



The Perfect



LE MARS

IOWA

Weekend

Getaway

Le Mars is truly a hidden gem. Being only a half hour drive from Sioux City, vacationers looking to stay local can enjoy an eventful day visiting parks, shopping downtown, admiring the many murals, attend a live concert, and even go on a scavenger hunt. That's right, since Le Mars is the "Ice Cream Capital of the World" city officials have taken advantage of this title, and strategically placed ice cream cone shaped sculptures all around town. So, let's explore!

Day 1

3:00 pm:

Arrive in town and start your afternoon at the Le Mars Arts Center (200 Central Ave S, Le Mars, IA)

Housed in the former Carnegie Library, this building was one of just 22 funded by Andrew Carnegie himself in 1903, and since its construction few changes have been made to the exterior. From the granite pillars and brown sandstone, to the large exterior and interior arches, and all the way down to the mosaic landing, the integrity of this Renaissance Revival style structure has been lovingly preserved. In the basement, they offer weekly and monthly art classes for youth and adults. Everything from painting canvas to throwing clay, they have something for everyone; and prices range from \$5 to \$45 depending on which class you select. (<https://www.lemarsarts.com/>)

5:00 pm:

Head to an early dinner at Iowa Barbeque Company (100 Plymouth St W, Le Mars, IA)

Opening their business only three years ago, this family-owned business has won Siouxland's Choice Award for the best barbeque, and even earned the number one spot on Siouxland's list of the top 50 restaurants. Make sure to try all three barbeque sauces, Bourbon Sweet, Missouri Molasses, and Texas Heat. Come early for your meat sweats, because when they run out (and oftentimes they do) there is no more to be sold. And check out their gift shop in store or online. (<https://www.iabarbeque.com/>)

6:30 pm:

Get ready to enjoy a show at The Browns Century Theater (11 Central Ave NW, Le Mars, IA)

Built in 1883, this historic structure used to be the old bank building, but after purchasing it in 2015 and transforming it through a full restoration, it is now the Browns Theater. Throughout the year, the Brown family put on Easter celebrations, St. Patrick's Day performances, Christmas carols, and holiday events. They even travel world-wide, but just thirty minutes up the road, you can enjoy a two-hour performance of singing, dancing and fiddle playing. During the intermission, guests are encouraged to make their way down to the gift shop where they can purchase handmade truffles, soaps and lotions, and even a copy of one of the Brown's albums. Check out their performance schedule online. (<https://thebrownstheater.com/>)

9:00 pm:

Check into your hotel at the Inn on Central (11 Central Ave NW, Le Mars, IA)

Located above the historic Browns Theater on Central Avenue, the Inn on Central offers guests a unique and charming accommodation experience. Originally constructed in the late 1800s, the building exudes a sense of old-world charm and elegance. The inn features beautifully appointed rooms with modern amenities, providing guests with a comfortable and inviting atmosphere during their stay. (<https://thebrownstheater.com/stay/>)

Day 2

9:30 am:

Start your day with caffeine and breakfast:

- Bellissimo Coffeeworks
- Family Table Restaurant
- Jim's Burger

11:30 am:

Check out these shops as you spend the afternoon window shopping on Central Ave.

- Bling-N-Fashions
- Shop Cary Boutique
- Sugar-N-Spice
- Collective & Co.
- Mescher's Clothing
- Hotopp Jewelry & Gifts
- Le Mars Toy Store
- SIMPATICO decor + gifts
- History Worth Repeating
- Shop near the corner LLC
- Lily Zita Boutique

1:30 pm:

Enjoy lunch at the famous Bob's Drive Inn (23 5th Ave SW, Le Mars, IA)

Featured in People's Magazine as the best hotdog in Iowa, Bob's was started in 1949 by Bob Kass, himself. In fact, they still get their hot dogs from Wimmer's in West Point, Nebraska, and the buns are freshly made at the Casey's in Sioux Center, Iowa. And while you're there make sure to order their famous taverns (a loose meat sandwich), or a homemade shakes, and don't leave without enjoying their made-in-house root beer floats! (<https://www.facebook.com/LeMarsBobsDriveInn/>)

3:30 pm:

Make your way to the Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor (115 Central Ave NW, Le Mars, IA)

This is a must-visit destination in the "Ice Cream Capital of the World". Doubling as a tourism hub and a sweet treat destination, this visitor center provides tourists with information about the city's history, attractions and events. You'll be able to watch a short film about the rich heritage of ice cream production in Le Mars, and downtown is an old-fashioned ice cream parlor where you can try delicious classic favorites, or unique seasonal offerings. (<https://ilovewells.com/>)

5:30 pm:

Head to dinner at Archie's Waeside (224 4th Ave NE, Le Mars, IA)

