

OKLAHOMA AT A GLANCE

This is a state blessed with an abundance of natural resources, including oil, natural gas, coal and lumber.



From rolling wheat fields to cattle auctions, pecans to peaches, Oklahoma enjoys a vibrant agricultural industry.

Oklahoma has three bustling metropolises with populations of more than 100,000, including Oklahoma City (with a population of more than 1 million), Tulsa (population of more than 810,000) and Lawton (population 112,500).

Contrary to some popular misperceptions, Oklahoma's economy boasts a wealth of diversity. Major industries include aviation and aerospace, energy, transportation equipment, food processing, glass, electronics, telecommunications and life sciences, to name but a few.

Oklahoma became the 46th U.S. state on Nov. 16, 1907.

In land size, Oklahoma is the 18th largest state in the nation, encompassing nearly 70,000 square miles in its 77 counties. That makes Oklahoma bigger than such European countries as Belgium, the Netherlands and England.



The literal heartland of the nation, Oklahoma is close to the geographic center of the United States and bordered by six states – Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico.



Wide-open sunny skies dominate much of the climate in Oklahoma, with typically more than 300 days of sunshine each year. Winters tend to be short and mild.

It might surprise some people, but Oklahoma features an incredibly diverse terrain. Forest covers more than a quarter of the state, which also includes four mountain ranges: the Ouachita, Arbuckle, Wichita and Ozark Plateau. In fact, Oklahoma has more diverse terrain per square mile than any other state in the nation.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

A wide spectrum of major corporations calls Oklahoma home, including the Sonic Corp., Dollar Rent-A-Car, Thrifty Rent-A-Car, AFS, Quik Trip, Devon Energy and Kerr-McGee.

Devon Energy is North America's largest independent oil and natural gas company and includes more employees worldwide than such corporate giants as Nike and Dillard's.



The wild blue yonder is alive and well in Oklahoma's thriving aviation and aerospace industry, which accounts for 10 percent of the state's industrial output. Harvard University recently ranked Oklahoma as one of the top 10 states in the nation for manufacturing of aerospace engines.



American Airlines' Maintenance and Engineering Base in Tulsa is the largest of its kind in the world, with more than 8,000 employees.

The lunar ladder that Neil Armstrong used in his historic moonwalk was manufactured at Tulsa's Boeing facility.



All the nation's air traffic controllers are trained at the Mike Monroney FAA Center in Oklahoma City.

Oklahoma is the largest tire-producing state in the country, with major Goodyear, Michelin North America and Dayton production facilities.

The world's biggest private weather company, Weathernews Americas Inc., has an office in Norman, where it provides detailed weather services to flight-planning systems for major airlines such as American Airlines and American Eagle.

Stillwater's jumpin' little juke joint better known as Eskimo Joe's is responsible for the second most collectible T-shirts in – yes, it's true – the world.

OUR NATION'S DEFENSE

Oklahoma plays a major role in the nation's defense system. Boasting more than 26,000 workers, Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City is the largest jet engine and aircraft repair center in the U.S. The hub of the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) serves as the U.S. Air Force nerve center, controlling its surveillance and communications.

Virtually all of the military's non-nuclear bombs are manufactured at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, a depot that covers about 70 square miles.

Software developed by an Oklahoma-based firm enables the Pentagon to determine when U.S. military personnel have been targeted by enemy troops.

Fort Sill in Lawton is the U.S. Army's premier artillery training school.



DIVERSITY



Oklahoma, which takes its name from the Choctaw term for “red people,” is home to 39 American Indian tribal headquarters – more than in any other state.

More languages are spoken within the borders of Oklahoma than in all of Europe, a testament to the size and influence of American Indian tribes represented in the state.

Oklahoma has a unique place in the annals of African-American history. In the wake of the Civil War, many African-American men and women fled the Old South for the new promise of Oklahoma, establishing more than 50 all-black towns and settlements across the state.

Oklahoman Wilma Mankiller, former principal tribal chief of the Cherokee Nation, holds the distinction of being the first woman to be named chief of an American Indian tribe.

In the late 1940s, Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher fought the courts and discrimination of that era to become the first African-American admitted to the University of Oklahoma School of Law. Her triumph, aided by future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, presaged the civil rights advances of the following two decades.



THE LAND

The state boasts more than 11,600 miles of shoreline and more than 78,500 miles of rivers and streams – about *three* times the circumference of the earth.

