

MUSIC ROOTS OF AMERICA

12 days

Discover the roots of America's musical heritage, beginning with the Blues in "Sweet Home Chicago" and continuing on to Detroit, home of the Motown sound popularized by the Supremes and Aretha Franklin. Visit Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, filled with artifacts and music from many of pop music's legends. Country music is the focus in Nashville while visiting the Country Music Hall of Fame and Grand Ole Opry. Finish by retracing the music roots of Elvis in Memphis at Sun Studios and Graceland.

Day 1 Chicago. Welcome to Chicago! Your Tour Director will be on hand this afternoon to assist with check-in and will have suggestions for places to eat and the perfect place for a night cap.

Day 2 Chicago. Chicago is the true home of the blues, and we start today with a "Blues tour" focusing on it's history. You'll visit historic sites such as the BLUES HEAVEN FOUNDATION (the restored Chess Studios), the 47th Street Blues District, the Jazz Record Mart, Muddy Waters' Southside home and the Maxwell Street Market. The remainder of the day and the evening are free for shopping and additional sightseeing. (B)

Day 3 Chicago-Detroit. This morning we skirt the shores of Lake Michigan and head to Detroit, "Motor City USA." Upon arrival, enjoy a city tour showing how Detroit has had a profound impact on the world—from the invention of the automobile to the Motown sound. You'll see NEW BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, Aretha Franklin's church where her father served as pastor, and the historic FOX THEATER, which was home to the famous Motown Revue. (B)

Day 4 Detroit. Our morning starts with a visit to the HENRY FORD MUSEUM AND GREENFIELD VILLAGE. At the museum, see JFK's limo, Rosa Park's bus and thousands of uniquely American innovations. Greenfield Village features 90 historic buildings, period presenters and artisans. This afternoon, visit the FORD ROUGE FACTORY, the largest car plant in the world, where you'll see all of Ford's classic cars from the Model T to the Mustang, and more. You'll learn the history and then see how a car is built on the assembly line. This evening join an optional evening out to Bert's Market Place for dinner and jazz. (B)

Day 5 Detroit-Cleveland. Before leaving "Motor City USA" enjoy a guided tour of the MOTOWN HISTORICAL MUSEUM, home of the world-famous Studio A, where the Temptations, Marvin Gaye and countless others recorded with the Funk Brothers. Hear Aretha Franklin ask for her R-E-S-P-E-C-T, see some of the Jackson 5's famous dance moves and learn how Stevie Wonder got his stage name. We hug the shores of Lake Erie and cross Ohio to Cleveland, the birthplace of "Rock n Roll." It is here that radio DJ Alan Freed popularized the term Rock and Roll. It is also here where Chuck Berry made his first public appearance, where David Bowie made his U.S. debut and where Elvis Presley played his first concert north of the Mason-Dixon Line. This afternoon is yours to spend at the ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME. Home to thousands of priceless artifacts, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum has become the repository for the most important and rare items of rock's most celebrated artists. On your guided tour, you'll get an inside look at the lives and stories behind the music of your favorite performers. See James Brown's tuxedo, U2's first t-shirt, Ricky Nelson's LIFE magazine cover, costumes from the Everly Brother's early performances and many other items such as posters, backstage passes, and report cards. You're sure to find something from your favorite recording stars. (B)

Day 6 Cleveland-Louisville. Today we head south through Ohio to Louisville, Kentucky, set on the banks of the Ohio River. Known the world over, one of Louisville's favorite sons is Cassius Clay, otherwise known as Muhammad Ali. Upon arrival, we'll visit the newly opened MUHAMMAD ALI CENTER, where his biography, from his Louisville roots and his boxing career to his social and religious convictions, will come alive. Louisville is also home to the "most exciting two minutes in sports," the incomparable Kentucky Derby. We'll visit the KENTUCKY DERBY MUSEUM and CHURCHILL DOWNS where you'll view the Grand Stands, Finish Line, and Winner's Circle. Tonight explore some of Louisville's great blues and piano bars. (B)

Day 7 Louisville-Owensboro-Nashville. Kentucky, affectionately known as the "Bluegrass State," is also the birthplace of Bluegrass music. Bluegrass began as a way for country folks to compose songs about their day-to-day life. The songs reflected life on the farm or in the hills, and this type of music was called "mountain" or "country" music. It gained in popularity in the 1920s with stars such as Jimmie Rodgers, the Carter family, and Earl Scruggs. We'll make a stop to visit the INTERNATIONAL BLUEGRASS MUSEUM where you will learn more through displays, interpretive exhibits, posters, costumes, instruments and, of course, the music itself. We then head to Nashville, "Music City USA," for a three-night stay. (B)

Day 8 Nashville. This morning see the city up-close on a sightseeing tour of its landmarks with a local guide, including the recording studios of Music Row. No tour of Nashville would be complete without a visit to the COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME. Its collection houses historical costumes, memorabilia, instruments, photographs, manuscripts and other objects which tell the story of country music. These artifacts are supplemented by live performances, interactive exhibits, and lots of great music. Our tour also includes a visit to historic RCA STUDIO B—once a recording home of popular music titans such as Elvis Presley, Chet Atkins, Eddy Arnold, and the Everly Brothers. You'll even have the chance to make your own recording! We'll also visit the historic RYMAN AUDITORIUM, original home of the Grand Ole Opry. There's a special treat in store for you tonight as you attend an unforgettable show at the world-famous GRAND OLE OPRY, the mecca for country musicians. (B)

Day 9 Nashville. A full day at leisure to discover more of Nashville. Take a line dancing lesson at the Wild Horse Saloon, explore the Willie Nelson Showcase, or take a trip on the General Jackson Showboat and sail the Cumberland River in style while enjoying strolling musicians and live musical productions. For those looking for the perfect souvenir, visit Opry Mills Mall, featuring a variety of shops and restaurants. Since this evening is free, why not visit Printers Alley or one of the many establishments located on Honky-Tonk Highway, and perhaps see a famous face giving an impromptu performance? (B)

Day 10 Nashville-Memphis. Today travel across Tennessee to Memphis where the first stop is GRACELAND, Elvis Presley's home. Take a peek into the private life of the "King" of Rock 'n Roll. Your guided tour includes the mansion, Hall of Gold, the Automobile Museum, his private airplanes and the Meditation Garden where Elvis and his family are buried. Tonight join an optional evening out to famous Beale Street where you'll hear the Memphis sound and taste traditional southern barbecue. (B)

Day 11 Memphis. This morning starts out with a sightseeing tour of Memphis. The tour includes a visit to SUN STUDIOS, the "cradle of Rock 'n Roll." Visit the original recording studio where musicians like Howlin' Wolf, B.B. King, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and many others first created the hot new sounds that became a musical phenomenon and changed the world forever. Suggestions for your free time this afternoon and evening include the Rock 'n Soul Museum where you'll learn more about Memphis and its musical and cultural history. The Gibson Guitar Factory will show you the step-by-step process of hand crafting these legendary guitars from start to finish, and The National Civil Rights Museum, located on the assassination site of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., traces the history of the American Civil Rights Movement. Your Tour Director will have additional suggestions for shopping, dining, and entertainment. (B)

Day 12 Memphis. The trip ends today with guests departing on individual schedules. Transfers to Memphis International Airport are provided. (B)

Meals: B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner