

History Lives Here

A Five-Day Tour of Tennessee's Historic Homes

With a rich tapestry of American heritage, Tennessee's historical stomping grounds are sure to enlighten you. Journey down our historical roads and trails for a stroll into Tennessee's legendary past. Tour Tennessee's heritage towns, and immerse yourself in the state's diverse past from Davy Crockett to Elvis Presley.

Day One

Start with Memphis' most famous attraction, [Elvis Presley's Graceland](#). Touring Graceland is a one-of-a-kind experience that will lead you on Elvis's fascinating journey to superstardom. You and your group will experience the cultural changes that led to the birth of Rock 'n' Roll and see, first-hand, how Elvis became the most celebrated entertainer in the world.

Next stop is [Davies Manor Plantation](#), located on a 640-acre Revolutionary War land grant, the oldest fully furnished log house in Memphis. A 'must' in Memphis is to enjoy lunch on your own down on Beale Street at any one of the many delicious eateries famous for barbeque!

The [Memphis Pink Palace Museum](#) was originally designed to be the dream home of wealthy entrepreneur Clarence Saunders. It's name comes from the mansion's ornate pink Georgian marble facade. Saunders, an entrepreneur and founder of Piggly Wiggly, began building the house in the early 1920's but, due to a legal dispute with the New York Exchange, he had to declare bankruptcy and the unfinished building was eventually given to the city in the late 1920's for use as a museum.

The [Hunt Phelan Home](#) mansion, built mostly by slave laborers in 1828, served as Ulysses S. Grant's headquarters and as a hospitality lodge and hospital for the troops during the planning of the siege at Vicksburg. It also served as the first Freedman's Bureau to educate the newly freed slaves.

Your group's next visit will be to the [Alex Haley Museum and Interpretive Center](#), in nearby Henning. It is the boyhood home and final resting place of Alex Haley, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Roots*.

Located about sixty miles northeast, in Rutherford, is the [Davy Crockett Cabin - Museum](#), a replica of David Crockett's last home. It contains furniture, tools, original logs and more from the early 1800s, along with his mother's grave. It also features books on the Crockett family, local history, pictures and copies of letters.

In Jackson, [Brooks Shaw's Old Country Store and Casey Jones Village](#), one of Tennessee's top ten tourist attractions, celebrates the life and times of Jackson's favorite son. Within the village, visitors can relive the "Steam Age" of railroading by touring the , featuring the restored home of the engineer himself, as well as a life-size replica of Casey's 382 locomotive.

Now it is time to head for Nashville for dinner and a good night's rest. Enjoy a three course dinner and Broadway style show aboard the [General Jackson Showboat](#), a 300-foot paddlewheel riverboat.

Day Two

[Loveless Cafe](#) is the best way to start your day in Nashville. Nationally acclaimed and frequented by celebrities, world travelers and local appetites alike, the Loveless Cafe serves up award-winning country ham and red eye gravy, real Southern-fried chicken, and Nashville's favorite scratch biscuits with homemade preserves cooked right in the kitchen.

Not far away is the 30-acre historic site, [Belle Meade Plantation](#). The 1853 Greek Revival mansion is filled with original furnishings and period antiques; the tour encompasses the first and second floors of the historic structure. During the group tour, hear a century of Belle Meade's history through stories of the Harding and

Jackson families and the skilled laborers who contributed to make Belle Meade Plantation one of America's premier thoroughbred farms. After the tour of the mansion, discover the eight other historic outbuildings throughout the property.

The [Belmont Mansion](#) was the summer home of Adelia Acklen, the extraordinary "Southern Belle" who negotiated during the height of the war with both Union and Confederate armies to permit her 2,800 bales of cotton be shipped to England (bringing her \$960,000).

[Travellers Rest Plantation & Museum](#), used by Confederate General John Bell Hood as his Army of Tennessee headquarters, preserves 200 years of Nashville's past.

