

# Historic Trails & Blue Ridge Mountains

14 days from Washington DC to Washington DC

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## Vacation Overview

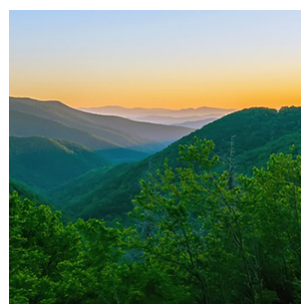
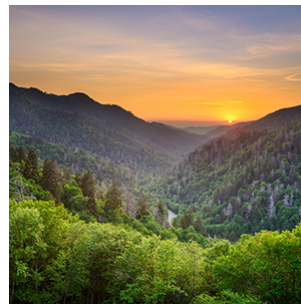
From colonial settlements and Civil War sites to the magnificent Blue Ridge Mountains and stunning Great Smoky Mountains, this southern U.S. tour features historic sites, spectacular scenery, and fun experiences all along the way. You'll overnight in the Washington DC area; Gettysburg; Shenandoah National Park; Beckley; Lexington, Kentucky; Gatlinburg; Asheville; Lexington, Virginia; and Williamsburg.

History buffs will enjoy visits to the Gettysburg Battlefield, where Abraham Lincoln delivered his immortal speech in 1863; Harper's Ferry, where John Brown made his ill-fated raid on the U.S. Arsenal in 1859; the Lincoln Museum; Sinking Spring Farm, the one-room cabin where Lincoln was born; the Civil War Museum, the fourth-largest Civil War museum in the United States; Biltmore Estate; Mount Airy, Andy Griffith's hometown; Monticello Estate, Thomas Jefferson's home; Mount Vernon, home of George and Martha Washington; and Colonial Williamsburg, where life in the 18th century is recreated.

Throughout this southern U.S. tour, you'll witness fascinating landscapes. Beautiful views await you in Shenandoah National Park, with its 200,000 acres of protected lands. Marvel at the green pastures, white-board fences, and columned estates in Kentucky bluegrass country. Spend two nights in Gatlinburg, a popular mountain retreat, and drive through the center of the Smoky Mountains, with the winding roads, striking wildflowers, and animal diversity. In Virginia, stop at tranquil Mabry Mill, an old water-driven grist mill that is one of the country's most photographed spots, and visit Natural Bridge, a 215-foot-high limestone arch sculpted by nature in a wooded setting.

These are just some of the many highlights of this southern U.S. tour featuring stunning national parks, historic sites, and fun-filled experiences

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## Itinerary

### Day 1 WASHINGTON DC AREA

Enjoy time at leisure to relax or do some independent exploring. Your Tour Director is on hand this evening to answer any questions.

### Day 2 WASHINGTON DC AREA-GETTYSBURG

Today begins with a guided sightseeing tour that shows you the graves of American heroes, including those of John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, in beautiful Arlington Cemetery. Your guided tour of the capital continues, with photo stops at Capitol Hill and the White House, and visits to the Lincoln and Vietnam Memorials. Afterward, cross the Mason-Dixon Line into Pennsylvania, and visit the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center. Tonight, we offer an optional outing to a local restaurant to enjoy the flavor of the area.

### Day 3 **GETTYSBURG–HARPERS FERRY–SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK**

This morning enjoy a guided visit to the hallowed Gettysburg Battlefield, site of the decisive Civil War campaign and where Abraham Lincoln delivered his immortal Gettysburg Address in November 1863. Afterward, head for Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, where, in 1859, John Brown made his ill-fated raid on the U.S. Arsenal. The park shares 2,178 miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. En route to Shenandoah, crest the Blue Ridge Mountains for magnificent vistas of the Shenandoah Valley. Overnight in Shenandoah National Park.

 Breakfast

### Day 4 **SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK–NEW RIVER GORGE–BECKLEY**

Travel through lumber and limestone country into wonderfully wild West Virginia. After a lunch break in Lewisburg, a pre Civil War town, travel to Fayetteville and stop at New River Gorge Bridge, the world's third-longest steel-span bridge, rising 876 feet above the river. Then, on to Beckley, the heart of West Virginia's "smokeless" coal industry, for an overnight stay.

### Day 5 **BECKLEY–CHARLESTON–KENTUCKY HORSE PARK–LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY**

Before entering Kentucky, we stop in the state capital of Charleston, West Virginia, one-time home of American frontiersman Daniel Boone. As you cross the state border, the scenery changes to green pastures, white-board fences, and the columned estates of Kentucky bluegrass country—backdrop for the movie *Seabiscuit*. Arrive in Lexington, the "Heart of the Bluegrass." This afternoon, enjoy a fascinating visit to the Kentucky Horse Park, from where legends like Man o' War and Secretariat conquered the racing world.

