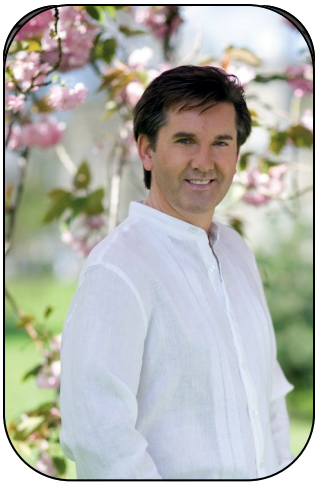
BRANSON

See 13 musical shows including Daniel O'Donnell

October 24, 2017 ~ 10 Days

WELLS GRAY TOURS

a world to experience



Fares Per Person:

$3645 double/twin
$4195 single
$3515 triple

> Tour is exempt from GST.
> **Early Bookers:** $200 discount on first 15 seats; $100 on next 10
> **Experience Points:** Earn 90 points from this tour.
Redeem **90 points** if you book by **August 22**.

Includes

- Coach transportation from Okanagan, Salmon Arm and Kamloops to Seattle airport and return
- Alaska Airlines non-stop flight from Seattle to Kansas City and return
- Air transportation taxes and security fees
- Coach transportation for 8 days in Missouri
- 9 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Fantastic Caverns underground tour by tram
- *Texas Tenors* show
- *John Denver Tribute* show
- *The Dutton Family* show
- *Presley's Country Jubilee* show
- Locally-guided sightseeing tour of Branson area with College of the Ozarks
- Lunch cruise and show on *Branson Belle*
- Titanic exhibit
- *George Dyer* show
- *#1 Hits of the Sixties* show
- *Puttin' on the Ritz* show
- *Down Home Country* show
- *Pierce Arrow* show
- *Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies* show
- *Daniel O'Donnell* show
- *Million Dollar Quartet* show
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **20 meals:** 8 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 6 lunches, 5 dinners

Kamloops > 250-374-0831
Kelowna > 250-762-3435
www.wellsgraytours.com

Penticton > 250-493-1255
Vernon > 250-545-9197
Toll Free > 800-667-9552

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Branson, Missouri

Branson had its modest beginning in 1882 when Reuben Branson opened a general store and post office in the area. The first tourist attraction opened in 1894 when William Lynch bought Marble Cave, renamed it Marvel Cave, and began charging for tours. Fame came to Branson in 1907 when Harold Bell Wright published his novel about the Ozarks, *The Shepherd of the Hills*. Hugo and Mary Herschend acquired Marvel Cave in 1950 then, ten years later, built Silver Dollar City, a re-creation of a frontier town which still operates today with rides and shows. The *Baldknobbers Jamboree* opened the first live musical show in Branson in 1959, but the first theatre on Highway 76 was *Presley's Mountain Music Jubilee* in 1967. Branson began its transformation into a major tourist attraction in 1983 when the Roy Clark Celebrity Theatre opened and began to bring famous country music stars to Branson. During the next ten years, performers such as Box Car Willie, Andy Williams, Shoji Tabuchi, and Glen Campbell built their own theatres. The television series *60 Minutes* aired an episode in 1991 which declared that Branson was the "music capital of the entire universe", much to Nashville's chagrin. Currently there are 40 theatres operating in Branson and it has more theatre seats than Broadway or Las Vegas. It has been named the #1 U.S. destination for groups for the past six years and entertains more than six million visitors annually, but has a year-round population of only 11,000. Branson's title today is the "live music show capital of the world."

Activity Level: Light activity including short distances to walk and some steps, mainly going to/from your theatre seats. There can be longer walks in Seattle and Kansas City airports; request a cart or wheelchair in advance if this could be an issue for you. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 1, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director and driver have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

A Quick Look at the Shows

Texas Tenors
John Denver Tribute
The Dutton Family
Presley's Country Jubilee
Showboat Branson Belle
George Dyer
#1 Hits of the Sixties
Puttin' on the Ritz
Down Home Country Show
Pierce Arrow
Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies
Daniel O'Donnell
Million Dollar Quartet

Itinerary

Tuesday, October 24: *Meals: L*
We travel via the Coquihalla Highway, cross the border at Sumas, and follow I-5 south to Seattle. We stay overnight in Renton at the Quality Inn.

Wednesday, October 25: *Meals: B*
Our flight on Alaska Airlines leaves Seattle in mid-morning and is non-stop to **Kansas City**, Missouri, arriving about 4 pm. We stay overnight at the Drury Inn near the airport.

Thursday, October 26: *Meals: B,L*
We journey south across Missouri with a stop at **Fantastic Caverns**. Discovered in 1862 by a farmer's dog, the cave is the only one in the USA that you can ride through on a tram. Near Springfield, we have lunch at Lambert's Café, famous for its generous portions (hope you are hungry). Then it is a short drive into the hills of the Ozarks to reach **Branson**. We stay six nights at the full-service **Radisson Hotel**, located just off Country Music Blvd. It has 10 floors, interior corridors, restaurant, lounge, indoor/outdoor pool, sauna, whirlpool, and fitness centre. Tonight, enjoy the first of our 13 wonderful shows in Branson — **The Texas Tenors** at Starlite Theatre. Since first stepping onto the stage of *America's Got Talent*, these three tenors have been wowing audiences around the world. Their unique blend of country, gospel, classical, and Broadway music keeps them in high demand with this memorable show full of music, humour, and cowboy charm.

