

AMERICA'S DEEP SOUTH

Sights & Sounds of Nashville, Memphis, New Orleans & Houston



America's Civil Rights Movement, music heritage and space exploration all came to a head in the explosive and exuberant atmosphere of the nineteen sixties. Our unique Deep South Tour encompasses the highlights and tragic lows of this astonishing era through the country music of Nashville, the rock'n'roll and jazz of Memphis and the rhythmic blues of New Orleans before concluding at the N.A.S.A Space Centre in Houston – the original mission control from those iconic days.

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to America. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

DAY 1: UK to Atlanta

Your journey starts with a flight from London's Heathrow on the scheduled services of British Airways directly to Atlanta where our coach and tour director will be waiting to transfer you to your city hotel.

DAY 2: Atlanta to Nashville B/D

This morning, after breakfast, begin your day with a brief city tour of Atlanta and then head off to Nashville. Stop along the way at the historic Lookout Mountain with its fabulous views across terrain fought over during the America Civil War then later on visit the Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg where the eponymous whisky has been made since 1884. Interestingly Lynchburg, with its red

brick courthouse and quaint general store has just one traffic light and is a dry county! After a break for lunch continue on through Tennessee to 'Music City USA' Nashville, a town set amidst rolling farmland known worldwide as the home of country music. In the evening join your fellow travellers for a welcome dinner.

DAY 3: Nashville B

For music listeners, your tour begins here with a visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame, a huge museum of all things Country and Western with films, videos, costumes and home to Elvis Presley's solid gold Cadillac. Next continue to the Johnny Cash Museum to admire never-before-seen historical documents, awards and costumes. Your group will also have the chance to visit one of Nashville's famous honky-tonks playing live country music as well as the Ryman Auditorium and the impressive Parthenon – the only full scale replica of the Greek Parthenon giving reason for its nickname 'Athens of the South'. Whilst in Nashville you have the option of attending a country music concert at the famous 'Grand Ole Opry' at an additional cost.

DAY 4: Nashville to Memphis B/D

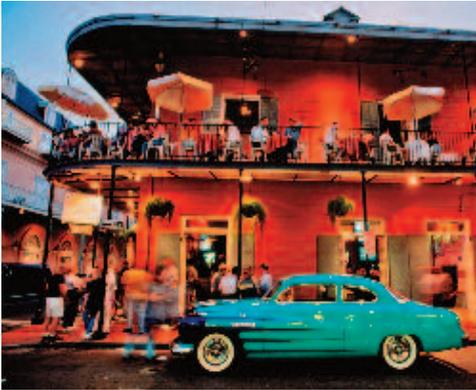
Following breakfast begin the day with a visit to Studio B, Nashville's oldest surviving recording studio regularly used by stars such as Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison, Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and The Everley Brothers to name just a few. The tour will then head for Memphis, yet another highlight of this Southern Musical Medley tour. On arrival in Memphis you will take a trip to the National Civil Rights Museum built on the spot where Martin Luther King was assassinated in 1968. Telling the story of the black fight for freedom from slavery through to the Civil Rights Movement of the early fifties and sixties, prepare yourself for an emotional and unforgettable experience. This evening, after checking into your hotel we've arranged dinner at BB Kings Blues Bar for a great night of Southern food, musical sounds and hospitality amongst the lively atmosphere of Beale Street.

DAY 5: Memphis B

Today features another first for the music lover – a visit to Graceland the home of Elvis, one of the most iconic houses in America and final resting place of The King. Enjoy an audio tour through the decadent and quirky rooms including the 'jungle den' where he used to watch football games and Kung-fu movies.

AMERICA'S DEEP SOUTH

continued



Next watch the famous Peabody Ducks march to and from the Grand Lobby at the Peabody Memphis Hotel, a unique tradition dating back to 1933! Then we move onto Sun Studio where Elvis recorded his first hit and where you can still see Jerry Lee Lewis' piano. Admire architectural landmarks such as Court Square Fountain, the Lincoln American Tower and Calvary Episcopal Church whilst your guide entertains you with entertaining tales about this rowdy riverside town and its inhabitants. Tonight is at leisure for you to explore and experience the many bars, restaurants and music scene of Memphis.

DAY 6: Memphis to New Orleans B/D

Today the tour leaves Memphis and follows the path of the mighty Mississippi River and travels deep into the heart of the Mississippi Delta via Jackson before crossing the border into Louisiana. Driving across Lake Pontchartrain on the longest causeway in the world you will arrive in New Orleans, a melange of European style and Caribbean flavours and a city full of flamboyance, festivities and a whole lot of soul. We've arranged to take you to the New Orleans School of cooking this evening for an entertaining demonstration from one of their Creole/Cajun experts with dinner included and the chance to try a New Orleans speciality such as Gumbo, Jambalaya and Pralines.

