

# 33 FREE THINGS TO DO IN KANSAS CITY



## 1 RIDE THE KC STREETCAR

Travel along the totally free 2.2-mile KC Streetcar line to discover some of Downtown KC's most vibrant districts. The route includes 16 stops throughout the Crossroads Arts District, Power & Light District and River Market, each as interesting and diverse as the last.

## 2 BOULEVARD BREWING COMPANY

This 40-minute tour, free on Wednesdays, explores the unique history, brewing process and business approach to Kansas City's favorite beer. The tour ends in the brewery's tasting room, where visitors can sample a select variety of Boulevard brews.

## 3 BRUCE R. WATKINS CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

Named in honor of local political and social activist Bruce R. Watkins, the center recognizes the vast contributions African-Americans made to the cultural development of Kansas City. Exhibits, displays, classes and stage performances provide an entertaining and educational experience for visitors.

## 4 CHILDREN'S PEACE PAVILION

Located in Independence, MO., this hands-on museum is an interactive way to teach children the concepts of peace. More than 25 child-centered learning activities encourage children to implement conflict resolution, communication and stewardship skills into their everyday lives.

## 5 THE CITY MARKET

Located in Kansas City's historic River Market, this farmers' market is the largest in the region with an annual attendance topping more than 1.3 million people. The River Market also boasts a wide variety of unique gift shops and restaurants.

## 6 CROWN CENTER

A Downtown favorite, this entertainment district offers something for everyone. Experience great dining, restaurants and attractions, or simply relax outside while watching the beautiful fountains. For a budget-friendly option, check out the free outdoor movies and live music during the summer or the Mayor's Christmas Tree in December.

## 7 DEANNA ROSE CHILDREN'S FARMSTEAD

This family-friendly attraction is a great place to see and feed an array of barnyard and local animals. The farmstead, designed to model a traditional Kansas family farm, features nearly 200 animals, a fishing pond and pony rides. Admission is free from 2 p.m. to close, Monday through Thursday, and every day for children under 1 year.



**8** **FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY'S MONEY MUSEUM**  
The Money Museum's interactive exhibits teach visitors about the Federal Reserve's role within the economy. Visitors can also see the region's largest cash vault, lift a 27-pound gold bar and view President Harry S. Truman's extensive coin collection. Bonus: all visitors leave with a bag of shredded currency.

**9** **FIRST FRIDAYS**  
The Crossroads Art District comes alive the first Friday of each month as thousands gather for the 40-gallery art crawl that has quickly become a local and regional favorite. Live entertainment and a wide variety of sidewalk vendors and food trucks make First Fridays a vibrant display of Kansas City culture.

**10** **FOUNTAINS**  
Kansas City takes pride in being nicknamed the City of Fountains—and for good reason. More than 200 majestic fountains adorn the city, from quaint neighborhoods to major town landmarks. Be sure to visit the newly renovated J.C. Nichols Memorial Fountain located at the Country Club Plaza for a look at one of the most popular fountains in the area.

**11** **FRONTIER ARMY MUSEUM**  
This collection of historical artifacts pays tribute to the Frontier Army's role in the exploration and expansion of the nation from 1804 to 1916. The museum also celebrates Fort Leavenworth's history from 1827 to the present. The collection includes unique artifacts such as a 1790 prairie schooner and a JN4D aircraft, the type used by General Pershing in a 1917 conflict.

**12** **HALLMARK VISITORS CENTER**  
Located in Crown Center, the Hallmark Visitors Center honors the story of one of the world's largest greeting card companies and one of Kansas City's most celebrated businesses. The interactive exhibit allows visitors to follow Hallmark's 100-year journey as well as observe different greeting card trends throughout the years. Visitors can even create their own star-shaped bow as a keepsake.

**13** **HASKELL INDIAN NATIONS UNIVERSITY CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM**  
This museum champions the achievements of Haskell Indian Nations University, which first opened in 1884 as a boarding school in Lawrence, Kan. The collection not only celebrates the history of Native education but the vast tribal history of the land as well.

**14** **ERNIE MILLER NATURE CENTER**  
Bring your hiking gear or biking equipment out to Olathe for outdoor adventures at Ernie Miller Park and Nature Center, the perfect way to spend a day in Kansas City's beautiful, natural environment. Explore educational exhibits, bird-watch with friends, trailblaze through the environment and so much more.



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## KALEIDOSCOPE

Kaleidoscope is a free art studio that combines the creative genius of Hallmark with the magic of imagination to create a space for kids to express themselves. Independent art sessions allow children of all ages to create with bows, cardboard, melted crayons and more. At Kaleidoscope, children can discover the joy of creating.

