

Central South Full-Experience 7-Day Tour

New Orleans, Tennessee

Tour Code: CS7

Departure Date: Every Thursday (All year around)

Price list: Buy 2 Get 1 Free

Standard price per person is based on double-bed room.

	1 st & 2 nd Person	3 rd Person	4 th Person	Single	Share
CS8	\$685	\$0	\$500	\$1028	\$880

Departure time: 8:00AM

Pick-up location: 207 W Cermak Rd. Chicago, IL 60616

Drop-off Location: 207 W Cermak Rd. Chicago, IL 60616, or, O'Hare International Airport (ORD). **Note: Please book your flights departing from ORD after 7:00PM.**

Itinerary Highlights:

1. The Ark Encounter theme park ----the largest timber frame structure in the world
2. Travel across the Central US from North to South.
3. Experience the distinctive culture of the Central and South US up close.
4. Exclusive tours in Purdue University
5. New Orleans and Tennessee
6. Famous cities and spectacular natural landscape; music and equestrian events; modern beauty and pristine wildness; gourmet foods and shopping

Day 1: Chicago - Springfield - St. Louis

First, we will go south to Springfield, hometown of Abraham Lincoln, one of the most respected presidents in the United States. We will see his former home where Lincoln lived in for 17 years. Right behind his residence, there is the State Capitol of Illinois, the tallest non-skyscraper capitol building in the United States. Then we will head for St. Louis, the largest metropolitan area of East Missouri, sitting by the banks of Mississippi River that is the longest river of the country. Located in Central America, St. Louis is right at the geographical center point of the United States. It used to be one of the busiest train transport hubs in the world. It held the 3rd Summer Olympics in 1904. It is also well known for being the beginning point of the Westward Movement. Visit the Gateway Arch, a 630-foot monument, is the world's tallest arch, commemorating the striving men during this historical migration and land expansion. We will also visit the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis. The interior of the building is covered by 41.5 million pieces of mosaic glass in more than 7000 colors. It is one of the world's largest mosaic collections nowadays. Our tour group will head to the hotel by dusk.

Hotel: Comfort Inn Festus or equivalent

Day 2: St. Louis - Memphis Graceland

After going across Mississippi River the second time during this tour, we reach Memphis, the biggest city of Tennessee, the land of music. Memphis is a city of reminiscence. The city was named after the ancient capital of Egypt by the Nile River. It has the same scorching sun as that in Egypt. The city echoes its Egyptian reference city with a huge modern looking Pyramid that we can see on the bus. Visit Graceland, the mansion home of Elvis Presley, commonly regarded as “the King of Rock and Roll”, “the most significant cultural icon of the 20th century”. Elvis’ hit songs can be heard everywhere in Graceland to pay homage to this beloved superstar. Browse Elvis Presley’s fancy mansion with an interactive iPad to feel the legend. Later, go to the hotel near Jackson.

Hotel: Ramada Pearl/Jackson Airport or equivalent

Day 3: Oak Alley Plantation - New Orleans (Night Tour)

When we reach Oak Alley Plantation, a U.S. National Historic Landmark located at the west suburban of New Orleans, our attention, right away, would be attracted to the astonishing beauty that the plantation presents. Visitors may even feel that they were taken into the scene of *Gone with Wind*. The master’s big house is contrasting with the slave quarter nearby. Two rows of 300-years-old oak trees are not only concealing the amazing quarter-mile-long garden road, but also the bitterness of the south had borne after Civil War. The natural environment of New Orleans is as distinctive as its local culture. We will also have a swamp tour, a fun adventurous yet safe boat ride that showcases the unique eco system of New Orleans region. You’ll have opportunities to see alligators, snakes, turtles, egrets, herons, ibis and many other species as well as many strange looking plants living in the swamp. It is like entering a land of unknown. The natural disaster remains of Hurricane Katrina of ten years ago can still be seen. It is so fascinating of the untouched swamp wildness of the pristine beauty. After going to the hotel, it is recommended to take an optional New Orleans night city tour at \$25 per person. New Orleans is a city with rich French and Spanish heritage. In between corners of every old French style townhouse, you may find a live jazz performance; every narrow block you turn to, there might be an oyster cocktail bar. It feels like many festivals are going on simultaneously. The night is long, and the nightlife is on.

Hotel: La Quinta Inn New Orleans Veterans/Metairie or equivalent

Day 4: New Orleans – Birmingham

New Orleans, built in 1718, is an important historical city in South US and one of the major ports, also well-known as the birthplace of jazz and French Creole culture. In its French Quarter, streets are narrow and crowded with French-style architectures, much like in France. It is up to you whether you like to start your day in the Caf  Du Monde with a most original French Coffee and their famed sugar coated donut, or, immerse yourself in the liveliness of local street art. Feel free to visit the antique stores alongside the Royal Street, or randomly jump in a jazz bar on the Bourbon Street. Jackson Square was built to commemorate General Andrew Jackson. St. Louis Cathedral and steamboat are also within walking distance; and, if

anything, don't miss out the chance to try some authentic Cajun food. We bid farewell to New Orleans and head to Alabama State by noon. Passing through Birmingham, the largest city in Alabama, where is one of the most intense "battlegrounds" during Civil Right Movement in 60s, you will learn and feel how much the tears and blood of demonstrators shed for human rights equality. The violent moments frozen in the silent statues in Kelly Ingram Park are depicting the unforgettable story passing through generations.

