



National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Trust Tours

CHARLESTON: An Insider's View

with John Meffert

March 16–20, 2025



Reflecting Pond at Drayton Hall / Pinktoad



Lantern Gate (Nick Amoscato)

Charleston: An Insider's View March 16–20, 2025

With its unique antebellum architecture and painstakingly preserved Colonial-era urban core, Charleston is perhaps the most graceful of America's historic cities. Peeking through the city's countless wrought-iron gates, views of jasmine-covered walls, ornate architectural detailing, and elegant gardens add to the city's Colonial charm. Charleston's many-layered, multicultural population, preserved homes, and historical monuments also speak eloquently, and sometimes painfully, of our nation's history. See Charleston through the eyes of John Meffert, a longtime preservation expert whose insights and camaraderie have captivated countless National Trust travelers.

Study Leader

John Meffert

Historian John Meffert is a longtime proponent of preservation. As former director of the National Trust's Southern Office, he now serves as a consultant on heritage conservation services in his hometown of Charleston, where he has also served as director of the Preservation Society of Charleston, preserving the city's historic resources.



Edmondston-Alston House (Spencer Means)

Charleston Highlights

Go behind the scenes to see special collections at Middleton Place.

Enjoy exclusive access to two of Charleston's most delightful gardens.



Middleton Place (Warren LeMay)

Sunday, March 16 Arrivals

Upon arrival in Charleston, transfer independently to the tranquil Fulton Lane Inn, a member of Historic Hotels of America and your home for the next four evenings. Late this afternoon, join architectural historian and longtime Charleston resident John Meffert for an opening lecture and overview of the days to follow. Following his talk, join a guided stroll past several hidden architectural gems taking in the historic charm of South Carolina's cultural jewel. Then toast your arrival in Charleston at a welcome dinner. (D)

Monday, March 17 Charleston's Historic Homes

Depart for a full day of touring the best historic homes in Charleston. Following a short walk along Charleston's Battery, enjoy an in-depth tour of the stately Edmondston-Alston House, one of the city's most splendid

dwellings and a classic example of Charleston's changing and sophisticated taste in architecture and decorative arts. The house, which was built in the late Federal style and later updated with Greek Revival elements is a repository of family treasures, including Alston family silver, furniture, books, and paintings that remain in place where they have been for more than a century. Next, visit the Heyward-Washington House. This brick Georgian-style double house was built in 1772 and houses a magnificent collection of Charleston-made furniture including the priceless Holmes-Edwards bookcase, dating from 1770 to 1775. Following lunch at a popular local restaurant, enjoy a guided tour of the Gibbes Museum of Art, home to early American paintings by such renowned American artists as Benjamin West and Thomas Hart Benton, along with contemporary American art and a special exhibition featuring landscapes of

the Hudson River School. Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. (B, L)

Tuesday, March 18 Drayton Hall & Middleton Place

This morning, drive to Drayton Hall, a National Trust Historic Site and plantation home that survived the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the earthquake of 1886. The main house, in its near-original condition, is considered one of the finest examples of Georgian-Palladian architecture in the United States, and the grounds represent one of the most significant, undisturbed historic landscapes in America. Continue to Middleton Place. After a stroll through the spectacular gardens, go behind the scenes for a closer look at Middleton family collections during a tour of the historic house. Relax over a lunch featuring classic local dishes like fried chicken, country biscuits, okra gumbo,

collard greens, and pecan pie. Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. (B, L)

Wednesday, March 19 **Private Gardens in Charleston**

At the Nathaniel Russell House, enjoy a guided tour of the property and its decorative arts collection. Set amid spacious formal gardens, the Nathaniel Russell House is a National Historic Landmark recognized as one of America's most important neoclassical dwellings. The graceful interior—restored to its 1808 grandeur with elaborate plaster ornamentation and a grand spiral staircase—is

among the most exuberant homes ever created in early America. Today, be special guests at two magnificent, historic Charleston gardens opened exclusively for the National Trust. After free time for lunch and independent exploration of the city, rejoin your fellow travelers this evening to bid farewell to Charleston during a memorable dinner in an exceptional local restaurant. (B, D)

Thursday, March 20 **Departures**

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer independently to the airport for return flights home. (B)

Accommodations at Fulton Lane Inn

Fulton Lane Inn is a peaceful and tranquil retreat situated in the heart of Charleston's famous historic district, an unbeatable location for guests who want to explore the exciting city of Charleston. The inn with its historic architecture features the natural beauty, warm hospitality, and cozy comforts of the Lowcountry, all just steps from the energy and excitement of King Street. Many of the city's best monuments are located within minutes of the hotel's front door. The uniquely appointed spacious guestrooms feature picturesque furnishings and thoughtful amenities. Complimentary wine and cheese are available nightly in the lobby.



Entry Gate Planter, Charleston (Spencer Means)



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Dates: March 16–20, 2025

Tour Cost:

Land Package\$3,695

Single Supplement.....\$695

**Tour price is per person based on double occupancy, with a minimum of 15 paying participants.*

Activity Level: Moderate, good overall mobility required.

Deposit & Final Payment: A deposit of \$1,000 per registrant is required to reserve space on the tour, of which \$500 is non-refundable for ISDI's registration and planning fee unless the tour is cancelled due to low enrollment. This deposit may be paid by check or by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. Final balance will be invoiced and is due on December 5, 2024 and must be paid by check to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations are accepted after this date on a space-available basis with payment in full by check only.

Flights: Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for all aspects of their round-trip air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until operation of the tour is confirmed by ISDI.

Tour Inclusions: 4 nights at the three-star Fulton Lane Inn; breakfast daily, 2 lunches, 2 dinners, 2 glasses of wine at dinners; access to beautiful private gardens; academic leadership of John Meffert; services of an ISDI tour director; land transportation by private coach; gratuities to local guides and drivers, entrance fees to sites per itinerary; taxes and services; bottled water daily on coach.

Tour Exclusions: Airfare, airline taxes, and fuel surcharges; airport and hotel portage; airport transfers upon arrival and departure; excursions, activities, or meals during traveler's free time; personal items; personal services; travel extensions; personal insurance for health, baggage, and tour cancellation; passport fees; visa fees; gratuities for hotel housekeeping staff.

Terms and Conditions: Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

Cancellations & Refunds: Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to ISDI and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by ISDI. There is a non-refundable registration and planning fee of \$500 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by ISDI on or before December 5, 2024: full refund minus \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between December 6, 2024 and January 30, 2025: full refund minus \$1,850 per person cancellation fee (includes registration and planning fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after January 31, 2025: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by ISDI or National Trust Tours due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

Travel Insurance: Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be sent upon tour registration. For additional information, please contact National Trust Tours at 888-484-8785.

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For more information, visit nationaltrusttours.com

Travel with National Trust Tours is open to members of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), a privately-funded non-profit organization, works to save America's historic places. Membership is \$20 for individuals and \$30 for families. To learn more about the NTHP, visit www.savingplaces.org.