



# Des Moines, IA



**D**es Moines, Iowa's capital city, was established as Fort Des Moines in 1843 at the point where the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers merge. Although the origin of the city's name is uncertain, most historians agree that Des Moines probably referred to the river and is derived from the Indian word *moingona*, meaning river of the mounds, or the French word for "monk," because Trappist monks lived along the river.

Attractions in Des Moines include the Iowa State Capitol's 23k-gold dome and the Capitol grounds, which contains numerous monuments and memorials. Built in the American Victorian Second Empire style, the Iowa governor's residence, Terrace Hill, is a National Historic Landmark. Modern and contemporary art of the 20th and 21st centuries comprise the permanent collections of the Des Moines Art Center. The State of Iowa Historical Museum exhibits historic artifacts and documents that relay the stories of Iowa's growth and development. The Iowa Hall of Pride showcases the achievements of all Iowans. The Science Center of Iowa & Blank IMAX Dome Theater offers hands-on exhibits and special-format theaters. The Norman E. Borlaug Hall of Laureates is home to the World Food Prize, the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture," and showcases global achievements in science, agriculture, and humanitarian efforts. Salisbury House & Gardens is a historic house museum that contains a library of rare and first-edition books and collections of fine arts, historic documents, decorative arts, and musical instruments. Jointly operated by the city and Drake University, the Drake Municipal Observatory contains an 8.5-inch refracting telescope that was built in 1894.

Des Moines Performing Arts is home to three stages, including the Temple for Performing Arts, and hosts Broadway tours, dance series, comedy series, family shows, and concerts by the Des Moines Symphony and others. Ballet Des Moines performs at the Hoyt Sherman Place Theater. The Des Moines Community Playhouse presents musicals, dramas, comedies, and family shows. StageWest and Repertory Theater of Iowa perform at the Des Moines Social Club's Kum & Go Theater. Iowa Shakespeare Experience holds a summer Shakesperience Festival of the Classic Arts on various outdoor stages, including the Simon Estes Riverfront Amphitheater, and a year-round theatre program of "Theater at the Great Estates." The West Terrace of the Iowa State Capitol Complex is the venue for the free Music Under the Stars summer concerts. Midsized touring acts and big local bands perform at Woolly's.

## NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtown Des Moines has many condominiums, lofts, and flats for purchase or rental. Historic East Village is an eclectic neighborhood of restored historic properties, beautiful streetscapes, and urban living at the foot of the State Capitol. Queen Anne, Italianate, and other Victorian-era homes dating from the 1870s through the early 20th century dominate Sherman Hill, Des Moines' oldest neighborhood and first local historic district.

Beaverdale, the largest of the city's recognized neighborhoods, is known for its Beaverdale Brick homes—Tudor-style brick homes built by local contractor E.T. McMurray in 1938. The neighborhood also features tree-lined streets mostly laid out in a grid pattern and surrounded by parks.

The Waterbury neighborhood contains a mix of single-family architectural styles, including Tudor, Colonial Revival, Prairie, Modern, and Craftsman Bungalows that were built between 1906 and 1940. Some houses from the 1923–1925 period were built on the site of a former country club and are recognizable by the individually crafted matching chimney and shutter motifs. The central part of the neighborhood contains large homes on large, hilly lots.

Centrally located in Des Moines, the Woodland Heights neighborhood was established in the early 1900s. Houses are nestled in a landscape of rolling hills and surrounded by mature trees. Craftsman and Prairie-style single-family homes are common in this neighborhood; duplexes and apartments are also available as is a new infill development of 17 townhouses.

Several new developments are also available, such as Riverwoods and Wakonda Living, which is a gated community that overlooks the Wakonda Club Golf Course.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Des Moines has 76 parks with many amenities. Located in downtown Des Moines, the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park features 28 contemporary sculptures by some of the world's most celebrated artists. The historic rocket slide and the Heritage Carousel are among the attractions at Union Park, which also offers a children's water play area, basketball and tennis courts, and the Union Park Floral Garden. The illuminated 1,400-foot-long Kruidenier Trail Pedestrian Bridge is the most distinguishing feature of Gray's Lake Park. Ewing Park is the city's largest park and contains the Children's Forest, playgrounds, an 18-hole disc golf course, trails, a pond, lilac arboretum, BMX and soap box derby tracks, and a dog park. Birdland offers a marina, swimming pool, and an ADA-approved, accessible playground.

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden has many outdoor gardens and a tropical plant conservatory.

Blank Park Zoo cares for 104 animal species. Pella Wildlife Company provides a drive-through wildlife park and an Academy of Wildlife Education at the Merle Hay Mall. Ape Cognition & Conservation Initiative is home to 5 bonobos, a rare and endangered species, and is dedicated to understanding the basic processes of learning in the family of primates.

## EDUCATION

The Des Moines Public School District educates 32,000 students in 38 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, 5 comprehensive high schools, and 10 schools that provide a range of specialized and alternative educational programs.

Higher education is available at Drake University and Grand View University, which are private universities that have undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Des Moines University's Osteopathic College is the largest medical school in Iowa. The university also offers graduate degree programs in health sciences, physical therapy, and podiatric medicine. Upper Iowa University—Des Moines grants associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees. The AIB College of Business offers undergraduate degree programs. Mercy College of Health Sciences trains nurses and a variety of health care technologists and assistants. The Urban Campus of Des Moines Area Community College grants diplomas, certificates, and associate degrees.

## HEALTH CARE

Des Moines is served by the following hospitals:

Broadlawn Medical Center (200 licensed beds)

UnityPoint Health—Des Moines: Iowa Methodist Medical Center (460 licensed beds, includes Blank Children's Hospital), Iowa Lutheran Hospital (224 licensed beds), and Methodist West Hospital (95 licensed beds)

Mercy Medical Center—Des Moines: Mercy Central Campus (656 licensed beds, includes Mercy Children's Hospital) and Mercy West Lakes (146 licensed beds)

VA Central Iowa Health Care System (68 acute care beds)

## CITY STATS

2012

City Population	206,765
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	588,999
Per capita personal income, Des Moines-West	
Des Moines, IA MSA:	\$46,753