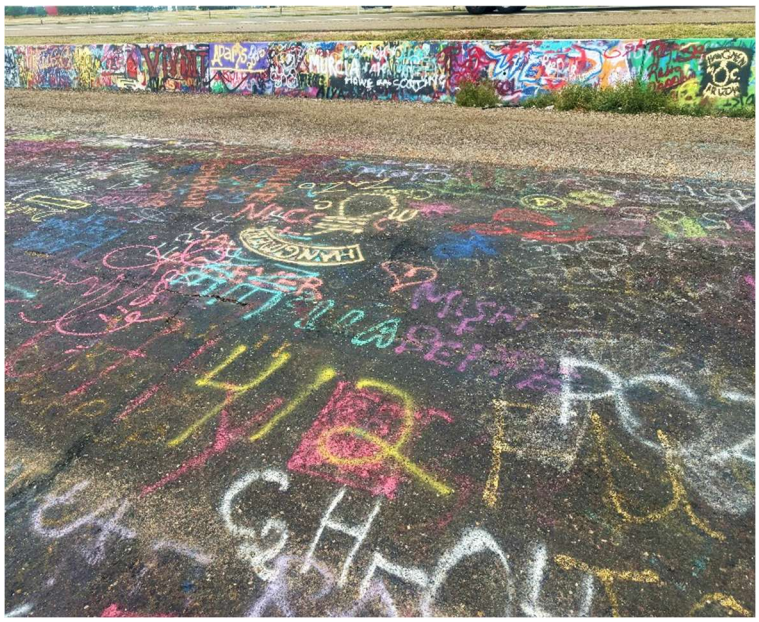
The Flyin' Solo VanLife on the Highways and Byways of North America
RICK'S ROADS
Ride Along and Enjoy the People, Places, and Who Knows What

BLOG POST: 2025.09.22
Cadillac Ranch, Amarillo, TX



A couple of prior roadtrips had taken me through Amarillo on this stretch of highway, but I always saw this freaky place too late and was past it before I could make the turn. I guess I never wanted to break my precious momentum because I never turned around and went back for a look-see.

This time, it was my destination. After leaving Petrified Forest NP in eastern Arizona, the tone of RoadMode2025 had shifted from Cruise-Around-and-See-Stuff to Get-East-Pronto. I was, however, on the lookout for quick-stop points of interest, and Cadillac Ranch certainly qualified.

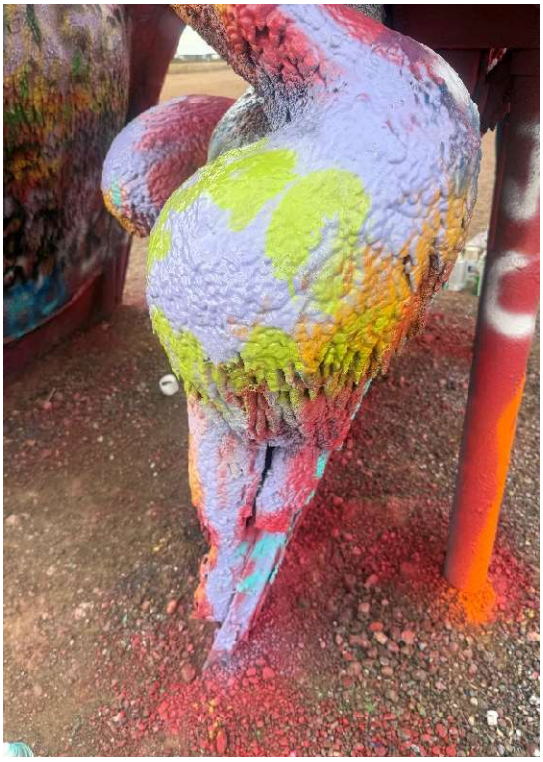


It sits on full view of I-40, on the southern side, but you need to exit the Interstate onto a frontage road to get to it. Right away I could tell I was going to get more than I bargained for; the pavement and the barrier were painted for a hundred yards, and I mean *thoroughly* painted.

I began to get a clue as to what an interactive attraction this might be.



My second clue was the trailer. It was parked halfway between the gate and the cars, and they were selling spray cans of paint! OK…



Then, when I got up to the Caddies themselves, wow, what a kaleidoscopic mish-mash of colors! And there were several half-full spray cans standing on the ground. I reckon whoeber bought them painted to their heart's content and left the remains for cheap-ass people like me to find and use.

So, I picked up a can of yellow, gave it a good shaking, and sized up where to add my own personal touch. That was when "This is weird" became "This is astounding!" Look at that photo. That is a car part … with 2000 coats of paint on it?? Some of them looked like the formations in Carlsbad Caverns, though more colorful.





Two problems were now obvious. The first problem was that there were NO blank spots on any of these cars; wherever I might choose to paint, several hundred people had already painted right there.

The second problem turned out to be even worse than I suspected; paint was not going to stick to these slick surfaces. I tested a few spots and, sure enough, I just got runny streaks. The steady wind didn't help either. You couldn't give yourself a 6"-8" distance, you had to put that nozzle almost right up to the surface.

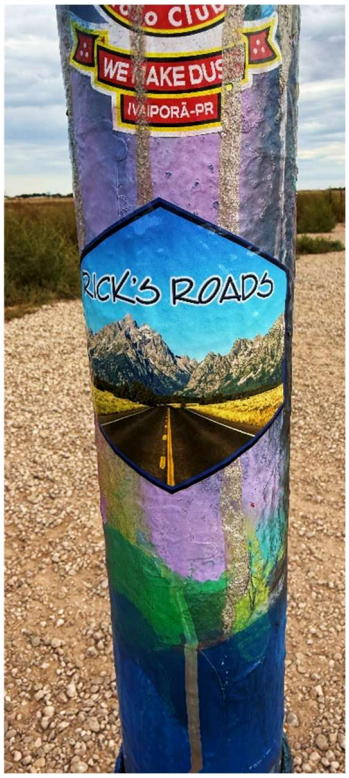
That one in the photo (right) was the best result of several attempts. Lame, eh? It must have been a windless day for some of these other auto-artistes.






FANTASY





There is a gate near the road. I don't think it is ever "closed". It's one of those gates that you can zig-zag-walk through, but you won't get your two-wheel vehicle through.

Well, I decided that the post needed a little dressing up, of a different kind.