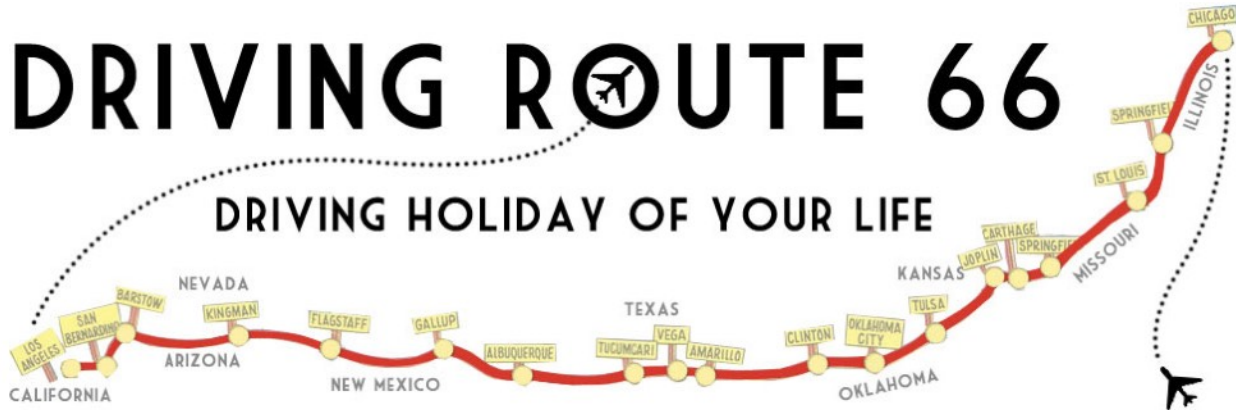


DRIVING ROUTE 66



DRIVING HOLIDAY OF YOUR LIFE

Tour #1: The Pure Classic Route 66 (13 days, 12 nights)

Day 1: Arrive to Chicago, IL

After touching down at Chicago International Airport you to transfer to the car rental facility and hire your pre-paid vehicle. Chicago, it almost goes out with saying, is one hell of a town; the largest, most vibrant of the Great Lake cities. The city skyline has few peers and down on the streets you'll find a fantastic selection of world class museums, restaurants and cafes. There is also the city's famed bar and nightclub scene that is still anchored in an incredible jazz and blues tradition. In the morning the long dreamt of journey across Route 66 begins.

Whether you're a first-time or returning visitor to Chicago there is lot do do: you can visit Chicago's historic landmarks, classic movie locations, and hottest attractions. Visit Cloud Gate (**The Bean**), do boat tours, there is State Street shopping, Picasso, Garrett Popcorn Shop, Chicago Theatre, Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium, Willis (formerly Sears) Tower: **The Skydeck**, Magnificent Mile Shopping District, even you can do private tours: you'll learn about the incredible growth of Chicago around the turn of the century, its power as a hub for communications, retailing, and industry, its magnificent architecture, and life in the city today.



Day 2: Chicago, IL - Springfield, IL (Illinois, Miles: 187, Kilometers: 301)



Parallel to I-55, (the Interstate 55) the legendary Route 66 began its run right here. It cut through the state before it ran the whole way to the Pacific Coast.

Along the way you'll see old-time diners and service stations which are a real slice of Americana. Riding South from Chicago you barrel through the coal-mining area of Illinois and continue along the Pontiac Trail, as this road used to be known. Finally you pull into Springfield, the Illinois state capital. On your way you'll be passing sights such as the **Gemini Giant**, **Polka dot Inn**, **Odell Service Station** and many more.

Day 3: Springfield, IL - St. Louis, MO (Missouri, Miles:116, Kilometers:187)

Making your way south, you head towards the state of Missouri on our way to St. Louis, a town rich in history. Along the way, you will pass through a number of Highway towns, which are great places for a stop en route. You will also set aside some time to visit **Meramec Caverns** as you head for the Mississippi River – a complex of mineral formations which are as rare as they are exquisite. And of course you couldn't miss the famous "**Chain of Rocks Bridge**" from a distance - it has been closed to motor traffic since 1970. Now you are properly in Missouri, the state where the Mississippi River meets the Missouri River, and where you can find both forests meet the grassland prairies. It's a short ride from the state border into the "Gateway to the West," St. Louis, a dynamic and cultured city nestled along the shores of the mighty Mississippi River. You will find not only some of the best live music, but also BBQ ribs in the entire United States in St. Louis. You can also study the magnificent **St. Louis Arch** from the window of tonight's accommodations.



