

SAVANNAH & CHARLESTON

7 days absorbing the Charms of the South

March 18, 2024 – 10 days

50th
ANNIVERSARY

WELLS GRAY TOURS
a world to experience



Magnolia Plantation



Horse-drawn Carriage

Discover waterfront cities, a bygone era of plantations, 19th century mansions, and antebellum culture on this guided tour to Charleston, Savannah, and Georgia's Golden Isles. Explore the history in Charleston, admire the Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, enjoy a tasting at North America's only tea plantation, cruise Charleston's Harbor and the Savannah River, ride in a horse-drawn carriage through Savannah's historic district, and walk on Tybee Island with a naturalist. The Golden Isles will delight you with gorgeous marsh views, St. Simons Island Pier Village, shrimp boating, and dinner at the renowned Jekyll Island Club, once the domain of Rockefellers and Vanderbilts. Beautiful magnolias, live oaks draped with Spanish moss, and the clip, clop of horse-drawn carriages will entice you to slow your pace, sip a mint julep, and utter greetings like "hey y'all!"



INTERNATIONAL
TOUR



ACTIVITY LEVEL

► **17 Meals Included:**

9 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 5 dinners

► **Fares per person:**

\$7,120 double/twin; \$8,685 single

No GST.

► **Early Booking Bonus:**

\$280 discount on first 12 seats; \$140 on next 8

► **Experience Points:** Earn 117 Experience Points

► **Departure from:** Victoria



ITINERARY

Day 1: Monday, March 18

Transportation is provided to Seattle for an over-night 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: Tuesday, March 19

We fly on Alaska Airlines from Seattle to **Charleston, South Carolina**, arriving in late afternoon. Our coach meets us at the airport. The Hampton Inn Historic District in the heart of Charleston is our lodging for three nights.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hampton Inn Charleston

Day 3: Wednesday, March 20

A local guide conducts a Charleston city tour. Charleston came to be known as "The Holy City" due to the religious freedom several hundred years ago. In the early days, the church steeples towering over the skyline were a vital landmark to guide ship captains into Charleston, one of the most important harbours on the eastern seaboard. See centuries old cobblestone streets, historic homes, the antebellum mansions along the Battery, and the Military College of South Carolina (also called The Citadel) while hearing stories about the Holy City. Discover sweet grass baskets, try a benne, pick up a souvenir, or stroll the streets around the Charleston Historic Market during free time mid-day. This afternoon, we go to **Magnolia Plantation** which was settled in 1676 and is still in the same family 15 generations later. We enjoy a tram tour through the splendid gardens which opened to visitors in 1870, followed by a guided home tour. Unique dining awaits this evening on the ***Spirit of Carolina dinner cruise*** offering gourmet cuisine, live entertainment, and wonderful views of Charleston's Harbor.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hampton Inn Charleston

Day 4: Thursday, March 21

Wadmalaw Island was first settled thousands of years ago by Cusabo Indians, who hunted deer and wild turkey in the virgin forests, grew corn and beans in the verdant soil, and left behind huge middens of oyster shells. The rich soil and temperate climate of Wadmalaw Island has supported commercial and family farms for generations. Long famous for tomatoes, the island is also dotted with u-pick family farms and Community Sponsored Agriculture cooperatives. Here is the only **tea plantation** in the USA. Learn about the Bigelow family and view many acres of breathtaking Camellia Sinensis tea plants as far as the eye can see. Learn how tea is made during an informative factory tour, take a trolley ride through the tea fields, and help yourself to all the iced tea you wish. On nearby Johns Island, we admire the huge **Angel Oak Tree**. Estimated at nearly 500 years old, it stands 20 metres tall, measures 8.5 metres around, and its longest branch is 57 metres.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Hampton Inn Charleston

Day 5: Friday, March 22

We journey south along the coast to **Beaufort**, "Queen of the Carolina Sea Islands," where we admire the timeless architecture of its National Historic Landmark District during a guided horse-drawn carriage tour. There is time to wander through the quaint shops. Entering Georgia, we arrive in **Savannah**, founded in 1733 and the oldest city in the state. It was a strategic port during the American Revolution and the Civil War, and is still an important Atlantic Coast port. We stay three nights in the historic district.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hilton Garden Inn

Day 6: Saturday, March 23

During a guided trolley tour, we see Savannah's 22 historic squares and hear about its storied past. Highlights include such landmarks as Forsyth Park, River Street, the Waving Girl statue, the Cotton Exchange, and Colonial Park Cemetery. Explore at your leisure this afternoon with hop on/off trolley privileges. Next is the **American Prohibition Museum** and, at the end of the tour, ironically, a drink ticket is provided for use in the speakeasy. Tonight, we go to the **Savannah Theatre** which opened in 1818 and has been presenting movies and stage shows ever since. Tonight's performance will be announced in late 2023.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hilton Garden Inn

Day 7: Sunday, March 24

Tybee Island is a barrier island at the mouth of the Savannah River and known for its wide, sandy beaches. We take a beach walk with a local naturalist, then have lunch at The Crab Shack. Later, we relive a bygone era on board the *Georgia Queen*, hearing the captain's intriguing tales as we cruise the Savannah River.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Hilton Garden Inn

Day 8: Monday, March 25

We drive to Georgia's Golden Isles with a visit to St. Simons Island. Marvel at the expansive marshlands, centuries old live oaks dripping with Spanish moss, and the charming beach village overlooking the Brunswick River. You may want to try some sweet Georgia shrimp at one of the cafes in the village. This afternoon, we enjoy a hands-on experience on board the *Lady Jane Shrimping Boat* which introduces us to the sea life of the intercoastal waterway. Then we cross bridges and causeways to Jekyll Island. In 1886, 53 prominent wealthy Americans bought the island for \$125,000 and turned it into an exclusive private winter retreat called the **Jekyll Island Club**.

