

BRANSON

Includes 13 amazing shows!
October 20, 2020 ~ 10 Days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person:

\$4110 double/twin

\$4765 single

\$3970 triple



- > Tour is exempt from GST.
- > **Early Bookers:** \$200 discount on first 15 seats; \$100 on next 10
- > **Experience Points:** Earn 95 points from this tour.
Redeem **95 points** if you book by **July 15**.

Includes

- Transportation to Seattle airport and return
- Flight from Seattle to Kansas City and return
- Current air transportation taxes and security fees
- Airline luggage fees for one checked bag
- Coach transportation for 8 days in Missouri
- 9 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Fantastic Caverns underground tour by tram
- *Hughes Family* show
- *Dublin Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies* show
- *The Dutton Family* show
- *Broadway's Greatest Hits* show
- Locally-guided sightseeing tour of Branson area with College of the Ozarks
- Ralph Foster Museum
- *The Amazing Acrobats of Shanghai* show
- *Larry Gatlin & the Gatlin Brothers* show
- *The Yakov Smirnoff* show
- *C.J. Newsom's Classic Country & Comedy* show
- *A Tribute to John Denver* show
- *The #1 Hits of the 60s* show
- *Presley's Country Jubilee* show
- Titanic exhibit
- *Johnson Strings* show
- Sight and Sound Theatre's *Noah* show
- Gratuities for Branson driver and guide
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **18 meals:** 8 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 4 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**



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 was named the #1 U.S. destination for groups for 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 stairs, 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 or at airline check-in if this could be an issue for you. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coaches by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. The coaches cannot carry a scooter. 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. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour.

A Glance at the 13 Shows in 2020

Hughes Family
Dublin Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies
The Dutton Family
Broadway's Greatest Hits
Amazing Acrobats of Shanghai
Larry Gatlin & Gatlin Brothers
Yakov Smirnoff

C.J. Newsom's Classic Country
A Tribute to John Denver
#1 Hits of the 60s
Presley's Country Jubilee
Johnson Strings
Noah

How are the Branson shows selected?

The 2020 tour will be the 24th time that Wells Gray Tours has visited Branson. Many customers repeat the tour, knowing that some shows will be offered again, some are new, and many change their songs and stories. After each tour, our travellers turn in their comment sheets, rating each of the shows as excellent, good, average, or poor. A weighting of 10, 5, 1 or 0 respectively is applied. Nine of the 2019 shows scored very high and are being offered again in 2020. Two are not performing (*Daniel O'Donnell* and *George Dyer*) and two did not score well, so four new shows are being offered: *Hughes Family*, *Larry Gatlin*, *#1 Hits of the 60s*, and *Johnson Strings*. In addition, the Sight and Sound Theatre changes its production every year, and the spectacular show, *Noah*, is scheduled for 2020. With up to 40 shows to choose from, there is always something new and exciting to see in Branson.

Itinerary

Tuesday, October 20:

Transportation is provided to Lynnwood, north of Seattle, where we stay overnight at the Embassy Suites. Meet your fellow travellers during a reception with cocktails, beer, and wine.

Wednesday, October 21: *Meals: B*

We fly on Alaska Airlines non-stop to **Kansas City**, Missouri, and stay one night at the Drury Inn near the airport.

Thursday, October 22: *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. After lunch at Bass Pro in Springfield, 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 **Hughes Brothers** present fantastic entertainment from a very talented family of singers, dancers, and musicians. The show is filled with a variety of music from pop, rock, and country to Broadway, gospel, and hip hop as they dance in unison with grace and style. The Hughes Brothers have been performing together for over 28 years, but they started so young that they're all under 40 years old.

Friday, October 23: *Meals: B,L,D*

This morning, we go to King's Castle Theatre to see the **Dublin Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies**. 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*. Lunch is at the Pickin' Porch Grill, followed by **The Dutton Family** show. 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 at the Grand Country Buffet, then we see **Broadway's Greatest Hits**. The show has a talented cast, extravagant costumes, and terrific choreography. Songs have been selected from 25 musicals including *42nd Street*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Miserables*, *Cats*, *Chicago*, *Oklahoma*, *My Fair Lady*, *Wicked*, *Chorus Line*, *Hairspray*, and *Mamma Mia*.

