

Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway

The Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway travels through six communities as it winds its way through the knobs of Kentucky. This corridor is a national destination unto itself and exhibits significant historic and cultural resources around every turn. From the town of Hodgenville, through New Haven and Bardstown, on through Springfield and Perryville to Danville, the 71.2 miles of the Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway proudly display the history and culture that the region was built upon.

Length: 71.2 miles / 113.9 km

Time to Allow: Approximately three hours



Local Information

Stop by the following places for visitor information:

Hodgenville-LaRue County Chamber of Commerce
270-358-3411

Bardstown-Nelson County Tourist & Convention Commission
800-638-4877

Springfield Tourism
859-336-5440

Danville-Boyle County Convention and Visitors Bureau 800-755-0076

Visitor Services



Accessibility

Most of the resources have ADA accessible features; however, some locations have been unable to retrofit their historic structures to accommodate ADA compliant design. In general, the entire byway is ADA accessible and with careful travel planning, all abilities can be accommodated.



Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

The corridor is capable of accommodating bicycle and pedestrian traffic along the entire route.



Food

There are places to buy food along this byway.

Gasoline



Gasoline is available.

Information



Stop by the following places for visitor information: LaRue County Chamber in Hodgenville, open weekdays. Bardstown/Nelson County Visitor Center in Bardstown, open weekdays and Saturday. Springfield/Washington County Visitor Center in Springfield, open weekdays. Danville/Boyle County Convention and Visitors Bureau in Danville, open weekdays and Saturdays. Perryville Visitor/Welcome Center in Perryville, open weekdays.

Restrooms



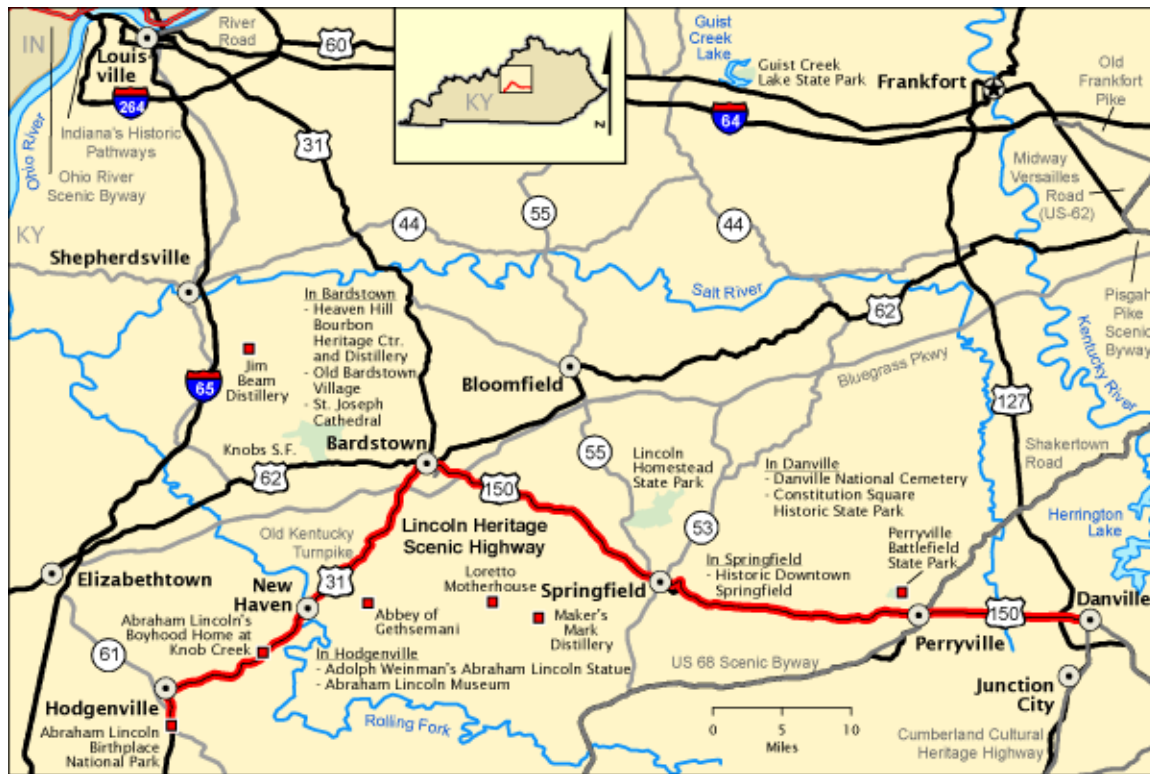
There are toilet facilities along this byway.

