



LEGENDARY ROUTE 66

The Kansas Ribbon of the Mother Road

[66 Home](#) | [Info](#) | [Facts](#) | [Gallery](#) | [Ghosts](#) | [Ghost Towns](#) | [Emporium](#) | [Maps](#)
[Stories](#) | [Museums](#) | [Associations](#) | [Links](#) | [Credits](#) | [Books](#) | [Postcards](#) | [Recipes](#)
[Arizona](#) | [California](#) | [Illinois](#) | [Kansas](#) | [Missouri](#) | [New Mexico](#) | [Oklahoma](#) | [Texas](#)



The short sojourn of the [Mother Road](#) through [Kansas](#) is the shortest of any state at just 13.2 miles. But, don't for a moment, discount this brief journey, as in these few short miles, there is more of the [Route 66](#) experience than any other dozen miles on the [Mother Road](#). This brief stretch of the road also provides a peek at [Civil War](#) history, the [Old West](#), and the mining days of the tri-state area.

The [Kansas Mother Road](#) was completely paved in 1929 and was never bypassed by the Interstates that sidestepped so much of [Route 66](#). Though the road zigs and zags along section lines, the route is well-marked and easy to follow.



Kathy Weiser, October, 2007

This image available for photographic prints and downloads [HERE!](#)

Heading out of [Joplin, Missouri](#), you will see blighted land that looks a bit like a battle zone. From years of lead and zinc mining, the area has been left scarred by this industry that petered out in the 1970's. Referred to as "Hell's Half Acre," there can be glimpsed a beauty in the devastation.

In [Galena](#) you can stop and see the Howard Litch Historical and Mining Museum that exhibits the history of the mining industry and the terrible union fallout in the 1930's, which left [Galena's](#) streets bathed in blood.. As you turn south on Main Street you will be on the road that was once called Red Hot Street, as the [saloons](#) and bawdy houses stayed open twenty-four hours, catering to the many miners of the area.

Three miles down the road you will cross the Spring River and come to the small town of [Riverton](#) which houses the old [Eisler Brothers Store](#), built in 1925.

After leaving [Riverton](#), you will soon come upon the Rainbow Bridge, built in 1923, and the only one left still standing on [Route 66](#). Though doomed for destruction, the [Kansas Route 66](#) Association, the Kansas Route 66 Association convinced the officials of Cherokee County to leave the Brush Creek Bridge standing as a historic landmark. Fully refurbished today, It is in such good condition, that you can still drive over it.



[Rainbow Bridge](#) just north of [Baxter Springs, Kansas](#).

Kathy Weiser, September, 2007

This image available for photographic prints and
downloads [HERE!](#)

Old [Route 66](#) continues on into [Baxter Springs](#) on Willow Ave., turns left on Third Street and then right onto Military Ave. [Baxter Springs](#) is filled with history from the [Civil War](#) and provides a great look at several [Route 66](#) vintage buildings.

At the Heritage Center and Museum, you can learn all about the history of [Route 66](#), as well as the battles that were fought in this 19th century town that was once visited by the likes of the [James-Younger](#) gang, the [Dalton Gang](#), the [outlaw Henry Starr](#), and Bonnie and Clyde.

Enjoy the friendly hospitality of these [Kansas](#) natives before trekking on into [Oklahoma!!](#)

© [Kathy Weiser/Legends of America](#), updated October, 2007.



The [Route 66](#) Shield is proudly displayed on the road into [Galena, Kansas](#)

This image available for photographic prints [HERE!](#)



Abandoned Lead and Zinc Mines near Galena, [Kansas](#). Photo courtesy John Charlton, [Kansas Geological Survey](#)

See the [Kansas 66 Gallery of Pictures](#)



[To Galena](#)



[Return to Route 66](#)



[To Kansas 66 Main](#)

[From the Rocky Mountain General Store](#)

[Four 66 Tin Signs](#) - weathered style signs. Measuring 10"x16", made of heavy gauge metal, signs have rolled edges for safe handling. Includes: Main Street USA - [Chicago](#).



<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/66-KansasRoad.html>