



Tribes of the Northern USA Trip #1

LAKOTA PRAIRIE ADVENTURE – TIPI CAMPING & HORSES

8 days (7 nights)

This is an all-inclusive excursion into the prairie lands through which the Lakota travelled and off which they lived. We shall learn about Lakota history, culture and spiritual beliefs, and how they related to their natural environment. Once we have left the ranch where we prepare for the journey, we will travel by horse, experience the wide-open spaces, and sleep beneath the infinite skies in traditional tipis.

Itinerary:

Day 1:

The adventure begins when we are picked up from the airport (Rapid City, South Dakota) and transferred to a working western ranch and comfortable guesthouse in Crawford, Nebraska. The ranch nestles in the foothills of the picturesque Pine Ridge of northwest Nebraska and is surrounded by the pristine scenery of the Oglala National Grasslands. In this area we are at the heart of the Great Plains in which the Lakota Sioux traditionally lived. Overnight at the comfortable ranch house.

Day 2:

Today we begin **preparation** for our exciting week on the prairie. We will spend much of our time today learning natural horsemanship techniques (a speciality of this ranch) and rules of safety for our horseback excursion. After a fun-filled day of **instruction** and advice, we will turn in for the night in our comfortable guesthouse - the last we will see of mattresses, bathtubs and flushing toilets for four days.

Days 3-4:

After breakfast we will pack the tipis on our horses and with our Lakota guides, begin on our trail to find a place to set up **camp**. We will consider what type of conditions and location the Lakota looked for when setting up their camps and the reasons why.

After selecting the ideal campsite, we will stay there for the next two days. This time will be spent **learning** about the plant and animal life in this area. We will also learn about the spiritual beliefs and traditional Lakota values,

such as honesty, generosity, wisdom, respect and courage. Traditional foods will be served for our meals. We will spend each day living as they did on the prairie, and be told traditional Lakota stories at night.

On the fourth night, the history of the Lakota people will be shared with us. We shall also have the opportunity to experience a **sweat lodge**. Without doubt, we will emerge ready for a deep night's sleep in our tipi.

Days 5-6:

Since the Lakota lived a **nomadic** life, the following morning we will pull up camp and travel to a new location approximately ten miles away, where there will be different plant and animal life. There we will stay for two more nights.

On clear evenings we will be able to see our vast **skies** illuminated by the many stars or sparkling moon. We will be looking into the stellar theory of the Lakota, who had different names for the constellations. They believed that there was a vivid relationship between the stars and life on the ground, a mirroring in which what happened above so also happened below.

Day 7:

On the sixth day we will pull up camp and journey back to modern life back at the **ranch** we started at, and a chance to reflect on our shared experiences with our travelling companions. We stay overnight in our lodging facilities complete with running water and beds.

Day 8:

Our prairie adventure over, we say our farewells and are returned to the airport.

Includes:

4 nights' tipi camping, 3 nights at a ranch guest house; all meals; equipment; supplies; horsemanship classes; nature and Lakota traditions lessons; transportation to and from airport.

What to expect:

After leaving the ranch and venturing out into the prairie, you will stay in communal tipis, as did the Lakota. Individual tents can be provided if required. All of the food is provided, but feel free to bring along any preferred snacks if you so wish.

There will be no electricity, mobile phone reception or internet once we are out in the prairie, though in case of emergencies we will be able to reach the ranch by radio. There won't be any running water or flushing toilets; instead we will have access to barrels of fresh water and environmentally-friendly port-a-potties.

What to wear:

You should bring comfortable clothing, sturdy shoes, a hat or sunshade, sunblock and other personal essentials.

Health:

We will travel with horses, so some riding experience would be useful. We will be erecting tipis, which will require some effort, but physical activities will not be excessive

Culture:

Be prepared for any preconceived notions about Native American culture to be challenged. Come with an open mind and an open heart.