

The Town Just Down the Road

10 reasons to put Louisburg on your fall road trip list.

words KELLI WHITE

A short, fifteen-minute drive south of Overland Park on Highway 69 is a little town with big talk—and it certainly lives up to the hype. Louisburg, a community of fewer than 5,000 people, is a family-friendly, fast-growing, fun place to spend a day. In fact, you may find that one visit just isn't enough time to take in all the reasons that took you there.

If you haven't visited Louisburg already, autumn is the perfect season to make the drive to this quintessential American small town. Buckle up as we head down the highway to our Top 10 must-see picks in the town known for apples, wine and fun.

LOUISBURG CIDER MILL

From fresh cider doughnuts sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar to the local favorite, Lost Trail sweet sarsaparilla, the Louisburg Cider Mill and Country Store has plenty of treats to put a smile on your face. But, the fun doesn't stop with your taste buds. Watch hundreds of tumbling apples meet their sweet fate in the cider-making process, and take in the wonderful signature fall aroma as you peruse the selection of homemade gifts such as jams, candies, lotions and soaps.

Every October crowds gather for Ciderfest, a festival with area vendors, a giant corn maze, pumpkins, and hay bales great for kids to climb on and the perfect backdrop for those fall photos with your little ones. This year's festivities are slated for two weekends: September 25 and 26 and October 2 and 3.



POWELL PUMPKIN PATCH

What's fall without a visit to a pumpkin patch? Grab your wagon and gather your own gourds at this quaint stop on your Louisburg adventure. As you navigate the vine-covered paths searching for the perfect specimen, you'll discover there's so much more to this place than pumpkins. Family-owned and -operated, the Powell Pumpkin Patch is a friendly place that has earned local loyalty for years. Enjoy a wagon ride around the grounds, choose an Indian corn wreath for the season and don't forget your way out of the spectacular corn maze. With so much to do and some of the best pumpkin prices in the area, this is a destination you'll want to revisit before the first snowfall.



POWELL OBSERVATORY

"Star light, star bright" takes on a whole new meaning at this Louisburg treasure. With the largest telescope in a five-state area, you'll be seeing more than just stars during your visit to Powell Observatory. The skies are darker here than in the city, so participants have a much better chance at viewing galactic grandeur. Experience one of the Star Bright Saturday Night programs and be amazed.

Powell Observatory is open Saturday nights May through October and you can also reserve it for private star parties. Contact the reservation coordinator at (913) 438-3825 for more information. The observatory is supported through suggested donations of \$5.



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ONCE UPON A TIME ANTIQUES

A fairytale shopping experience, Once Upon a Time Antiques is sure to send you into a storybook happy ending with purchases you can't wait to bring home. When you step upon the planked front porch, you immediately feel at home and anticipate the goods that beckon you inside. This is the kind of place where the merchandise changes with the seasons but the store retains its original comfort and whimsy no matter what decorates its interior. Expect to spend more than a little time here, as there is so much to see. Weaving through each room you'll encounter a delightful maze of both antiquity and modernity and be inspired to add a newfound item to your home's décor. Deciding between the wrought iron candleholder and the painted porcelain rooster may be tough. Chances are you'll leave with both.



CEDAR COVE FELINE CONSERVATORY

For a fun and educational outing, spend some time at Cedar Cove where the kids will love learning about all the wild cats, from leopards to lynxes. The volunteer staff has recently welcomed two additions to the cat family at Cedar Cove—African lions Tonka and Shanta. Cedar Cove rescues felines from unfortunate circumstances and gives them a home while educating visitors at the same time.

There's no such thing as a black panther? Who knew? Discover many more fun feline facts at Cedar Cove Feline Conservatory just east of Louisburg on Highway 68.

Open all year but seasonal hours apply. All proceeds go to maintaining the facility: \$5 for adults and all children age four and up. Additional donations are encouraged.