Saturday, October 24: *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." The Ralph Foster Museum on the campus is included. Lunch is at the Center Stage Grill, then we thrill to an entirely different show, **The Amazing Acrobats of Shanghai**. One of the most celebrated acrobatic companies, these performers have stunned audiences all over the world. Forty acrobats bring the Orient to Branson in a fast-paced production featuring classic Chinese dance, physical performance art, and an awesome highlight of five gravity-defying motorcycles driving around inside a steel ball. Dinner is at the 1950s style Uptown Café, then we go to the Mansion Theatre to see **Larry Gatlin & the Gatlin Brothers**. With 15 top-five hits in the 1970s and 1980s, the Gatlins continue to enjoy huge popularity as they entertain audiences with new releases from their most recent album, *The Pilgrim*. Other favourites are *Black Gold*, *Houston*, *I Just Wish You Were Someone I Loved*, *I Don't Wanna Cry Anymore*, *Night Time Magic*, and *All the Gold in California*.

Sunday, October 25: *Meals: Brunch, D*

The day starts with a sumptuous brunch in elegant Keeter Hall at the College of the Ozarks, prepared and served by students. This afternoon, we attend a show starring **Yakov Smirnoff**, an uplifting comedian who tells hilarious tales of life in his native Russia contrasted with his new homeland of America. He has kept audiences laughing in Branson since 1992. Dinner is at the Wildwood Bistro in the Radisson Hotel, then we attend **C.J. Newsom's Classic Country and Comedy show** at the Americana Theatre. Newsom gives Branson the best of country's legendary ladies and has been sharing the music of the incomparable Patsy Cline for years. Her show now features huge hits from other leading ladies of song such as Loretta Lynn, Reba McEntire, and Judy Garland. On top of all that phenomenal music, enjoy another local comedian, the king of Branson comedy, Terry Sanders.

Monday, October 26: *Meals: B,L,D*

This morning, we go to **A Tribute to John Denver** at the Little Opry Theatre. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Denver from his friend, James Garrett. He shares personal stories that will make you laugh, cry, and hear Denver's songs with more in-depth perspective. Garrett performs some of Denver's most beloved hits, including *Leavin' on a Jet Plane* and *Rocky Mountain*

High. Lunch is at McFarlain's, then our 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 Getting Basted BBQ. Tonight, we see the wonderful show that is usually top-rated every year by Wells Gray customers — **Presley's Country Jubilee**. It is two memorable hours of music and comedy with one of Branson's longest running shows, still popular after 53 years and four generations of Presleys on the stage.

Tuesday, October 27:

Meals: B,D

This morning, 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. There is free time in downtown Branson for lunch. This afternoon, we see the **Johnson Strings** performance — one dynamic family, 20 dazzling instruments, 8 voices in close harmony, and plenty of family humour. Before opening their Branson show in 2017, The Johnson Strings spent 10 years touring across the USA. Each of the six kids began taking music lessons as 3 to 6

year-olds. Some of their songs are Ed Sheeran's *Perfect*, Michael Buble's *Feelin' Good* and *The Orange Blossom Special*, Brad Paisley's *Mud on the Tires*, The Judds' *Love Can Build a Bridge*, *The Lord's Prayer*, *Bridge Over Troubled Water*, and *What a Wonderful World*; and Disney's *Let It Go* and *Foggy Mountain Breakdown*. Our "Farewell to Branson" dinner is at Florentina's Restaurant, then tonight's show, **Noah**, is an awesome finale to our week in Branson. The story of Noah, the Ark, and the Great Flood is performed in a grand style on the Sight and Sound Theatre's 100-metre wraparound stage, with lavish staging, gorgeous costumes, a dramatic storm, colourful characters, live animals, and memorable songs.

Wednesday, October 28:

Meals: B

We must say goodbye to Branson and the Ozarks after six days of fabulous entertainment. The coach takes us to **Kansas City** and we fly to Seattle. We stay overnight at Embassy Suites near the airport.

Thursday, October 29:

Meals: B

There are short stops at Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham and the Duty-Free Store, then we cross the border and travel home.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$400 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due July 15, 2020. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

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 July 15.

Cancellation Policy: Up to June 15, 2020, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$100 per person. From June 16 to July 15, the cancellation charge is \$300 per person. From July 16 to August 14, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From August 15 to September 15, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After September 15, 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: Dutton Family

E-points: This tour earns 95 points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points or e-points. One point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until July 15.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842