Among the best-known members were Marshall Field, John Pierpont Morgan, Joseph Pulitzer, William Vanderbilt, and William Rockefeller. The Club operated until 1942, then was purchased by the Georgia government to create a park. We savour an elegant dining experience at the Jekyll Island Club, so you can relive these gilded years among the ranks of the rich and famous.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hampton Inn Jekyll Island

Day 9: Tuesday, March 26

We step into the past again during a tram tour of Jekyll Island's historic district. Heading north, we stop at the **National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force** for a tour of aircraft that served in World War II. This evening, we fly on Alaska Airlines from Charleston to Seattle.

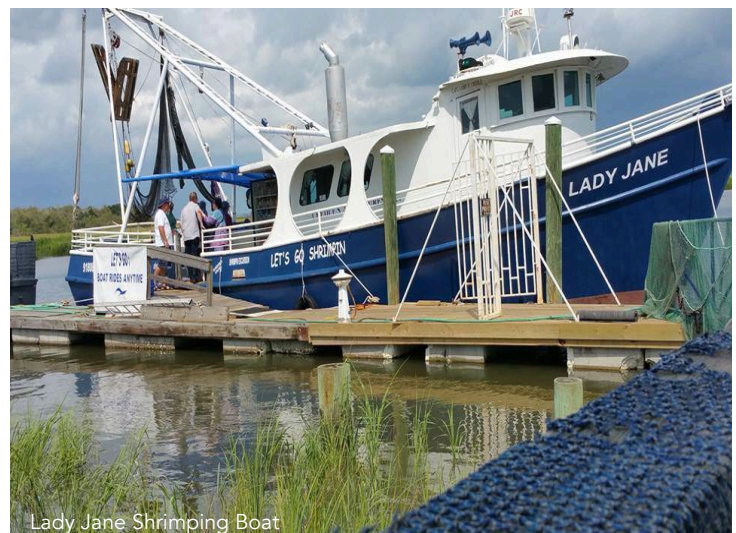
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Embassy Suites Sea-Tac

Day 10: Wednesday, March 27

Transportation is arranged from Seattle to your pickup point in the Victoria area.

Meals included: Breakfast



Lady Jane Shrimping Boat

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transportation to Seattle and return
- 9 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- Flight from Seattle to Charleston
- Current air taxes and security fees
- Airline fee for 1 checked bag per person
- Transfer from Charleston airport to hotel
- Local Guide for 7 days in South Carolina and Georgia
- Locally-guided tour of Charleston
- The Citadel and The Battery
- Magnolia Plantation house and gardens tour
- Dinner cruise in Charleston Harbor
- Wadmalaw Island tour
- Charleston Tea Plantation with trolley tour
- Angel Oak Tree
- Carriage tour of Beaufort historic district
- Trolley tour of Savannah historic district
- Hop on hop off ticket for Savannah
- American Prohibition Museum
- Performance at Savannah Theatre
- Tybee Island with naturalist beach walk
- Riverboat cruise on Savannah River
- Shrimp boat excursion at St. Simons Island
- Tram tour of Jekyll Island historic district
- National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force
- Flight from Charleston to Seattle
- Gratuities for USA guides and drivers
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **17 meals:** 9 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 5 dinners



Moderate activity including walking tours of historic homes and gardens which usually require some stairs and standing. There are three boat excursions which may have steep gangways to access the vessel, depending on tides. Charleston and Savannah have historic districts where coaches are restricted, so walking tours are offered which may be on cobblestone streets or uneven sidewalks. The coach cannot carry a scooter or motorized wheelchair. There can be longer walks in the airports. Everybody participating in this tour is expected to be capable of handling Activity Level 2. 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 tour days. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.



Angel Oak Tree

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$400 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due January 16, 2024. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined. Payments can be made by online banking or cheque (1.5% discount on tour fare), or by Visa or Mastercard (\$5,000 limit per person on credit cards).

Early Booker Bonus: Receive \$280 discount on first 12 seats and \$140 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after January 16, 2024.

Cancellation Policy: Up to December 15, 2023, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From December 16, 2023, to January 16, 2024, the cancellation charge is \$300 per person. From January 17 to February 16, the cancellation charge is 60% of the tour fare. After February 16, there is no refund.

Itinerary and Fare Changes: Due to continuing after effects of the pandemic, sometimes we are notified about changes to the itinerary prior to departure and sometimes during the tour. We do our best to substitute a similar service if something cancels, but occasionally the only alternative is to provide a refund for the missed activity. Please note that if we are forced to cancel a tour component due to an issue beyond our control, the current penalties still apply if you choose to cancel the entire tour. Fuel surcharges and changes to taxes or other tour costs can occur at any time, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up to departure.

Flight seating: We are unable to take requests for window or aisle seating on the planes. The airline will not accept them, as group seating is assigned as a block. If this is important to you, we suggest you take the "No Flight" option with a fare reduction of \$590 and book your own flight which allows seat selection.

Flight upgrades: Please enquire about current prices for upgrades on the flights to and from Charleston. First class may be available.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy. Restaurants may not be able to satisfy all food allergies. (An allergy causes medical distress, a preference does not.)

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, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Photo Credits: Meet Charleston (Magnolia Plantation), Visit Savannah (Horse-drawn carriage), Meet Charleston (Downtown Charleston), Adobe (Oak Alley), Kerrie Niemeier (Lady Jane Shrimp boat).

Experience Points or E-points: This tour earns 117 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn e-points that are added to your account after the tour returns. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your earned points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until January 16, 2024.

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

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