

# ALEXANDER+ROBERTS®

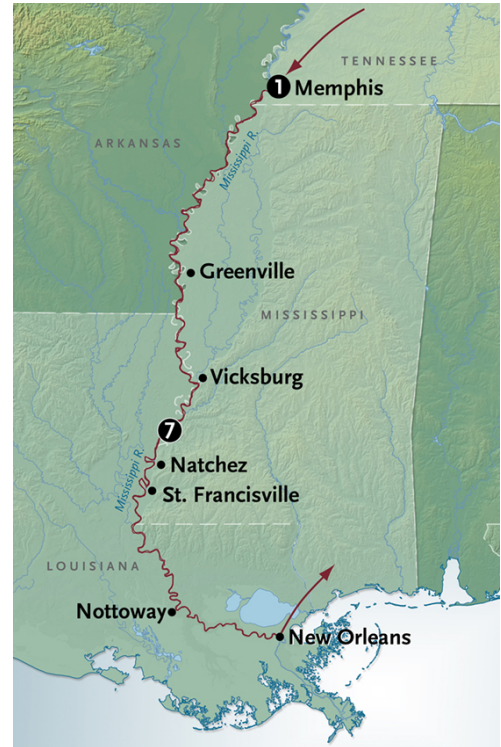
ORIGINAL JOURNEYS SINCE 1947

## Along the Mississippi Memphis to New Orleans

9 days from \$5,799

Aboard the new *American Countess*

Join us on the stylish and spacious Mississippi River Ship, the *American Countess*, for an all-inclusive journey that begins with our privately chauffeured airport transfer and an overnight in Memphis, the *Birthplace of Rock n' Roll*. Attentively hosted by A+R from start to finish, you'll enjoy a more rewarding and carefree voyage with premium shore excursions included, elegant shipboard dining, an Open Bar, engaging experts, entertainment and shipboard gratuities. All guests and shipboard staff are fully-vaccinated.



## Our Distinctive A+R Style

- + Be met and chauffeured privately from the airport to the 5-star Peabody, *The South's Grand Hotel since 1869*. Delight in the stroll of the 5 resident ducks through the lobby at 11am and 5 pm every day and get to know Memphis. Extra nights are available if you wish.
- + Explore the rise of the Delta Blues, R&B and Rock n' Roll from the deep musical traditions of the South at the Grammy Museum Mississippi and, of course, *Graceland*
- + Embark on a guided boat expedition into the Manchac Bayou where lush vegetation and moss-draped cypress provide prime habitat for a rich variety of wildlife.
- + Enjoy a guided visit to iconic Nottoway Plantation, the grandest Antebellum mansion along the Mississippi, and explore the historic towns of St. Francisville and Natchez so expressive of life before, during and after the Civil War era.
- + Learn about the siege that captured the Mississippi for the Union at the Vicksburg National Military Park and see the 27 monuments representing the States that lost soldiers in the dramatic conflict.

- + With private chauffeured airport transfers, a pre-night in Memphis at our luxury hotel and 7 nights in your choice of outside stateroom; Open Bar; 21 meals; a complete program of 6 pre-arranged premium shore excursions and all shipboard gratuities.

## **Our Journey**

### **Day 1 – Welcome to Memphis**

Your driver will await you at the airport to chauffeur you to the Peabody, a newly renovated luxury classic since its opening in 1869. Begin to explore Memphis on your own, hear some music or enjoy its special cuisine. Should you wish more time on your own, we're pleased to book extra nights at the Peabody for you.

### **Day 2 – Memphis + Graceland + Embark the American Countess**

Following breakfast, we'll check-out and gather your luggage before departing on a pre-arranged guided tour that will introduce you to the fabled streets of Memphis, *City of the Blues*. Alongside our guide, we'll step into the residence of *The King, Graceland*. An interactive audio tour takes you through the museum and provides the opportunity to enjoy the many displays of Elvis' storied life, from his clothes to his cars.

