

Crossroads of Illinois

Day One

Our adventure begins in the Just Beyond the City LimitsSM in the Chicago Southland. Travel North on the Bishop Ford Freeway up to the Pullman Historical District, America's first planned industrial community and a stop to the A. Phillip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum. Breakfast will be served at the Pullman Dining Car Museum. Captured in wonderfully preserved photographs and meticulously maintained memorabilia, the struggle between corporate power and disenfranchised workers is shown to be a timeless dynamic, The museum is a catalyst for change and places to the community in the mix of the tourism industry.

Travel South to the Lotton Art Glass Studio. Here you can view some of the most beautiful art glass ever made, decorated and blown in the ways of old. Visit the gallery and watch the internationally renowned Charles Lotton at work in his studio. Next tour Balmoral Park Race Track. Built in 1936, Balmoral Park Race Track is steeped in racing tradition, history and color having hosted some of the greatest harness racing and thoroughbred horse races in America. Also, visit the Crossroads of America where Lincoln Highway and Dixie Highway intersect in Chicago Heights. Then head West on the Historic Lincoln Highway to the village of Frankfort. In Frankfort, have lunch at The Pickwick Society Tea Room, Gifts & Antiques. Enjoy wonderful refreshments including finger sandwiches, fruits and cheese, tea and the special of the day all themed after the literary classic, *Little Women*. After lunch, enjoy Antique Shopping in Downtown Frankfort. Enjoy a leisurely visit to historic Frankfort. This modern community has retained the history and charm of early America. Browse through antique, specialty and art shops, historical buildings and enjoy the charm and splendor of Frankfort.

Check into your Chicago Southland hotel early, but get ready for some ethnic food and fun. Depart for Evening function at the Carraig Pub at Chicago Gaelic Park. Carraig is Gaelic for "The Rock". This is an authentic traditional Irish pub set in the heart of Gaelic Park. All of the wood and stained glass was imported from Ireland. If you have never been to Ireland and you want to feel the atmosphere of a real Irish Pub, then a visit to The Carraig is a must. The Carraig has the best Guinness in the Southside and carry all of the other Irish favorites.

Day 2

In the morning, head south to Illinois Amish Country. Arrive at the Illinois Amish Interpretive Center; view a short video and the museum to see how Illinois Amish differ from different orders around the country. After greeting our step-on guide, we head to the country for a tour of the Old Order Amish countryside. Along the way we will enjoy a meal with an Amish family. This gives you a chance to really see how the Amish people live what they believe. There is no electricity inside their homes. They are very modest in décor and everyone on the farm has a job. But you will never go away hungry from an Amish dinner. Once we have eaten, we will carry on with our countryside tour. We will be sure to include a stop along the way at one of the many cottage businesses.

Once we have been through the country the coach will then head to Tuscola. Here you will check into our hotel, with a welcome reception, and then you will have a little free time to browse the Tanger Outlet Center.

After some very important down time, we load the coaches again for dinner at Amishland's Red Barn Buffet. Don't worry; the barn is very close to your hotel. While at dinner tonight, we have invited several of the business owners to come and visit and get acquainted. After dinner, we have planned some "Mystery Entertainment" hosted by the Tuscola Fine Arts Center.

Day 3

After a good night's rest at your hotel, we will check out and head to Springfield.... On your way, please enjoy Dixie Cream Donuts on us.

Begin your tour by visiting Lincoln Home National Historical Site, a restored four-block neighborhood. First stop, Lincoln Home Visitor Center for your free tickets to tour the Home where Lincoln lived for 17 years (1844-1862).

Next stop, a free guided tour of the Old State Capitol Historic Site, a magnificently restored building with period furnishings. It was here in the Hall of Representatives, that Lincoln gave his famous "House Divided" speech. A short distance from the Old State Capitol is Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices, where Lincoln practiced law from 1843-1853.

Since your group will be in downtown Springfield for lunch, dine here for lunch where many of the restaurants are very knowledgeable and efficient in handling group bus tours. Homemade soups, wonderful quiche or a famous Horseshoe is available within walking distance of the morning sites.

In the afternoon, don't miss the spectacular Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. Opening in the spring of 2005, the three-block area in downtown Springfield will feature a research library and a multi-level museum of approximately 100,000 total square feet, which will include 35,000 sq. feet of exhibits. The Journey of Lincoln's life through his Presidency will be depicted with no expenses spared. The SBC Holavision Theatre, which will mix special effects and live actors, will be something you will not want to miss!

The last stop of the day would be Lincoln's Depot, where the newly elected President departed his beloved Springfield for an uncertain future in Washington, DC.

Should you like to stay overnight in the city this evening, we will be able to recommend excellent local cuisine for your dining pleasure as well as offer excellent accommodations and evening entertainment.