Plunge deep into Americana on this 2,448-mile odyssey from Chicago to Santa Monica, Calif. We’ve highlighted the New Mexico and Arizona stretch of the Mother Road.
Everyone has to travel at least one section of Historic Route 66 in their lives. Established in 1926, the legendary road stretched 2,448 miles from Chicago, Ill., to Santa Monica, Calif.

In bad times, migrants fleeing the Dust Bowl in the 1930s traveled on Route 66 to California, their cars weighed down by possessions and unrealized dreams. In good times, World War II veterans saw the road as a path to freedom, loading their families into cars to explore the Americana of small-town Route 66, California’s sunny beaches and Disneyland.

While it was completely decommissioned in 1985 and replaced by five interstates, you can still drive on the remnants of one of the nation’s most iconic highways. In Chicago, you’ll find a sign marking the start of Historic Route 66 at Adams Street and Michigan Avenue. From there, you’ll pass through the quirky small towns that lined the original route in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California.

As you stop in Arizona towns like Williams, Seligman and Kingman, you’ll realize they have accomplished the impossible. They have frozen time, offering the past as a present-day experience. You’ll hear it at the vintage gas stations playing 1960s music. You’ll taste it in your homemade root beer and in your hamburger served in 1950s-style diners like Mr. D’z in Kingman, Ariz. You’ll feel it as you drive the open two-lane road that cuts through some of the country’s vast stretches of prairie and desert.

Beatnik writer Jack Kerouac distilled the experience best in his book *On the Road* when he wrote, “... all the golden lands ahead of you and all kinds of unforeseen events wait lurking to surprise you and make you glad you’re alive to see.”

What follows are the road’s highlights when your wheels traverse New Mexico and Arizona, home to the longest uninterrupted stretch of Historic Route 66.

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**TIP**
Arizona does not observe daylight saving time. This can create a one-hour time difference between it and surrounding states.

PHOTOS: Depositphotos (Seligman, Ariz), Grant Ordelheide (Neon signs in Williams, Ariz.)
GET YOUR KICKS ON 66

From Grants, N.M., to Winslow, Ariz., you’ll discover vintage Route 66-themed stops and uncrowded national and state park sites. Here are some of our favorites.

By Tori Peglar

ROUTE 66 ARCH
Completed in 2016, the drive-under neon arch in Grants, N.M., is shaped like the iconic Route 66 emblem. Park under it to get a great photo of you with the neon arch. It’s off of I-40’s exits 81 and 85 on Route 66.

EL MALPAIS NATIONAL MONUMENT
This uncrowded national monument’s visitor center is in Grants, N.M., making it easy to learn about the area’s volcanic past. Hike around a cinder cone volcano on an easy-to-moderate 3.8-mile loop in the El Calderon Area.

ROUTE 66 VINTAGE MUSEUM & DOUBLE SIX GALLERY
Located in downtown Grants, N.M., this museum features vintage Route 66 postcards and a 1923 Model T Ford. Nearby is Western New Mexico Aviation Heritage Museum. Liz Taylor’s third husband failed to see the airport’s beacon in 1958 and fatally crashed his plane into Mount Taylor.

NEW MEXICO MINING MUSEUM
The West is known for its boom-and-bust mining cycles. In Grants, N.M., you can learn how uranium transformed this town formerly known as the “Carrot Capital of the World.” Navajo sheepherder Paddy Martinez discovered Grants’ uranium reserves in 1950, which led to a 30-year mining boom. Explore the museum’s exhibits and replica uranium mine.
**EL RANCHO HOTEL**

Built in 1936, this rambling hotel in Gallup, N.M., is a true Route 66 classic, attracting Hollywood stars like Ronald Reagan in its early days. Rooms are named after actors, and their autographs fill the second-floor walls. Grab a drink at the 49er Lounge, arguably the town’s best-stocked bar. Visit Ortega’s Jewelry Store in the hotel before heading to the bigger shops in town.

**WIGWAM MOTEL**

Have you slept in a wigwam lately? If not, pull over in Holbrook, Ariz., and stay at iconic Route 66 mainstay, Wigwam Motel. In your teepee, you’ll find cable TV and air-conditioning, surprising modern upgrades in a motel village built in 1950 and still managed by the Lewis family.