Optional activity: we can get a one-time permit for you to exclusively drive cross the Chain of Rocks Bridge from IL to MO. Feel the old time legend in person! Fee: \$250 per occasion.

Day 4: St. Louis - Springfield (Missouri, Miles:247, Kilometers:397)



Today you will not only drive on Route 66's finest roads, but stop at the **Fanning 66 Outpost**. Stocked with a goodly selection of Route 66 souvenirs and collectibles including a taxidermy shop, archery range and the **world's largest rocking chair**, according to the Guinness Book of Records. At 46 inches tall and weighing some 26,500 pounds it could hardly be anything else!

Devil's Elbow is a famous or should we say infamous stretch of Missouri Route 66 legend - and the Big Cut area of the Mother Road. It used to be considered one of the most dangerous sections of old Route 66. Today it is an agreeable break in a pleasant, park-like setting. Devil's Elbow was a popular resort town in the 1930s and 40s. With the picturesque Big Piney River's and the beautiful Ozark Hills as a backdrop it's easy to see why.

Superior hotel: TownePlace Suites Springfield or similar
Standard hotel: Best Western Route 66 Rail Haven or similar

Day 5: Springfield - Tulsa (Oklahoma, Miles: 202, Kilometers: 325)



Visit “**Gay Parita Service Station**”. This is a must stop in a wonderful world of Route 66 attractions.

You could easily spend hours just going through all the treasures there.

In Galena there is a chance you meet “**Tow Mater**” from the movie CARS – the original 1951 International boom truck next to the old garage on the old Route 66 where you can have lunch.

On your way to Baxter Springs, Kansas and just few miles west of Riverton you come to the Marsh Arch “**Rainbow Bridge**” on the old alignment of Route 66. This is one elegant old bridge, though it is far smaller than the old Spring River Bridge, which did not survive the “new is better” ethos so evident during the 1970s and 80s.

As you drive through Miami (and we are starving) you won’t miss **Waylan’s Ku-Ku Burger** with its giant Cuckoo Clock outside. This little fast food restaurant with a cuckoo bird popping out of its cuckoo clock roof has been a Route 66 icon for decades.

Route 66 Vintage **Iron Motorcycle Museum** is located on the Mother Road in downtown Miami. The museum includes a 2,000 sq. ft. motorcycle and Route 66 gift shop and is home to an incredible collection of motorcycles and memorabilia. There are over 40 vintage motorcycles on display at the museum, including a 1917 Harley Davidson, 1972 Yamaha World Record Jump Bike, 2004 Honda world record jump bike, 1949 Indian Scout, 1949 AJS, 1957 Ariel, and many more.

In Afton Oklahoma you stop by the **Station Packard Museum** (restored 1930s Eagle D-X filling station), a privately owned automotive museum on U.S. Route 66. It houses a showroom, 18 Packards & other vintage automobiles plus a collection of Route 66 memorabilia, including items from the now-demolished Buffalo Ranch Trading Post. A restored set of historic D-X fuel pumps stands in the old station's forecourt and the red and white on blue “Approved Packard Service” dealership logo is proudly displayed atop a signpost.

Then, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the appropriately named **Totem Pole park** is home to the World’s Largest Concrete Totem Pole, a 90 foot totem pole that towers over the park in an astonishing array of folk art colors, with the four nine-foot Indians near the top each representing a different tribe. Between 1937 and 1948, one Ed Galloway built the totem pole utilizing some 28 tons of cement, six tons of steel, and 100 tons of sand and rock. Ed’s personal tribute to the American Indian features a collection of some 200 carved pictures.

One of the most recognizable attractions on old Route 66 in Oklahoma must be The **Blue Whale**.