After some free time, we'll head to the pier where the stylish American Countess awaits. Settle in to your spacious outside stateroom as we begin our voyage down the Mississippi. With flexible open seating in the dining room throughout the cruise, enjoy the ship's fine dining anytime between 5 and 8pm enhanced with complimentary house wine and spirits. Of course, the open bar is always at your disposal. Meals B+D

### **Day 3 – The Musical Traditions of Mississippi**

After breakfast on-board and accompanied by our guide, we'll venture out into the town of Terrebonne Landing, Mississippi, an agricultural center since antebellum days in the South. The town has nurtured a rich musical tradition from its earliest days up to the evolution of the Blues, R&B and Rock n' Roll. This tradition is displayed memorably at the Grammy Museum with all these genres as well as Hip-Hop and Latin. We'll also visit the Martin and Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum documenting the rise of railroad developments that helped this country thrive in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. A 1941 Illinois Central caboose is a surprising highlight. Meals B+L+D

### **Day 4 – Vicksburg, Mississippi**

Abraham Lincoln wrote to his commanders early in 1863 "... see what a lot of land these fellows hold, of which Vicksburg is the key. The war can never be brought to a close until

that key is in your pocket.” Thus began one of the most consequential campaigns of the Civil War for control of the entire length of the Mississippi. Waged over the course of more than three months in the spring and summer of that year, the terrible Siege of Vicksburg gained the Union success albeit with tremendous losses on both sides. The rich character of the city remains, however, as our hop-on, hop-off independent touring will reveal this morning. The stained-glass windows of the Church of the Holy Trinity, built after the war in 1869, are magnificent. Built in 1830, the nearby Anchuca Mansion was the war hospital during the Siege and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The antebellum 1858 Old Court House, the Lower Mississippi Museum and Old Depot Museum are interesting inclusions this morning. Surprisingly, the first bottles of Coca-Cola in the world were filled in 1894 at the Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum, a fun addition to your ramblings in Vicksburg.

Following lunch on-board, our guests will depart for a guided excursion to the picturesque Vicksburg National Military Park where we’ll learn the riveting stories of what soldiers endured over the three months of battle to capture the city. The National Military Park houses 27 major monuments erected since 1903 to commemorate all the states that lost soldiers during the Siege, including one that honors the Union’s Mississippi Black Infantry. We’ll visit the Illinois State Monument which ranks among the many here as America’s most impressive military memorials. Before returning to ship, we’ll also visit the USS Cairo, an iron clad river boat that was commissioned in 1862 and raised from the river bottom in 1964. Meals B+L+D

### **Day 5 – Natchez, Mississippi**

After breakfast on-board, our guests will enjoy a guided visit to *The Towers*, one of the most elegant private homes in this historically rich town, the oldest along the entire Mississippi. Restored recently by Ginger and James Hyland, they will personally accompany our visit as they present the history, architecture and extensive collections of antiques and fabrics that fill the residence. In the afternoon, following lunch on *The Countess*, we’ll enjoy independent hop-on, hop-off sightseeing with extensive opportunities to explore antebellum life. Among the stops and places you can explore at your own pace are the Rosalie Mansion, built in 1823, and the remarkable William Johnson House Museum. Mr. Johnson was born a slave who gained his freedom at the age of eleven and built this 3-story brick home during his career as the town’s barber. Both Magnolia Hall and Stanton Hall are other Greek Revival architectural gems to include in your visit. A great place to cap the afternoon is the Museum of African-American History and Culture covering the 300 years of the struggle for equality in the environs of Natchez. Meals B+L+D

### **Day 6 – The Charm of St. Francisville**

On a bluff overlooking the Mississippi, this lovely town has a colorful early history as the oldest in what are known as Louisiana’s Florida Parishes. In 1810, an adventurer fought

off the Spanish to control a group of parishes on the East Bank of the river and designated them the Republic of West Florida. Although the Republic didn't last long, the identity of the Florida Parishes has persisted to this day. Settled initially as Bayou Sara, floods and fires destroyed the settlement and the hearty residents simply hauled their surviving homes up the bluff to establish themselves anew as the town of St. Francisville. With hop-on, hop-off touring, we'll explore this historic town with 140 buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Admire the homes along Royal Street and stroll the Old Market Hall, established in 1819. The West Feliciana Historical Society Museum and Grace Episcopal Church are other notable highlights.

Following lunch on-board, A+R guests will experience a guided excursion to a most unusual setting, the Angola Penitentiary. Set on the site of a former plantation, this is a tour of redemption and rehabilitation in what is now considered to be a model facility for inmates to achieve these two goals. This moving excursion will bring to mind films like *The Shawshank Redemption*, *The Green Mile* and *Dead Men Walking*, actually shot here, as we explore the facility and see the vast fields where more than 5 million pounds of produce are harvested each year. Our visit will end memorably in the chapel where we'll gather to hear current inmates describe their inspiring, personal journeys from difficult pasts to transformation. Meals B+L+D

### **Day 7 – Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

We'll spend today exploring the bustling capital of Louisiana, so different from the small towns we've encountered so far on this Mississippi journey. It's a captivating and diverse city with the country's tallest capitol building at 34 floors, a French lilt to the language and numerous museums to engage visitors. Within walking distance of our dock, you'll find the USS Kidd DD-661 named after Admiral Kidd who died on the bridge of his flagship during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Now a museum, the 2,050-ton, 376-foot-long vessel is a repository of aircraft, bombers and artifacts from WWII and the Korean Conflict.

On foot or with hop-on, hop-off touring, Louisiana State University beckons with a presentation of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century life in the Delta at the Rural Life Museum. The LSU Museum of Art complements this visit with both historic and contemporary art native to the state. Return to the *American Countess* as you wish. Meals B+L+D

### **Day 8 – Deep into a Bayou + Nottoway Plantation**

After an extensive breakfast, we'll wind our way along historic River Road to La Place, deep in the heart of Louisiana plantation country, while our expert guide offers colorful insight and historic anecdotes about the region when cotton and sugar were king. Arriving at the edge of the Manchac Bayou, we'll meet our resident Cajun Captain who'll guide us in his boat deep into these wetlands – where lush vegetation and moss-draped

cypress provide prime habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. American alligators, nutria, ibis, herons and egrets are some of the species we might encounter.

Following lunch back on-board, we'll experience a bit of antebellum life. Surrounded by manicured gardens, Nottoway is a historic 3-story residence with grand, columned verandahs and a lavishly decorated interior including the White Ballroom, entirely white with gold gilding. *The White Castle of Louisiana* is the perfect example of plantation life of that pre-Civil War era and the largest mansion along the Mississippi. Returning to the ship in the late afternoon, there will be time to relax before dinner is served.

Meals B+L+D

### **Day 9 – Disembark in New Orleans**

We'll disembark the *American Countess* this morning after breakfast, gathering our luggage for a narrated tour through some of *The Big Easy's* most iconic neighborhoods including the French Quarter, the Garden District, St. Louis Cemetery and City Park. Our journey will conclude at New Orleans International Airport for your onward flight, or, spend more time in New Orleans with a stay at the new 5-star Higgins Hotel, attached to the fantastic National WWII Museum, the city's number one attraction.

Meals B

## **Accommodations**

### **Memphis – The Peabody**

Memphis' most celebrated and distinctive hotel, the Peabody is known for its charm, hospitality and its inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Opened in 1869, the guestrooms are spacious, beautifully designed and newly renovated with every modern amenity. Fine linens, prime bedding, 42" flat screen TV's, access to the Athletic Club and pool and free WiFi are all included. Right in the center of town, the Peabody is famous for its twice-daily Duck March of 5 mallards through the hotel's lobby. Full protocols are in place.