



FUN-FILLED FAMILY ATTRACTIONS

South Dakota offers a variety of unique and educational adventures for the whole family. Beyond iconic monuments like Mount Rushmore National Memorial and Crazy Horse Memorial, families can journey back in time to learn about the Old West and enjoy an old-fashioned chuck wagon cookout, become a Junior Ranger and dig for fossils or discover the night sky and spend an evening under the stars at Badlands National Park.

[1880 Train, Black Hills Central Railroad](#) (Keystone/Hill City, SD)

Fun for all ages, enjoy a train ride through the Black Hills of South Dakota on the 20-mile journey between Keystone and Hill City. The vintage steam train, just like the ones used to settle the American West, travels through the historic and scenic Black Hills region. Passengers on the train can see forests, meadows and wooded canyons, as well as remnants of old mines and mining operations.

[Badlands National Park](#) (Interior, SD)

The other-worldly landscape of Badlands National Park features a maze of buttes, canyons, pinnacles and spires, a result of millions of years of wind and water erosion. Families can visit the park's 244,000 acres and view a wide range of animals, like bison, prairie dogs, coyotes, eagles and hawks. Adding to the adventure of the national park, families can also go camping and join the ranger-led Night Sky Program for stargazing. Children can even become Junior Rangers and go on an adventure with the park rangers to explore plants, animals and fossils, and solve mysteries about the Badlands' ancient history.

[Bear Country USA](#) (Rapid City, SD)

Get up close (from the comfort of your vehicle!) with black bears, reindeer, buffalo and more at Bear Country USA. Take the three-mile drive through more than 250 acres of the Black Hills to view over 20 species of North American mammals, including bighorn sheep, mountain lions, timber wolves and more. Kids will love exploring Babyland where they can see bear cubs, otters and other playful creatures.

[Children's Museum of South Dakota](#) (Brookings, SD)

Perfect for the curiosity of children, the Children's Museum features exhibits and demonstrations for all ages. Inside, you'll find exciting, hands-on exhibits that spark learning and creativity. Or, head outside to see Mama T. Rex and Max, the only full-size permanent animatronic T. Rex dinosaurs on display in the US. Visitors will be able to discover what makes up the prairies of South Dakota, who the people of the plains are, where they come from, and see the connection between the land and culture in the region.

[Custer State Park](#) (Custer, SD)

A family trip to South Dakota isn't complete without a stop at Custer State Park to visit the 1,300 bison that roam the park's 71,000 acres in the Black Hills. Visitors are also invited to drive along the park's 18-mile Wildlife Loop Road to view the bison, bighorn sheep and elk. The State Game Lodge at Custer State Park offers families the

chance to book a Buffalo Safari Jeep Ride to get up close with the herd. The open-air ride goes into the backcountry along with guides to talk about the park and its amazing wildlife. Blue Bell Lodge in Custer State Park takes families on an exciting adventure with an old-fashioned hayride on a wagon through a mountain meadow canyon. The experience includes traditional chuck wagon food and fun sing-alongs with country and folk music for entertainment by the fire. Visitors can also explore the park by horseback from the trail rides offered at the lodge.

[Dinosaur Park \(Rapid City, SD\)](#)

Located on 20 acres on Skyline Drive, Dinosaur Park is home to life-size concrete dinosaur figures. Children are invited to climb on the gigantic dinosaurs and the whole family will enjoy the 100-mile views that reach all the way to the Badlands National Park.

[Great Plains Zoo and Delbridge Museum of Natural History \(Sioux Falls, SD\)](#)

The Great Plains Zoo in Sioux Falls features more than 1,000 animals from around the world. The 45-acre park offers up-close views of animals often not found in larger zoos, including giraffes, tigers, rhinos and primates. Ride a camel or get a kiss from a sheep in the Hy-Vee Face-to-Face Farm. Also included is the Delbridge Museum of Natural History, a one-in-the-world collection of 150 mounted animals including 38 vanishing species.

[Laura Ingalls Wilder History \(De Smet, SD\)](#)

Families are invited to Laura Ingalls Wilder's homestead to travel back in time and experience what life was like in the 1880s when Laura and her family first settled in De Smet. The homestead offers covered wagon rides, an 1880s school session and pioneering activities like making rope and cob dolls. Each July during the Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant, visitors can enjoy plays depicting a story from the books.

[Mammoth Site \(Hot Springs, SD\)](#)

Discovered in 1974, the Mammoth Site is now a museum that is home to more than 60 mammoth skeletons, in addition to skeletons of a llama, camel, prairie dog, wolf, fish and giant short-faced bear. Visitors can view the remains up-close and personal, and even see what the mammoths would have looked like if they were still alive today. Junior paleontologists (between 4 and 12 years old) can learn about dinosaurs and participate in digs for hidden replica fossils using real excavation tools.

[Outdoor Campus East \(Sioux Falls, SD\) and Outdoor Campus West \(Rapid City, SD\)](#)

Experience the great outdoors of South Dakota at one of two Outdoor Campuses where children can learn about and enjoy outdoor activities like fishing, archery and gardening for butterflies. The Outdoor Campuses feature nature trails and freshwater aquariums for interactive family fun.

[Reptile Gardens \(Rapid City, SD\)](#)

Housing more species of reptiles than any other zoo or wild animal park, Reptile Gardens was recertified by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's largest reptile zoo in the 2018 edition. Families can experience hands-on demonstrations and animal shows sure to thrill the group. Special exhibits like the Sky Dome and a fun-filled Prairie Dog Town, as well as areas featuring giant tortoises and Komodo dragons add to the fun. The gardens also showcase a collection of more than 50,000 species of flowers.

[Rush Mountain Adventure Park \(Keystone, SD\)](#)

Near Mount Rushmore, Rush Mountain Adventure Park, home to Rushmore Cave, offers a variety of family activities, including a scenic cave tour to explore ancient rock formations. The site is also home to many family-friendly rides and attractions like the Soaring Eagle Zipline Ride, the Gunslinger 7-D Interactive Ride, as well as the Wingwalker Challenge Course, and newly added Mountain Coaster.

[Storybook Island \(Rapid City, SD\)](#)

Storybook Island invites children to visit their favorite storybook characters throughout the theme park. The eight and a half-acre park features life-sized figurines from classic children's stories and also offers children's train rides.

[Wylie Park & Storybook Land \(Aberdeen, SD\)](#)

Wylie Park offers endless fun for families with a zoo, an 1881 authentic train depot museum, go-karts, bumper boats, bicycle and surrey rentals, miniature golf and a small lake with a swimming beach. The park also has campgrounds with cabins and facilities for RVs. At Storybook Land in Aberdeen, classic fairytale stories are brought to life. Children can travel down the Yellow Brick Road from the Wizard of Oz story, take a ride on a replica 1863 train and carousel and discover more than 60 larger than life displays of classic fairytale and nursery rhyme stories.

[Wall Drug \(Wall, SD\)](#)

America's number one roadside attraction, Wall Drug is a 76,000-square-foot attraction featuring a restaurant, an array of gift shops and the Backyard play area for kids to explore. Wall Drug offers something for every member of family. The historic roadside attraction continues to follow its tradition of offering free ice water to thirsty travelers and has been doing so since 1931.

For additional information, visit TravelSouthDakota.com.

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