

Rolling lush hills, historical monuments, “Iowa’s Ocean,” numerous attractions, historical sites, annual celebrations, recreational areas and trails are all part of what makes South Central and Southeast Iowa so special.

Visitors to the area will find a number of activities and events unique to this part of the state – events that capitalize on this region’s history while looking toward the future.

South Central and Southeast Iowa is rich in tradition and offers excitement throughout the year. The Villages of Van Buren County, for example, offers visitors a chance to walk back in time with its historic business districts, buildings, museums and landmarks.

Recreation enthusiasts will find plenty to do in and around Rathbun Lake in Appanoose County. The lake, “Iowa’s Ocean,” plays host to hundreds of thousands of visitors each year who want to swim, camp, boat, hunt and fish.

Then there is Lake Darling in Washington County, which is also home to Kalona – known for its historical village, quilts and Amish and Mennonite communities.

Keokuk County is great for those looking for a leisurely drive along the roads that meander through the beautiful Iowa countryside.

In Monroe County, the county seat – Albia – is known best, according to locals, for its 92 historic buildings that encircle the square, the most of any county in the state of Iowa.

Then there’s Jefferson County, home to Iowa’s newest city, Vedic City, established just a few years ago.

In Wapello County, visitors can find plenty to do in the area’s largest city, Ottumwa or can make a stop in Eldon, home of the “American Gothic” house, featured in Grant Wood’s famous painting. Don’t forget about Davis County. From the historic square in Bloomfield to the Amish crafts and furniture in Drakesville – there are endless treasures to be found.

There’s also the famed Amana Colonies – home to seven villages, featuring great German food, wind and furniture.

In Mahaska County, Oskaloosa’s annual Lighted Christmas Parade is a holiday favorite.

And in Burlington, softball is king – there are several tournaments throughout the year.

No doubt, South Central and Southeast Iowa offers tourists and visitors plenty to do, lots to see and memories to last a lifetime.

Cover photo provided by Melissa Carlo

40 Top Reasons To Stop

<p>1) Chariton.....9</p> <p>2) Lucas.....9</p> <p>3) Centerville.....10</p> <p>4) Moravia.....10</p> <p>5) Moulton.....10</p> <p>6) Rathbun.....10</p> <p>7) Bloomfield.....12</p> <p>8) The Troy Academy.....12</p> <p>9) Mars Hill Church.....12</p> <p>10) Stringtown Stagecoach House12</p> <p>11) Morman Trail.....12</p> <p>12) The Amish.....12</p> <p>13) Lake Wapello.....12</p> <p>14) Sigourney.....13</p> <p>15) Delta.....13</p> <p>16) What Cheer.....13</p> <p>17) Fairfield.....14-15</p> <p>18) Lockridge.....15</p> <p>19) Albia.....18</p> <p>20) Avery.....18</p>	<p>21) Buxton.....19</p> <p>22) Georgetown.....19</p> <p>23) Hiteman.....19</p> <p>24) Melrose.....19</p> <p>25) Oskaloosa.....20</p> <p>26) The McNeill Stone Mansion.....21</p> <p>27) Parks.....21</p> <p>28) The Nelson Pioneer Farm.....21</p> <p>29) Bentonsport.....24</p> <p>30) Bonaparte.....24</p> <p>31) Cantril.....24-25</p> <p>32) Farmington.....25</p> <p>33) Keosauqua.....25</p> <p>34) Selma.....25</p> <p>35) Van Buren County.....25</p> <p>36) Agency.....26</p> <p>37) Eldon.....26-27</p> <p>38) Ottumwa.....27</p> <p>39) Pioneer Ridge.....27</p> <p>40) Woodlands Scenic Byway.....27</p>
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