



Akta Lakota Museum & Cultural Center

an outreach of St. Joseph's Indian School



NATIONALLY RENOWNED CENTER OF NATIVE AMERICAN ART

TRADITIONS LIVE AT THE AKTÁ LAKOTA MUSEUM

The Atká Lakota Museum sits on the banks of the Missouri River in the heart of Chamberlain, South Dakota, a small town known for rolling hills, walleye fishing and Native roots. A stroll through the museum is a walk through the Lakota tribe's timeline, from their original settling on the Great Plains to their forced relocation to reservation camps. Here are five exhibits you need to see.



THE TIPI

Did you know that a tipi isn't a symmetrical cone? It is actually slightly tilted to the rear for more headroom and better ventilation. The tilt braces the front of the tipi from the nastiest of prairie winds. The Aktá Lakota Museum has a massive tipi exhibit and knowledgeable experts with more interesting facts about this iconic Native American structure.



THE GIFT

The Gift is a brand new exhibit that opened in June 2021 and is based on the traditional Lakotan narrative of White Buffalo Woman and the sacred pipe gifted to Itazipco Oyate, one of the seven oyates of the Oceti Sakowin. The exhibit centers on seven of the Lakota's sacred ceremonies, called "gifts." The foretold gifts are interpreted by an artwork, poem and song. Each one is created by a Lakota artist, poet or musician and presented alongside the coinciding text from the narrative.

[Learn More!](#)



STORY TIME' WITH UNČÍ AND LALÁ

Story Time with Unčí and Lalá is a free public program that brings American Indian history to life through Native American literature. This program is primarily for children, but all are welcome.

Readings are held every week in June and July on Tuesdays in the museum from 10:30-11:30 A.M. with new stories and activities every week. [Learn More!](#)



STORY TIME

WITH UNČÍ + LALÁ

LAKOTA BUFFALO DAYS — TOM PHILLIPS

Lakota Buffalo Days is a large diorama painted by Tom Phillips, Chickasaw. Phillips dedicated his life to recording and recreating the authentic history of Native Americans through art and sculpture. This diorama is incredibly detailed and features a scene showing the Lakota herding buffalo in the Black Hills. The diorama also includes real props from the epic film *Dances with Wolves*. Get close to inspect the intricate details. [Learn More!](#)



THE BIRCHBARK CANOE

Along with our tipi exhibit, the birchbark canoe exhibit is one of our guests' favorites. On display is a real Santee Sioux birchbark canoe. Canoes like this one played a vital role in hunting and fishing, trading, travel and even served as shelter in circumstances of poor weather.

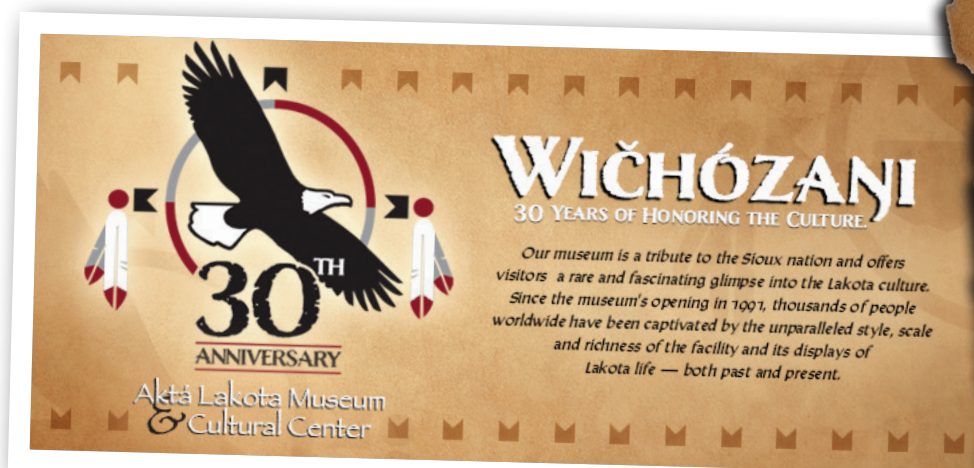


MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

WÍCHÓZANI – 30 YEARS OF HONORING THE CULTURE

Over the decades, the museum's collective memory has provided exceptional research, exhibit and educational services to the students of St. Joseph's Indian School and all those interested in learning more about the rich culture and heritage of the Northern Plains Indian people. To

commemorate the milestone anniversary we are sharing video tributes that will lead visitors on a journey through the moments in the evolution of the Museum, our collection and educational programs. [Learn More: 30-Years Together!](#)

