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21 Places in Kansas to Experience in 2021

TOPEKA – The Kansas Tourism Division of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) has announced its list of 21 places in Kansas to experience in 2021. The 21 locations across Kansas range from events, agritourism, history, outdoor adventure and breathtaking scenery.

Tourism Director, Bridgette Jobe expressed her enthusiasm for travel to resume. “Take this opportunity to explore your own state,” Jobe encourages. “While setting your New Year goals be sure to include travel as a part of that plan. There are many health benefits to taking a vacation, and Kansas has ample opportunities for travelers to safely experience these attractions.”

To learn more about these locations and travel safety guidelines, visit TravelKS.com.

The 21 Places in Kansas to Experience in 2021

Santa Fe Trail- 2021 marks the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail, and celebratory events will be happening across the state. Council Grove is commemorating the anniversary with a two-day celebration on July 16-17, 2021, including an old west gunslinger reenactment.

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area- The largest wetland in the interior U.S. It is a complex of marshy basins in a 41,000-acre lowland area containing the largest system of wetlands in Kansas, and the richest wetland feeding grounds in the central flyway. It is critical to the survival of many species. Some 320 bird species frequent Cheyenne Bottoms.

Kansas State Fair- Celebrate all things Kansas at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson, Sept. 10-19, 2021.

Historic Sites- Kansas is home to 16 state-owned historic sites and 27 national historic landmarks. Explore our state's fascinating history from Bleeding Kansas, the Civil War, and Native American history, to frontier forts and historic trails.

Wine Trail- Before prohibition, Kansas combined with Missouri to form one of the largest grape-growing and winemaking regions in America. Kansas, because of the fertile soil, is the perfect home for select grape varieties. Kansas' landscape is dotted with a growing number of local wineries – some of which are nationally- and internationally-recognized.

Tanganyika Wildlife Park- Tanganyika, located in Goddard, is the only park in the U.S. with 10 interactive encounters where you can touch, feed, and even ride unique animal species. Handcrafted by Tanganyika keepers, choose from more than 15 experiences that will deepen your connection to some of our nation's rare and endangered species.

State Parks- There are 28 state parks spread across Kansas. Some are amid steep, timbered slopes ringed in bus-sized boulders. Others are where prairie grasses and wildflowers stretch towards 10-mile horizons. Enjoy the hundreds of miles available for hiking where the terrain, and views, will leave you breathless.

Eisenhower Presidential Museum- Recently renovated with new exhibits, experience Ike and Mamie's story in their own words. The all-new 25,000 square-foot museum in Abilene boasts innovations in technological components and interactive exhibits guaranteed to engage audiences of all ages and learning styles.

Nicodemus- The oldest preserved black settlement west of the Mississippi River. Visitors can learn about Nicodemus history in the Visitor's Center and take a walking tour to view the historic buildings that represent the five pillars of the African American community: church, self-government, education, home and business.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area- Extraordinary events in Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area are forever woven into our nation's fabric. In the nineteenth century, the nation turned its eyes to the Missouri-Kansas border where differing definitions of "freedom" collided, inciting and fueling a Civil War. The heritage area, located in Lawrence, focuses on three main themes: Shaping the Frontier, Kansas/Missouri Border War and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve- Nearly 11,000 acres of wide-open space, beautiful vistas, seasonal wildflowers, wildlife, a bison herd, and plenty of solitude. The Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is the only unit in the National Park Service dedicated to preserving a rare remnant of tallgrass prairie. The preserve, located near Strong City, has more than 40 miles of hiking and nature trails.

Emma Chase Friday Nights- Enjoy live music every Friday night in Cottonwood Falls. Dance under the stars downtown with the historic Chase County Courthouse as your backdrop.

Field Station: Dinosaurs- A one-of-a-kind, prehistoric experience featuring more than 40 life-size, moving and realistic dinosaurs that are thrilling, educational and fun! Your expedition includes 10-acres of walking trails, more than 30 live shows, and games and activities conveniently located in Derby.

Drive-In Theatres- The nostalgic pastime of a drive-in theatre is no longer in the past. Kanopolis, Wichita, Dodge City and Kansas City each offer the perfect option for a fun, family night out.

Rock Formations- Explore some of the Sunflower State's most unique natural wonders – From the Niobrara chalk formations of Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park, Castle Rock and Monument Rocks, to the sandstone concretions of Rock City and the Dakota formations of Mushroom Rock State Park.

Brewery Tours- Hankering for hops? A growing number of Kansas breweries are popping up throughout the state, catering to those in search of fresh flavors and unique experiences.

Drive The Byways- Kansas has 12 byways – nine scenic, two of which are National Scenic Byways and three historic byways. Over a millennium, geologic shifts shaped the state's landscape to create a scenic backdrop for travelers. Follow the paths of great expedition teams and adventurers to see where history happened along Kansas' 12 distinctive byways. During the journey, visit museums and shops or enjoy local dining and lodging to create your own byway experience.

Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes- This Fort Scott museum highlights role models who demonstrate courage, compassion and respect, regardless of race, religion and creed. Through the Center's unique project-based learning approach, students discover, develop and communicate the stories of Unsung Heroes who have made a profound and positive impact on the course of history. By championing these Unsung Heroes, students, educators and communities discover their own power and responsibility to effect positive change in the world.

Kansas Agritourism Business- Saddle up and experience the thrill of a cattle drive or join in the harvest at a working Kansas farm. You'll have a new appreciation for the state's agricultural roots and the work involved in bringing food from farm to table.

Grassroots Art Capital of Kansas- Lucas is a folk-art lover's paradise and home to some of the most whimsical attractions in Kansas. The World's Largest Souvenir Travel Plate welcomes you to town, and traditional Post Rock limestone architecture enhances the aesthetic of local neighborhoods and downtown businesses.

Medicine Lodge Peace Treaty Pageant- Held every three years, this special event commemorates the Great Peace Council of 1867 between the U.S. Government and the five Plains Tribes. The large-scale reenactment takes place in a natural amphitheater just east of Medicine Lodge in the beautiful Gyp Hills, near the original site of the council where the Medicine River and Elm Creek flow together. It compresses 300 years of history into two hours of entertainment and education, celebrating the diverse cultures of the native peoples, discoverers, explorers and settlers.

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The Mission of the Kansas Tourism Division is to inspire travel to and throughout Kansas to maximize the positive impacts that tourism has on our state and local communities.

**Be sure to check the current health guidelines before you visit a new community or attraction. Some locations are currently closed due to COVID-19.*

Attached: Kansas Tourism Division logo