



National Trust for Historic Preservation

National Trust Tours

# A MISSISSIPPI RIVER VOYAGE

Aboard the *American Splendor* Paddle-Wheeler

**MARCH 3-11, 2026**

Featuring **JOHN MEFFERT** and a keynote address  
by Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning Author  
**DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN**





Cypress Bayou,  
Louisiana

## DEAR NATIONAL TRUST TRAVELER,

Join us for a cruise down the mighty Mississippi River from Memphis to New Orleans aboard the 185-berth *American Splendor*. Built in 2016 in the classic paddle-wheeler style, *American Splendor* offers modern amenities alongside 19th-century riverboat opulence and features stylish cabins, fine cuisine, and lively performances by onboard musicians.

Begin in Memphis, Tennessee, home to Elvis' Graceland, and uncover its diverse heritage while strolling iconic Beale Street or exploring notable sites such as the Stax Museum of American Soul Music or the National Civil Rights Museum. Embark *American Splendor* and cruise downriver visiting sugar plantations, Creole cottages, and lush landscapes of Bayou country. In Cleveland, Mississippi, choose to visit the Grammy Museum, take a guided tour of the Mississippi Blues Trail, or venture to Mound Bayou, an all-Black community considered an oasis during the turbulent beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement. See where the Battle of Vicksburg raged for 47-days before Union forces secured control of the Mississippi River. Continue to Natchez and discover how its architectural grandeur reflects the prosperous Steamboat Era of the early 1800s. Downriver in St. Francisville and Vacherie, Louisiana, investigate magnificent mansions and historic plantations, including Oak Alley and Creole Laura Plantation. The journey concludes in New Orleans in the architecturally distinct French Quarter. On optional tours, admire the gorgeous homes and landscapes of the Garden District and visit the renowned National World War II Museum.

An incredibly rich educational program makes this Mississippi River cruise an experience like no other. Begin with a keynote address in Memphis by Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, **Doris Kearns Goodwin**, and throughout the voyage, enjoy panel discussions and opportunities for direct engagement with an outstanding lineup of lecturers including historian and study leader **John Meffert**. This unique journey along one of North America's great waterways is expected to sell out, so we encourage you to reserve your space today!

Sincerely,

Meg Annacone-Poretz

Director, National Trust Tours

The **NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION** is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to saving historic places and revitalizing America's communities. For more information, visit the Trust's website at [www.savingplaces.org](http://www.savingplaces.org) or phone (800) 944-6847 or (202) 588-6000.

## Highlights

- Begin the program with an exclusive keynote address by **DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN**, esteemed Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author.
- Cruise down the Mississippi River from Memphis to New Orleans in the **CLASSIC PADDLEWHEELER RIVERBOAT**, *American Splendor*.
- Visit **HISTORIC VICKSBURG** where the North gained control of the Mississippi River after 47-day battle during the Civil War.
- Choose between **A VARIETY OF EXCURSION OPTIONS** along the way, including the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the Grammy Museum in Cleveland, and the Garden District of New Orleans.
- Tour **OPULENT MANSIONS AND FORMER PLANTATIONS** downriver in St. Francisville and Vacherie, Louisiana.
- Delight in an **ENRICHING AND ENGAGING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** throughout the cruise and discover how the Mississippi River has shaped U.S. history, from the Civil War to the birth of Blues and Rock 'n' Roll.



# STUDY LEADERS



**JOHN MEFFERT**, consultant on Heritage Conservation Services, has a long tradition with the National Trust. He has served as the Director for our Southern Office and was the director of the Preservation Society of Charleston, the oldest nonprofit organization in the United States, responsible for preserving the historic resources of Charleston, S.C. John has delighted many study tour groups with his lectures and insights on preservation, and receives rave reviews as study leader.

## Special Guest Lecturer



**DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN** is a world-renowned presidential historian, public speaker, Pulitzer Prize-winning and #1 New York Times best-selling author, and a partner in Pastimes Productions. Goodwin is often called upon by the news media, late-night TV hosts, and hundreds of companies, educational institutions, government agencies, and nonprofits to share her vast knowledge of leadership and provide historical context for current-day events.

Her eighth book, *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s*, was published in Spring 2024 and became an instant #1 New York Times bestseller. Artfully weaving together biography, memoir, and history, this new book takes readers on the emotional journey Doris and her husband, Richard (Dick) Goodwin, embarked upon in the last years of his life as they delved into more than 300 boxes of letters, diaries, documents, and memorabilia that Dick had saved for more than fifty years. The Goodwins quickly realized they had before them an unparalleled personal time capsule of the 1960s — the events and pivotal figures of the decade: John Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Kennedy, Eugene McCarthy, and especially Lyndon Johnson, who greatly impacted both their lives.