**HOMOLOVI STATE PARK**

Just three miles from Winslow, Ariz., lies Homolovi State Park where you can stretch your legs, tour ancient ruins and spend the night in the campground under dark night skies. It has great trails, sweeping views of the eastern part of the state and petroglyphs and walls of old Hopi residences. The Hopi lived in the area from 1200 to the later 1300s.

**PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK**

At Petrified Forest National Park, you can bring your pet anywhere, except the park’s buildings, making it one of the most animal-friendly locations in the park system. The 2-mile out-and-back Martha’s Butte hike leads you to a stunning solar-marker petroglyph that gets covered exactly in half by shadow during the summer solstice. At Red Basin, you’ll find petrified wood, petroglyphs and vibrant badlands formations. And there’s the Painted Desert, a pink-hued landscape that changes colors with the sunset.

PHOTOS: Kenneth Brown / Courtesy Grants/Cibola County Chamber of Commerce [Route 66 Arch]; Courtesy Grants/Cibola County Chamber of Commerce [El Malpais National Monument]; Courtesy Arizona State Parks & Trails [Homolovi]; Depositphotos [Petrified Forest National Park, Wigwam Motel in Holbook, Ariz.]
It can be argued that Winslow, Ariz., was saved by a song and a boarded-up hotel slated for demolition.

For years, Winslow was the celebrated heart of northern Arizona. Beginning in 1917, it was home to a Hubbell Trading Post warehouse, part of a vast trading empire of Native American wares. It served as headquarters for the Santa Fe Railway. It was home to the finest Harvey Hotel in the Southwest, La Posada, which opened in 1929 to the tune of $40 million in today’s dollars. And Route 66 ran right through downtown.

But people stopped traveling by train, La Posada shut its doors in 1957 and Route 66 was decommissioned in 1985 and replaced by I-40 that bypassed Winslow. And contrary to the 1972 Eagles hit song Take It Easy that put Winslow on the pop culture map, there was nothing easy about these changes.

Today, Winslow is in the midst of a renaissance, having revived some of its most iconic attractions. Pull over to visit Standin’ on the Corner Park featuring a bronze sculpture of a man standing on a corner and a vibrant trompe l’oeil-style mural of a girl in a flatbed Ford. You also can dine or sleep in the stunning 54-room La Posada Hotel restored by Allan Affeldt, his wife, artist Tina Mion, and hotel general manager, Daniel Lutzick.

It was Affeldt who read about La Posada 23 years ago when it appeared on the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s endangered list. He traveled from Laguna Beach, Calif.,

**EXPLORE METEOR CRATER**

It’s as deep as a 60-story building and as wide as 20 football fields. More than 2 million fans could watch games from the crater rim. But to really comprehend the vastness of Meteor Crater near Winslow, Ariz., it’s worth pulling off I-40 to see it yourself.

When the meteor hit Earth 50,000 years ago, it left a crater that remains the best preserved impact site on Earth.

Today, you can join Commander Perseus and First Officer Jackie, as they fly down into the crater and then off into space to intersect an asteroid that is on a collision course with Earth.

It’s part of a new 4-D experience that combines HD film with special effects and full-motion seats. You’ll find it in Meteor Crater Discovery Center.

Then step outside to gaze at the crater, stopping at various viewpoints that have scenic magnifiers. When you get too hot, bask in the air-conditioned building to see fascinating exhibits and learn about the Apollo astronauts who trained there. When you get hungry, dine in the new Blasted Bistro Restaurant and then peruse the expanded Gift Shop.

Find out more by calling 800-289-5898 or at meteorcrater.com.

**RENAISSANCE TOWN**

In Winslow, see the best eras of the Southwest brought back to life from Native American lore to Route 66.

By Tori Peglar

It can be argued that Winslow, Ariz., was saved by a song and a boarded-up hotel slated for demolition.

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It was Affeldt who read about La Posada 23 years ago when it appeared on the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s endangered list. He traveled from Laguna Beach, Calif.,
to see the hotel designed by visionary architect Mary Jane Colter and instantly fell in love. Slated for demolition, Affeldt convinced the railway to sell it to him. In the hotel, you’ll find the award-winning Turquoise Room restaurant run by James Beard-nominated chef John Sharpe.

But don’t miss Winslow’s stretch of Route 66, which has the original concrete roadway on 2nd and 3rd Streets. Rather than pave over it, Winslow residents decided to grind up the old pavement and reuse it.