Claiming the number four spot on Rachael Ray's list of America's best steakhouses, Archie's has earned a distinguished spot among some of the best steakhouses in the world. Archie Jackson, who the restaurant is named after, opened his own steakhouse here in Le Mars in 1949 after years of working in the stockyards, learning how to butcher animals and successfully dry-aging meat. Now owned by Archie's grandson and current owner, Bob Rand, this 70-year-old establishment still boasts their infamous Christmas villages along the walls. (<https://www.archieswaeside.com/>)

7:30 pm:

Enjoy after dinner drinks at Wise I Brewing Company (15 2nd St NE, Le Mars, IA)

What's the meaning behind the name Wise I. Playing a crucial part to end prohibition in Iowa, Ida B. Wise was a vocal advocate for not only ending the ban on alcohol, but also women's rights. And as for the I, well it happens to be the first letter of the great state of Iowa; thus, the name was born, Wise I. In collaboration with Wells Enterprises, Wise I has created the Original Bomb Pop Sour! Being the first brewery in Le Mars, and one of our favorites in all of Siouland, we hope you enjoy your experience. (<https://www.wiseibrew.com/>)

Day 3

8:00 am:

Check out of your hotel.

8:30 am:

Head to breakfast at the relaxing Habitué Coffeehouse (108 Central Ave NW, Le Mars, IA)

According to Webster's Dictionary, "Habitué" is a noun describing a frequent visitor. This is self-evident, and will undoubtedly be a necessary stop every time you visit Le Mars. We especially love the view from the bay windows looking across the street at the Blue Bunny Ice Cream shop. From traditional breakfast starters, to a cranberry turkey sandwich on rye bread, and even homemade cupcakes and pastries, make sure to enjoy your meal while reading one of their books from the upstairs library. (<https://habitucoffee.com/>)

10:30 am:

Go on a scavenger hunt for all the ice cream cones around town! *map*

Being that Le Mars is the “Ice Cream Capitol of the World”, the city has placed 56 cone sculptures all across town. Standing nearly six feet tall, each represents the rich history of this unique Iowa town, and some directly mirror the business they are mounted in front of. Families and businesses, with the help of the city, find artists to render colorful and thoughtful miniature murals on these cone statues. Some have significant influence and meaning, and some are pure creative artistry. There's even a Cone Walk Map! (<https://www.lemarsiowa.com/DocumentCenter/View/265/Cone-Map-PDF>)

12:30 pm: Grab lunch at:

- Lally's Eastside
- 4 Brothers Bar & Grill

2:30 pm:

Take a walk through history at the Plymouth County Historical Museum (335 1st Ave SW, Le Mars, IA)

Originally Le Mars Central High School, the Plymouth County Historical Museum occupies all 5 floors of this beautiful building. Finished in 1924, with an addition in 1952, it functioned as a school up until 1980. After sitting vacant for 3 years, the Historical Society purchased the building in 1983, and began reconstruction. Now it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. From vintage tractors and signs, heritage rooms, a 1960s turn of the century kitchen, an old diner and even a realistic pharmacy await your visit. (<https://plymouthcountymuseum.yourwebsitespace.com/>)

5:00 pm: Walk through the alleyways admiring the many murals

Allowing artists to express their creativity, Le Mars has commissioned 25 area artists (and that number is still growing) to illustrate, paint, sketch and draw on the brick walls they call their blank canvases. And there are in the vicinity of 40 businesses allowing their walls to undergo an imaginative and exciting facelift. Funded by the city of Le Mars, the local Art Center, and the Le Mars area Chamber of Commerce's Main Street program, this project has expanded and grown to encompass as many downtown businesses as possible.

7:00 pm: Sit down for dinner at

- P's Pizza House
- Blue Tequila

9:00 pm: Head back home

Thank You

This concludes your visit to Le Mars. Take your time throughout your visit, and don't feel like you have to do everything. Please, don't hesitate to reach out with any suggestions or questions you may have! I hope you enjoy your time in Yankton, and make sure to tag me in your adventures @TheSiouxlandBlog!

If you have time, check out:

- Sweet 16 Lanes
- Foster Park
- Le Mars Municipal Park Shelter House
- The Pit
- Kellen Ponderosa LLC
- Cork It!

Honorable Mention!

Spend an evening at Christmas Acres! A local family turns their farm into a winter wonderland with over 200,000 Christmas lights and giant prop, creating Christmas scenes from movies and countless Instagram photo ops. (18481 Impala Ave, Struble, IA 51031)

Or if you are planning a trip around a certain event, here are some ideas to help you on your journey:

- Sip & Shop (April 25th, 2024)
- Le Mars Farmers Market: Wed and Sat mornings (May - Sept)
- Ice Cream Days (June 12th-15th, 2024)
- Crazy Days (July 11th-13th, 2024)
- Plymouth County Fair (July 24th-28th, 2024)
- Harvest Hollow Pumpkin Farm (Sept - Oct)
- Christmas in Hometown Le Mars (First Saturday after Thanksgiving)
- Pioneer Christmas Village (Nov - Dec)