Lunch at the Garden Gate Café at [The Hermitage: Home of President Andrew Jackson](#) is next on the itinerary. Then tour this historic site where you will learn about the Jackson family mansion, the formal garden, slave quarters, and the original log cabin the Jacksons occupied in 1804. Their 1,100-acre plantation was once home to 150 enslaved African Americans who worked the farm, cultivated the gardens, tended livestock, baled cotton, cared for the home and its guests, and met countless other needs of the plantation. A few miles north, in Goodlettsville, is the [Bowen Plantation House](#), circa 1787. It was the home of Captain William Bowen of the Virginia Militia during the American Revolution. While there, also see [Historic Mansker's Station Frontier Life Center](#), an authentic reconstruction of a 1779 frontier fortified station typical of early Cumberland Settlements.

Both architecturally and culturally significant, [Historic Cragfont](#) in Castalian Springs was the home of Revolutionary War hero General James Winchester, one of the founders of Memphis. Once the finest house on the Tennessee frontier, it was known as "The Grandeur on the Frontier."

Now it is time to head back into Nashville for dinner and another good night's rest. Head to downtown Nashville for dinner at the famous [Wildhorse Saloon](#), a restaurant, concert hall, dance venue and television studio all in one, and experience the "Honky Tonk Highway," of [The District](#). Consisting of famous clubs on Lower Broadway, Second Avenue, and Printer's Alley, such as Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, Legends Corner, Nashville Crossroads, Second Fiddle, The Stage and many more, the District is alive with great music, food, and night spots!

Day Three

After breakfast at the hotel, today's first stop will be a little south of Nashville, in Franklin. Your group will tour the Historic [Carnton Plantation](#) and hear intriguing stories about Carrie McGavock, the mistress of Carnton before, during and after the Civil War. Carnton provides the setting for *The Widow of the South*, by Robert Hicks, the story of a woman who gave her heart first to a stranger, then to a tract of hallowed ground, and became a symbol of a nation's soul. Also see the most battle-damaged building from the Civil War still standing today and hear tales of the generals who lost their lives.

[The Carter House](#), also in Franklin, serves as a memorial to the Carter family as well as the countless heroes in the 1864 Battle of Franklin. The modest brick home was the Federal Command Post during the Battle of Franklin while the family took refuge in the basement.

Before the next leg of the trip, enjoy lunch in historic downtown Franklin.

Then it's on to Spring Hill for a visit to [Rippavilla Plantation](#). This Antebellum Greek revival house museum was occupied by both Union and Confederate during the Civil War and was at the heart of the Confederacy's "Last Offensive." Additional buildings on site include an original slave cabin and Freeman Bureau School.

Rattle and Snap Plantation in Mount Pleasant, just west of Columbia, has been referred to as "magnificent," the "most monumental house in Tennessee." William Polk named the property "Rattle and Snap" after winning the land in a game of chance by the same name. The fine craftsmanship throughout the mansion is the work of talented slave artisans.

Just eleven miles away, in Columbia, is the [James K. Polk Ancestral Home](#), the only remaining residence of the 11th President of the United States. The 1816 home was built by Polk's father Samuel, and is one of the best examples of Federal style architecture remaining in Tennessee. Today it houses over 1000 objects that belonged to President and Mrs. Polk including furniture, paintings, china, and silver. In addition to touring

the main Home, you may visit the adjacent 1820 Sisters' House where two of the President's married sisters lived at different times.

A little nap on the motorcoach may be in store as you head to [Falcon Rest Mansion & Gardens](#) in McMinnville. This 10,000 square foot mansion, built by Gorilla Pants manufacturer Clay Faulkner in 1896, boasts Biltmore-like systems, a friendly ghost and museum-quality antiques. To make this day end on a really festive note, your group will take part in an interactive "Murder at the Mansion" mystery play while they enjoy a delicious dinner. After the meal is completed and the murder is solved, guests are treated to a tour of the Falcon Rest mansion.

After this fun evening it's time to head 40 miles east to Murfreesboro.

Day Four

An early morning starts with breakfast at the hotel and then it is on to [Oaklands Historic House Museum](#). This was the largest plantation in the county when it became caught in the crossfire of the Civil War and served as headquarters for Confederate President Jefferson Davis while he was visiting Murfreesboro. This beautiful antebellum home tells the story of the Maney family as they built their home in four phases from 1818 to 1860.

Learn the story of Civil War hero Sam Davis at the [Sam Davis Home and Museum](#) a few miles away in Smyrna. This historic site features an 1860s home, museum and outbuildings.