“It really means something for people to stand on the original Route 66 roadway,” says Bob Hall, CEO of Winslow Chamber of Commerce.

There are also 12 art galleries. Find out more by downloading Winslow’s free app in the app store.

Stop by the Winslow Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center in the 1917 Hubbell Trading Post warehouse, 523 W. Second St., or go to visitwinslow.com.
“TAKE IT EASY” with us in
WINISLOW ARIZONA

To plan a visit, download our FREE mobile app (search for Winslow, AZ) or go to www.visitwinslow.com when you’re here stop by the Chamber/Visitor Center at 523 W. Second St...we’ll tell you all the “fine sights to see.”
You'll feel as if you stepped back into Route 66's heydays when you pull into Williams, Ariz., just 60 miles south of Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim. Explore its vibrant historic downtown where you'll hear the greatest hits of the 1950s and '60s playing on seemingly every corner. You'll discover a ton of Route 66 memorabilia and souvenir shops, as well as restaurants that bring to life the 1950s and 1960s. Fuel up on lunch at Grand Canyon Coffee & Cafe. Or head to Cruiser's Route 66 Cafe to see Route 66 memorabilia and eat classic American food.

For a fancy meal, head to Red Raven Restaurant downtown.

Then, leave your car behind as you head to the train depot to ride the Grand Canyon Railway for the final 65-mile stretch to the Grand Canyon.

You'll avoid all the vehicle traffic backed up to get into the park. But riding the train is also just plain fun. Back in the day, President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir paid $3.95 to ride the rails to the Grand Canyon. Today, the Old West lives on with staged train robberies and cowboy sing-alongs [read more about the train on page 79].

RELIVE THE 1950s

Historic downtown Williams, with its vintage Route 66 businesses, is one of the Grand Canyon area's best-kept secrets.

By Tori Peglar

Kick back and celebrate your Grand Canyon vacation with a cold beer at the Grand Canyon Brewing Co. at 301 N. 7th St., in Williams, Ariz.

There's a tasting room and restaurant with burgers, brats and pizza. Along with the brewery's year-round beers like Sunset Amber, American Pilsner and Horseshoe Bend Pale Ale, you'll find seasonal beers offered like Sacred Saguaro, a Viennese-style lager.

Plus, watch a game on TV or play pool, darts and shuffleboard for free. Make advanced reservations online or by phone to tour the brewery's production facility.

Or check out Brewcade in the back of Cruiser's Route 66 Cafe downtown. Relive the '80s with vintage arcade games while enjoying a microbrew; grandcanyonbrewery.com
When you return to historic Williams, take a walk on the wild side on the outskirts of town at Bearizona Wildlife Park on Route 66. It may be your one opportunity to see a white buffalo.

“You can see animals up-close that you normally couldn’t,” says Diana Roggenbuck of Bearizona. “We rescue about 50 percent of our animals and give them homes when they no longer can live in the wild. It’s about education and fun.”

Afterwards, stroll Fort Bearizona Walking Area that includes a raptor program and barnyard petting zoo. In the Canyonlands Restaurant, you’ll find canyon walls, ancient-looking ruins and soaring wood-carved eagles.

“It’s an attraction on its own,” says Roggenbuck who adds there are great views of the jaguar enclosure from the restaurant.

The restaurant serves everything from burgers to salads and sandwiches and features two bars. The best part? Food is served quickly, giving you more time in the park.

“Every time you drive through, you’ll see something different, be it a bear on the road, in a tree or wolves howling,” says Roggenbuck who reminds passengers to stay in their cars with doors and windows closed.

Learn more about Williams at experiencewilliams.com and Bearizona at bearizona.com.
BRING A GUIDE

Wish you had a guide while touring to and inside the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park or Grand Canyon West? Download the GyPSy Guide App.

“We recognized that travelers preferred to set their own pace and itinerary but still enjoyed a fun, informative and educational guided experience” says Rick Bulich of GyPSy Guide. “That became our inspiration. How do we re-create that experience for people who want to remain independent and self-tour in their own vehicle?”

The app uses your device’s location service to automatically play entertaining commentary about the behind-the-scenes stories, historical events and notable geologic formations as you drive. In doing so, it tells you about upcoming sights, so you have time to make an informed decision as to whether you want to stop. Because the app relies on your phone’s GPS signal, not cell towers, no cell, network or WiFi is required while touring.