Constructed in the early 1970s by Hugh Davis as an anniversary gift to his wife Zelta, The Blue Whale and its pond quickly became a favorite rest area and swimming spot for both locals and passers by.

Superior hotel: The Mayo Hotel or similar
Standard hotel: Ramada Tulsa or similar



Day 6: Tulsa - Clinton (Oklahoma, Miles: 217, Kilometers: 350)

Seaba Filling Station: listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this Route 66 landmark is now filled with over 65 vintage motorcycles from 1908 to present. **The Seaba Station** was built in 1921, five years before historic Route 66 was certified as a national highway. Let you pay a visit to browse through motorcycle displays, antiques, souvenirs and more.

At Arcadia, Travelers frequently pause to consider the statue of Washington Irving, and all his works and deeds. Then there's the iconic **Round Barn**, according to many the most photographed spot of all on Route 66. These days there is yet another reason to stop in Arcadia: **POP'S**, a somewhat futuristic looking restaurant on Route 66 that's bound to become one of the many instantly recognizable landmarks on "America's Main Street"!



The **National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum** on Oklahoma City features a superb collection of classic and contemporary western art. The exhibition wing houses a turn-of-the-century town and interactive history galleries that focus on the American cowboy, rodeos, Native American culture, Victorian firearms, frontier military and western performers.

You can have lunch at a great little place called **Fat Elvis Diner**. The burgers are fantastic, but if you have a special request it may be to ask the (Elvis impersonator) owner not to sing. He has the voice of ...Kevin Costner plus his guitar is out of tune. All in good fun, but you continue our trip West reaching the interestingly named South Canadian River and the 38-arch bridge which traverses it. This bridge was indeed constructed using 38 low-rise truss arches, some 19 on each side. These arches are also known as "ponies" - **Pony Bridge**:

they are painted yellow and visible from some distance. It's here you get the authentic feeling that comes from riding on a two-lane cement road which hugs the very contours of the earth, and rises and falls gently with the hills. Going down this road you get a sense of what it must've been like crossing Route 66 back in the 1930s ... except that you're almost certainly going much faster than they did back then!

Lucille's Service Station: a classic and historic gas station along Route 66 near Hydro OK from 1929, is one of only two upper-story, out-thrust porch style stations left on Oklahoma's stretch of Route 66. In 1941, the Hamons family took over the operation of the station and Lucille Hamons, for which the service station is named, ran the business for 60 years. Lucille, who quickly became known for her friendly assistance to motorists, earned the nickname "Mother of the Mother Road."



The road eventually takes you to the **Oklahoma Route 66 Museum**. Largely due to Jim Ross and Shellee Graham's many fine Route 66 photographs, probably this is the best out of the many museums on Route 66.

Day 7: Clinton - Amarillo (Texas, Miles: 193, Kilometers: 311)

As befits its name, **The National Route 66 Museum** in Eric celebrates Route 66, not just in the state of Oklahoma, but all eight Route 66 states. The museum features a walk through scale model of all eight states focusing on the ordinary folk who lived, worked and traveled the old Mother Road. The murals are quite realistic and the exhibits include vintage automobiles and antiques from the bygone hey-day of Route 66.

There was a time when everything west of Eric was considered to be the “Great American Desert”. This is also explained by the fact that until it was realigned, Eric used to be right on the Texas border.

You go just one block south of Roger Miller Boulevard and check **Bonebrake Hardware "Museum"**. In the 1960s the owners retired: just locked the doors for the night and left. Nobody has ever seen them after. Today you can look in the store windows to see dusty counters and inventory, otherwise unchanged.

There was a time, the 1930s to be precise, when Shamrock was a prosperous oil town. A conspicuous reminder that the old Route 66 ran through Shamrock, is the Tower Service

Station and **U-Drop Inn Conoco**, since 1936 it's been a Texas Route 66 milestone.



The U-Drop Inn Cafe, named by a local schoolboy in a contest that awarded him \$50.00 for his idea. To this day, it is still one of the most upscale eateries on U.S. Highway 66 between Oklahoma City and Amarillo.