Goodwin previously authored six critically acclaimed and New York Times bestselling books, including the Carnegie Medal-winner, *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism* and *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. *Team of Rivals* is often cited as an inspiration for business and political leaders, including President Barack Obama, and was awarded the prestigious Lincoln Prize, the inaugural Book Prize for American History, and Goodwin in 2016 was the first historian to receive the Lincoln Leadership Prize from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation. Goodwin was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in History for *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt*.

Doris Kearns Goodwin has served as a consultant and has been interviewed extensively for PBS and the HISTORY Channel's documentaries on Presidents Johnson, both Roosevelts and Lincoln, the Kennedy family, and for Ken Burns' "The History of Baseball" and "The Roosevelts." Goodwin has received numerous awards for her books and career, including the inaugural American History Book Prize from the New-York Historical Society, the Gold Medal for biography from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and most recently the Washington Irving Medal for Literary Excellence from the Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York for *An Unfinished Love Story*. Goodwin graduated magna cum laude from Colby College and was invited to deliver the commencement address there in 2024. She earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Government from Harvard University, where she taught Government, including a course on the American Presidency.



Beale Street, Memphis



Vicksburg

## ITINERARY

### TUESDAY, MARCH 3

#### Home/Memphis, Tennessee

Depart home and arrive in Memphis independently and check into the Guest House at Graceland. Just steps away from Elvis' Graceland, this property reflects Elvis' iconic style combined with the Southern charm of Memphis. This evening, meet fellow travelers at a festive welcome reception and dinner, featuring a keynote address by eminent Pulitzer-winning historian Doris Kearns Goodwin.

*The Guest House at Graceland*  
(R,D)

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

#### Memphis, Tennessee

Following an opening lecture, spend the morning exploring Memphis' diverse heritage. Choose between three optional tours: **1)** Stroll down Beale Street, the home of the blues and the birthplace of rock 'n' roll; **2)** Visit the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, which has preserved a multitude of soul music artifacts within vibrant and interactive exhibits; or **3)** Tour the National Civil

Rights Museum, a moving and historically significant museum built on the site of the former Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. In the afternoon, board the *American Splendor* and begin the journey down the mighty Mississippi River.

*American Splendor*  
(B,L,D)

### THURSDAY, MARCH 5

#### Cleveland, Mississippi

Today the *American Splendor* arrives in Cleveland, Mississippi. Choose between a visit to the Grammy Museum, a guided tour along the Mississippi Blues Trail, or an excursion to the nearby town of Mound Bayou, an all-Black community known as an oasis during the turbulent beginnings of the Civil Rights movement. *American Splendor*  
(B,L,D)

### FRIDAY, MARCH 6

#### Vicksburg, Mississippi

During the Civil War, Vicksburg served as a key to Union victory as General Grant's successful 47-day siege in the summer of 1863 brought control of the Mississippi River. Today visit the National Military Park, considered the best-preserved battlefield in the United States; the iron-clad gunboat Cairo; and the Lower Mississippi River Museum, with exhibits depicting life in historical Vicksburg and an aquarium featuring local fish species. Later, explore Vicksburg's historic downtown area independently.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)







Stanton Hall,  
Natchez



Slave Cabin,  
Laura Plantation, Vacherie



New Orleans

## SATURDAY, MARCH 7

### **Natchez, Mississippi**

Having suffered little destruction during the Civil War, Natchez is home to the largest concentrations of restored pre-Civil War properties in the United States. Today visit your choice of three of these historic homes: Longwood, with its unique octagonal design; Rosalie, which served as Union headquarters during the Civil War; and Stanton Hall, constructed in 1851 and regarded today as one of the most opulent historic mansions in the country. There will also be an opportunity for free time in central Natchez with an optional lunch ashore. *American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## SUNDAY, MARCH 8

### **St. Francisville, Louisiana**

Today visit the once-thriving cotton port of St. Francisville to learn about the town's rich legacy. In the Historic District, take optional excursions to magnificent mansions and plantation homes including a walking tour of historic St. Francisville; Rosedown Estate and Garden, one of the few privately maintained formal gardens of the 19th century;

Myrtles Plantation, reputed to be one of the most haunted homes in America; the Oakley Plantation, the home of John James Audubon; and Port Hudson Historic Site, where you will learn about the culminating battle and Campaign to open the Mississippi River.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## MONDAY, MARCH 9