Visit gypsyguide.com to learn more.
When you stay at the Yavapai Lodge in Grand Canyon National Park, you’ll experience a piece of the park’s history, but you’ll also be actively participating in its future.

Located about a mile from the rim, the lodge was built in 1958 during the National Park Service’s building boom to prepare for its 50th anniversary. It was part of the so-called Mission 66 program, designed to increase park infrastructure to serve the crowds of post-World War II visitors. The lodge itself is reminiscent of Route 66 motels. Today, all rooms have been upgraded, including air-conditioning in every unit, new in 2019.

Nestled in a ponderosa pine forest, you’ll see wildlife, such as elk, deer and squirrels on your visit.

“It’s so peaceful here in the woods,” says Yavapai’s lodging director Amy Neil. “There’s something very special about being in the middle of the bustle of the park and still having this sense of solitude.”

Staying in the lodge, you’ll feel its commitment to the park’s future. It starts the second you pull in. With plenty of parking, you can leave your car at the lodge and take the park’s shuttle to get to all the stops you want to see, lowering your carbon footprint.

You can join Yavapai Lodge and the National Park Service in giving back on the South Rim every Thursday morning to pick up litter, including micro trash, and to learn more about why trash matters.

After a day exploring the park, head back to the lodge to relax. Outdoor games like cornhole give you an excuse to connect with other travelers. Stop by the Yavapai Coffee Shop for a scoop of ice cream with flavors like Grand Canyon Caramel Crunch and Moose Tracks.

Or head to the Yavapai Tavern where you’ll find a beautiful patio, equipped with heaters for chilly nights, a fire pit and a Southwestern-inspired menu from Chef Justin Warnat with a focus on local ingredients and sustainability. Try the Loaded Elk Burger made from elk raised in Colorado and topped with local poblano peppers. Or, go plant-based with the Power Plant Burger. The locally made 100-percent vegan patty packs 16 grams of plant-based protein and is covered with Hatch green chile cheddar cheese and homemade Southwestern sauce. Wash it down with one of several locally brewed beers on draft.

Book a room today or learn more at visitgrandcanyon.com. Sign up to volunteer with the lodge and park service at nps.gov/grca/getinvolved/dnps-litter.htm.

Sleep well and sustainably at Yavapai Lodge.

By Mikaela Ruland
Life is Grand at Yavapai Lodge

The view at the Grand Canyon is extraordinary. So is the impression it will make on you. Nearby Yavapai Lodge and Trailer Village RV Park give you the perfect vantage point, within Grand Canyon National Park and just a short walk from the South Rim. Enjoy easy access to Yavapai Restaurant, Yavapai Tavern, Yavapai Coffee Shop and Canyon Village Market & Deli. Here, your family has a comfortable basecamp for adventure. If it feels like a different world, that’s because it is.

Book your bucket list escape today.
Go to VisitGrandCanyon.com or call 877-404-4611.
Heart of Historic Route 66

1½ hours to Grand Canyon Skywalk®
3 hours to Grand Canyon Village
- Museums & Historic Sites
- Breweries & Wineries
- Biking & Hiking Trails
- Scenic Drives

Ask us about your free passport!

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866.427.7866
GoKingman66.com
ROUTE 66 HEADQUARTERS

Stop in Kingman to discover the legendary road’s most poignant stories and relics.

By Tori Peglar

Route 66 has never been just a road to get from one place to another. It’s always been an experience in itself, showcasing the best of America — our zany sense of humor, unique mom-and-pop shops and immense creativity funneled into vibrant neon signs.

There’s no better place to learn of its storied history than to pull off Route 66 in Kingman, Ariz., and visit the Arizona Route 66 Museum. You can literally spend hours perusing its remarkable exhibits with incredible artifacts and photographs. They collectively tell captivating stories of the road through the people who traveled it. It’s right across from the legendary Mr. D’z Route 66 Diner whose staff has been flipping burgers since 1929.

“Until people go through the museum, they don’t really see the big picture,” says Joshua Noble of Kingman’s tourism department. “We really fill in the blanks.”

You’ll see heartbreaking photos and life-sized depictions of the Dust Bowl refugees and whimsical stories of post-World War II America. There’s even an exhibit on the legendary Burma-Shave signs that lined the route, promoting Al Odell’s ailing shaving cream business with silly sayings like “He’s nifty and thrifty—looks 30 at 50.”