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www.somersetridge.com

Louisburg Cider Mill and Country Store
14730 K-68 Hwy
(913) 837-5202
www.louisburgcidermill.com

Cedar Cove Feline Conservatory
3783 K-68 Highway
(913) 837-5515
www.saveoursiberians.org

Powell Observatory
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(913) 837-5305
www.askconline.org/powell.htm

Once Upon a Time Antiques
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(913) 837-3338
www.onceuponatimeinteriors.com

Foxfire Farm Herbals
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www.foxfireherbal.com

The Coffee House
408 West Amity Street
(913) 837-4902

Bungalow Boutique
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(913) 837-3443
www.bungalowboutique.com

Timber Creek Barbeque
14 West Amity Street
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BUNGALOW BOUTIQUE

Sequined tanks and studded handbags? Check. Embellished denim and flirty dresses? Check. Candles, pottery and chic gifts? Check. Yes, this place seems to have shopping covered for both your closet and every other room in the house. From dazzling accessories to wardrobe staples, what's inside this little house has a big fashion impact.

The Bungalow Boutique first opened its doors earlier this year and is quickly becoming the hottest shopping spot south of the city limits. You can find that perfect cocktail dress or those casual camo capris you've been looking for, all under one roof. Open Monday through Saturday, this red and white bungalow has easily earned a spot in our Top 10 and should earn a stop on your town tour. Expect to make this your new headquarters for must-have fashion.

FOXFIRE FARM HERBALS

You can smell it as soon as you walk in. The soothing sensation of aromatherapy and essential oils lingers and entices you to stay even after you're done shopping. Foxfire Farm Herbals is an endearing little shop filled with all-natural supplements and nutrients. Life-long foundational herbalist and owner Tammy Crandell teaches the idea of using what is naturally grown around us for our food, nutrition and medicine. She customizes blends of herbs and teas based on her customers' medicinal needs and doesn't follow the fads of herbal medicine but rather what is proven to work for the long term. Along with herb therapy, Foxfire Herbals offers holistic nutrition coaching and energy therapy.

Come in and ask about their "sassy water." Anything with a name like that is intriguing enough to get us there.

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THIS QUINTESSENTIAL AMERICAN
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THE COFFEE HOUSE

Its name calls it what it is, but it doesn't say it all. True—it is a house and you can find a great-tasting latte inside, but this little abode offers so much more than your morning or midday java fix. You'll find charming decor in cozy rooms with comfy furnishings, where you can play board games, read books and magazines or surf the Web on the shop's computers. It's a small town coffee shop complete with big city amenities, but what makes this whimsical spot worthy of return is the children's artwork and local creations decorating the walls. Don't wait too long to stop by because The Coffee House closes at 2 p.m.

TIMBER CREEK BARBEQUE

Before you leave Louisburg be sure to check out Timber Creek Barbeque for some sustenance. Now, it's hard to compete with all the great barbeque in the Kansas City area, some of which has earned national recognition, but Timber Creek serves up great-tasting, tender eats well worth a try. Dare to compare this small town smokehouse to any of the city's barbeque standouts and you won't be disappointed. Burnt ends and fries anyone?

DESTINATION: LOUISBURG, KANSAS

SOMERSET RIDGE VINEYARD AND WINERY

Looking for a new place to go with the girls? Or a fun afternoon date? Stop by Somerset Ridge for some fabulous wine tasting and a relaxing stroll around the vineyard. Planted in 1998, this award-winning hillside vineyard now encompasses more than 8,000 grape vines with 13 varieties of grapes. Enjoy live music from Kansas City area bands and singers and be surprised with the winery's newest seasonal elixir. The folks at Somerset welcome feedback and love trying out new wines and blends they discover on their travels.

Somerset Ridge is a family-owned operation that proudly practices sustainable farming methods. The tasting room is open Wednesday through Sunday until 5:00 p.m. Event scheduling is also available. ❖



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