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## KAUFFMAN MEMORIAL GARDEN

A two-acre garden in the heart of the Kansas City, this garden is a part of the Kauffman Legacy Park. Kauffman Memorial boasts more than 7,000 plants and several beautiful water features. Be sure to check out the secluded Secret Garden behind the conservatory.

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## KANSAS CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The historic Central Library branch is a beloved treasure in Kansas City. Visitors can enjoy movies in the old bank's vault, see a variety of exhibits, attend special events or simply settle in with a good read in the city's largest collection of books. Be sure to snap a picture at the famous Community Bookshelf feature that runs along the south wall of the parking garage.

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## KEMPER MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

A leader among modern art museums in the nation, Kemper Museum has grown to nearly 1,000 works of art since its opening in 1994. The museum offers a growing permanent collection, temporary exhibitions, as well as free public programs. For a contemporary take on dining, be sure to check out Café Sabastienne.

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## LAKESIDE NATURE CENTER

Lakeside Nature Center, located in Swope Park, allows visitors to explore local wildlife and contribute to community conservation projects. The Nature Center is also one of Missouri's largest wildlife rehabilitation facilities. Special events include nature story time, guided hikes and educational programs.

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## LANESFIELD SCHOOL HISTORIC SITE

A site on the National Register of Historic Places, visitors to the Lanesfield School can travel back to 1904 to explore the day in a life of a rural one-room schoolhouse student. The school, built in 1869, is the only remaining building of the once town of Lanesfield, Kan. The Visitor's Center also features an exhibit on the rural educational system of the settlers of Kansas.

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## LEGENDS OUTLETS

Take a break from shopping and discover where this popular entertainment district received its name. Visitors can take a self-guided audio tour of the tribute to more than 80 legendary Kansans from athletes such as Maurice Green and Tom Watson to pioneers such as Amelia Earhart and Russell Stover.



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## LEGLER BARN MUSEUM

Originally built in 1864 along the Santa Fe Trail at the corner of 95th & Quivira in Lenexa, Kan., this stone barn now resides in Sar-Ko-Par Trail Park as a testament to Lenexa's history. The exhibit features many artifacts from the early prairie days to the expansion of Lenexa in the 20th century.

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## LIBERTY JAIL

Sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the jail is a reconstruction of the original Clay County Jail on the same site of its initial location. The exhibit focuses on the LDS Church's role in the social and religious history of the area.

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## MARTHA LAFITE THOMPSON NATURE SANCTUARY

Located in Liberty, this nature center includes educational programs, live animal exhibits as well as multiple hiking trails. Try geocaching for an adventurous game during the hike.

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## MORMON VISITORS CENTER

This educational center depicts the experiences of early Mormon pioneers in Independence, Mo. The tour also presents the basic beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through paintings and A/V presentations.

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## MIDWEST GENEALOGY CENTER

From research databases to appointments with genealogists, head to Independence's Midwest Genealogy Center to discover your family's history at this free, essential public resource.

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## THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART

Home to more than 34,500 pieces of art, from ancient Chinese ceramics to modern art in the Bloch Building, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is a world-class treasure located right in the heart of Kansas City. The ever-expanding collection makes The Nelson unique each time visitors explore. Be sure to enjoy the shuttlecocks at the Sculpture Park on the south lawn.

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## NERMAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

A beautiful complement to the Johnson County Community College campus, the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art is the largest contemporary art museum in the four-state region. The Nerman collection includes a combination of international, national and regional artwork.



# 29

## OVERLAND PARK ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

Stroll through this 300-acre nature sanctuary for a wilderness retreat featuring eight natural ecosystems. Paved or woodchip pathway, the Arboretum is a picturesque example of Kansas City's beauty. Free on Tuesdays and every day for visitors 5 years old and younger.

# 30

## PENGUIN PARK

This Northland favorite is the perfect place to let children explore their wild side. The park features both a 26-foot kangaroo slide and 23-foot playable penguin that are perfect for an afternoon adventure in the park.

# 31

## PUBLIC CUPPINGS AT THE ROASTERIE

Free public cuppings (coffee tastings) are held every Thursday at The Roasterie's Plant Cafe from 5 to 6 p.m. Sample a wide variety of coffees from all across the world while dedicated staff guide you through your experience. RSVPs are required (maximum of eight people per cupping).

# 32

## SHOAL CREEK LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM

Nestled in Hodge Park, this 80-acre museum reflects life in a typical 19th century village. The village includes 17 authentic log cabins and homes. Be sure to visit during special events, as the village comes to life with reenactors.

# 33

## SPRINT FAMILY FUN DAYS

Families can enjoy the Kansas City Power & Light District in a whole new way at this event, held on the second Saturday of each month from May to October. Each Fun Day has a theme that is sure to delight children both young and old.