Seasons

Best Time to Drive

The best time of year to experience the Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway is from late May to mid-October.

Map and Directions



Legend:

 Point of Interest	 Campground	 Featured Byway	 Water	 State Border
 Park	 Picnic/Rest Area	 America's Byways	 Wildlife Refuge	 Urban Area
 Mountain	 Interstate	 Other Byway	 Wilderness Area	 Tribal Nation
 City	 U.S. Highway	 Other Road	 Other Federal Lands	 Military Base
 Capital	 State Highway	 Trail	 Other State Lands	

Driving Directions

- The Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway corridor is approximately 71.2 miles traveling through the central part of the Bluegrass State.
- It begins just south of Hodgenville on KY 31E at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site.
- The corridor travels northeast along US 31E (SR 84, SR 46) from just south of Hodgenville to Bardstown.
- The corridor then heads east on US 150 (SR 52, SR 605, SR 152) from Bardstown to Danville.
- The corridor ends in Danville where US 150/US 127/KY 52/KY 34 intersects with S 4th Street/N 4th Street/W Main Street.
- The corridor passes through the towns of Hodgenville, New Haven, Bardstown, Springfield, Perryville, and Danville.

Getting to the Byway



Nearby airports

Blue Grass Airport, KY (45 miles / 72.42 km, 1 hour)

Start:



Airport Way, Blue Grass Airport, Lexington
 N 38.034° W 84.604° [?]



Directions:

- Head southwest on Aviator Rd toward Airport Rd/Man O War.
- Turn right at Airport Rd/Man O War.
- Turn left at KY-1968/Parkers Mill Rd.
- Turn right at Man O War Blvd.
- Turn right at Harrodsburg Rd/US-68.
- Turn left at US-127.
- Turn left at Danville Rd/US-127.
- Turn left at 127/Harrodsburg Rd.

- Turn left at 127/150/KY-34/
KY-52/W Main St (Lincoln
Heritage Scenic Highway Corridor).

Junction with byway: * Intersection of 127/Harrodsburg Rd with W Main St., Danville
N 37.646° W 84.782° [?]

Louisville International Airport, KY (37 miles / 59.55 km, 50 minutes)

Start: ✈ Terminal Drive
N 38.187° W 85.742° [?]



- Directions:**
- Exit the airport on Terminal Drive and get onto I-264 eastbound.
 - Almost immediately get onto SR-130/I-65 south.
 - Take I-65 south for approximately 1 1/4 miles.
 - At the fork stay to the left and follow the signs for Nashville/I-65 south for 1/2 miles.
 - Take a slight right at I-65 south and follow for approximately 14 3/4 miles.
 - Take exit 112 for KY-245 toward Bardstown/KY-61/Clermont for 1/4 mile.
 - Turn left at Clermont Rd/KY-245 and continue to follow KY-245 for 15 1/2 miles.
 - Turn right at North 3rd Street/US-150/US-31 East and follow for 1 1/4 miles.

Junction with byway: * Intersection of Clermont Rd and US-150, Bardstown.
N 37.808° W 85.460° [?]



Nearby cities

Bowling Green, KY (71 miles / 114.26 km, 1 hour 20 minutes)

Start: ● Bowling Green
 N 36.978° W 86.438° [?]