DAY 7: New Orleans B

In the morning, after breakfast visit some of New Orleans highlights including the famous

French Quarter taking in Bourbon Street, the art galleries and antique shops of Royal Street and Jackson Square with its many artists, museums and fortune tellers.

The rest of the day and evening are for you to enjoy at your leisure, but make sure you live the New Orleans' motto "Laissez les bons temps rouler" – let the good times roll!

DAY 8: New Orleans B

Today is a free day for you to enjoy and relax in New Orleans in your own time. Stroll around the market in the French Quarter, stop for some lunch at one of the many oyster bars and restaurants, shop for antiques and trinkets or book yourself a tour through the Louisiana bayou aboard an airboat. This evening you can take your pick of the many excellent bars, eateries and music venues for where this laid back city, The Big Easy, is world renowned.

DAY 9: New Orleans to Houston B

This morning it's time to leave New Orleans and travel to Houston to catch your return flight back to the UK the next day. There will be a stop along the way in Lake Charles for an hour or so for you to stretch your legs and have some lunch. Arriving in Houston in the early hours of the evening there will be a short orientation tour before returning to the hotel.

DAY 10: Houston to the UK or Extension B

The final day includes a visit to Houston's Space Centre, home to N.A.S.A and the world's largest collection of moon rocks and lunar samples on public view. You'll also see Mission Control that

guided the first moon landings as well as original Saturn, Mercury and Apollo rockets that have been at the forefront of space exploration since the early sixties. (We suggest you visit www.spacecentre.org for a full flavour of this fascinating experience). Sadly, your southern tour of music, culture and history is at an end and it is time to depart for the airport to catch your return direct flight back to Heathrow with British Airways, or continue on to your chosen extension.



Your hotels

Atlanta (1 night): 3★ Holiday Inn Express & Suites - 111 Cone St NW, Atlanta, GA 30303, United States. Contact number: 001 404-524-7000

Nashville (2 nights): 3★ Gaylord Opryland - 2800 Opryland Dr, Nashville, TN 37214, United States. Contact number: 001 615-889-1000

Memphis (2 nights): 3★ Holiday Inn Memphis - 160 Union Ave, Memphis, TN 38103, United States. Contact number: 001 901-525-5491

New Orleans (3 nights): 3★ Royal St Charles Hotel - 135 St Charles Ave, New Orleans, LA 70130, United States. Contact number: 001 504-587-3700

Houston (1 night): 3★ Hampton Inn & Suites - 5820 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX, United States. Contact number: 001 713-869-9211

All accommodation is 3★ and features an en suite bathroom, air-conditioning/heating, TV and tea/coffee making facilities. Mercury Holidays has visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the high standards of service which we require for our clients. If the hotels detailed are not available, alternatives will be used of a similar standard. Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style & served in the hotel each morning. Lunches & most dinners are not included & will need to be budgeted for accordingly.

On your arrival

On your arrival in Atlanta you will be met by a representative from our local agent, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/Atlanta representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your national guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries. However, if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

Destination America

801 E. Katella Avenue
Anaheim
CA 92805
Contact number: 001 714-935-0040

Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for Destination America

Contact	Telephone number
Danielle Blanco	Office: 001 714-935-0040 (ext. 5151) Mobile: 001 714-552-3034

Visas and Passport advice - Important

You will need to obtain an ESTA visa. This must be applied for at least 7 days before you are due to land in the USA. Please advise if you would like us to arrange this for you. All UK passport holders **must have** a bio-metric epassport and your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date you are expected to arrive back in the UK. Important note: if you do not have a bio-metric epassport, you will be **refused entry** into the USA.

Insurance

You must obtain suitable travel insurance prior to departure. Mercury Holidays is partnered with Holiday Extras which offer insurance at the following prices:

Age in years	Up to 64	65-74	75-85
Up to 17 days cover	£51	£96	£166

Prices are for worldwide insurance, including the USA. For all persons 86 years and over, please contact us for insurance prices. If you have an existing policy with another company, please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour, you will be met on arrival in Atlanta and will be accompanied by a tour director throughout your stay ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

Tippling

Tippling is common practice in America. It is customary to tip your guides and driver, please allow approx. 8-11USD (£5-7) per person per day. All tips will be collected by your tour director on the last day. Tippling at restaurants, hotel staff etc is discretionary.

Health and Vaccinations

It is strongly recommended that you check the latest health recommendations for travel to the USA with your GP at least 4-6 weeks before travel. Any medicines you may need during your journey should be packed in your hand luggage. We suggest it is worth taking a few first aid supplies such as travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic cream, aspirin etc. Because these products can be more expensive abroad and familiar brands are not always available. It is not advisable to drink the tap water.

Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves full days of sightseeing, often on foot, and includes some climbing of stairs and getting on and off coaches. **This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.**

Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 20, and the maximum will be 45. In the unlikely event there are less than 20 people booked on your tour date then you may be asked to change to a different date. A full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.



Currency Exchange - IMPORTANT

The currency in America is the United States Dollar (USD). You will be able to change currency both before you travel and whilst you are away. You will also have access to ATMs during your tour where you can withdraw money in the local currency.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry and extra drinks and snacks. Approximately £500-£700 per person will be sufficient for the durations of the tour.

Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

What to Pack

- Sunscreen, insect repellent and hat
- Waterproof lightweight jacket
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- A plug adaptor - The official voltage for the USA is 120 and operates on a 2 pronged North American outlet.

Flight and Airport Information

Your flight is to Atlanta/from Houston with British Airways (BA), departing from London Heathrow Terminal 5.

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
London Heathrow - Atlanta	16:00	20:10	8 hours 55 minutes	BA227M
Houston - London Heathrow	16:05	07:25	9 hours 5 minutes	BA194M

IMPORTANT: Please note that all flight times/numbers are given for guidance and are subject to change. Final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Baggage Allowance

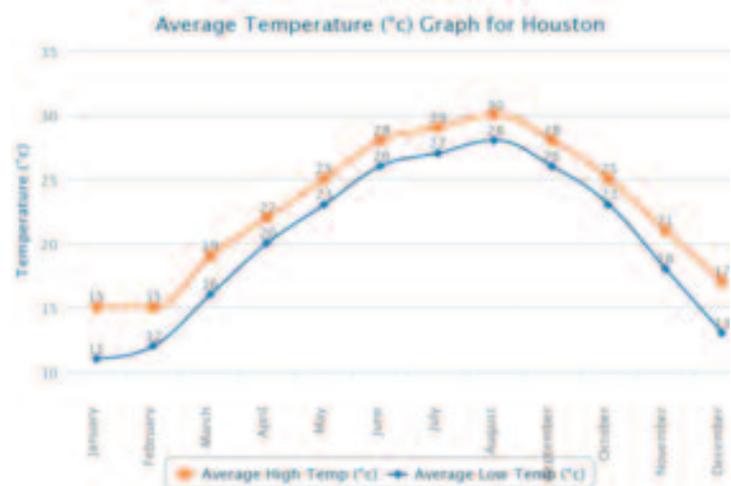
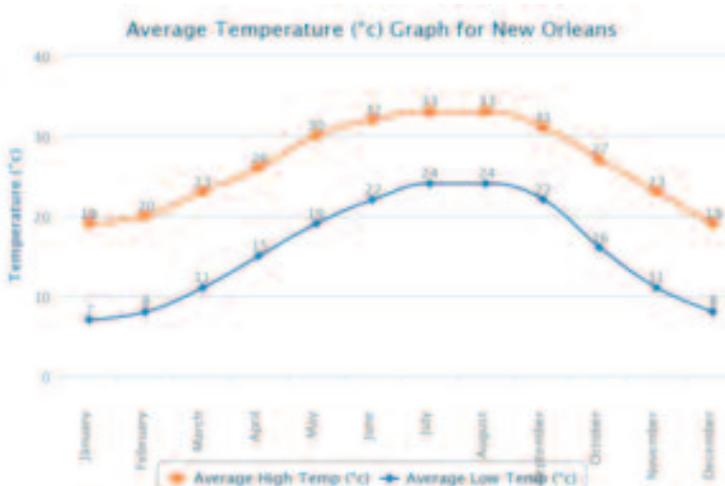
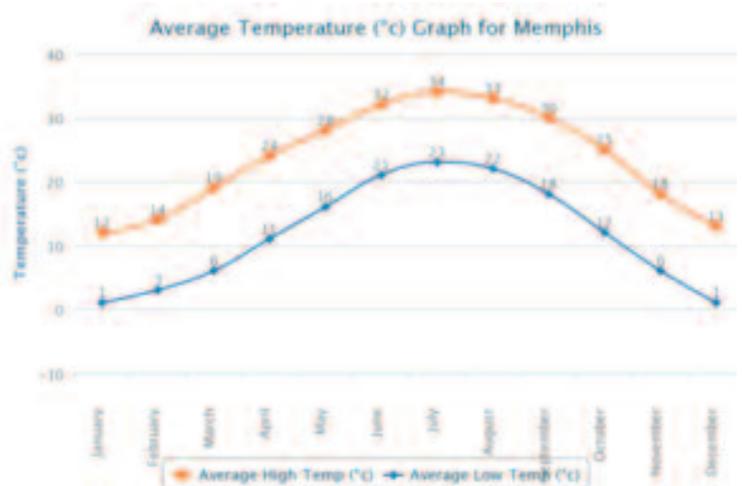
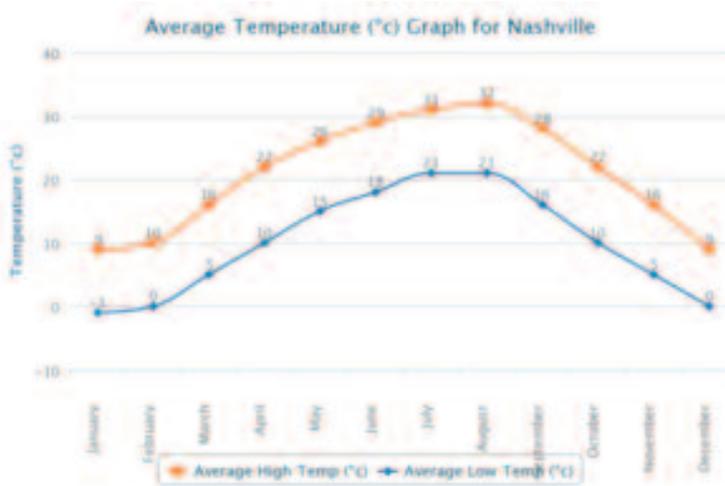
Baggage allowance (per person): Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage. There is also an allowance of one cabin bag not exceeding 56cm x 45 cm x 25 cm and one personal bag not exceeding 45 cm x 36 cm x 20 cm that you can take on the aircraft as hand luggage. Weight restrictions will be finalized on E-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-in should be at least 3 hours before departure.

Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras - Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

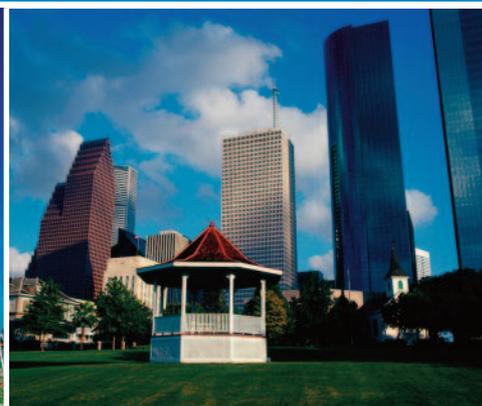
Weather and Climate

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



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Houston extension



As Texas' biggest city, Houston is home to some of the finest museums, performing arts and entertainment in the United States. Your 2 night extension in this sprawling city, gives opportunity to further experience the culture or treat yourself on a trip to one of the many shopping malls.

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Houston.

Houston (2 nights)

Houston is a sprawling, brash, friendly, prosperous and arguably Texas's most cosmopolitan city. There are over a staggering 8,000 restaurants to choose from in the city, representing a huge diversity of cuisine – so you certainly won't go hungry in Houston! Explore the history of NASA's manned space flight program to the cultural districts such as Chinatown and the Mahatma Gandhi District. Transformed by oil being discovered in 1901, its sheer energy and relentless Texas pride mean there are showpiece skyscrapers and swanky art galleries including The Menil Collection, a staggering grouping of ancient and modern artworks.

Hotel Information

Your stay will take place at one of the below hotels:

3★ Hampton Inn & Suites - on Bed & Breakfast.
Hotel information: 5820 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX, United States.

Contact number: 001 713-869-9211

Any alternative hotels or board basis will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure. Final confirmation of your hotel will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any lunches and dinners, as well as personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry and drinks.

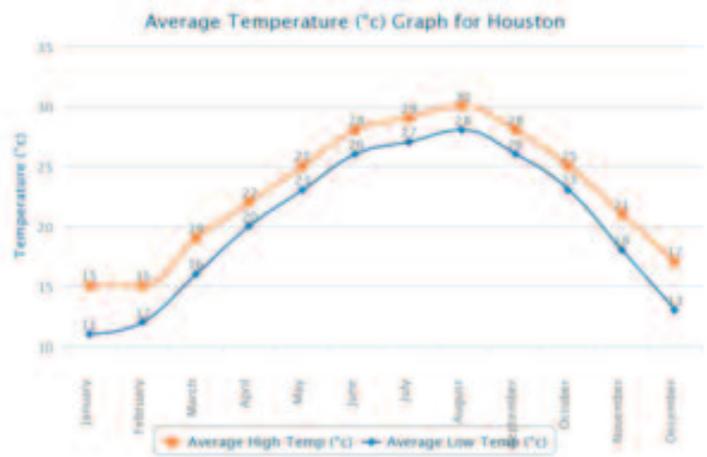
Tour Guides

Your stay in Houston is not escorted by a tour guide and your time will be free to explore the city at your own pace. Transfers are included.

Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.

Weather and Climate



3★ Hampton Inn & Suites

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on 0843 224 0723