



NEBRASKA EQUINE VETERINARY CLINIC

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Trail Riding Near and Far

If being on horseback is what you like best, you are in luck! We have found some places you will want to spend your time! There are great leisurely trail riding spots close to Omaha for or for a more adventurous ride there are great places a few hours away with maintained and rugged trails, camping and scenic views.

Whether you are traveling north, south, east, or west before you get started on your horseback adventure there are a few things you need to know. If you are crossing state lines, you must have a CVI (Certificate of Veterinary Inspection a.k.a. health certificate) and a current negative Coggins (EIA) test. This is a federal requirement that subjects you to fines, penalties, and impoundment of your horses if you are unable to provide this paperwork to law enforcement. You may need to have a brand inspection if traveling out west. Places like western Nebraska, western South Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana may require you to have a brand inspection while visiting the area.



Let's begin our adventure by heading up north to the great state of Minnesota! Take interstate 80 east and head north on interstate 35 to Hinckley, Minnesota to find **St. Croix State Park**. This park boasts 34,000 acres and 75 miles of horseback riding trails along the scenic St Croix River. The main equestrian campground has a shelter with restrooms, showers and two indoor fireplaces as well as tie lines and a corral for your horses. Ten of these sites have electrical hookups. There is water available for horses and drinking water for humans. Several of the equestrian campgrounds are primitive and have non-modern rest rooms.



St Croix State Park
30065 St Croix Park Rd
Hinckley, MN 55037
320-384-6591

Our next adventure takes us Southeast to the **Mark Twain National Forest** near Licking, Missouri. This trail riding spot is not for the faint of heart! There are no bridges or groomed trails and you must bring your own water. Authorities recommend you bring a compass or GPS and make sure that someone outside your group knows your plans. Campsites are primitive with a few picnic tables, fire rings and hitching rails.

Mark Twain National Forest
401 Fairgrounds Rd
Rolla, MO 65401
573-364-4621



Head southeast on your next ride to **Shimek State Forest** located outside of Farmington, Iowa. These beautiful trails wind through 9000 acres with forests of oaks and cedars and offers water crossings without bridges. There are 25 miles of trails including one graveled 'all weather' trail. There are two equestrian campgrounds with hitching rails, shade, water hydrants, pit toilets, fire rings and picnic tables. You will also find River Valley Lodge nearby, a great destination for the trail riding family.

Shimek Forest Campground

33653 Rt J6

Farmington, IA 52626

319-878-3811



If you want to head east for a shorter drive, **Brushy Creek State Park** in Lehigh, Iowa is a great place. Brushy Creek has 50 miles of trails with a 12 mile graveled trail around Brushy Creek Lake. Several of the trails include water crossings some with bridges and some without. The equestrian campgrounds are great with a shower house, modern restroom facilities, electrical hookups, an arena, and hitching rails with shade for your horses. Call ahead if there is rain because in an extremely wet year some of the trails are closed.

Brushy Creek State Recreation Area

3175 290th St

Lehigh IA 50557

515 543-8298



Head for the hills the Black Hills that is! If you are looking for a wide variety of trail conditions with beautiful scenery then **French Creek Horse Camp in Custer State Park** is your trail riding dream. There are 71,000 acres of Black Hills National Forest with three levels of trails ranging from easy with mostly level ground to strenuous rocky trails and steep slopes. You can pick trails that range from a 4 hour ride to a 22 mile ride. There are the dangers of bison, rattlesnakes, and poison ivy but those are outweighed by the breathtaking scenery including Mount Rushmore. Campsites include corrals with shade, electrical hookups, flush toilets, showers and drinking water. Certified weed free hay is required so check the website for suppliers. These sites are in high demand so plan ahead; reservations can be made one year in advance at:

Custer State Park

13329 US Hwy 16A

Custer, SD 57730

800-710-2267



Head back through history and visit **Fort Robinson State Park** in northwest Nebraska. Fort Robinson State Park is set on 22,000 acres with 20 miles of trails as well as many fire service roads in the nearby Nebraska National Forest. The equestrian camping area has showers, electricity and stalls for the horses at night. There are numerous other activities going on at the fort including an old fashioned rodeo every Thursday night during the summer months. Fort Robinson also hosts several national trail rides including Paint, Quarter, and Arabian Horse Association rides.

Fort Robinson State Park

3200 Hwy 20

Crawford, NE 69339-0392



If you are into primitive camping and want to avoid the crowds, check out **Rock Creek Station State Historical Park** and adjoining **Rock Creek Station State Recreation Area** have 4 miles of trails and a non-modern equestrian campground. Periodically throughout the summer there are living history reenactments.

Rock Creek Station State Historical Park
57426 710th Rd
Fairbury, NE 68352
402-729-5777



Niobrara State Park is another trail riding spot that has primitive camping with 120 acres of free range riding. There is a community corral for horses.

Niobrara State Park
89261 522nd Ave.
Niobrara, NE 68760-6087
Phone: (402) 857-3373



If you are looking for a close place to ride for the day, **Indian Cave State Park** near Nebraska City, Nebraska includes 16 miles of trails through the hardwoods along the Missouri River. The equestrian camping is primitive and you must carry in drinking water. Many people ride here in the fall and boast of the fall foliage colors.

Indian Cave State Park
65296 720 Rd
Schubert, NE 68437
402-883-2575



Another close day trip is **Two Rivers Recreation Area** near Venice, Nebraska has wonderful horse paths in the wildlife management area along the Platte River. You may also ride through the park and view the various small lakes that make up Two Rivers State Park. There are no marked trails. The horse staging area was enlarged and is straight west of the caboose park. Primitive camping is available with water. Weekends are busy with campers and fisherman, so you may get stopped a lot by people asking to pet the horses. Hunting is permitted in the park so some areas closed to riding during hunting season.

Two Rivers SRA
27702 F ST
Waterloo NE 68069-7012
(402)359-5165



Located just an hour south of the Omaha, ride on trails through the Loess Hills with views overlooking the Missouri River at **Waubonsie State Park**. This park offers 8 miles of trails with non-electric equestrian camping, hitching rails and pens for your horses.

Waubonsie State Park
2585 Waubonsie Park Rd
Hamburg, IA 51640



Lake Cunningham State Park is a local favorite for day rides. Located just north of the metro Omaha area, off of highway 36, Glen Cunningham Lake has 6 trails that consist of over 120 miles of paved trails. There are not any specific camping areas designated for horses but there is a horse trail course hidden throughout the park. There are several locals that help maintain the trails for horseback riding and host events and rides at Lake Cunningham. If you are on Facebook look for the Friends of Lake Cunningham group and visit the Douglas County Fair website for information on their trail ride challenges which are open to the public and utilize the trail course.



Lake Cunningham State Park
8305 Rain wood Rd
Omaha, NE 68122
402-444-5900

There are so many places to explore from horseback that it's hard to know which place to start. Whether you want to go far from home or just down the road remember to plan ahead, have the necessary paperwork, bring emergency first aid items, and have fun!

