

# GARDENS OF CHARLESTON AND SAVANNAH

MARCH 26 - APRIL 2, 2025



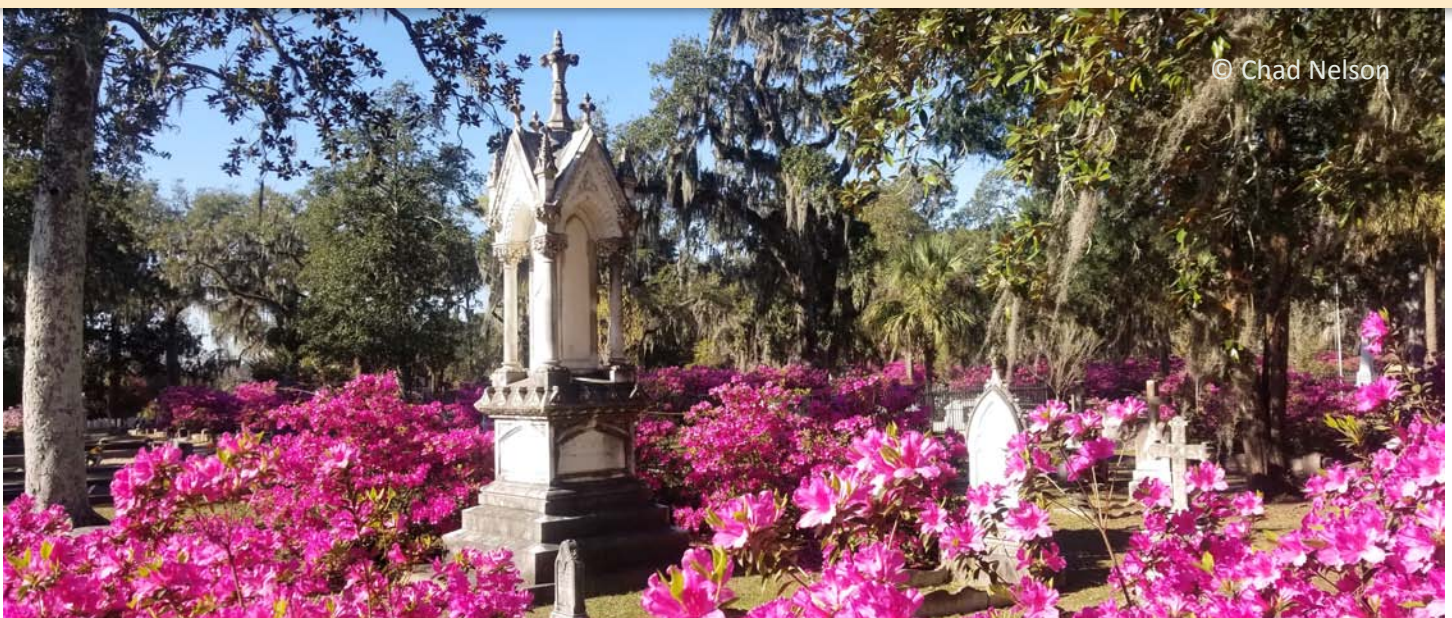
AN EXCLUSIVE TOUR ESCORTED BY  
C. COLSTON BURRELL  
WITH  
SUSAN MCLEOD EPSTEIN





The Lowcountry cities of Charleston, Beaufort and Savannah are noted for southern hospitality and a storied gardening tradition dating back centuries. Grand plantations of a bygone era and bucolic scenery featuring trees laden with Spanish moss are familiar through gothic novels and countless films.

Travel with Garden and Nature Tours, the Minnesota State Horticultural Society and Friendship Tours on a 7-night getaway to these storied cities. Explore historic plantations and discover private garden sanctuaries during the height of azalea season. Enjoy touring gardens, exploring historic mansions and savoring fine Lowcountry cuisine dining with a congenial group of fellow garden and travel enthusiasts.





# Meet Your Escort and Guide



C. Colston Burrell is a lifelong naturalist, plantsman, and gardener. He is principal of Native Landscape Design and Restoration, which specializes in blending nature and culture through artistic design. When Cole is not traveling, he is designing gardens for his clients, or tending his own 10-acre property designed to display the plants he loves while letting natural succession serve as head gardener. He shares his garden with birds, butterflies, and a wealth of amphibians.

Cole escorts garden and natural history tours throughout the United States and abroad. The New World tropics are a favorite destination. He has traveled in Costa Rica, Panama, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Argentina, as well as Europe New Zealand and Japan.

Susan McLeod Epstein, tours manager for the Charleston Preservation Society, is steeped in the Lowcountry's historic and contemporary gardens. She has worked in the tour industry for two decades, and knows gardeners, designers, and landscape architects throughout the region. When not working she tends her garden and manages the family farm in Camden, SC where her family has farmed for over 200 years.

Susan is an experienced gardener herself, and has a degree in horticulture from Clemson University. She has been documenting historic landscapes and gardens in the Lowcountry as well as throughout the state. She has toured gardens extensively in the US, UK, and throughout Western Europe and is always looking forward to the next trip.

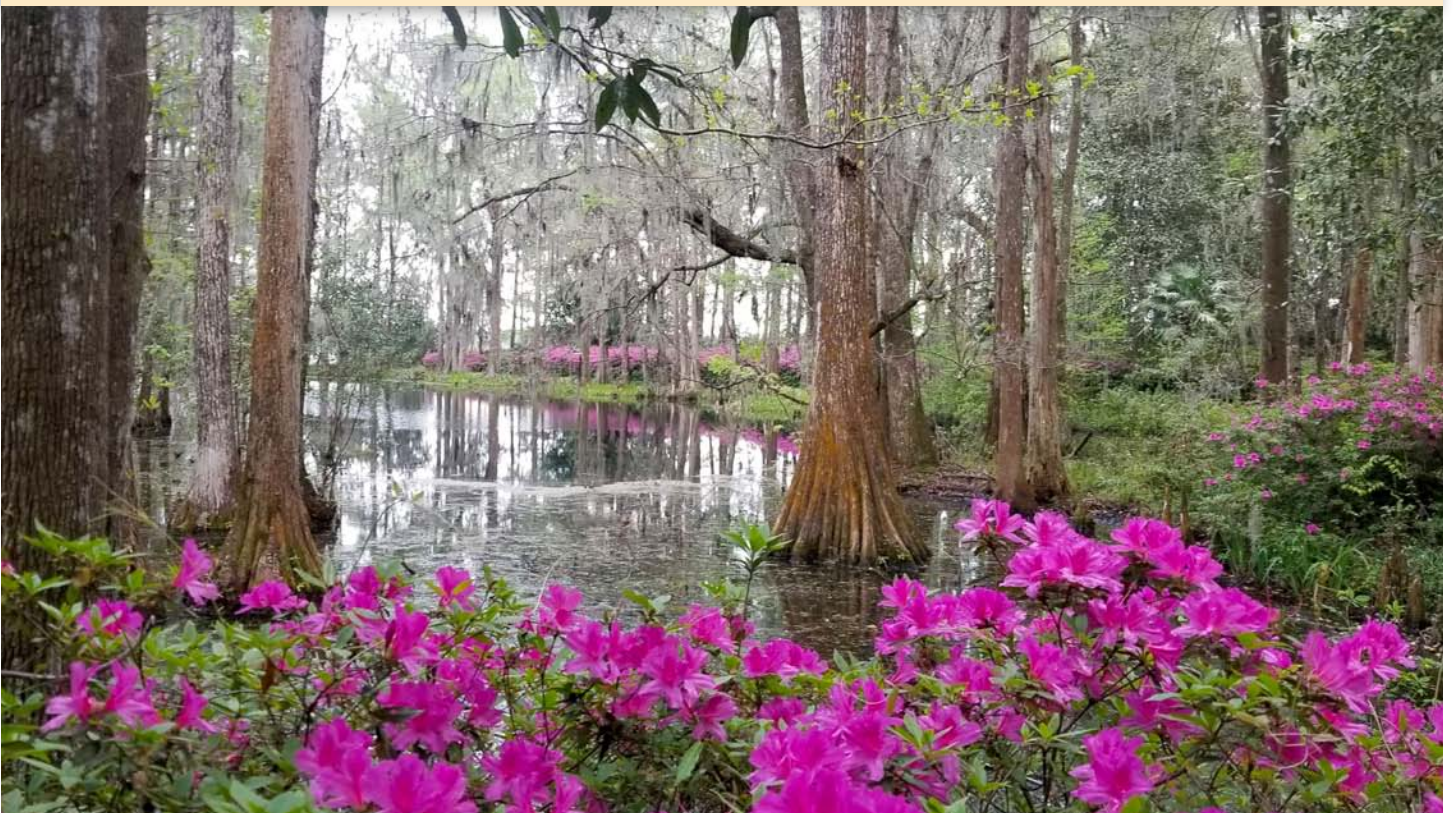


# WELCOME TO THE LOWCOUNTRY

Cobblestone streets, horse-drawn carriages and pastel antebellum houses define the port cities of Savannah, Beaufort and Charleston. Magnificent plantations framed by live oak trees festooned with Spanish moss recall the Old South. Join C. Colston Burrell and Susan McLeod Epstein for an immersive small-group journey into the gardens, history, culture and cuisine of the storied southern Lowcountry. We explore these unique cities on walking tours, through private garden visits, and guided outings to historic properties.

Destinations include Brookgreen Gardens, Magnolia Plantation, Middleton Place and Bonaventure Cemetery. We plan to visit six private gardens, and walk in the footsteps of history to see parks, historic squares, and markets.

Please join us for an unforgettable journey as we survey the beauty and history of the Lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia!.





# Tour Itinerary Highlights

- Savor a festive Lowcountry Boil in Susan Epstein's private garden
- Explore the Lowcountry's history, culture and cuisine
- Delight in two wine receptions
- Partake of three group lunches featuring local cuisine
- Visit six private gardens
- Tour Brookgreen Garden's plant collections and sculptures, as well as a pontoon boat trip through rice fields to enjoy local wildlife
- Walk in the footsteps of history at Middleton Place and Magnolia Plantation
- Stroll through the history of Charleston, Beaufort and Savannah
- Enjoy a private guided tour of the history and horticulture of Savannah's famous squares
- Discover the secrets of Bonaventure Cemetery, made famous in the book *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*
- Relish a farewell dinner emphasizing locally sourced ingredients



# Tour Details

TOUR DURATION 7 Nights / 8 Days

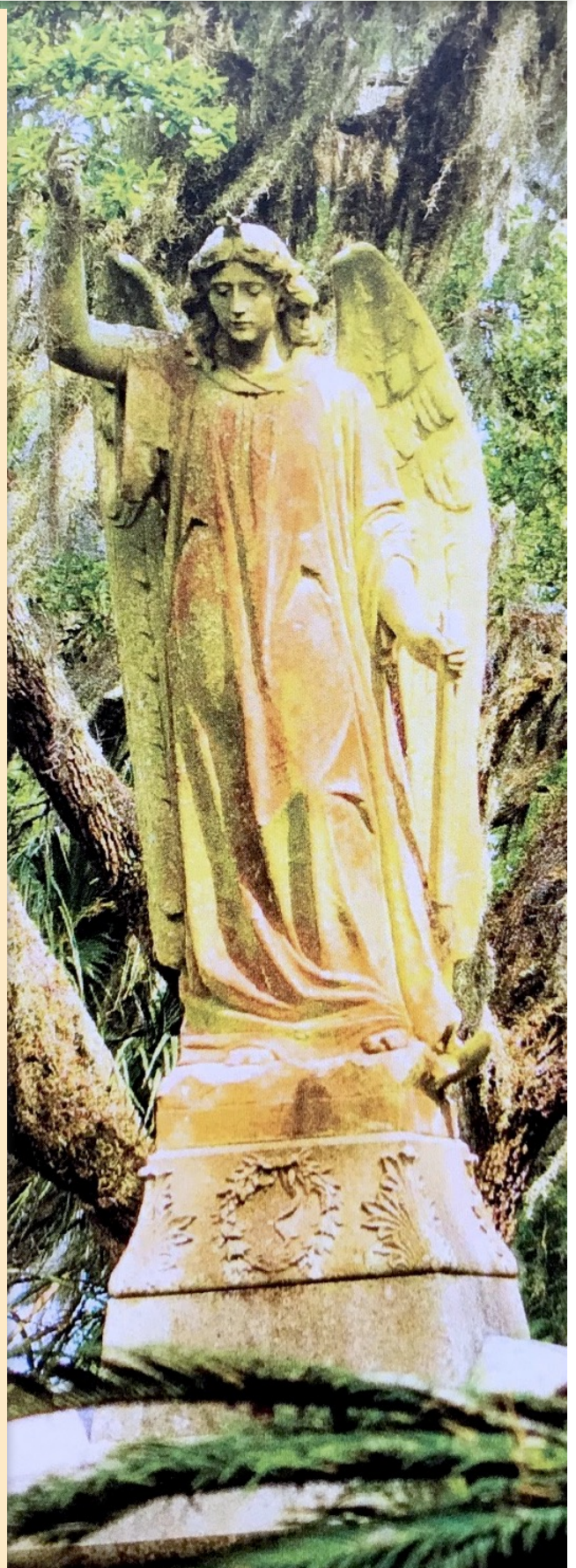
## TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Airport transfers — Charleston International and Savannah/Hilton Head International
- Seven nights lodging
- Breakfast daily
- Three lunches and three dinners
- Host throughout tour—C. Colston Burrell
- Escort in Charleston—Susan McLeod Epstein
- Admission to all gardens and historic homes
- Guided tours and excursions
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Gratuities to your local driver and guides
- Gratuities to your tour host

## NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR

- Round trip airfare from home cities
- Meals not included in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages except as noted in the itinerary
- Travel insurance
- Airport fees, taxes and baggage charges
- Gratuities to luggage handlers or housekeeping
- Optional sightseeing or recreational activities
- Any other items not specifically mentioned as included in the itinerary

~ Please Note: You will fly into Charleston International Airport and return from Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport





# Tour Pricing and Registration

## TOUR DURATION

7 Nights / 8 Days

## PRICING

\$5,449.00 Land Price — Double Occupancy

\$1,195.00 Single Supplement

~ Tour is limited to 20 travelers

~ Fewer than 18 travelers may result in a small surcharge

~ Itinerary subject to change without notice

## DEPOSIT

\$1,000.00 per person with reservation to secure your spot

## TO REGISTER VISIT

<https://www.friendshiptours.net/group-travel>

Select "Group Sign In". Enter the Tour Code **25MAR26CHARLESTON** in the box labeled "Make a New Reservation."

\*\*\*Please review the Tour Policies before registering\*\*\*

<https://www.friendshiptours.net/tour-policies>

SPECIAL THANKS TO CHAD NELSON FOR MANY OF THE PHOTOS IN THIS BROCHURE



Minnesota State  
**Horticultural  
Society** 

**FRIENDSHIP TOURS**  
**THE SHIP SHOP**

# Terms and Conditions

## Gardens of Charleston & Savannah

Escorted by C. Colston Burrell

March 26 - April 2, 2025 7 Nights / 8 Days

**ARRIVAL:** Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at Charleston Airport (CHS) Plan to arrive by 3:00PM to meet in baggage claim and be transferred to the hotel.

**RETURN:** Wednesday, April 2, 2025 transfer included from morning sightseeing to Savannah Airport (SAV) for your flight home. Arrange for flights after 3:00pm.

**COST** (with 18-20 paying guests):  
\$5449. per person based on double occupancy  
+\$1,195. per person single supplement  
Fewer than 18 travelers may result in a small surcharge.

**AIR TRAVEL:** Do not purchase air until you have been advised that the minimum number of travelers for this tour has been reached. This trip is based on a minimum of 18 travelers. Flight arrangements are not included in this tour package.

### RESERVATIONS VIA FRIENDSHIP TOURS:

**CALL:** 800-243-1630 and ask for **Charleston & Savannah tour with C. Colston Burrell**

**ON LINE:** [www.friendshiptours.net/group-travel](http://www.friendshiptours.net/group-travel)  
and select "Group Sign In." Enter the Tour Code **25MAR26CHARLESTON** in the box labeled "Make a New Reservation."

**DEPOSIT:** \$1,000. per person with reservation to secure your spot.

**FINAL PAYMENT:** balance due January 7, 2025

**Please reserve now. Small group tour.**

**Commitment required in order for trip to operate.**

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** If a passenger cancels after deposit and before January 7, 2025, the fee is \$500 pp; no refunds if cancelled after January 7, 2025. If Friendship Tours needs to cancel due to lack of participation, a full refund will be processed.

**PRICES & ITINERARY:** Prices are valid at time of publication. Friendship Tours shall not be liable for any fluctuation in price or change in schedule or equipment or accommodations for any travel booking or travel service to be provided by a Travel Supplier. Changes to itineraries may become necessary. These changes will not be considered a material change and will not be cause for cancellation or refund.

**TRIP PROTECTION COVERAGE** is strongly recommended. Friendship Tours offers Travel Protection insurance through 2 insurance providers: **AON/NTA Travel Protection Plan** and **Travel Insured International**. Trip Protection offers coverage for Cancellation for covered medical reasons, Interruption, Emergency Medical, Travel Delay & more. For information: <https://www.friendshiptours.net/protection-plan>

**The AON/NTA Travel Protection Plan** offers 3 levels of insurance: Basic or Enhanced or Enhanced with Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR). The Pre-existing medical condition exclusion can be waived by purchasing the Enhanced Plan within 14 days of your deposit or initial payment. The Enhanced Plan with the add-on of CFAR must be purchased within 14 days of initial deposit. CFAR allows you to cancel for any reason up to 48 days prior to departure and reimburses up to 75% of your nonrefundable trip cost. To enroll: Register online at <https://nta.aontravelprotect.com> - Tour Operator Location **#076068**. You can also view plan details on this site. Or call Aon 1-800-388-1470. Customer service agents can also answer questions about each plan. Or call Friendship Tours 860-243-1630 or 800-243-1630.

**Travel Insured International** offers the Worldwide Trip Protection plan with the option to add upgrade benefits (available for additional cost) including CFAR when purchased within 21 days of your initial deposit. Other upgrades include Electronic Equipment, Event Ticket Fee Protection, Travel Inconvenience. Ask Friendship Tours for more information. Or request a quote online: <https://www.friendshiptours.net/protection-plan> Agency **#18649**

**RESPONSIBILITY:** This package is subject to our full terms and conditions which can be found on our website at <https://www.friendshiptours.net/tour-policies>. Paper copies are available upon request. **By signing up for the tour, making a payment and continuing to use our services, you are agreeing to be bound by the Terms and Conditions.**



**FRIENDSHIP TOURS**  
**THE SHIP SHOP**

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[www.friendshiptours.net](http://www.friendshiptours.net)



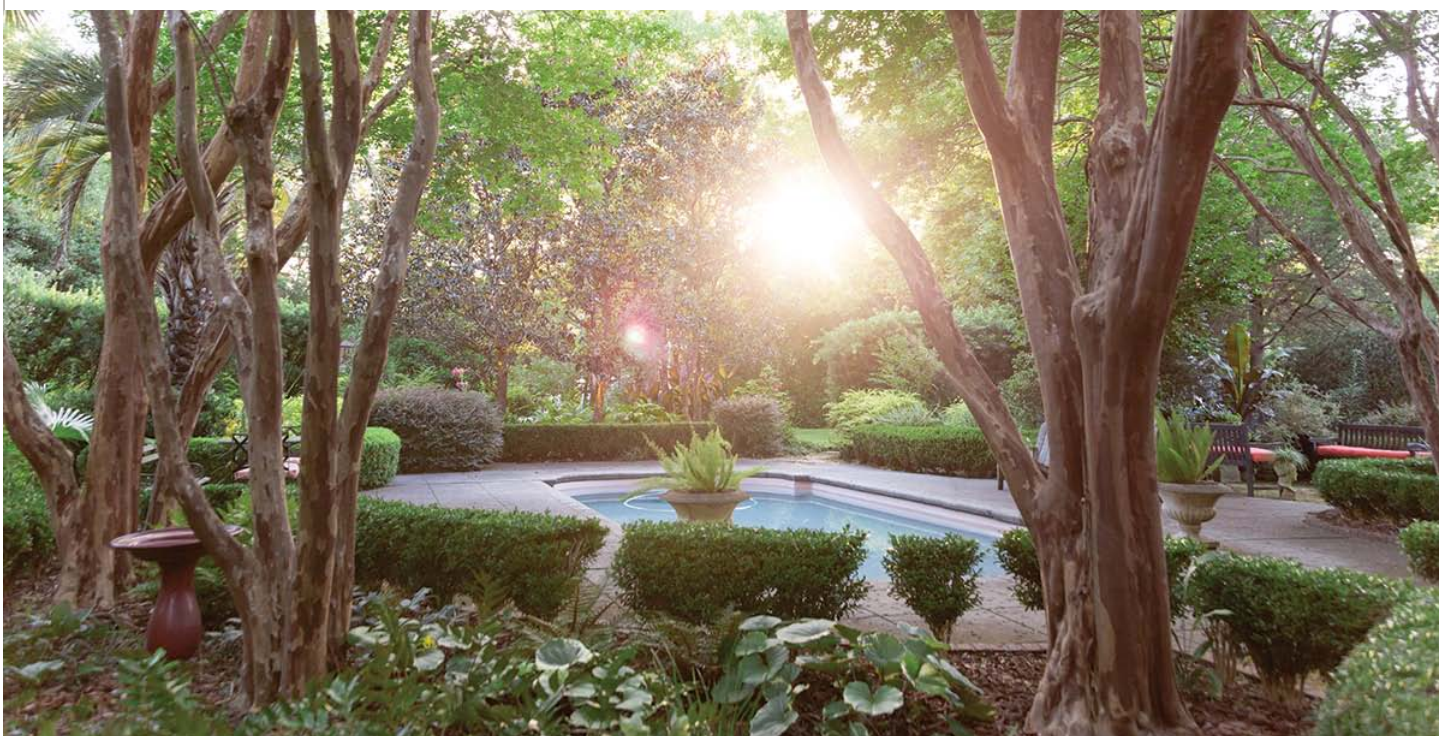
# Itinerary

## DAY 1 – Wednesday, March 26 – Arrival Day in Charleston

Plan to arrive at Charleston International Airport by 3:00 pm for a group transfer to check in to our hotel - Courtyard Charleston Historic District. Enjoy lunch on your own at the airport, and take some time to explore the shops near the hotel upon arrival.

Meet in lobby and depart for a welcome dinner in Susan Epstein's Garden. Enjoy a glass of wine while strolling the garden and a sumptuous Lowcountry Boil, with seafood, spicy andouille, corn and potatoes. Vegetarian options available.

After dinner, we return to our hotel. Night at Courtyard Charleston Historic District, for the first of five nights. R, D





# Itinerary

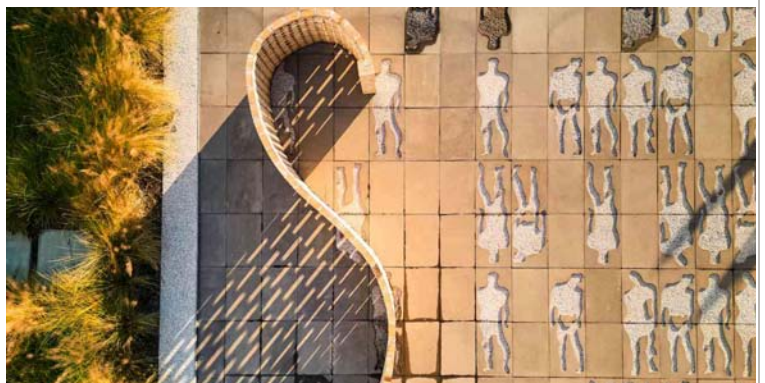
## DAY 2 – Thursday, March 27 – Historic Charleston

After our included breakfast, we set off on foot to explore Charleston's Historic District. Our first stop is the International African American Museum for a self-guided tour. At the museum entrance, the African Ancestors Memorial Garden reflects on the significance of the historically sacred site of Gadsden's Wharf—where alongside several others in the Charleston Harbor—an estimated 40% of African captives entered this country. Inside, exhibitions tell the dynamic story of the international African American experience.

Next, we head to City Market, a National Historic Landmark, for shopping and lunch on your own. The City Market historic complex was established in the 1790s. It stretches for four city blocks from the architecturally significant Market Hall, through a continuous series of one-story market sheds.

In early afternoon, we meet Susan Epstein for a walking tour of some of downtown's most iconic private gardens.

After our tour we return to our hotel for dinner on your own. Night at Courtyard Charleston Historic District. B





# Itinerary

## DAY 3 – Friday, March 28– Brookgreen Gardens

After our included breakfast, we depart for a guided tour of the varied plant collections, landscapes and sculptures of Brookgreen Gardens. Brookgreen is a unique melding of art, nature, and history. The 9,100-acre property includes themed gardens featuring 1,445 American figurative sculptures as well as trails through nature reserves on the property. Opened in 1932, the garden takes its name from the former Brookgreen Plantation, which dates to the antebellum period. Lunch is in the Harvest Restaurant.

In the afternoon we take a narrated Creek Excursion, a cruise on a 48-foot pontoon boat, passing historic rice fields now home to alligators, waterfowl, and osprey. On the journey, an interpreter helps us see the distinctive landscape of the rice plantations and understand the role of enslaved Africans in the history of the Lowcountry.

After our tour we return to our hotel for dinner on your own. Night at Courtyard Charleston Historic District. B, L





# Itinerary

## DAY 4 – Saturday, March 29– Exploring Charleston

After our included breakfast, we depart on foot for a guided tour of Nathaniel Russel House, which offers a glimpse into the lives of the mercantile elite who flourished in the late Colonial and early Federal period, the artisans and craftspeople they hired to build and adorn their opulent homes, and the enslaved men and women whose forced labor made possible their lavish lifestyles.

Next, we visit Gibbes Museum, established as the Carolina Art Association in 1858. The museum moved to a new Beaux Arts building in the Charleston Historic District in 1905. The Gibbes houses a premier collection of over 10,000 works of fine art, principally American works, many with a connection to Charleston or the South.

After lunch on your own at Oyster House, we meet Susan Epstein for a bus tour of private gardens on Sullivan's Island and Isle of Palms. We enjoy a glass of wine in the last garden of the day.

After a festive afternoon we return to our hotel. for dinner on your own Night at Courtyard Charleston Historic District. B, R





# Itinerary

## DAY 5 – Sunday, March 30 – Lowcountry Plantations

After our included breakfast, we depart for a guided tour at Magnolia Plantation, on the banks of the Ashley River. Magnolia is one of the Lowcountry's oldest public attractions. It is a phenomenal horticultural destination, a significant historic and cultural site, and a place of unparalleled natural beauty.

Within the grounds we find Audubon Swamp, a nature lovers paradise with more than 400 acres of protected wetlands. Some 267 species of birds have been recorded here, and the Audubon Swamp Garden is an ideal place to explore a native cypress swamp.

Our next stop is Middleton Place, located along the Ashley River. Middleton Place is a rare survivor of the American Revolution, Civil War, economic upheavals, and natural disasters. First granted in 1675, this National Historic Landmark connects to the very fabric of our nation's complex history focusing on the contributions of the Middleton family as well as the enslaved Africans and African Americans who lived and worked here. We have a self guided tour, followed by a box lunch in the cafe.

We return to hotel for dinner on your own. Night in Charleston, Courtyard Charleston Historic District. B, L





# Itinerary

## DAY 6 – Monday, March 31 – Beaufort

After our included breakfast, we check out and board the coach for our journey to Beaufort. Just outside of Charleston we stop at the Angel Oak, a magnificent live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) believed to be nearly 500 years old.

We continue to Beaufort to meet local guide Janet Matlock for a Walking Tour of the parks and historic homes of the city. Along our journey, we stop for lunch on your own at a local restaurant before continuing on with Janet.

Late afternoon we say farewell to Janet and Beaufort to head south into Georgia to Savannah. We check into our hotel before gathering for a group dinner at 45 Bistro. Night in Savannah, River Street Inn. B, D





# Itinerary

## DAY 7 – Tuesday, April 1 – Savannah

After our included breakfast, we hit the streets for a walking tour of the Historic District with Old Savannah Tours. Sites of interest include Basilica of St. John, Andrew Low House, Forsyth Park, Mercer Williams House and the Green-Meldrin House. Lunch is included.

After our tour, we return to the hotel to freshen up before our farewell dinner/cooking demo at Chef Darins. Night in Savannah, River Street Inn. B, L, D





# Itinerary

## DAY 8 – Wednesday, April 2 – Savannah and Departure

After our included breakfast, we have a free morning to explore Bonaventure Cemetery. Originally called Evergreen Cemetery, Bonaventure was a private commercial enterprise, established in 70 acres of the original Bonaventure Plantation. Evergreen was designed as a traditional Victorian cemetery with curving pathways, lots of trees and grassy areas. Although a cemetery, it was common for families to meet and picnic here while still providing a place of comfort and solace for the bereaved friends of relatives of those buried there.

Evergreen was purchased by the City of Savannah in 1907 to become the fourth of the five cemeteries the city currently owns. Since then it has expanded from the original 60 acres to nearly 103 acres.

After our tour, we head to Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport for lunch on your own and flights home. B

\*\*\*Do not book flights departing before 3:00 pm\*\*\*