Oklahoma has more man-made lakes than any other state and more miles of shoreline than the east and gulf coasts combined.



For a home where the buffalo roam, you need look no further than the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, the nation’s first and oldest national wildlife park, which has one of the largest buffalo herds in America.

The Tallgrass Prairie Preserve near Pawhuska is the only protected ecosystem of its kind in the world.

Dune-buggy and four-wheeler enthusiasts throughout the world know that “Little Sahara” in Waynoka offers some of the best riding that can be found.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Oklahoma is one of only four states to have 10 or more “eco-regions,” areas that have a distinct terrain.

Alabaster Caverns in northwest Oklahoma is the world’s largest publicly held gypsum cave that is open to the public. It has been dubbed as “nature’s underground wonderland” for its scenic treasures.

A RICH HISTORY

The Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History in Norman is home to the world’s largest dinosaur skull – a Pentaceratops skull measuring almost 11 feet tall -- and the world’s largest Apatosaurus (formerly known as a Brontosaurus) skeleton. The \$37.5-million facility houses more than 5 million artifacts.



The most storied cattle trail in U.S. history, the Chisholm Trail, snaked through Oklahoma from the Red River to the Kansas border. The trail is commemorated by museums in Duncan, Waurika and Kingfisher.

History buffs, take heed. Guthrie has the distinction of being the largest contiguous district on the National Register of Historic Places, some 400 city blocks encompassing more than 2,100 buildings. That includes the biggest collection of historic structures in a single district, the only remaining intact Territorial Capitol and a National Landmark Community.



Historic downtown areas in four Oklahoma communities – Enid, Cordell, Newkirk and Okmulgee – have been named Great American Main Street Award Winners by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Get your Route 66 kicks in Oklahoma. The state has more drive-worthy miles of Route 66 than any other state. Oklahoma is definitely Route 66 country. Not only was native Oklahoman Cyrus Avery credited with creating the route, but Oklahoma was the first state to have a museum dedicated to the famed roadway.

Legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright left only one high-rise as part of his remarkable legacy, and it's the 19-story Price Tower in Bartlesville.

The Fort Sill Museum in Lawton is the world's largest repository of military artifacts. The bounty of history housed in the 26 buildings includes hundreds of thousands of items, from antique uniforms and artillery to a flag flown by the U.S. cavalry at the Battle of Little Bighorn.

Oklahoma City's 45th Infantry Museum, which features a tremendous array of artifacts from World War II, is the largest state military history museum in the U.S.



FAMOUS OKLAHOMANS, GREAT AMERICANS

From the frontier of the southwest to the final frontier, Oklahoma has boasted more astronauts than any other state. Eight “flown” astronauts have ties to the Sooner state: Gordon Cooper, Shannon Lucid, Owen Garriott, Lt. General Thomas Stafford, Stuart Roosa, Fred Haise, William Pogue and John Herrington, who holds the distinction of being the first American Indian to walk in space.

During World War II, Navajo and Comanche “code talkers” from Oklahoma played critical roles in military victory in the Pacific and European Theaters. Comanche “code talker” Charles Chibitty transmitted the first Allied message from the Normandy invasion. The Navajos’ story was commemorated in the 2002 Nicolas Cage movie “Windtalkers.”

Edmond native Shannon Miller is the most decorated American gymnast in history, having won seven Olympic medals and nine World Championship medals.

Wynnewood native Dr. Donna Shirley led the team that designed the Martian exploration rover called *Sojourner*. The first rover on another planet, it was the centerpiece of the Mars Pathfinder mission in 1997.

BLACK GOLD

True to its oil and gas legacy, Oklahoma is the only state in the nation with an oil well on the grounds of the state Capitol.

Oklahoma was home to the world’s first flowing commercial oil well, a replica of which is in Bartlesville’s Johnstone Park.

Drumright boasted the first oil well on the planet to churn out a million barrels of oil.

Marland Oil, the Oklahoma-based company that later became Conoco, was the first employer in the nation to organize employee benefits (medical and eye) for its workers.



HMMM ...

To satisfy a *veeerrry* Big Mac attack, look no further than Vinita for the world's largest McDonald's, a 29,135-square-foot eatery that spans a four-lane interstate.

Only one county in the United States, Cimarron County in the Oklahoma Panhandle, touches four other states other than its own: Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and Texas.

Oklahoma has the only Carnegie Library with a dome paid for with Carnegie funds.

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE



The dollar stretches a lot further in Oklahoma than most states. To enjoy the same spending power as an Oklahoman, a person would have to earn 7 percent more if living in Dallas, St. Louis or Kansas City; 14 percent more in Phoenix or a whopping 28 percent more in Los Angeles.

We boast enviable housing costs.

According to a recent Coldwell Banker study, a 2,200-square-foot home costing between \$130,000-\$135,000 in Oklahoma would have a price tag of nearly \$180,000 in Dallas; \$244,700 in Denver and \$249,100 in Portland.

Traffic gridlock is not a problem in Oklahoma. People who move here from such rush-hour nightmares as Chicago, Houston or Los Angeles save enough time on their daily work commute to gain the equivalent of two years per year.

Tee up! Oklahoma has more than 175 golf courses, including several nationally renowned courses that have been ranked in the Top 10 by *Golf Digest*.

Oklahomans are a people renowned for their compassion, generosity and civic-mindedness. For example, Oklahomans donate blood at twice the national average.



The “Generosity Index” compiled by The Catalogue for Philanthropy reports that Oklahoma, once you take into account the average gross income of states, ranks *fourth* among U.S. states for the amount of income our people give to charity (\$1.5 billion in 2001).

Oklahoma City’s Ford Center is one of the world’s top 10 major concert venues in the world, according to *Pollstar*, a leading trade magazine.

EDUCATION

The state has won accolades from educators across the country for its effort to improve classroom instruction. More recently, the *Princeton Review* ranked Oklahoma eighth in the nation for quality of student testing and the accountability features that support our testing system.

The University of Oklahoma ranks at the top per capita in its enrollment of National Merit Scholars and in the top five U.S. public universities for Rhodes Scholar graduates.

Students from more than 110 countries attend OU, which also has an astonishing 156 exchange agreements with other nations – the highest of any university in the U.S.

As a result of Oklahoma State University’s impressive output of Truman Scholars, the school has been named a Truman Honor Institution. In fact, Oklahoma boasts more Truman scholars per capita than any other state in the nation.



The University of Tulsa routinely leads the nation in producing computer science Ph.D.s and is among only six pioneer institutions in the National Science Foundation’s “Cyber Corps” program.

The Stillwater-based Oklahoma Museum of Higher Education is the only museum in the nation to cover higher education for an entire state.



Oklahoma City's MAPS for Kids Program is the nation's largest public/private education initiative, poised to generate more than \$690 million in public support for metro area schools over the next seven years.

Oklahoma students on average scored higher than their peers in all but one state in the 14-state southern region that includes Texas. For the SAT college entrance exam, the state bested the southern region and ranked 11th nationally.

Students in Oklahoma have won eight Goldwater Scholarships, the most prestigious national award in science, math and engineering.

Of 58 students in 2002 to make a perfect ACT score of 36, an astonishing five were from Oklahoma. For a state of our population size, that is nothing short of remarkable.

According to the Southern Regional Educational Board, Oklahoma is second nationally in its percent of four-year-old children in state-supported pre-kindergarten programs. Oklahoma is one of only three states in the U.S. to provide free pre-K for all participating school districts on a voluntary basis.

LOVE FOR THE ARTS



Oklahoma has more than 300 museums covering a plethora of realms, from the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa to Oklahoma City's National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum.

The Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa houses the world's largest collection of art related to the American West. The facility also has a certified copy of the Declaration of Independence.



The Oklahoma City Museum of Art's permanent collection includes an eye-popping collection of glass art by the renowned Dale Chihuly – the largest-ever collection of its kind.

Oklahoma City University, hailed for one of the best music and performing arts programs in the nation, is in the midst of establishing a \$30-million Bass Music Center.

No less of an authority than *The New York Times* has hailed the Tulsa Ballet as one of the finest regional companies in the country.

Oklahoma was the home state for Maria Tallchief, widely considered the greatest American ballerina of all time.

Acclaimed writer Ralph Ellison, whose novel "The Invisible Man" is widely considered one of the classics of 20th century American literature, was from Oklahoma City. Oklahoma has a lengthy and diverse literary tradition; as other noted authors from this state include Angie Debo, Tony Hillerman, S.E. Hinton, Billie Letts and William Bernhardt.