Hotel: Comfort Suites Gadsden or equivalent

Day 5: Chattanooga - Great Smoky Mountains Gatlinburg

Leave for Tennessee, we will arrive Chattanooga and explore the magnificent Lookout Mountain by getting on top of Rock City. It is said seven neighboring states might be seen from Lover's Leap, one of the scenic points in the Rock City - you can find out by yourself whether it is true or not. However, we are sure you will be amazed by the breathtaking panoramic views of natural landscape, massive ancient rock formations, and gardens with over 400 native plant species. We continually drive through the Great Smoky Mountains which is the habitat of a variety of animals. Then we will reach Gatlinburg, a charming mountain town with a variety of unique shops, restaurants and boutique hotels. Among them, some local stores will surely keep you busy where you can pick out souvenirs or local products such as Ole Smoky Moonshine and hand-made candies. Our Tennessee visit reaches the climax of the day by attending the most visited dinner attraction in America (at your own expense): Dixie Stampede, dine in a dinner theatre where you can watch a brilliant show with 32 horses and a cast of top-notch riders. They will thrill you with daring feats of trick riding and competition, pitting North against South in a friendly and fun rivalry. You will enjoy music, dancing, special effects and family friendly comedy along the way. With such a visual spectacular and taste buds satisfaction, the experience composed is second to none.

Hotel: Clarion Inn & Suites West Knoxville or equivalent

Day 6: Kentucky Horse Park – Ark Encounter theme park

Visit Kentucky, where known as the "Bluegrass State" due to its fertile soil in many pastures. We stop by Kentucky Artisan Center, a state tourism agency celebrating Kentucky's charming local folk art wares. A variety of handcrafts and artworks are one of a kind and such eye-candy. Later, arrive in Lexington, the "Horse Capital of the World". Kentucky's horse racing is world famed. We will visit Kentucky Horse Park. This equestrian facility is a 1,224-acre park dedicated to "man's relationship with the horse" with various shows and museums open to public. Kentucky Horse Park has also been home to many of the world's best competition horses, and a nursery ground to many rare horses (If Kentucky Horse Park closed, visitors would see the statue of champion horse and its championship career in front of the park.). **At noon we will head towards the Ark Encounter theme park. The theme park is a \$100 million representation of Noah's Ark in Kentucky. The Ark itself claims to be the largest timber frame structure in the world. In the evening, we will head towards the historic Findley Market to enjoy local food for dinner.**

Hotel: Clarion Hotel Conference Center Louisville North or equivalent

Day 7: Purdue University - Chicago

After seeing Indiana State House in Indianapolis from outside, we travel to Lafayette, where Purdue University is located. Purdue University is a giant public flagship university founded in 1869 with a nearly 40,000 student enrollment. The West Lafayette campus offers more than 200 majors for undergraduates, over 70 graduate and doctoral programs. Purdue has produced 23 astronauts who have been chosen for space flight. Its alumnus Neil Armstrong took his famous "small step" into history as the first human to set foot on the moon. We will reach sweet home Chicago later afternoon of the day.

Notes:

Upon completion of the tour, we will send you to the O'Hare International Airport (ORD) for flights home. See "Airport Pick-up/Drop-off Notes" for more details. (If you need to leave at any other places on the way back to Chicago, please confirm it with your tour guide in advance.)

Scenic Spots Notes:

- (1) Itinerary will be subject to traffic and weather. The sequence of the attractions might be changed according to actual and practical situation for better service.
- (2) In case of attraction closures (due to holidays or construction, etc.), tour guide may make some necessary changes to the itinerary accordingly.
- (3) This tour does not accept any City Pass or your own tickets for the attraction. Guests need to purchase admission tickets from tour guides.

Refund Remark:

- (1) If the weather condition, war, general strikes and other unforeseen circumstances interrupt the journey, our company reserve the right to rearrange the journey without refunding the tour fee.
- (2) If visitors cannot join the tour because of personal reason, the fee for hotels and transportation is not refundable.

Tour fee exclude: the meals, attractions tickets, service fee (\$10 per person per day), and any private costs (such as hotel telephone charges, laundry etc.).

Attraction Admission List	Adult	Senior (65+)	Children(3-12)
Memphis			
Graceland (Elvis Presley Mansion)	\$39.00	\$35(62+)	17.00(7-12) Free (6 and Under)
Tennessee/New Orleans			
Oak Alley Plantation	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$5.00 (6-12) \$8.00(13-18)

New Orleans Night Tour	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$15.00
Swamp Boat Tour	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$16.00
Rock City	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$13.00
Dixie Stampede Dinner Show	\$67.00	\$67.00	\$41.50
Kentucky/Indianapolis			
Kentucky Horse Park	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$9.00
Purdue University Campus Tour	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$7.00
Ark Encounter	\$43.00	\$33.00	\$30.00

*Price is subject to seasonal change without prior notice