Iowa & Mississippi River

**La Claire's location** – where the Mississippi River makes a sharp bend to the southwest – contributed to its early history as the home of many riverfront pilots. All of the homes, and buildings included in the city’s historic district were built in the mid-19th century (mostly between 1850-1870). Local shopkeepers are proud to offer a brochure for a self-guided walking tour of the homes and buildings. This small community is becoming a focal point for antique collectors.

**Rapid City** is at the upper end of what were known as the Rock Island Rapids – rocky shoals which posed a great danger to riverboats before installation of locks and dams to control river levels. The town was settled around a grist mill and a saw mill. Enormous coal mines employed many residents and helped the community to thrive in the 1870s and 1880s. Shuler’s Shady Grove, a riverfront park with a boat ramp, trail and picnic areas, is named after the owner of one of the area’s first coal mines. Here you can enjoy a short network of trails around a restored stream and woodland.

**Hampton** was an early wood supply stop for passing steamboats. Black’s Store, now a historical museum, was built in 1848, and still stands at 603 First Avenue – reached easily by foot from the river trail. Heritage Park includes a heritage center, picnic pavilions and family entertainment. Also on-site is a bike share program provided by RiverAction. This nation of native plants is used to capture storm water and prevent flooding of adjacent areas. Riverwalk Forest Preserve is about a mile upstream, and offers panoramic views of the Mississippi River.

**Smith’s Island & La Claire** – just upstream from Lock and Dam 14 between Bettendorf and Davenport, a – offers a refreshing nature walk. Hikers can spot numerous species of wildlife and plants while traversing the 1.7 mile trail through upland and bottomland habitat. Visitors in the spring enjoy numerous wildflowers. Frequent sightings of turtles and ducks will treat everyone. A fishing pier is conveniently located next to the parking lot of 182nd Avenue.

**Benton Harbor** is the region. There’s plenty of parking available, or boat."
Bicycles are available to rent at the QC Convention and Visitors' Center in Union Station. Downtown Davenport, during the summer months. Nearby is the newly reconstructed John O'Donnell Stadium (home of the professional baseball team, The Sluggers of the Quad Cities), the new Figge Art Museum (designed by London architect David Chipperfield), the "Skybridge" with its great riverfront overlook, and the River Music Experience, a tribute to music with Mississippi River roots. And, just downstream of Centennial Bridge is Centennial Park with its river-themed, interactive children's playground.

The Village of East Davenport is an historic area established in 1831 as a hub for sailers fed by logging of northern forests. The first bridge span across the Mississippi River was built a short distance downstream in 1854 with assistance from railroad lawyer Abraham Lincoln. A log treadle from the original bridge, dating back to the 1800's, still stands in the village.

At the start of the Calhoun, a former training camp – Camp McClellan – was built in the village. The site of Camp McClellan is now Lindsay Park with magnificent views of the river. The Channel Cat Water Taxi dock is in lower Lindsay Park.

A trail extension to Bettendorf lifts the Davenport trail from the Village of East Davenport to Leach Park (15th and State Streets, Bettendorf) one mile to the east (upstream). This section provides a very scenic walking/biking route with views of the Rock Island Arsenal, the Twin Bridges (I-74) and the Davenport skyline.

Buffalo, less than 10 miles downstream from Davenport, was home to the pearl button industry in the late 1800's. Mussels were harvested locally and elsewhere, then shipped to Buffalo, where buttons and button blanks were punched out. The town boasted eight button factories, the largest of which was the Haskell Button Factory located on Second Street.

Davenport's Riverfront Trail along Mississippi River begins at Credit Island. Enjoy a three mile round trip of the island, home to a city-owned golf course and the 5600-linear-foot floating bridge which recreates George Seagard's "Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte." The art, and dozens of other art installations and conservation projects, were funded by River Action.

ON THE COVER
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