



National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Trust Tours

Discovering Crystal Bridges

A World-Class Oasis of
Art & Architecture in Arkansas

with historian John Meffert

November 7–11, 2027



DISCOVERING CRYSTAL BRIDGES

With the unveiling of the spectacular Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in 2011, Arkansas suddenly hit the map for culture lovers around the United States. Its excellent art collection built by Walmart heiress Alice Walton and its dynamic architecture by Moshe Safdie immediately made it one of the most important museums opened in America in the last 50 years. The museum continues to expand and diversify, including its exciting “Momentary” center for contemporary art that opened in 2020. Beyond Crystal Bridges’ Bentonville campus, Arkansas has a beautiful cultural scene well worth exploring, from emerging young artists to soaring glass-enclosed chapels. This one-of-a-kind tour introduces travelers to artistic and architectural masterpieces spread throughout Northwest Arkansas. Tour museums with experts, learn about ongoing preservation projects, and enjoy fine dining in a variety of restaurants.



*Fiori Boat (detail), 2016, Dale Chihuly
Crystal Bridges (Alfredo Carrillo)*

Travel with John Meffert

A longtime proponent of preservation and the former director of the National Trust’s Southern Office, John Meffert now serves as a consultant on heritage conservation services in his hometown of Charleston, S.C. He has also served as director of the Preservation Society of Charleston, preserving the city’s historic resources.



*Mildred B. Cooper Memorial Chapel,
Bella Vista, Arkansas (Mike Mahaffey)*



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (Mike Haupt)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Welcome to Bentonville

Arrive independently to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport (XNA) and take a taxi to the five-star Compton in Bentonville. Check into the hotel and get settled into your room. Enjoy a 5:00 pm lecture by study leader John Meffert. Following a short orientation walking tour, enjoy a lovely welcome dinner together. (D)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

Today is dedicated to the art haven that is the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Walk along the Art Trail to Crystal Bridges, the brainchild of Alice Walton, daughter of the founder of

Walmart, and designed by renowned architect Moshe Safdie. The impressive collection includes works by great American artists. Begin with a guided tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman Wilson House, which is emblematic of the Usonian style followed by an architectural tour of the museum itself, which incorporates the beauty of its surrounding natural elements. Break for lunch at Eleven, the on-site restaurant at Crystal Bridges. Next delve into collection highlights of the American Art galleries during a self-guided tour and free time to further explore the museum's collections and to see Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Mirror* room. Return to the hotel in the mid-afternoon or linger at the museum longer to continue your personal exploration of its vast collection and

extensive sculpture trail and to experience James Turrell's *The Way of Color* skyspace installation at sunset. Enjoy an independent dinner. (B,L)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Eureka Springs & Thorncrown Chapel

Drive an hour to the nearby town of Eureka Springs, a Victorian-era spa resort town that still preserves dozens of fine buildings from the 1870s through the 1930s. Stop at Thorncrown Chapel, a beautiful, soaring chapel designed by E. Fay Jones. Then enjoy a special narrated tram tour that will focus on the town's most important architectural jewels. Following lunch together, return to Bentonville. Return to the hotel for an afternoon at leisure or join an excursion

to Crystal Bridges' newest museum, The Momentary, an old cheese factory turned contemporary art and cultural space. Enjoy free time to see the contemporary exhibitions and then gather for a drink at The Momentary's Tower Bar. Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. *(B,L)*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

A Day in Fayetteville

Drive approximately 45 minutes south of Bentonville to Fayetteville to the E. Fay and Gus Jones house, the former residence of renowned architect Fay Jones. Completed in 1956, it was designed by Jones upon his return to Fayetteville after working in the office of Frank Lloyd Wright. Drive through the impressive campus of the University of Arkansas.

After feasting on local barbecue, visit the Mildred B. Cooper Memorial Chapel, a beautiful chapel designed by Jones and Maurice Jennings and commissioned by John Cooper to commemorate his late wife. It makes for a fascinating comparison with Jones' more monumental Thorncrown Chapel seen the day before. Enjoy a refreshment hosted by the owners of a lovely Bella Vista home. After a break at the hotel, be treated to a memorable farewell dinner at one of Bentonville's best gourmet restaurants. *(B,L,D)*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Departures

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and take an independent taxi to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport (XNA). *(B)*

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Compton Bentonville

Opened in December 2025, The Compton Bentonville is the city's newest upscale hotel, a breathtaking sanctuary ideally located in the downtown historic center, just a scenic stroll or five-minute drive from the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art. The architectural style masterfully blends modern luxury with regional naturalism, reflecting the rugged beauty of Northwest Arkansas. Its defining feature is a soaring, two-story skylit atrium centered on a sculptural limestone bluff wall and a flowing water feature, designed to mirror the iconic cliffs of the Buffalo National River.



Sunburst shining through the holes in Buckmaster Fuller's Geodesic creation at Crystal Bridges (Mike Haupt)



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Tour Cost:

Land Package \$3,895

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 nonrefundable for ISDI's registration and planning fee unless the tour is cancelled due to low enrollment. This deposit may be paid by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or check. Final balance will be invoiced and is due on July 1, 2027 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 their own air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed by ISDI.

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.

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.

Tour Inclusions: 4 nights at the Compton Bentonville; breakfast daily, 3 lunches, 2 dinners, 2 glasses of wine or beer at included dinners; land transportation by private motor coach on November 9 and 10; entrance fees to sites and visits listed in the itinerary; services of an ISDI Tour Manager; expert local on-site guides; gratuities for local guides and drivers and at included meals; bottled water on coach; service charges and taxes.

Tour Exclusions: Airline tickets, airline taxes and surcharges, and baggage fees; airport portage; airport transfers; meals other than those specified in the itinerary; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, valet service, à-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, laundry charges, travel extensions, or tour deviations; travel insurance; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

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 July 1, 2027: full refund minus \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between July 2, 2027 and September 22, 2027: full refund minus \$1,950 per person cancellation fee (includes registration and planning fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after September 23, 2027: 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.

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Visit

<https://nationaltrusttours.com>

TO REGISTER BY PHONE:

Call National Trust Tours at

888.484.8785

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info@nationaltrusttours.com