NORTH DAKOTA

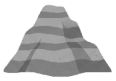
THE PEACE GARDEN STATE *Became a state November 2, 1889 (39th)*

North Dakota is wide-open prairie under a very big sky. It has striped badlands in the west, rich farmland in the east, and fewer people than almost any other state.



Why the Peace Garden State?

The International Peace Garden sits right on the border between North Dakota and Canada. It opened in 1932 to honor the friendship between the two countries, which have lived side by side in peace for more than 200 years. Visitors can walk through its flower gardens and cross from one country into the other.



A President's Badlands

Theodore Roosevelt first came to the badlands in 1883 to hunt bison. The next year his wife and his mother died on the same day, and he returned to work as a rancher. He later said he would never have become president without his time in North Dakota. Today a national park named for him protects the striped hills, where bison and wild horses roam.



A Lake Named for Sacagawea

The explorers Lewis and Clark spent the winter of 1804 to 1805 near the villages of the Mandan and Hidatsa people. There they met Sacagawea, a young Shoshone woman who traveled west with them and helped them talk with the people they met. North Dakota spells her name Sakakawea. The huge lake behind Garrison Dam is named for her.



Pasta from the Prairie

Long ago, a giant lake left by melting glaciers covered the eastern edge of North Dakota. When it drained, it left behind flat land with deep, dark soil. Today farms across the state grow more than half of the country's durum, the hard wheat used to make pasta. North Dakota is also one of the top states for sunflowers and honey.



Oil Under the Prairie

About two miles under western North Dakota lies the Bakken, a layer of rock that holds oil. Oil was first found in North Dakota in 1951, but the Bakken's oil was too hard to reach. In the 2000s, new ways of drilling set off an oil boom. Towns like Williston grew quickly, and North Dakota became one of the top oil states in the country.



The Middle of a Continent

A stone marker in the town of Rugby claims the center of North America. Around 1930, government mapmakers balanced a cardboard cutout of the continent on a pin, and it balanced about 15 miles from Rugby. Not everyone agrees. In 2017 a professor used a computer to find the center and landed on another North Dakota town, one that happens to be named Center.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population	About 800,000 (4th fewest)
Size	About 70,700 square miles (19th largest)
Highest point	White Butte, 3,506 feet
Counties	53
Neighbors	Minnesota, South Dakota, Montana, and Canada to the north

DID YOU KNOW?

- North Dakota and South Dakota became states on the same day. The president shuffled the papers so no one would know which he signed first.
- The western meadowlark is the state bird of six states, including North Dakota.
- Fort Union was the most important fur trading post on the upper Missouri River from 1828 to 1867.
- The Nokota horse descends from wild horses that lived in the badlands.

FIND IT ON THE MAP

1. Which city is the capital?
2. What is the highest point in the state?
3. Which city is closest to Theodore Roosevelt Park?

Answers: 1. Bismarck 2. White Butte 3. Dickinson