Cartoonist Chester Gould, the late and great creator of Dick Tracy, hailed from the town of Pawnee.

An incredible array of musicians have called Oklahoma home, from Woody Guthrie to Garth Brooks, Reba McEntire to Patti Page, Toby Keith to the Flaming Lips.

A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

Oklahoma is known far and wide for its rock-solid workforce, the byproduct of a people shaped by compassion, a strong work ethic and commitment to their community. It is such traits, for example, that spurred Goodyear to invest \$250 million to expand its Lawton plant.

Economy.com, a leading provider of economic and industry research, ranked Oklahoma as the fourth-lowest state in the nation for overall costs of doing business in



2002. In addition, the web site ranked Tulsa the second-best place in the nation to do business.

We have among the lowest tax burdens in the nation. In 1999, Oklahoma had the 46th lowest state and local per capita tax burden in the country. *Congressional Quarterly* ranks Oklahoma as the third lowest in property taxes per capita. And *Expansion Management* magazine ranked Oklahoma fourth in its 2002 “America’s Hottest Cities” for manufacturing expansions and relocations.

Location, location, location: For business marketing, Oklahoma can’t be beat. An equal distance from New York, Los Angeles and Mexico City, the state has more than 75 million people living within a 500-mile radius.

Both Interstate 35 and Interstate 40 cross Oklahoma, providing a critical transportation link to both coasts, Canada and Mexico.

Oklahoma City and Tulsa offer international air passenger and cargo service, while state service is provided by another 155 regional airports.

The nation’s most inland, all-weather port is the Port of Catoosa, linking Oklahoma to major U.S. and world markets.

Oklahoma’s Quality Jobs cash-back program is widely considered one of the best incentive programs in the nation. In four years, the state has committed about \$660 million in incentive payments to more than 150 firms.

Our state is known internationally for one of the finest CareerTech systems in the world. Our 54 technology center campuses throughout the state, boasting strong partnerships with business and industry, have trained more than 450,000 people for such fields as information technology and aerospace.



RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY



The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation is one of the foremost institutions of its kind in the world. Research at the OMRF was instrumental in developing the only known treatment for blood poisoning, which kills more than 250,000 Americans each year. Medical breakthroughs at the foundation have also contributed to treatment for AIDS, heart disease and lupus.

In fact, the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation was recently named third out of the top 40 U.S. research institutions.

The University of Oklahoma's School of Meteorology, among the finest in the world, benefits mightily from collaborations with experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Partners in Norman.

The \$62 million National Weather research center to be built on OU's Norman campus will be the largest facility of its kind in the U.S.

Oklahoma State University boasts an internationally renowned optics and sensor research program developing state-of-the-art laser applications for use in medicines, defense, communications, transportation and manufacturing.

The state's familiarity with tornado has helped fuel a number of research breakthroughs to help deal with nature's fury. Ever since producing the first-ever tornado warning, Oklahoma had led the world in meteorological forecast tools and training. In addition to the Storm Prediction Center and the National Severe Storms Laboratory, the state has OK-First and Mesonet, two cutting-edge technology tools.

Since its formation, the Presbyterian Health Foundation has given nearly \$88 million to foster the growth of research in the life sciences field. Subsequently, Oklahoma City is recognized for its life sciences industry cluster.



When science eventually finds a remedy for Alzheimer's Disease, chances are the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation will deserve a good deal of the credit. Led by Dr. Jordan Tang, a group of OMRF researchers identified an enzyme that could stop the progression of the disease.

Dr. Bruce Roe of OU heads up one of the nation's top centers for microbial genome sequencing. His work with Noble Foundation scientists in Ardmore on the genetics of legumes could result in better crops and more resilient plants for hungry peoples in developing nations.

Dr. French Anderson of Tulsa is considered the father of Gene Therapy.

Dr. Warren "Sonny" Jackman of the OU Health Sciences Center has pioneered a heart procedure that corrects potentially deadly irregular heartbeats. He utilized his pioneering techniques to treat the son of the Sultan of Brunei, the wealthiest man in the world.

The Ardmore-based Noble Foundation directs one of the nation's largest charitable endowments into cutting-edge plant genomics research.

The fourth-largest biotech company in the world, Genzyme, recently acquired technology from Oklahoma City's Novazyme, a biotech firm developing enzyme replacement drug therapies to treat rare genetic disorders.