 Continental Breakfast

### Day 6 **LEXINGTON–HODGENVILLE–BARDSTOWN–LEXINGTON, KY**

Travel on the Bluegrass Parkway and stop at Sinking Spring Farm, a one-room cabin where the nation's 16th president, Abraham Lincoln, was born. A replica of the original log cabin is preserved as a shrine to one of the best-loved American presidents. Visit the Lincoln Museum, dedicated to Lincoln's life and times. The museum features 12 historically accurate scenes from Lincoln's life and Civil War memorabilia. Be sure to walk out to the center of Town Square for a photo op in front of the Lincoln Statue and the Lincoln Boy Statue. Afterward, we head to Bardstown and visit the fourth-largest Civil War Museum in the United States. Unlike the other museums, this one focuses mainly on the War of the Western States. Visitors move through a series of exhibits featuring artifacts from both the Union and the Confederacy. End your day by visiting an authentic Bourbon Distillery. You'll learn about the production of the finest Kentucky Straight Bourbon, and enjoy a tasting. Return to Lexington, where the evening is free for independent activities.

### Day 7 **LEXINGTON, KY–GATLINBURG**

Travel to Tennessee, with a stop at Corbin for a short visit to Colonel Sanders' original fried chicken restaurant, which is now a museum. This afternoon, visit the fascinating Museum of Appalachia, with 65 acres of farmland and a number of historic cabins, barns, and other buildings—even a frontier privy! The next two nights are in Gatlinburg at the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains.

### Day 8 **GATLINBURG**

As one of America's most popular mountain retreats, Gatlinburg offers something for everyone. The day is free for independent activities.

**Day 9 GATLINBURG–GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK–ASHEVILLE**

Drive right through the center of the Smokies along the spectacular Newfound Gap Road, peaking at 5,046 feet. Continue into North Carolina and stop at the 7,500-acre grounds of the Biltmore Estate, built by George Vanderbilt, grandson of railroad magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt. Overnight in the Asheville area, hometown to singer Roberta Flack.

**Day 10 ASHEVILLE–BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY–MOUNT AIRY– LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA**

Blue Ridge Parkway runs from the Great Smokies to Shenandoah National Park without a single traffic light along its 470-mile route. Take in a portion of the parkway today, from Fancy Gap to Roanoke. Visit Mount Airy, North Carolina, Andy Griffith's hometown. Affectionately known as Mayberry, the town is the inspiration for the setting of The Andy Griffith Show that ran in the 1960s. There is time to stroll Main Street, visit Floyd's Barber shop and enjoy a taste of the past at Walkers soda fountain. This afternoon stop at the tranquil setting of Mabry Mill, one of the most photographed spots in the country. Next up: a visit to Natural Bridge, a 215-foot-high arch in a wooded setting, once owned by Thomas Jefferson. George Washington's initials are still visible on the cliffside, from his work here as a young surveyor.

 Continental Breakfast

**Day 11 LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA–MONTICELLO–RICHMOND–WILLIAMSBURG**

Visit the graceful home of the third U.S. president, Thomas Jefferson. The Monticello Estate reflects Jefferson's skills as an artist, architect, and designer. It is the only house in the U.S. that is on the UNESCO World Heritage list of international treasures. Enjoy an orientation tour of Richmond, capital of the Confederacy during the Civil War. Stop at the Capitol Building for photographs before making our way to Williamsburg, between the James and York Rivers, where the very earliest English settlers established their first colonies.

 Breakfast

**Day 12 WILLIAMSBURG. EXCURSION TO COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG**

Today is dedicated to Colonial Williamsburg, where American heritage is proudly preserved in the reconstructed buildings and historical displays. Stroll down quaint streets and browse through homes, gardens, taverns, shops, and exhibits. In the Hall of Burgesses, listen as costumed interpreters debate the controversial steps that led to the Declaration of Independence.

 Breakfast

**Day 13 WILLIAMSBURG–MOUNT VERNON–WASHINGTON DC**

This morning, visit Mount Vernon, the beloved home of George and Martha Washington, overlooking the banks of the Potomac River. Take time to explore the most popular historic estate in America. The final leg of your journey takes you back to Washington DC, where you overnight in close proximity to quintessential D.C. The evening is free for independent activities.

 Breakfast

**Day 14 WASHINGTON DC**

Your vacation ends this morning. You can extend your vacation with extra nights and explore the nation's capital further.