Oozing old time atmosphere, the small Panhandle town of McLean is a trip back in time to a true Route 66 experience. McLean's **Devil's Rope Museum** is dedicated to barbed wire, or the Devil's rope as it's sometimes called around here. The Museum features the history of barbed wire, and artifacts which are a reminder of the significance of this invention, and its impact on the Old West's development.

The restored **Phillips 66 Gas Station** – Now this is truly history. Not only was it the first Phillips 66 Service Station in Texas, built as it was in 1927, but the gas pumps show the price of gas at a mere 19¢ a gallon!

On you drive, to another historic railroad town, this one dating back to 1902, Groom, Texas. Arguably its chief attraction is the neck-turning **"Leaning Tower of Texas"** actually just a water tank tipping perilously to one side. One leg of the Britten USA water reservoir is actually shorter than the others. It was built this way just to catch the tourist's eye and get them to stop for a while in Groom. Another attraction for the Interstate traveler is the **Groom Cross**. With a height of 190 feet, the Groom Cross is reported as being the 2nd biggest cross in the northern hemisphere. Built on private property it is visible for miles as you approach this panhandle town. Though it doesn't date back to the very first days of Route 66 it's definitely in the spirit of the old Mother Road.

There are ten graffiti-covered cars that are half-buried, nose-down and rise up out the desert terrain, and collectively known as **The Cadillac Ranch**. Built in 1974 by Stanley Marsh and The Ant Farm, a San Francisco Art Collective, the ranch is located along the fringes of historic Route 66 facing west "at the



same angle as the Cheops' pyramids." The Cadillacs are all emblematic of the "Golden Age" in American Automobiles (1949 through 1963). The line-up of cars and their position all the way out in a field allows for some atmospheric photography. Their distance from any watchful eye of authority also encourages ever-changing layers of painted graffiti, which Marsh has never had much of a problem with. Interesting to note however, that in 1997 encroaching development forced Marsh to pick up and move the whole Caddy farm that much further West.

be the Big Texan Steak Ranch, and if not, it should be. Open since 1960, The Big Texan has become world-renowned for its 72oz steak eating challenge. If you can eat a shrimp cocktail, salad, baked potato with fixin's, and a 72oz steak (about 2 kgs) within 60 minutes your meal is free! But if you can't quite make it, you'll have to foot a bill of around \$70 plus tip. Only around 1 in 6 customers are successful, according to the Big Texan website website. Call their complementary 2 way limo ride from your hotel!

Day 8: Amarillo - Santa Fe (New Mexico, Miles: 301, Kilometers: 485)

You have officially reached the halfway mark when you arrive at the town of Adrian, Texas. This little Route 66 town's claim to fame is that it's the midpoint of the 2,278 miles between Chicago, IL and Santa Monica, CA. Some pictures under the halfway sign are a photo opportunity too good to miss. The landmark is called **MidPoint Cafe**.



Onto to New Mexico and a full day of both riding and sightseeing, you drive through Tucumcari, where the neon lights of the archetypal motel **The Blue Swallow** have been a beacon for road weary travelers since 1939. Lunch at a Mexican restaurant fortifies us for the afternoon in Tucumcari

There is some of Route 66 memorabilia to see in Santa Rosa, including Bono's **Route 66 Auto Museum**. The pristine condition of the Ridgway Historic District in the Santa Rosa downtown are a reminder that the tourist industry is as important to this charming New Mexican town as it ever was.

Day 9: Santa Fe - Gallup (New Mexico, Miles: 272, Kilometers: 437)

When Wild Hogs Came to Madrid...If you have always been curious about what it would be like to be living in the midst of a major movie production while it's being shot, than this site should be right up your street. It chronicles the shoot of the Disney movie Wild Hogs as it in took place in **Madrid**, New Mexico. The film is about ageing suburban bikers who face down a serious gang and starred John Travolta and Tim Allen.

For an entirely different kind of experience, it's interesting to note that Madrid and the area surrounding it, is reputed to be haunted. There has been many a ghost sighting around the town, in the old church and the cemetery, but perhaps most of all the Mine Shaft Tavern. Both guests and staff have reported seeing doors pushed open by unseen hands, doors that then swing eerily in the breeze. Glasses fall from

shelves and smash on the floor, mysterious sounds are heard through the six inch abode walls, furniture is moved about in the middle of the night, and perhaps strangest of all, employees at the Mine Shaft tell of looking in the mirror to see a ghost staring back at them. Spooky!