- Take 231/Campbell Lane/Scottsville Road and continue to follow Scottsville Road for approximately 2 1/4 miles.
- Turn left onto the ramp to Louisville (I-65) and follow for 1/4 miles.
- Merge onto I-65 North and follow I-65 North for 57 3/4 miles.
- Take exit 81 for KY-84 toward Sonora.
- Turn right at KY-84/East Western Avenue and continue to follow KY-94 for 6 3/4 miles.
- Turn left at KY-84/South Lincoln Boulevard/US-31 East and follow for 1/4 mile.
- Take a right at East High Street.

Directions:

Junction with byway: * Where KY-84 intersects with East High Street
 N 37.574° W 85.739° [?]



Elizabethtown, KY (13 miles / 20.92 km, 20 minutes)

Start: ● Elizabethtown
 N 37.700° W 85.882° [?]

- Head northeast on KY-1357/St. John Road toward West Dixie Ave/US-31 West.
- Turn left at West Dixie Avenue/US-31 West and follow for approximately one mile.
- At Main Street/Public Square, take the 2nd exit onto East Dixie Ave/KY-61/US-31 West for 1 3/4 miles.

Directions:



- Turn left at KY-61/Lincoln Parkway and continue for 9 miles.
- Turn left at West Main Street and follow Main Street for approximately 1/2 mile.
- Continue straight onto KY-210/
KY-84/East Main Street/US-31 East

**Junction
with
byway:** * East Main Street
N 37.574° W 85.740° [?]

Road Trip: Abraham Lincoln, Central Kentucky History, Bourbon and Religion

Departure: Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace National Park, Kentucky

Destination: Constitution Square State Historic Park, Kentucky

Time to allow: 1 day

Sites and stops along this itinerary are meant to fully interpret and experience the four themes this highway is built upon: the early life of Abraham Lincoln in Kentucky, religious settlement, Bourbon heritage and a rich, Civil War history. Beginning this itinerary in Hodgenville highlights the sites where Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was born. This itinerary also travels to sites of rich religious settlement significance, including the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, America's oldest Trappist Monastery as well as the oldest Catholic Cathedral (St. Joseph) west of the Allegheny Mountains.

Day 1

- **Start: Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace National Park**

The historic quality of the corridor is presented to the byway traveler significantly at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Park. This site offers the byway traveler with a first-hand display of the Lincoln legacy and associates the traveler with the physical elements that represent Lincoln's birth. This site is a great location to begin the journey of Abraham Lincoln's early life in Kentucky.



Located just south of Hodgenville, the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace at the Sinking Spring Farm has a memorial building that houses the symbolic Lincoln Cabin. This cabin is an early 19th Century Kentucky cabin that symbolizes the one in which Lincoln was born. The Memorial Building is neo-classical style with 16 windows, 16 rosettes on the ceiling, and 16 fence poles representing Lincoln being the 16th president. 56 steps lead up to the building, which represents his age at the time of his death.

Exhibits and films in the Visitor's Center highlight Lincoln's Kentucky years, and the impact his frontier childhood had on the development of the adult Lincoln's character and beliefs. Some trails on the property lead in and around the Memorial Building housing the cabin.

This site and Lincoln's Boyhood Home at Knob Creek are nationally recognized as the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site.

- **Stop 1: Abraham Lincoln Museum**



From previous stop: 5 minutes / 3 mi (4.8 km)

Directions: Head north along the US-31E corridor to Hodgenville. The Lincoln Museum is located on the roundabout in the center of town, west of the Lincoln statue.

Suggested time at this stop: 3 hours

The cornerstone of Hodgenville's historic district, the Lincoln Museum provides an in-depth interpretation of the historic and cultural quality of the Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway. The Lincoln tradition is presented to the traveler and the historic elements that composed Lincoln's life are clearly depicted and presented in a variety of mediums.

