

Points-In-Between

Yellowstone National Park Trip—September 2010

Our round-trip trip out and back to Yellowstone National Park took about 3,800 miles overall. Along the way, we saw many sights and attractions. On the following pages is a summary of the things we visited.



The John Deere Headquarters in Moline, Illinois, was designed by renowned architect Eero Saarinen (St Louis Arch, Dulles Airport, TWA Terminal, etc.) This structure was built in the early 1960s, and it is as contemporary and state-of-the-art some 45 years later.

The interior had a large atrium with many John Deere farm equipment, which you could literally climb into and look around.

Really neat place to visit.



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We stopped in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and were impressed by the “Falls’ (or, more like rapids).

There was an interesting laser light show at night which told the history of this region.

Of interest was the important legacy of the Lewis & Clark expedition, which really departed from Louisville—and not St. Louis.

There was a tall observation tower which allowed a good vista overlooking the falls area.



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We had not planned to stop in Grinnell Iowa, but we saw a billboard promoting a bank building designed by the famous Louis Sullivan (who designed many wonderful buildings in Chicago, and who Frank Lloyd Wright started out working for.)

Anyway, we got off the interstate and were very pleased we did so. The overall town was like 'Mayberry' with interesting stores downtown, etc.

And, the bank building is now the tourist center—which unfortunately was closed on Sunday when we were there.



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On the way back home, we stopped in St. Louis to visit the “Vatican Splendors” exhibit—which was phenomenal. The History Museum, where the display was at, had a large map of the Lewis & Clark expedition in the front plaza (left). It also had a nice room containing artifacts from the famous St. Louis World’s Fair (above right)

Below left: We stopped in Independence Missouri, which is a suburb of Kansas City, where President Harry Truman once lived. His museum was about a half mile away from his home, and we picnicked on the grounds there.



Below: Lewis & Clark Visitor Center on the banks of the Columbia River, at border between Nebraska and Missouri. This is just outside Lincoln Nebraska. It had many nice exhibits and a replica of the type of boat they used.



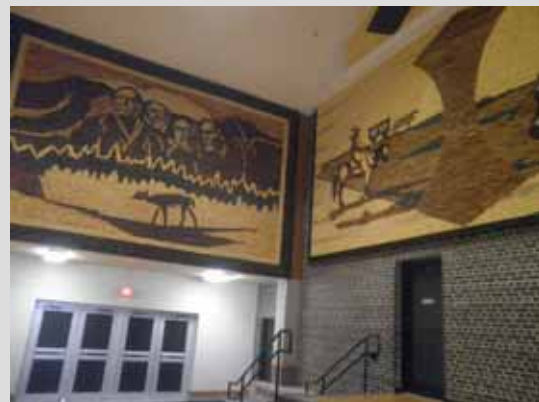
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The “Corn Place” in Mitchell South Dakota, is one of the “must see’s” on the trip. It is smaller than anticipated. Basically, it is a gymnasium with corn as façade decorations.

One of the interesting areas was the photo wall which contained images of all the different corn facades over the past 100 or so years that they have been decorating this facility. See the images at the very bottom of this page for some of the more colorful designs.



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We really didn't know much about the "Badlands" or whether we'd actually get off the interstate to check it out.

But, due to time change from Central Time Zone to Mountain Time Zone, we picked up an extra hour, so we decided to check this out—and, we were glad we did.

Just a very different landscape—something you'd find on the moon for as far as the eye could see.

Now we know why the early settlers called this the "Badlands" since one could not live in this harsh environment.



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Above: Devil's Tower, which was prominently featured in the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind". This was once a volcano.

Below: Little Big Horn where Gen. George Custer and about 220 soldiers were killed in the infamous "Custer's Last Stand" battle. It was fascinating to observe the terrain in which the battle occurred and better understand how this legendary western event took place.



THE MEMORIAL

The remains of about 220 soldiers, scouts, and civilians are buried around the base of this memorial.

The white marble headstones scattered over the battlefield denote where the slain troopers were found and originally buried. In 1881 they were reinterred in a single grave on this site.

The officers' remains were removed in 1877 to various cemeteries throughout the country. General Custer was buried at West Point.



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At Yellowstone, we stayed in Gardiner, Montana, at the North Entry Gate—which is the best point in which to enter the park. The Yellowstone Inn (above) was a really nice motel. We were able to get a 2 bedroom apartment like suite which made for enjoyable accommodations for 2 nights.

There were many touristy type shops and good restaurants. One had a great view of the park (left).

Below left: Neat little cabin overlooking the hillside.

Below right: Historic photo of Gardiner with train depot that literally dropped visitors off at the main gate.



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Above: this was a neat little 'quick stop' convenience store and gas station. It was in the form of a barn with silo. It had a nice garden area with sculptures. The photo in lower left corner is looking up inside the silo, which was the entry vestibule. I wish such roadside gas stops had similar unique designs as this. Very enjoyable rest stop.



Left: the famous "Wall Drugs" that is on everyone's 'must see' list. It is located near the Badlands.

Right: we saw a lot of motorcycles on the trip. Bikers like the wide-open spaces. We didn't go to Sturgis, South Dakota, but it was near our route.



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We saw a lot of 'wide open spaces' and some beautiful sunsets. There were also various windmill energy farms along the way.



"La Paz" Mexican restaurant in Lincoln, Nebraska, was a great place to eat. We saw the sign saying it was voted #1 Mexican restaurant in Lincoln for 9 straight years, so we decided to try it, and it sure didn't disappoint. All were pleased with this restaurant. Too bad it is so far away to visit regularly!