

# Rhythms of the South

15 Day Self-Drive Tour

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

• Atlanta • Nashville • Memphis • New Orleans • Pensacola • Tallahassee • Savannah • Charleston • Atlanta

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Atlanta

Fly to Atlanta from the UK and on arrival pick up your hire car. Upon check in, please ask the hotel reception for your ATI Tour documentation pack which will include your tour essentials. The rest of the day is then free to enjoy Atlanta at your leisure.

**Accommodation stay – 2 Nights in Atlanta.**

### Day 2: Atlanta

Enjoy a day in Atlanta, which started as a railroad junction in the 1830s and quickly became the transport hub of the South. Its strategic importance was a large part of the reason it made such an inviting target for General Sherman's Union Army, which razed it during the Civil War. Visit Fairlie-Poplar, the African American Panoramic Experience, Grant Park or the Atlanta History Center.

### Day 3: Atlanta - Nashville

Along the way, stop to see the Chattanooga "Choo Choo" train. In Lynchburg tour the legendary Jack Daniel's whiskey distillery. Proceed to Nashville in the evening. **Accommodation Stay – 1 night in Nashville.** Driving distance 392 kilometres.

### Day 4: Nashville - Memphis

Soak up the sounds in the country music capital by visiting the Grand Ole Opry and the Country Music Hall of Fame. Experience the South's tumultuous history at the Tennessee State Museum. Leave the city early enough to arrive in Memphis for a late dinner. **Accommodation stay – 2 Nights in Memphis.** Driving distance 334 kilometres.

### Day 5: Memphis

Explore the birthplace of the blues by taking in a performance in one of the entertaining Beale Street blues bars. Drive out for a tour of Elvis Presley's home Graceland; see the original bomber, Memphis Belle; or monorail to unique Mud Island.

### Day 6: Memphis – Vicksburg

Today visit Vicksburg National Military Park which commemorates the campaign, siege, and defense of Vicksburg in 1863. There's over 1,300 monuments, markers and plaques, a 16-mile tour road and a national cemetery, the nation's largest burial site of Civil War Union soldiers and sailors with graves totaling over 17,000. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Vicksburg.** Driving distance 349 kilometres.

### Day 7: Vicksburg – Natchez – Baton Rouge – New Orleans

Enjoy a drive through Natchez and Baton Rouge, the heart of the old South, on route to New Orleans. New Orleans' unique geography, sandwiched between Lake Pontchartrain and the mighty Mississippi River, shaped the flavors of the only cuisine native to North America. **Accommodation stay – 2 Nights in New Orleans.** Driving distance 304 kilometres.

### Day 8: New Orleans

The Big Easy is a melting pot of European culture and southern charm. Stroll through the French Quarter and admire its distinctive architectural styling, then experience the festive frenzy on Bourbon Street. Steamboat river tours onboard restored paddleboats are a great way to experience the mighty Mississippi.

### Day 9: New Orleans - Pensacola

Drive from city life to beach blankets. Relax on the white sand beaches of the Gulf of Mexico and enjoy a swim in the warm blue waters of the Atlantic Coast. Wander through Pensacola's Seville District or head to the beaches of Santa Rosa Island. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Pensacola.** Driving distance 301 kilometres.

### Day 10: Pensacola – Tallahassee

Travel along the Gulf Coast through the untouched wildlife preserves and natural habitats that dot the landscape. Fishing villages and the Emerald Coast provide ample distraction on the way. Sprinkled with southern charm, Tallahassee's landscape mixes antebellum architecture and modern innovation. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Tallahassee.** Driving distance 314 kilometres.

### Day 11: Tallahassee - Savannah

Historic Savannah is home to some of the South's most beautifully restored houses. Take a relaxing afternoon walk and picnic in one of the many green parks throughout the city. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Savannah.** Driving distance 484 kilometers.

### Day 12: Savannah - Charleston

Charleston truly represents the grandeur and elegance of the South. Gorgeous tree-lined avenues add to the charm of the antebellum architecture. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Charleston.** Driving distance 168 kilometres.