### **Vacherie, Louisiana**

Disembark on the west bank of the Mississippi River to explore historic Oak Alley, a grand Greek Revival plantation home famous for its namesake double row of 18th-century canopy oak trees lining the approaching path. Nearby Laura Plantation, a restored Creole plantation, is a fascinating contrast to Oak Alley, illuminating the personal stories and culture of its inhabitants and boasting twelve buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, including slave quarters. For those that feel adventurous, embark on a swamp tour through the ecologically rich Louisiana Bayou and navigate through cypress and pine for an up-close look at waterfowl and

other Bayou creatures. Arrive late this evening in New Orleans, where *American Splendor* will remain docked for the next two nights.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## TUESDAY, MARCH 10

### **New Orleans, Louisiana**

Spend the day exploring New Orleans with optional tours of the extravagantly styled and landscaped Garden District and the highly acclaimed National World War II Museum. Here immersive galleries tell the story of American courage and sacrifice in the war that changed the world. *American Splendor* will remain docked overnight, allowing for time to enjoy all that New Orleans has to offer.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

### **New Orleans, Louisiana/ Home**

After breakfast disembark and transfer to the airport for afternoon flights home.



Lounge

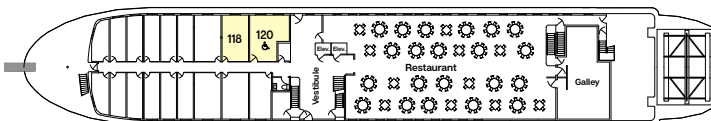
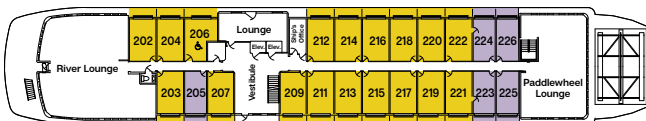
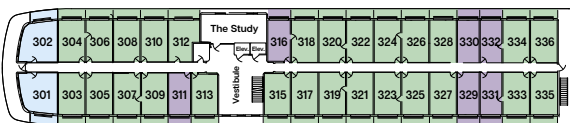


Stateroom

# AMERICAN SPLENDOR

*American Splendor* allows guests to experience the nostalgia of classic paddle-wheeler travel while enjoying modern comfort and amenities. Recently renovated, *American Splendor* features serene color palettes, luxurious textiles and linens, new furniture and carpets, and updated artwork and flourishes. From the staterooms and suites to the lounges and dining rooms, the new décor pays homage to the legendary Mississippi River. On board, guests can relax in a casual ambiance while admiring panoramic views of the passing scenery. Each spacious stateroom is outward facing, allowing commanding views of the riverside landscape, and includes all of the amenities you expect from a fine hotel. These staterooms also offer a sitting area, desk, and full-size bathrooms, and most feature floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors with a private balcony. With only 180 passengers, fellow travelers will quickly become new friends.

PROGRAM FEES (per person):	DOUBLE	SINGLE
<b>A STANDARD STATEROOM</b> Deck 1; window; 290 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$8,990	--
<b>B PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 2, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$9,790	\$10,990
<b>C PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 3, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$10,590	\$13,790
<b>D PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 4, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$11,390	--
<b>E PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 5, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$12,190	--
<b>F OWNER'S SUITE</b> Decks 3,4,5; Private balcony; 375 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$13,690	--
<b>S PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Decks 2,3,4; 185 sq. ft.	--	\$10,290



## General Information

### PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE

All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary ■ Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures and presentations ■ Keynote address by Doris Kearns Goodwin in Memphis ■ Departure group transfer from the ship to the airport in New Orleans ■ Baggage handling ■ Gratuities to porters, waitstaff, guides and drivers ■ Gratuities to shipboard personnel ■ Port charges ■ Entrance fees ■ Welcome reception and dinner including all drinks ■ Daily cocktail hour and nightly entertainment while on board *American Splendor* ■ Filtered water on motorcoaches ■ Professional tour managers throughout the program

### WHAT TO EXPECT

We consider this to be a moderately active program, with considerable walking at some destinations. Daily activities can involve up to two miles of walking, unaided, over varied terrain (e.g., uneven walkways, steep and sandy trails, dirt streets and paths in some locations). Participants must be physically fit, in good health, and capable of undertaking this level of activity without assistance from tour staff. In March, the weather is generally mild and comfortable, with high temperatures usually in the mid-70s, and rain is always a possibility.

### GROUP SIZE

This program can accommodate 160 participants and is co-sponsored with other organizations.

### AIR ARRANGEMENTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., can help with airline arrangements for this trip and can be reached at 877-376-1754. You are also welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants.