The Lincoln Museum is Kentucky's only museum dedicated solely to Lincoln's life and times. The Lincoln Museum is also a Civil War Trust Discovery Site. The museum is only three miles from Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace on Sinking Spring Farm, and offers visitors a full history of Lincoln's life along with a dozen dioramas of significant events and times in the life of the United States sixteenth President. Wax figures are set in historically accurate three-dimensional displays, or dioramas. The scenes depict various times in Lincoln's life, from his days as a boy in Kentucky, to the night of his assassination in Ford's Theater in Washington D.C.

In addition to the main exhibits, the upstairs portion of the museum features a variety of exhibits, including: rare newspaper clippings, campaign posters, and Lincoln memorabilia. A Lincoln art gallery on the second floor is filled with paintings, drawings and other artworks portraying Lincoln.

- **Stop 2: Adolph Weinman's Abraham Lincoln Statue**



- From previous stop:** same location
Directions: In the central plaza outside the Museum.
Suggested time at this stop: 30 minutes

The historical quality of the Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway is ever-present as one travels the corridor. The Abraham Lincoln Statue provides a magnified sense of this historic quality as one stands before the impressive and over-whelming statue dedicated to the American icon.

This significant historic resource is located at the heart of downtown Hodgenville and is a highly visited site along the corridor. The statue was created by noted New York sculptor Adolph A. Weinman (1870 – 1952) and placed on the square in 1909 to honor the Centennial of Lincoln's Birth. Sculptures by Weinman can be found throughout the United States at the Jefferson Memorial, the U.S. Supreme Court, State Capitol Buildings in Wisconsin, Missouri, and Louisiana, and he was the designer of a half-dollar titled "Walking Liberty." The Lincoln statue in Hodgenville is a magnificent and powerful sight and the newly constructed square that surrounds the statue is a wonderful site that provides a location for events and festivals.

Across the square from the Weinman Lincoln statue is a statue of younger Lincoln reading a book alongside his dog "Honey". The boy Lincoln sculpture was created by the Daub-Firmin-Hendrickson Sculpture Group in 2008.

The symbolism of the two Lincoln statues staring across a beautiful square is a sight and an experience to be remembered.

• **Stop 3: Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood Home at Knob Creek**



From previous stop: 10 minutes / 5 mi (8.0 km)

Directions: Head north along US-31E from Hodgenville.

Suggested time at this stop: 1 hour

Abraham Lincoln himself said "My earliest recollection however, is of the Knob Creek place." The Lincoln family moved to Knob Creek from the Sinking Spring Farm in 1811. Lincoln almost drowned in Knob Creek here and his younger brother Thomas was born here, but died only a few days after his birth. The existing log cabin on the site was reconstructed in 1931 and possibly includes logs from Austin Gollaher's home (Lincoln's schoolmate who rescued him from drowning in Knob Creek).

This site and Lincoln's Birthplace National Park are nationally recognized as the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site. This site is arguably one of the most visited and significant historic memorials in this part of the country.

• **Stop 4: Abbey of Gethsemani and Visitor Center**



From previous stop: 15 minutes / 10 mi (16.0 km)

Directions: Head north about 10 miles from the Lincoln Boyhood Home at Knob Creek.

Suggested time at this stop: 2 hours

The Religious Heritage and historical quality of the corridor is embodied in the Abbey of Gethsemani. The Abbey of Gethsemani is one of America's oldest Trappist Monasteries and captures the significance of religious settlement on this byway.

The Abbey was founded by the Order of Trappist Cistercians on a quiet reserve of 2,000 acres of land in Nelson County near the town of Trappist and has welcomed guests since 1848. In 1848 44 Trappist monks from the Abbey of Melleray in western France made themselves a new home in the hills of Kentucky.