Friday, October 27: *Meals: B,D*
Our morning show is **John Denver Tribute**, presented by Grammy-award winning musician James Garrett who delivers the songs and music of his late friend John Denver in this inspiring tribute to the country legend. Hear some of your favourite songs such as *Annie's Song, Back Home Again, Rocky Mountain High, and Country Road* as well as the stories behind the songs. Our matinee show is **The Dutton Family**. They are international touring and recording artists who play everything from bluegrass to classical in their shows, featuring a variety of instruments: violin, guitar, bass, viola, banjo, mandolin, harmonica, and drums. Dinner is included at the Grand Country Buffet. The evening show is **Presley's Country Jubilee**, two memorable hours of music and comedy with one of Branson's longest running shows, still popular after 50 years on the stage.

Saturday, October 28: *Meals: B,L,D*
This morning, a locally-guided tour visits highlights of Branson including **College of the Ozarks** which has a unique approach to education and is nicknamed "Hard Work U." Then we board **Showboat Branson Belle** for a lunch cruise on Table Rock Lake, featuring the live band, The Castaways. The world's only aerial violinist, Janice Martin, is also an accomplished singer who plays several instruments. Enjoy the polished vocal stylings of American Idol semi-finalist, Jason Yeager. The show lightens up with comedian and ventriloquist, Phil Hughes, and takes a magical turn with Aaron Radatz, a masterful illusionist. Afterwards, we explore the **Titanic Exhibit** which contains hundreds of artifacts from the famous ship as well as experiences such as a slanted deck and a vat of water as cold as the ocean. Dinner is at Florentina's, then we go to the Americana Theatre to see **George Dyer.** With his amazing tenor voice, Dyer soared onto the operatic scene in 1996, making his professional debut to rave reviews with the New York City Opera. He has enchanted countless audiences in the United States and Europe with solo concerts that feature a delightful mix of opera and Broadway favourites. It is this variety of musical performances that he has brought to Branson and 2017 will be his 9th season.

Sunday, October 29: *Meals: Brunch, D*
A sumptuous brunch is included in elegant Keeter Hall at College of the Ozarks, served by students. The matinee show is **#1 Hits of the Sixties**. Enjoy a high energy party as this group of 10 revisits the days of the British Invasion, Motown, California Surfin' and the Age of Aquarius with over 100 songs, 100 costume changes, and even some classic Fifties tunes! Dinner is at Landry's Seafood House, then the evening show is **Puttin' on the Ritz** which brings the magnificent glamour of yesteryear to the Branson stage! Enjoy the dazzling costumes, sensational synchronized dance steps, and catchy tunes of the 20s and 30s from the greatest composers of the cinema and theatre, Irvin Berlin, Cole Porter, and George Gershwin. It's a glittering production of song and dance that brings to mind the days of Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, and Judy Garland!

Monday, October 30: *Meals: B,D*
Breakfast is at Grand Country Buffet. Our morning show, **Down Home Country** at 76 Music Hall features singer Bob Davidson and "Fiddle Player of the Year" Melody Hart. They present the classics of George Jones, Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, and Waylon Jennings, in addition to the comedy of Harley Worthit. Classic country, western swing, and gospel music are all expertly performed in one show. This afternoon, we see **Pierce Arrow,**

the male quartet that celebrates all kinds of country music. They are joined by two female singers for gospel favourites with influences like Patsy Cline, Reba McEntire, Martina McBride and Nicole Mullen. Dinner is at Buckingham's with music by Kenny Parrott. Tonight's show is **Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies** at King's Castle Theatre. The nine singers bring some of Ireland's best music to Branson, including opera, pop, swing, Irish classics, and traditional folk ballads. Their repertoire includes a variety of songs such as *Scarborough Fair, Nessun Dorma, You Raise Me Up, Rolling in the Deep*, and the Irish favourite, *Danny Boy*.

Tuesday, October 31: *Meals: B,L,D*
The morning is free time and lunch is at Grand Country Buffet. **Daniel O'Donnell** is the star this afternoon and one of the week's entertainment highlights. His annual show in Branson and his touring shows around the world always play to sold-out audiences. O'Donnell's early attempts at recognition were failures until he put his savings into recording *My Donegal Shore* as a single. His incredible rise to the top began modestly when he signed with Ritz Records in 1986 and released his second album, *I Need You.* By 2002, he had achieved 19 singles and 17 albums. He is the only performer ever to have had six records on the British charts at the same time. We stay at the Welk Theatre for dinner and our evening show, **Million Dollar Quartet,** is also there. It is an electrifying Broadway musical inspired by the true story about an extraordinary twist of fate in 1956 that brought rock 'n' roll icons Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, and Carl Perkins together in what became one of the most memorable nights in music history. Hit songs include everything from *Blue Suede Shoes* and *Walk the Line* to *Ghost Riders*, *Sixteen Tons*, *Great Balls of Fire*, *Folsom Prison Blues*, *Fever*, *Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On*, and *Hound Dog*.

Wednesday, November 1: *Meals: B,L*
We must bid farewell to Branson and the Ozarks after six days of fabulous entertainment. The coach takes us to **Kansas City** and we fly about 5 pm on Alaska Airlines non-stop to Seattle. We stay overnight at the Quality Inn in Renton.

Thursday, November 2: *Meals: B,L*
There are stops at Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham and the Duty-Free Store, then we cross the border and travel home via the Coquihalla.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of $300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due August 22, 2017.
Discounts: Early bookers receive $200 discount on first 15 seats and $100 on next 10 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after August 22.
Cancellation Policy: Up to July 21, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of $50 per person. From July 22 to August 22, the cancellation charge is $200 per person. From August 23 to September 7, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From September 8 to September 22, the cancellation charge is 70% of the tour fare. After September 22, there is no refund.
Fare changes: Changes to currency exchange rates and taxes, and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond Wells Gray Tours' control, therefore we reserve the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure.
Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.
Photo Credit: Glatz Concerts

e-**points**: This tour earns 90 points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points. One point equals $1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until August 22.
Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924