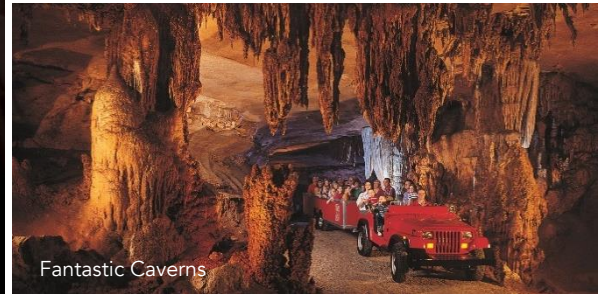




Dutton Family Show



Fantastic Caverns

BRANSON

September 27, 2022 – 10 Days

Includes 13 amazing shows!

The entertainment in Branson, Missouri is nonstop—filled with music, laughter, and legends of the stage. It has been named the #1 U.S. destination for groups for many years and entertains more than six million visitors annually. It all began in 1959 when *The Baldknobbers Jamboree* opened the first live musical show in Branson, but the first theatre on Highway 76 was *Presley's Mountain Music Jubilee* in 1967. Currently there are 40 theatres operating in Branson and it has more theatre seats than Broadway or Las Vegas. During six days and nights in Branson, we experience 13 shows across a wide range of genres including country music, acrobatics, comedy, Celtic music, opera, and Broadway tunes! Come and find out why Branson is called the "Live Music Show Capital of the World."

Activity Level: 1



17 Meals Included:

7 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 4 lunches, 5 dinners

Fares per person:

\$4,470 double/twin; \$5,205 single; \$4,350 triple
Tour is exempt from GST.

Early Bookers:

\$200 discount on first 15 seats; \$100 on next 10

Experience Points:

Earn 102 points on this tour.

Redeem 102 points if you book by July 20, 2022.

Departure from: Lower Mainland



Incredible Acrobats of China

ITINERARY

Day 1: Tuesday, September 27

We cross the border and follow I-5 south to Seattle for an overnight stay at the Embassy Suites near the airport. Meet your fellow travellers during a reception with cocktails, beer, and wine.

Accommodation: Embassy Suites Sea-Tac

Day 2: Wednesday, September 28

We fly on Alaska Airlines non-stop to **Kansas City, Missouri**. Our coach meets us at the airport and we drive to the **Arabia Steamboat Museum**. When this giant paddlewheeler sank in the Missouri River near Kansas City in 1856, she carried 200 tons of mystery cargo. The wreck was discovered in 1988, buried 15 metres underground and 1 km from today's river channel. The artifacts preserved and displayed in this museum include clothing, fine china, tools, guns, children's toys, and the world's oldest pickles.

Accommodation: Drury Inn Independence

Day 3: Thursday, September 29

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 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 Family** presents fantastic entertainment from a very talented group 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. With over 30 Hughes Kids in every show, the Hughes Brothers can claim to be the "World's Largest Performing Family."

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel

Day 4: Friday, September 30

Our morning show is **George Dyer** at the Americana Theatre. 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 2022 will be his 13th season. Lunch is at 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 go to the adjoining Music Hall for the **Grand Jubilee** Show. This incredible quartet entertains with spectacular music, great harmonies, family comedy, and Ozarks hospitality. Mark, Luke, David, and Jon sing favourite songs from Top 40, Country & Gospel classics, and Rock & Roll hits from the 70s through the 90s.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel

Day 5: Saturday, October 1

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. In the afternoon, we thrill to an entirely different show, **The Incredible Acrobats of China**. One of the most celebrated acrobatic companies, these performers have stunned audiences all around the world. Over 20 acrobats bring the Orient to Branson in a fast-paced production featuring Human Strength & Beauty, Plates Spinning, Juggling, Diabolo, Chair Stack, Butterfly Lovers, and Spinning Girls. Dinner is at the 1950s style Uptown Café, then we go to the Mansion Theatre to see **Jimmy Fortune Live**. He was the singing tenor for the legendary Statler Brothers for 21 years until they retired in 2002. This is an evening of toe-tapping country music as Fortune weaves together masterful tenor and bluegrass twang. Some of the Statler hits he wrote are *Elizabeth*, *Too Much on My Heart*, *My Only Love*, and *More Than a Name on a Wall*.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel

Day 6: Sunday, October 2

We start 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 Paula Deen's Southern Kitchen at Branson Landing, 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



Yakov Smirnoff

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, Terry Sanders.