### PROGRAM RATES DO NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic airfare ■ Medical expenses and immunizations ■ Arrival airport transfers ■ Departure airport transfer outside of group departure date ■ Travel and trip cancellation insurance ■ Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options ■ Airline baggage charges ■ Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; liquor or soft drinks except as noted ■ Laundry or dry cleaning ■ Telephone and internet charges ■ Room service ■ Other items of a personal nature

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

National Trust Tours strongly recommends the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is

available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to covered illness or accident. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement. USI Travel Insurance Services offers a plan designed specifically for National Trust Tours travelers, providing coverage for Trip Cancellation, Trip Interruption, Emergency Medical, and more. Plus, you can upgrade your plan with Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR) coverage for the utmost flexibility. CFAR allows you to cancel your trip for ANY reason at all and be reimbursed up to 75% of your pre-paid, non-refundable trip costs (conditions apply, see plan for details). To purchase travel insurance today, call: (800) 937-1387. For additional information, please contact National Trust Tours at (888) 484-8785. Complete Terms and Conditions including a Statement of Responsibility will be made available at time of registration, or in advance upon request. A signed "Terms & Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause" is required from each applicant prior to participation on the tour.

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RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve space on this program. If you have questions, or to register using a credit card, please call (888) 484-8785 or email [info@nationaltrusttours.com](mailto:info@nationaltrusttours.com). Final payment deadline is **November 3, 2025**. For those who register on or after November 3, 2025, full payment is due upon registration. **Final payment may be made by check, wire transfer or credit card (credit card payments will incur a processing fee of 2%).**

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Upon payment of the \$1,000 per person deposit, all reservations are subject to the cancellation provisions set forth below and by which the passenger agrees to be bound. Cancellations shall

not be in effect until they are received in writing and confirmed by Criterion Travel. Deposits are refundable (less a \$250 per person admin fee) if written notice of cancellation is received within 30 days of booking; after that, deposits are 100% nonrefundable. For cancellations after the November 3, 2025 final payment deadline: All payments are 100% nonrefundable, regardless of booking date. Trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. **NOTE:** Neither the National Trust for Historic Preservation nor Criterion Travel, the tour operator, accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalties incurred with the purchase of non-refundable tickets.

ITINERARY CHANGES

The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Criterion Travel. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the tour operator reserve the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant.

ELIGIBILITY

National Trust for Historic Preservation tours are open to members only. Membership dues for 2025/2026 are \$30 for family and \$20 for individual membership. The minimum age limit for the program is 14. Children must pay the full price, and those under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no maximum age limit. **PLEASE NOTE:** Participants must be in excellent health and able to participate in tour activities. Any physical condition that may require special medical attention must be reported at the time of your reservation. If you have any doubt about your ability to participate fully due to health conditions or disabilities, contact the National Trust at (888) 484-8785 or (202) 588-6300. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Criterion Travel reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of this tour at any time. In such case, the refund will be limited to the recoverable cost of unused tour services.

California Seller of Travel  
Program CST #2088800-40

A MISSISSIPPI RIVER VOYAGE  
MARCH 3-11, 2026

Reservation Form

For more information or to register by phone (preferred method of registration), please call National Trust Tours at **(888) 484-8785**.

NAME #1 (as it appears on passport) DATE OF BIRTH

NAME #2 (as it appears on passport) DATE OF BIRTH

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

EMAIL #1

EMAIL #2

Are you traveling with any other parties on this program? ☐ Yes, \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT INFORMATION

- ☐ Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person, payable to Criterion Travel) for \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on **A MISSISSIPPI RIVER VOYAGE**.  
☐ Please charge my deposit of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person) to my (*circle one*): VISA/MC/AMEX

NAME ON CREDIT CARD

CARD # EXP. DATE / CVV SECURITY CODE

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE DATE

ACCOMMODATIONS (not guaranteed)

Cabin category preference: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_  
Bed Preference: ☐ One bed ☐ Two beds

SINGLE TRAVELERS (choose one)

- ☐ I prefer single accommodations (*limited availability*)  
☐ I plan to share accommodations with:

☐ I'd like to know about roommates. *I understand that if a roommate cannot be found by the final payment deadline of November 3, 2025, I will pay the single rate.*

*I/We have read the tour information section of the brochure and agree to the Terms and Conditions stated therein.*

SIGNATURE #1 DATE

SIGNATURE #2 DATE





National Trust for Historic Preservation

## National Trust Tours

105 Loudoun Street, SW, Unit 1, Leesburg, Virginia 20175

[www.nationaltrusttours.com](http://www.nationaltrusttours.com)

(888) 484-8785 or (202) 588-6300

[info@nationaltrusttours.com](mailto:info@nationaltrusttours.com)

Find us on  National Trust Tours

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