla -> Tulsa (~280 miles, ~5 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
08:00 AM	Depart Rolla	Morning drive
11:00 AM	Springfield Route 66 Car Museum	Classic cars
02:00 PM	Blue Whale of Catoosa	Iconic roadside stop
04:00 PM	Arrive Tulsa	Vintage motel check-in

Overnight: Campbell Hotel, Tulsa

Day 6: Tulsa -> Oklahoma City (~120 miles, ~2-3 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
09:00 AM	Depart Tulsa	Route 66 Historical Village
11:00 AM	Lunch at Rock Café, Stroud	Classic diner
01:00 PM	Round Barn, Arcadia	Historic landmark
02:00 PM	Pops Soda Ranch	Try unique sodas
03:00 PM	Arrive Oklahoma City	Cowboy Museum

Overnight: Skirvin Hilton, Oklahoma City

Day 7: Oklahoma City -> Amarillo (~260 miles, ~4-5 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
08:00 AM	Depart OKC	Stop at Lucille's Gas Station (~09:30 AM)
11:00 AM	Clinton Route 66 Museum	Exhibits
01:00 PM	Lunch en route	Continue west
04:00 PM	Cadillac Ranch	Bring spray paint
05:00 PM	Arrive Amarillo	Overnight stay

Overnight: Big Texan Motel, Amarillo

Day 8: Amarillo -> Tucumcari (~120 miles, ~2 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
09:00 AM	Depart Amarillo	Morning drive
10:00 AM	Midpoint Café (Adrian, TX)	Celebrate halfway point
12:00 PM	Arrive Tucumcari	Murals, Tee Pee Curios

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Overnight: Blue Swallow Motel, Motel Safari, Tucumcari

Day 9: Tucumcari (local day)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
10:00 AM	Explore murals	Retro neon signs
12:00 PM	Lunch at Del's Restaurant	Local diner
02:00 PM	Visit Tucumcari Historical Museum	Local history

Overnight: Blue Swallow Motel, Motel Safari, Tucumcari

Day 10: Tucumcari -> Albuquerque (~180 miles, ~3 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
09:00 AM	Depart Tucumcari	Scenic drive
11:00 AM	Santa Rosa Auto Museum	Classic cars
02:00 PM	Arrive Albuquerque	Neon signs, Route 66 Diner

Overnight: Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, El Vado Motel

Day 11: Albuquerque (local day)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
10:00 AM	Old Town Albuquerque	Historic shops
12:00 PM	Lunch at Frontier Restaurant	Famous green chile dishes
02:00 PM	Explore El Vado Motel courtyard	Retro revival

Overnight: Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, El Vado Motel

Day 12: Albuquerque -> Flagstaff (~320 miles, ~5-6 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
08:00 AM	Breakfast at Route 66 Diner	Albuquerque classic
10:00 AM	Gallup murals stop	Local art
12:00 PM	Petrified Forest National Park	Scenic views
02:00 PM	Wigwam Motel, Holbrook	Retro stay
05:00 PM	Arrive Flagstaff	Overnight stay

Overnight: Wigwam Motel, Holbrook; Little America Hotel, Flagstaff

Day 13: Flagstaff (local day)

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Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
10:00 AM	Lowell Observatory	Astronomy history
12:00 PM	Lunch downtown Flagstaff	Local eats
02:00 PM	Explore Historic Downtown	Route 66 shops

Overnight: Wigwam Motel, Holbrook; Little America Hotel, Flagstaff

Day 14: Flagstaff -> Santa Monica (~460 miles, ~7-8 hrs)

Time	Activity/Stop	Notes
07:00 AM	Depart Flagstaff	Stop at Meteor Crater (~08:00 AM)
10:00 AM	Seligman	Burger + Route 66 revival town
12:00 PM	Hackberry General Store	Roadside charm
02:00 PM	Oatman burros	Wild burros experience
06:00 PM	Arrive Santa Monica Pier	Route 66 End Sign

Overnight: Fairmont Miramar Hotel, Sea Shore Motel

Notes:

Times are approximate and assume moderate driving pace with short sightseeing stops. Adjust based on group style and daylight hours.

Insider Tips:

Mix retro motels with modern hotels for balance. Book iconic spots early. Use overnight stays as part of the experience.