Meals included: Brunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel

Day 7: Monday, October 3

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. Lunch is at McFarlain's Restaurant, then 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 offers a variety of songs such as *Scarborough Fair*, *Nessun Dorma*, *You Raise Me Up*, *Rolling in the Deep*, and the Irish favourite, *Danny Boy*. Dinner is at Getting Basted BBQ, then we enjoy the lively 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 56 years and four generations of Presleys on the stage.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel



Day 8: Tuesday, October 4

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. There is free time to browse the shops and have lunch at Branson Landing. The matinee show is **#1 Hits of the Sixties** at the Clay Cooper Theatre. It is 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 1950s tunes! Our “Farewell to Branson” dinner is at Florentina’s Restaurant, then tonight’s show, *Jesus*, is an awesome finale to our week in Branson. It follows the history of Jesus, from his humble beginnings as the son of a carpenter to the miracles that he performed and his role as prophet. It is performed in a grand style on the Sight and Sound Theatre’s 100-metre wrap-around stage, with lavish sets, gorgeous costumes, a dramatic storm, colourful characters, live animals, and memorable songs.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Radisson Hotel



Day 9: Wednesday, October 5

We must say goodbye to Branson and the Ozarks after six days of fabulous entertainment. The coach takes us to **Kansas City**, then we fly to Seattle. The hotel’s evening reception is a popular gathering place.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Embassy Suites Sea-Tac

Day 10: Thursday, October 6

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

Meals included: Breakfast

TOUR NOTES

- Wells Gray first offered a tour to Branson in 1993 and it has been consistently popular, so this year will be the 24th trip there. In 2007, the tour date switched from spring to fall to attend a better variety of shows. The 2022 tour is in late September, so you can see the awesome *Jesus* show at Sight and Sound Theatre which will close for a month after our visit to set up a new show.



Activity Level 1: 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 or motorized wheelchair. If Activity Level 1 could be challenging, you are urged to 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.

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 many 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."



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transportation to Seattle airport & return
- Flight from Seattle to Kansas City and return
- Current air transport taxes and security fees
- Airline luggage fees for one checked bag
- Coach transportation for 8 days in Missouri
- 9 nights of accommodation and hotel taxes
- Arabia Steamboat Museum
- Fantastic Caverns underground tour by tram
- *Hughes Family* show
- *George Dyer* show
- *The Dutton Family* show
- *Grand Jubilee* show
- Locally-guided sightseeing tour of Branson area with College of the Ozarks
- Ralph Foster Museum
- *The Incredible Acrobats of China* show
- *Jimmy Fortune of the Statler Brothers* show
- *The Yakov Smirnoff* show
- *Newsom's Classic Country & Comedy* show
- Titanic exhibit
- *Dublin Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies* show
- *Presley's Country Jubilee* show
- *Down Home Country* show
- *The #1 Hits of the 60s* show
- Sight and Sound Theatre's *Jesus* show
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Gratuities for Branson driver & guide
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **17 meals:** 7 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 4 lunches, 5 dinners

HOW ARE THE BRANSON SHOWS SELECTED?

The 2022 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. Most of Branson was closed in 2020 and 2021, due to the pandemic, so we looked at the 2019 ratings. Nine of those shows scored very high, topped by the *Presleys*, but several have not re-opened and those theatres have new shows opening this year. The final choices for 2022 were 5 shows offered in 2019 and 7 new ones: *Hughes Family*, *George Dyer*, *Grand Jubilee*, *Jimmy Fortune*, *CJ Newsom*, *Down Home Country*, and *#1 Hits of the 60s*. In addition, the Sight and Sound Theatre changes its production every year, and the spectacular show, *Jesus*, is scheduled for 2022. With up to 40 shows to choose from, there is always something new and exciting to see in Branson.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due July 20, 2022. 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 20, 2022.

Cancellation Policy: Up to June 20, 2022, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$100 per person. From June 21 to July 20, the cancellation charge is \$300 per person (your deposit). From July 21 to August 19, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After August 19, 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.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$50 per person round trip. Transfer is to and from the coach route along Highways #1 and #17 from/to Tsawwassen. Please request no later than at final payment.

Photo Credits: Dutton Family, Fantastic Caverns, Acrobats of China, Hughes Family, Yakov Smirnoff, Presley's Country Jubilee, Sight and Sound Theatres, Branson Tourism Centre (Highway #76).

Experience Points: This tour earns 102 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 20, 2022.

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

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