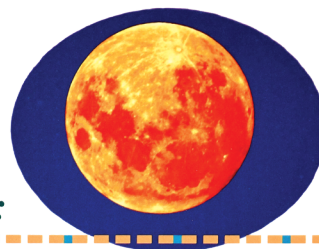


LAKOTA MOON CALENDAR

During the summer, the Blokétu moons, the camp circle followed the migrating buffalo and moved often. Women worked to maintain the camp and were responsible for transporting and unpacking the family's belongings; they also prepared food and made and set up tipis. Girls helped gather firewood and water and received instruction in quillwork decoration. Boys practiced their hunting skills on small animals. Men made weapons, hunted for game and defended the camp. Summer was also a time of celebrations and ceremonies. [Learn More!](#)

Blokétu — The Warm Moons (Summer)
Wípazuka Wasté Win — Moon of the June Berries
Canpásapa Wi — Moon When the Chokecherries Are Ripe
Wasúton Wi — Moon of the Harvest

American Indians treasured nature and earth. The people's close connection to nature is seen in their calendars. Based on the moon cycles, the American Indian year was divided into 13 moons with [each moon being 28 days long](#).



Blokétu:

The Warm Moons (Summer)

Wípazuka Wasté Win Moon of the June Berries
Canpásapa Wi Moon When the Chokecherries Are Ripe
Wasúton Wi Moon of the Harvest

The Lakóta year is divided into 13 moons. Each moon is 28 days long, and every day represents something sacred:

Two days for the Great Spirit
Two days for the Mother Earth
Four days for the Four Winds
One day for the Spotted Eagle
One day for the Sun
One day for the Moon
One day for the Morning Star
Four days for the Four Ages
Seven days for the Seven Rites of the Sacred Pipe
One day for the Buffalo
One day for the Fire
One day for the Water
One day for the Rock
One day for the Two-legged People

GROUP TOURS & FUN-FILLED FIELD TRIPS

The Aktá Lakota Museum promotes learning for children of all ages and abilities through interactive, informal, hands-on exhibits and programming.

The museum is a welcoming, fun and enjoyable environment that honors the rich, beautiful history of the Lakota people. Exhibits, both inside and outside, are designed to include subjects in art, literature, culture, and history. The Museum is a place that provides children and adults a living lesson on the American Indian way of life — both past and present.

Plan your visit today!



CAMPUS TOURS

The Aktá Lakota Museum welcomes visitors and group tours. We are open from 8 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. CDT Monday through Saturday and Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free!

Would you like a tour of St. Joseph's campus or the Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center? Campus tours are available in a variety of ways



- Self-guided audio tours: Drive or walk; for those who like to explore on their own, an audio tour is available anytime by dialing 1-877-342-0829. Campus maps are available at the front entrance of the museum.
- Guided walking tours: Approximately a mile walk, transportation is available. Please e-mail or call ahead to reserve. Tours depart from the museum and are available May – October at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Monday - Saturday.
- Private tours: Year round, by appointment only.

To schedule an appointment for a guided tour or request transportation for a tour, e-mail aktalakota@stjo.org or call 1-800-798-3452. [Need More Information?](#)

Visits are free — with donations encouraged — and the lessons last forever. Learn more about Lakota traditions and more things to do at the museum at aktalakota.org.

GENERAL MUSEUM INFORMATION

Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center

St. Joseph's Indian School

1301 North Main Street

Chamberlain, SD 57325

Phone: 1-605-234-3452

Toll Free: 1-800-798-3452

E-Mail: aktalakota@stjo.org

Online: www.aktalakota.org



Memberships and Affiliations

ABA – American Bus Association

NTA – National Tour Association

ASDM – Association of South Dakota Museums

SDSHS – South Dakota State Historical Society

AAM – American Association of Museums

IACA – Indian Arts & Crafts Association

MPMA – Mountain Plains Museum Association

AASLH – American Assoc. for State &

Local History

Summer Hours

May – October

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Monday - Saturday

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday

Winter Hours

November – April

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; Monday - Friday

Closed weekends and National Holidays

- Interactive Displays
- Medicine Wheel Garden
- After Hours Tours by Appointment
- Bus/RV Parking
- Handicap-Accessible
- Guided Tours Available Upon Request

FREE ADMISSION

Donations Welcome