Now it is time to head toward east Tennessee. Radio station WDVX brings back the Knoxville tradition of downtown mid-day live radio shows with the "Blue Plate Special" at the [One Vision Plaza - Knoxville Visitor Center](#). There's great music, a shop filled with quality arts and crafts by local artisans, plus great lunches from the famous Calhoun's restaurant.

After lunch your group will visit [Blount Mansion](#). Nestled in the center of downtown Knoxville's government district, Blount Mansion offers history that is hard to miss. Among the towers of glass, steel and brick, sits a house, small by today's standards, but a mansion on the Tennessee frontier. Known by the Cherokee Indians as "the house with many eyes," Blount Mansion has watched American history parade through its rooms and on the streets outside.

Next you will visit the [Armstrong-Lockett House & W.P. Toms Memorial Gardens "Crescent Bend"](#). This historic 1834 house museum is furnished with fine antiques, art and an extensive American and English silver collection (1610-1830). There is also a terraced three-acre formal garden with roses, thousands of blooming flowers and five fountains overlooking the Tennessee River.

[Confederate Memorial Hall \(Bleak House\)](#) is a Tuscan style villa also known as "Bleak House," named from a Charles Dickens poem. Confederate War General James Longstreet used it as his headquarters during the siege of Knoxville in 1863. [Ramsey House Plantation](#) was built in 1797 by Knoxville's first builder, Thomas Hope, for Francis Alexander Ramsey. The structure is significant for original interior and exterior architectural features and its period decorative art collection. The Ramsey Family was one of the first families to settle the Knoxville area. They played vital roles in developing civic, educational and cultural institutions. Colonel Francis A. Ramsey was one of the founding trustees of Blount College, now the University of Tennessee.

[Mabry-Hazen House Museum](#) housed both Union and Confederate soldiers and showcases one of the largest collections of original artifacts including crystal, silver, china and antiques.

After a long day of touring, it is now time for dinner at Calhoun's on the River, one of Knoxville's most popular restaurants, and a good night's sleep in Knoxville.

Day Five

Enjoy a nice continental breakfast at your hotel and then head to the [Andrew Johnson National Historic Site](#), in Greeneville. This site preserves two of the 17th President's homes, his tailor shop and burial site. Also visit the National Cemetery while there. Also in Greeneville is the [Dickson-Williams Mansion](#), which was designed

and constructed by two craftsmen from Ireland. It served as headquarters for both Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War.

A trip to [Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park](#), just 14 miles away in Limestone, features a museum which contains exhibits telling of the different aspects of the life of Davy Crockett. Your group can learn a lot about Crockett the hunter, the politician, the businessman and the legendary hero portrayed in the Walt Disney movies of the 1950's.

Your next stop will be at the [Rocky Mount Museum](#) in Johnson City. Rocky Mount is a four-season living history attraction with daily interpretations of pioneer life in 1791. Vividly dressed interpreters entertain and educate visitors on early pioneer life in the eastern U.S. The Firehouse Restaurant is where you can enjoy some of the region's best authentic hickory smoked bar-b-que specialties, homemade side items and desserts. [The John & Landon Carter Mansion](#), located just eight miles from Johnson City in Elizabethton, was built between 1775 and 1780 on land bought from the Cherokee Indians. The oldest frame house in Tennessee reveals a finely detailed interior.

In Bristol is the home of world-renowned musician and entertainer, Tennessee Ernie Ford. The [Tennessee Ernie Ford Home](#) features artifacts of his storied career. Twenty miles west is the [Allandale Mansion](#), often called Kingsport's "White House." Built in 1950 by Ruth and Harvey Brooks, Allandale still houses their fine furnishings, antiques and art. Also in Kingsport is the [Netherland Inn House, Museum & Boatyard](#), a three-story building which hosted many famous persons, including Presidents Andrew Jackson, Andrew Johnson and James K. Polk. With stage coaches, mail coaches, oxcarts and river traffic, the Netherland Inn was a popular place in the busy Boat Yard community of "King's Port." Then enjoy dinner at The Boatyard Diner. Then it is time to head to the beautiful [MeadowView Marriott](#), an award-winning hotel and golf resort nestled in the rolling foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains for your last night in Tennessee.