### Day 13: Charleston – Atlanta

Leave South Carolina's coast and head back inland on your return trip to Atlanta. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Atlanta.** Driving distance 467 kilometres.

### Day 14 - 15: Depart Atlanta to UK

Return your car at the airport before your departure flight back to the UK.

**Meals:** This tour is based on a Room only basis

\*Denotes local charge – Optional trips and excursions suggested on the itinerary are bookable and payable locally.

**This is a set tour itinerary, if you have booked any pre/post or optional tour arrangements please refer to your separate vouchers and final documents.**

**All hotels & locations are subject to change based on availability, final hotel list will be confirmed 10 days before departure.**

## TOUR NOTES

For current departure dates and prices please check our website

### Pre/Post Tour information

If you would like to extend your trip or make the tour part of a longer holiday, we can easily add on a pre or post night stays for you. Our Sales Team will work with you to arrange the best connecting flights and book any additional hotel stays. Simply tell us what you'd like and we can arrange it.

### Time difference

Eastern Time Zone: GMT -5 hours

Pacific Time Zone: GMT -8 hours

Mountain Time Zone: GMT -7 hours

Central Time Zone: GMT -6 hours

### Tour inclusions

- Accommodation listed above
- Welcome phone call from American Tours International on Day 1
- Virgin Holidays branded rucksack with tour documentation and Atlas, please ask when you check in at your first hotel for your 'ATI Pack'
- Cemetery and Gris-Gris Walking

### Tour exclusions

- All Flights and airport transfers in the UK
- Travel Insurance
- Car hire and insurance unless this has been booked by the sales consultant
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, tips & gratuities, video camera fees at monuments
- The required ESTA application
- Anything not detailed on the itinerary.
- Hotel Car Parking not included

### Dining inclusions

Room Only

### Accommodation

Accommodation in the itinerary will be a mix of "V" rated properties based on availability. Please note some tours are up to 3 weeks in duration and there may be some nights when staying in remote locations e.g. the National Parks, when the 'V' rating may vary. Hotels are subject to change up until 10 days prior to departure, but you will be advised of any changes.

### Visa requirements

It's mandatory for everyone travelling to or transferring through the US, under the Visa Waiver Program, to obtain approval to travel no later than 72 hours prior to travel by completing an online process ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) scheme. Failure to obtain an ESTA could result in the passenger being denied boarding by the airline. The cost of an ESTA is currently approx \$14 per person and can be obtained by visiting <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once completed & approved, the ESTA application is valid for two years and allows multiple visits without the need to reapply – simply update your details on the same website. Travelers can apply for an ESTA even if they have no firm plans to travel to the US. If you need any further information on the ESTA or you have any other visa queries, then try the Visit USA Website at [www.visitusa.org.uk](http://www.visitusa.org.uk) where further information on the scheme and up to date fee can also be found. The ESTA is very similar to the automated visa that you purchase to enter Australia and is completely paperless

### Currency

The official unit of currency in the US is the US dollar. Optional excursions will need to be paid locally by cash

to the tour guide. Major credit cards and debit cards will be accepted within the US.

#### Electricity

If you bring any electrical appliance to the USA, you may need an adaptor to fit the US electrical receptacles. You may also need a converter to change the voltage from 110 volts to 220 volts.

#### Tipping

Tipping is a big part of the USA's service economy and their taxation system, all visitors should understand that this is a part of the local culture; please see below a list of useful suggestions for tipping:

- Waiters/Waitresses: 15% - 20% for average - good service, more for exceptional service.
- Bartenders: \$1 - \$2 a round -or- 15% to 20% of the tab, with a minimum of 50 cents per soft drink, \$1 per alcoholic drink.
- Room Service: 15% - 20%
- Taxi driver: Varies depending on locality. Assume 15% will be enough; an extra \$1 to \$2 for help with bags.
- Hotel doorman: \$1 per bag for help with luggage; \$1 per person for hailing a cab.

#### Recommended vaccinations

We advise you to discuss your individual requirements for the USA with your GP at least 6-8 weeks prior to travel.