Next stop is **The 66 Diner** which looks, feels and even tastes like a Mother Road classic. Uniformed waitresses work the dining area to the beat of 1950s era rock-and-roll blasting from an old time juke box. Bright red ceiling lamps are suspended over aqua-blue counter stools. There's a hopscotch game built into the black and white tiled floor. But best of all you can chow down on traditional Route 66 roadside fare.

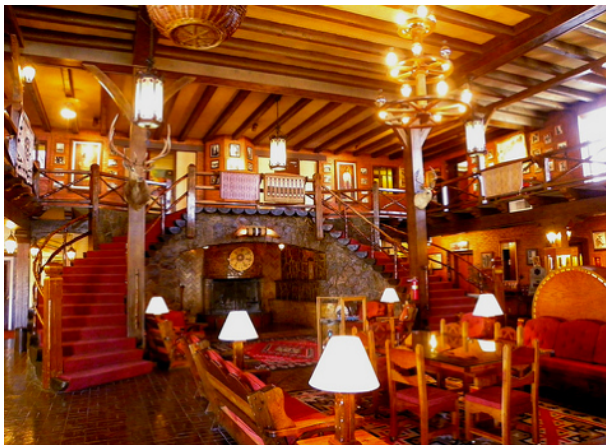
Try their hamburger or a sloppy Joe with French fries and a world beater milk shake, or a pounded-tender chicken-fried steak coated in gravy with a side of mashed potatoes. Check out their daily blue-plate specials, such as Tuesday's chicken pot pie and Saturday's hot turkey sandwiches.



An ice cave in the desert?

Located right along the Continental Divide we discover the **Ice Cave and Bandera Volcano**: "The Land of Fire and Ice". You might feel as if you've gone back to the Pleistocene era, walking through a landscape of gnarly, old-growth Juniper, Fir and Ponderosa Pine trees, over the prehistoric lava trail all the way to the Ice Cave. In the Arizona sunlight, the layers of ice sparkle blue and green. After this breathtaking sight, the trail winds around the side of Bandera Volcano to the site of a volcanic eruption, the Zuni Bandera volcanic field. Then we ride into El Malpais, where the old timey Ice Cave Trading Post displays ancient artefacts as well as Native American art and handicrafts.

Next, let's check out a real slice of the Old West, Hollywood style. Gallup's **El Rancho Hotel** was built in 1937 on historic Route 66, and is now protected and cared for by preservationists.



Well, back in the olden days of the Western, the Gallup rented rooms to literally 1000s of movie stars while they were in town making movies. And it sure looks the part, with its sweeping staircase and huge stone fireplace, plus old Hollywood star portraits and Navajo art filling the two story lobby of this rustic hotel. There's also a fine selection of Southwestern and Mexican cuisine available in the "Old West" 49er Lounge.

If it's Native American pottery, baskets, beaded items, artifacts you're after, you will certainly find them at Richardson's Trading Company located in Gallup's downtown area. It's a great place to select some one-of-a-kind Native American artwork.

Day 10: Gallup - Flagstaff (Arizona, Miles: 219, Kilometers: 353)

Some of the most outstanding geologic and fossil records of the Late Triassic period anywhere can be found at our next destination, **Petrified Forest National Park**. Driving through the park takes all of 45

minutes but if the you are keen, you can stay a little longer for a prehistoric history lesson. Research conducted in the park turns up new evidence all the time, ranging from petrified wood to dinosaur bones.

Old time trading posts and motels straight out of 1950s Americana still line Route 66 in Holbrook. The area around Holbrook is a nirvana for rock hounds, as the so-called Painted Desert is still fertile ground for discovering dinosaur remains.



Once you are in Holbrook AZ perhaps you'd like to stop by the **Wigwam Motel**. The Wigwam Motels, also known as the "Wigwam Villages", was a motel chain in the United States built during the 1930s and 1940s. The rooms are built in the form of tipis, mistakenly referred to as wigwams.

