



OLLI at Furman and Explore Up Close present

The Tennessee Presidential Tour

October 23 – 27, 2024

It's a bus trip to Tennessee! Join a small group of OLLI members on a delightful tour of Middle and East Tennessee, in the full beauty of Fall. It's the "Tennessee Presidential Tour," and we'll not only feature the homes of three Tennessee presidents, and stories about several others . . . we'll explore some of the prettiest countryside and landscapes in the eastern U.S. while we're at it! We'll travel at "the right pace," enjoy local food, drink, and hospitality, and bask in the fun of the small group experience (trip will be limited to 24 participants).

Trip highlights:

- 3 Presidential home visits
- Presidential Legacies: the Trail of Tears; the Civil War and Reconstruction; the New Deal; the Manhattan Project . . . and quainter presidential stories
- lovely drives showcasing Middle and East Tennessee, including the Cumberland Plateau and one section of the Natchez Trace Parkway
- showcasing: Nashville, Franklin, and Chattanooga
- lovely small town visits: Sewanee; Columbia; Crossville; Greeneville

Trip Itinerary:

Wednesday, October 23

All aboard! This “train’s” leaving for Georgia (. . . where are you, Gladys Knight?). We’ll travel by interstate to a favorite lunch venue, near Atlanta . . . and then on to Kennesaw, Georgia – home of the Smithsonian-affiliated Southern Museum, which houses one of the most unique Civil War stories of them all (. . . yes, surprise waiting).

We’ll continue our drive to the Tennessee border, and Red Clay State (TN) Historic Park. Red Clay documents the story of the forced eviction of the Cherokee People from the state of Georgia; and subsequently the federally-sponsored forced eviction of the southern tribes from the Southeastern U.S. There’s plenty of presidential history in this gut-wrenching saga.

We’ll move west to Chattanooga, just upstream of the Tennessee River Gorge and the Moccasin Bend of the great Tennessee River. Home for the night will be the Springhill Suites (riverfront), where we’ll enjoy Rest and Relaxation, and a group dinner at Scottie’s on the River (. . . in our hotel). Sleep well tonight!

Thursday, October 24

[There will be an early morning option for a nice “eye-opening” walk in downtown Chattanooga: Along the Tennessee Riverwalk to the Walnut Street Bridge (pedestrians only, crossing the broad Tennessee River) and Coolidge Park . . . and back.]

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel, then we’ll pack our bags. This morning, we’ll explore the city of Chattanooga. We’ll learn about *Chattanooga today*, which like Greenville, has garnered lots of acclaim for the revitalization of downtown in the last 20+ years. We’ll also pick up yesterday’s “surprise story” from Kennesaw in the National Cemetery; and we’ll climb Lookout Mountain for a visit to Point Park, where our bird’s eye view of Chattanooga’s geography will be the perfect map to follow Ulysses S. Grant’s “rising star” in the Chattanooga campaign of late-1863.

By late morning, we’ll be driving west (and crossing into Central Standard Time). We’ll stop in Sewanee, Tennessee, for lunch and for a look inside the lovely Sewanee Chapel (site of a presidential visit in 1911).

We’ll then descend “the mountain” into Middle Tennessee proper, enjoying a gorgeous drive to Columbia, site of our first presidential home – constructed by the father of James K. Polk in 1816, and inhabited by Polk for six years, as he cut his political teeth.

We'll arrive at our home for the next two nights – the Drury Inn, Franklin, Tennessee. After our requisite “R&R” . . . let's enjoy a group dinner in Franklin's lovely downtown. Overnight, Franklin.

Friday, October 25

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel. This morning we'll make a terrific tour of Nashville and the Cumberland Hills, just south of the city. We'll start by driving to “The Hermitage” . . . not meek, mild, and sequestered from the world . . . but rather the home of one of the largest personalities to be called President – Andrew Jackson.

We'll enjoy lunch in downtown Nashville (and a nice post-lunch driving tour of parts of the city). Then we'll embark on a scenic delight, driving the northern-most reaches of the Natchez Trace Parkway through the beautiful Cumberland Hills, and exiting at Leiper's Fork. Enjoy a short time to explore this hippest of Nashville's “ex-burbs.” We'll then return to nearby Franklin for R&R. Dinner is “on your own” this evening (with options “at” the hotel). Overnight, Franklin.

Saturday, October 26

Have breakfast in the hotel, then we'll pack our bags. This morning we'll embark on a stunning drive (by now, you'll believe me when I use that term), that will traverse Middle Tennessee, climbing the Cumberland Plateau from the west. Civil War stories abound in this bucolic setting. We'll enter the town of Crossville where we'll visit one of the most surprising vestiges of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal: the homes and community buildings of the Cumberland Homesteads.

We'll enjoy lunch in the area, then descend via a lovely backroads drive to Oak Ridge – the “Secret City” (another planned community in its own right, constructed in the FDR era). We'll make the most of a driving tour with significant stops – including the K-25 Overlook and Visitors Center, detailing the secret development of the atomic bomb, known as The Manhattan Project. We'll check into The Doubletree Hotel for that late-afternoon favorite – “R&R” – and later visit an esteemed area eatery, Calhoun's on the River, for a group dinner celebrating our new friends and inspiration. Overnight, Oak Ridge.

Sunday, October 27

Enjoy morning coffee and breakfast in the hotel. We'll make a drive to the award-winning Andrew Johnson National Historic Site, in Greeneville, Tennessee. Our visit will include a tour of the presidential home, and the opportunity to enjoy the lovely historic nature of

Greeneville itself. We'll enjoy lunch in the area, then make our return drive to Furman University, arriving in the late afternoon.

Trip Price:

\$1979 / person (double occupancy; single supplement, \$385); price includes comfortable chartered coach transportation; bus driver tip; 4 nights accommodation with breakfast in high-standard hotels; all activities per the itinerary; 4 lunches and 3 dinners, guide / concierge service throughout the trip. Price does not include alcohol, other meals or trip insurance.