Thomas Merton (January 31, 1915 – December 10, 1968), one of the most influential Catholic writers of the 20th century, worked, lived and wrote at the Abbey of Gethsemani, where he is buried. Merton's influence has continued to grow since his death and he is considered by many to be an important 20th Century Catholic mystic and thinker. Merton's letters, books and diaries reveal the intensity with which their author focused on social justice issues, including the civil rights movement and proliferation of nuclear arms. Merton blocked publication of his letters and diaries until 25 years after his death.

The new Welcome Center at the Abbey of Gethsemani opened in 2004 and includes a theater with films detailing the monks' day-to-day life, as well as a gift shop where Gethsemani's famous bourbon fudge is available for purchase.

- **Stop 5: St. Joseph Cathedral**



From previous stop: 30 minutes / 15 mi (24.0 km)

Directions: Travel north along US-31E towards Bardstown. The Cathedral will be located where US-31E meets US-150 just outside of downtown Bardstown.

Suggested time at this stop: 1 hour

One of the four major themes presented along the corridor is Religious Heritage and History. St. Joseph's Cathedral provides the traveler with a significant appreciation and display of historical quality and reflects the importance and ever-present sense of religious history that exists along the corridor and its communities.

The first Catholic cathedral west of the Allegheny Mountains. Built in 1816-1819, the cathedral contains historic paintings, gifts of Francis I, King of the Two Sicilies, and Pope Leo XII. The Episcopal See (bishop's church) was first founded in Bardstown at St. Joseph and then moved 40 miles away to the fast-growing city of Louisville in 1841. It is made of bricks that were baked on site, with large columns in the front. St. Joseph became a parish church, and now has the title "proto-cathedral".

- **Stop 6: Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center and Distillery**



From previous stop: 5 minutes / 1.6 mi (2.6 km)

Directions: Head west on W Stephen Foster Ave/US-62. Make a U-turn and turn right at S 4th St. Continue on Gilkey Run Rd/Old Gilkey Run. The center is on the left.

Suggested time at this stop: 2 hours

Bourbon is America's spirit, and nowhere in the world can Bourbon be better displayed than in the Central Kentucky region along the Lincoln Heritage Scenic Highway corridor. This cultural quality is presented in the Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center and Distillery in an impressive and educational manner, allowing the visitor to touch, feel, taste and smell all that Bourbon is about.

The world-famous Kentucky Bourbon Trail begins at the Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center and Distillery. One of the eight distilleries along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail is Heaven Hill distillery and Heritage Center. The nation's largest independent, family-owned producer and marketer of distilled spirits products, Heaven Hill Distilleries, Inc. has called Bardstown home for nearly seven decades. The whiskey stored within Heaven Hill makes up 17 percent of the world's future supply of bourbon. The recently added Heritage Center offers visitors interactive exhibits about the birth of bourbon, the role of whiskey/ bourbon throughout history, and the process by which many of the distillery's well-known brands are prepared.

In addition to Heaven Hill distillery, you can also tour the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey history, Maker's Mark Distillery and Jim Bean – just to name a few attractions dedicated to the history of bourbon distilling. This nationally significant cultural resource provides the Bourbon region of Central Kentucky with a world-class facility dedicated to the Bourbon industry and culture.

- **Stop 7: Lincoln Homestead State Park**



From previous stop: 40 minutes / 22 mi (35.2 km)

Directions: Head northeast on Gilkey Run Rd/Old Gilkey Run toward KY-49/Loretto Rd. Continue straight onto KY-49/Loretto Rd/Parkview Ave. Turn right at Springfield Rd/E Stephen Foster Ave/US-150. Turn left at KY-555/US-150. Turn left at KY-528/Lincoln Park Rd. The park will be on the left.

Suggested time at this stop: 2 hours

This site, offering travelers significant historic intrinsic quality, is located among the rolling hills of Central Kentucky just outside of Springfield. Visitors to this nationally significant attraction can tour the original home (replica) of Lincoln's mother, as well as replicas of the 1782 cabin and blacksmith shop where Abe's father was raised and learned his trade. The land is adorned with split-rail fences that exude a traditional American flair. The displays within the homes show some of the original furniture made by Thomas Lincoln over 200 years ago. There is a gift shop and an 18-hole golf course on-site as well. The Mordecai Lincoln House is also considered part of the Lincoln Homestead State Park site.