“Initially, it was about nostalgia,” says Noble about people traveling on Historic Route 66. “But now it’s part of a cheap and easy family road trip. It’s not just about going to Disneyland or going to Phoenix for spring training. People want to experience the drive as well as each destination.”

Visit the museum at Kingman’s historic Powerhouse, 120 W. Andy Devine Ave., or online at gokingman.com.
What's the difference between the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and Grand Canyon West? A lot. To start, they are in opposite corners of Arizona, with the South Rim closest to Williams and Flagstaff. Grand Canyon West is closer to Las Vegas, Nevada. Grand Canyon West is operated by the Hualapai tribe, so it has a completely different history and vibe than the South Rim, which is operated by the National Park Service. Learn more below.

**Grand Canyon South Rim**
- National Park Service
- $35/vehicle
- Nearly 5 hours (278 miles) from Las Vegas
- Park ranger talks
- Camping and lodging at rim
- Personal photography allowed
- Inner canyon hiking trails
- Start in Page, Ariz.

**Grand Canyon West**
- Managed by Hualapai Tribe
- $69/adult
- Just over 2 hours (122 miles) from Las Vegas
- Cultural bonus: Hualapai exhibits, performances
- Closest lodging: Hualapai Ranch near rim
- Photography: No cameras on the Skywalk
- Unique attraction: A glass bridge suspended over the Grand Canyon
- One-day rafting trips
- Start near Peach Springs, Ariz.

**Want to know more?**
www.nps.gov/grca
grandcanyonwest.com

Learn more about the North Rim at mygrandcanyonpark.com/park-access-overview.
THE OTHER SIDE

Along Route 66, stop at Peach Springs, Ariz., so you can take a raft and then helicopter to a glass bridge suspended over the Grand Canyon.

By Tori Peglar

Did you know you can walk on a mesmerizing glass bridge suspended 4,000 feet over the Grand Canyon?

It’s the main attraction at Grand Canyon West, a tourist site on the Hualapai Reservation that sits on the tribe’s sacred ground. There are two ways to get to it. Drive north from Kingman, Ariz., through a gorgeous rolling landscape dotted with Joshua trees.

Or take the adventurous route via Peach Springs, Ariz., by whitewater rafting down the Colorado River with Hualapai River Runners. You’ll ride in a turquoise raft powered by a motor that speeds you through the river’s calmer sections. Eventually, you’ll reach a helicopter that will whisk you away to the Skywalk, the $30 million horseshoe-shaped glass bridge.

Hualapai River Runners have been offering whitewater rafting trips for more than 40 years. Booking with the river runners is the only way you can do a one or two-day raft trip through the Grand Canyon without having to do a strenuous hike down the canyon or commit to a multi-day trip.

“We offer a one-day rafting experience, which a lot of companies do not,” says Luka Montana, a Hualapai tribe member. “It’s a fast and easy outing for people who want to get back to Las Vegas.”

It’s also unforgettable. Your epic trip starts at the Hualapai Lodge, an immaculate base in Peach Springs along Route 66. It’s home to a Hualapai-owned hotel and a restaurant where you can fuel up on breakfast and dinner and sample Native American traditional foods. From there, it’s about an hour-long bus ride down a dirt road past bighorn sheep and wild donkeys to Colorado River mile 226.

As you raft past Grand Canyon’s towering walls, you’ll spend the first 12 miles fording action-packed rapids. As the river mellows out, your Hualapai guide will tell you stories about the canyon and Hualapai and settler history. You’ll pass Separation Canyon where three men from Maj. John Wesley Powell’s 1869 river expedition abandoned the mission and hiked out never to be seen again. They had no way of knowing they were two days away from floating out of the Grand Canyon.

After eating deli sandwiches on a white-sand beach, you’ll float to arguably one of the world’s most stunning helicopter pads. An eight-minute ride up to the top of the Grand Canyon is magical and will bring you to the Skywalk where you can look through the glass at the Colorado River 4,000 feet below. Afterwards, you’ll board a bus back to Peach Springs.

Learn more at GrandCanyonWest.com
ABOVE & BELOW
WALK THE SKY. VIEW THE EARTH. RAFT THE CANYON.