There are of course many attractions along Route 66, some of which might best be described as curiosities. You can't stop for all of them, but who could resist the charms of a 10 foot high jackrabbit with a saddle across its back? This is a great, tongue-in-cheek photo opportunity. There's not much else to do at this spot on the I-40 in the middle of the desert, aside from a visit to the **Jack Rabbit Trading Post** that is. It's certainly curious that despite being in the proverbial middle of nowhere, the Jack Rabbit Trading Post has its own on and off ramps for I-40. The story behind them is this: Back in 1967 an Arizona state senator named Glenn Blansett purchased the Trading Post. One of his last acts as a Senator was to see that the I-40 ramps were put in place here. The Jack Rabbit Trading Post is still in the Blansett family, but these days it's his grand daughter Cindy who runs the show.

You may wonder how these far flung trading outposts ever attracted customers, especially in the days before the mass communications. Typically the owners of these establishments would take a road trip themselves, all 1,000 miles to Springfield, MO. On the way back, they dotted the roadside with billboards. The cumulative effect was such that by the time travelers arrived at a place like Joseph City their curiosity was so piqued they couldn't help but stop. Pioneers in their own way, the proprietors brought customers to their stores, and didn't let being "in the middle of nowhere" stand in their way. Good for them. Up until the 1960s, Winslow was the biggest town in northern Arizona, but it's a familiar story, when the town was bypassed by the I-40 in the 1970s, shops and businesses began closing down and the population declined. In 1972 however, "Take it Easy", the first hit single for those California rockers The Eagles came out, and immortalized the town in pop/rock consciousness with the lyric, "standing on a corner in Winslow, Arizona".



Tonight's accommodation is something special, for we sleep in La Posada. It was selected as one of the best places to stay in the world by the readers of Condé Nast Traveler. Originally built for railroad passengers, this Arts and Crafts hotel near Route 66 "is the destination—skip the town."

Soon you arrive at **Meteor Crater**, another one of Arizona's remarkable holes in the ground. It's the result of an asteroid crashing to earth at a speed of 26,000 miles, some 50,000 years ago. Some 550 feet deep

and almost a mile in diameter, these days the crater is actually a privately owned tourist attraction. Its “Astronauts Hall of Fame” plays up the crater’s likeness to the moon, not without justification when you learn that Apollo astronauts used to practice their moon-walk at Meteor Crater.



You drive on through the dense forestland southeast of Flagstaff, passing by the small seasonal stream of Walnut Creek, which over 1000s of years has engraved a 600 foot deep canyon into the local Kaibab limestone. You arrived at **Walnut Canyon**. Come gaze across the curved canyon walls! Among the remarkable geological cliff formations of the canyon itself, the shapes of the former homes of ancient inhabitants of Walnut Canyon are easily evident. On a hike along the Rim or Island Trails you can imagine what life was like along and within Walnut Canyon while visiting actual pueblos and walking in the steps of those who came before us.

Day 11: Flagstaff - Needles (California, Miles: 226, Kilometers: 364)

Williams, with its quant downtown which is on the National Register of Historic Places. To this day, Williams the town is a perfectly preserved piece of small-town America, with its virtually unchanged main street and what’s more, a kind of small town life you just don’t find much anymore. They still hold a local beauty pageant in Williams, and store clerks will happily give you tips on where best to eat.

As Route 66’s place in American history becomes the subject of ever more interest, Ash Fork’s place on the map seems assured. With all the stone quarries surrounding it, Ash Fork bills itself as “The Flagstone Capital of the World”, It is also starting point for Crookton Road, which has the distinction of being one of the longest stretches of unbroken Route 66 highway in existence today.

Eventually you arrive to Seligman, which is a great little town, with clean streets and friendly people.

There are, it has to be said, gift shops galore, most of them focused on Route 66 and American memorabilia. Out on the street, there are vintage cars, colorfully dressed mannequins, and funny little street signs galore.

Grand Canyon Caverns have been a must-see Route 66 tourist spot ever since the 1930s. A maze of limestone caves some 21 stories underground that wend their way all the way to the Grand Canyon, these caverns were formed over the course of 35 million years. You could fit 3 football fields inside the parts of the caverns where you can take a tour.