- **Stop 8: Historic Downtown Springfield**



From previous stop: 5 mi (8.0 km)

Directions: From Lincoln Homestead Park, travel US 150 to Springfield

Suggested time at this stop: 10 minutes

Visit historic downtown Springfield, home to the 1816 Courthouse where Abraham Lincoln's parent's original marriage bond was found. This historic Courthouse is the oldest courthouse still in use west of the Allegheny Mountains. Among the records, which date from 1792, is the marriage certificate of Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, parents of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, as well as many other Lincoln family documents. Replicas of the marriage documents are on display. Lincoln searched in vain in 1858 for proof of his parents marriage and died thirteen years later never knowing the truth of his legitimacy. "In Sacred Union", the bronze sculpture of Abraham Lincoln, stands on the plaza of the Washington County Judicial Center looking toward the historic 1816 Courthouse. The Kentucky Arts Council, with funding from the Kentucky Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, awarded the City of Springfield money to commission the sculpture to commemorate the 200th birthday of our 16th President.

- **Stop 9: Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site**



From previous stop: 40 minutes / 23 mi (36.8 km)

Directions: Head south on KY-528/Lincoln Park Rd toward Fairlane Dr. Turn left at KY-555/US-150. Turn left at N Jackson St/ KY-1920.

Suggested time at this stop: 2 hours

Perryville was the largest battle ever fought on Kentucky soil. At this site the battle is interpreted magnificently for the visitor's experience. On October 8, 1862, more than 72,000 Union and Confederate troops clashed in the battle that decided the fate of Kentucky in the Civil War. More than 7,600 Union and Confederate troops were killed or wounded. The outnumbered Confederates left Perryville that night as their failure to attain a decisive tactical victory kept Kentucky in Union hands for the remainder of the Civil War. The battlefield is one of the most unaltered Civil War sites in the nation. This national attraction has a museum and self-guided interpretive trail totaling over seven miles in length with over 40 sites available. A Confederate monument was erected in 1902 and a Union monument was erected in 1931.

- **Stop 10: Danville National Cemetery**



From previous stop: 20 minutes / 12.3 mi (19.7 km)

Directions: Head southwest on Battlefield Rd/KY-1920 toward Hays Mays Rd. Turn left at W 2nd St/US-150. Continue on 150/KY-52/Main St/Perryville Rd. Turn left at N 1st St. The cemetery will be on the left.

Suggested time at this stop: 30 minutes

At the beginning of the Civil War, the federal government appropriated 18 cemetery lots from the town of Danville on this site. The soldiers' lot was established as a National Cemetery in 1862. Most of the original interments were Union soldiers who died at the hospital in Danville. A Confederate lot in the city cemetery with 66 interments adjoins the Danville National Cemetery.

- **End: Constitution Square State Historic Park**



From previous stop: 1 minute / 0.3 mi (0.5 km)

Directions: Head south on N 1st St toward Sherley St/Shirley Ave. Turn right at W Broadway St. Turn left at N 2nd St. The park will be on the right.

End your trip through the rich culture and history of the Lincoln Heritage Highway at Constitution Square State Historic Park in Danville.

Constitution Square was the site of a series of important events in Kentucky's history: the ten constitutional conventions that led to Kentucky's statehood. Frontier statesmen who lived in what was then the Kentucky County of Virginia struggled more than eight years for independence. Finally, on June 1, 1792, Kentucky became the fifteenth state in the Union. Isaac Shelby, a Revolutionary War hero and convention delegate, was named the first governor of the new Commonwealth.

Totals for Day 1

Total Distance Traveled: 97.2 miles / 155.5 km

Total Travel Time: 2 hours 46 minutes

Total Stopping Time: 14 hours 10 minutes