On a smaller scale but interesting in its own way, is the old gas station at Hackberry. This former gas station and general store doesn't sell gas these days, but it does sell practically anything and everything



associated with Old Route 66. Run by John and Kerry Pritchard, we recommend a walk behind the store, where they keep the really interesting memorabilia. That means old cars, sheds, garages, cactus, signs and more than we can list here. You can even take a carrot or two and feed the mules beyond the water garden.

Then if you like root beer, may we recommend **Mr. D's Kingman Route 66 Diner**, proudly serving the finest root beer in the world. Root beer is in fact a kind of soda.

Beginning at the town of Kingman, Oatman Road is a winding two-lane road traversing 42 miles of Arizona's striking desert terrain. In combination with the byway's stirring Western

history, the scenery creates an atmosphere that is unmistakably "Old West". In the surprisingly lively ghost town of **Oatman**, we'll come across free-roaming burros (wild donkeys), the occasional gunfight (staged for your enjoyment), and a collection of scenic storefronts straight out of an old John Wayne movie.

Day 12: Needles - Victorville (California, Miles: 189, Kilometers: 304)



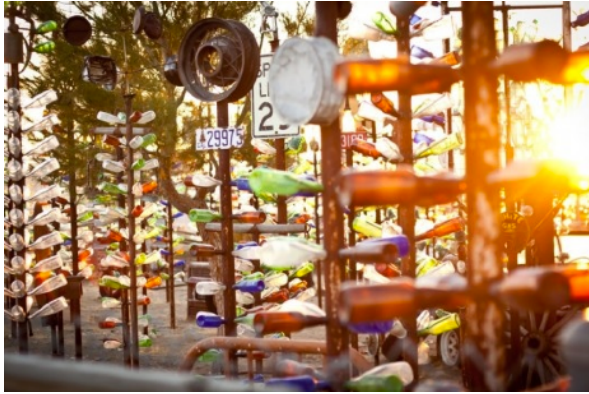
Today you pass through the exotically named desert towns of Baghdad, Siberia...

In the Mojave desert on Historic Route 66 we arrive at **Roy's** in the town of Amboy, California. Roy's Motel/Café and its gas stop is about as iconic a lonely desert stop can get, partly because of its many appearances in movies. You could say the town of Amboy has it all: its own airport, garage, school, church and graveyard - and even a volcanic crater. Everything but a post office, so don't expect to send any postcards from Amboy.

Further West **Calico** is an old West mining town that has been around since 1881 during the largest silver strike in California. With its 500 mines, Calico produced over \$20 million in silver ore over a 12-year span. When silver lost its value in the mid-1890's, Calico lost its population. The miner's packed up, loaded their mules and moved away abandoning the town that once gave them a good living. It became a "ghost town."

Day 13: Victorville - Los Angeles (California, Miles: 114, Kilometers: 183)

Bottle farm: Elmer has filled his yard with sculptures that resemble trees covered with bottles. They're actually pieces of pipe welded together, with hundreds of bottles loosely slipped over the ends so that they tinkle in the wind. There are lots of other odds and ends mixed in, including old signs, wheels, mechanical junk, all in all: a great stop, again!



On a palm-lined cliff at the edge of the Pacific Ocean in Santa Monica, only a few blocks away from the city's landmark pier, old Route 66 came to its western terminus. The pier supports a small amusement park and a charmingly quaint carousel.

There's a beachfront walkway which goes from the pier to Venice Beach, the heart of hippy trippy L.A.

But keep your eyes peeled, for right where Santa Monica Boulevard dead-ends at Ocean Boulevard, there's a brass plaque which denotes the official end of the "Main Street of America". Your Route 66 tour finishes right on Santa Monica Pier under the sign "**End of Trail**".



It's time to return your vehicle and make your way back home, unless you'd like to spend a few more days in Los Angeles or extend your holiday for another 2 days by driving to San Francisco by the scenic Ocean Road (highway #1)! in which case just let us know so we can arrange extended car hire and accommodation.

We hope you enjoyed your holiday and looking forward to organize another splendid road trip sometime soon!

Website and more information: <http://www.ridingroute66.us>