



MEJDI TOURS

The Struggle Towards Equality: The Civil Rights Movement

May 20-26, 2021 & September 23-29, 2021

Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival - Birmingham, Alabama

Arrive in Birmingham, Alabama and transfer to your hotel (on your own). Meet your expert guide in the lobby of your hotel and set the stage for your civil rights legacy tour with a visit to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, an interpretive museum that depicts the struggles of the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Explore the story of a persecuted people and their ongoing movement toward justice and equality. Across the street, visit the historic 16th Street Baptist Church, bombed by Klansmen in 1963. Stroll through Kelly Ingram Park where sculptures depict the reality of the police dogs and fire hoses that were turned on demonstrators who gathered here to protest segregation laws. Stroll historic 4th Avenue North, site of the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame. This evening, meet for an introduction into the history of the civil rights movement and its legacy in our nation today before joining the group for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Elyton Hotel, Birmingham (D)

Day 2: Selma to Montgomery

This morning, travel south to Selma (1.5 hour drive) stopping at the Selma-to-Montgomery Trail Interpretive Center en route to learn more about the marchers and the trials they encountered. Cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where the civil rights march began in 1965 and where law enforcement personnel confronted voting rights marchers on Bloody Sunday. These marches and other protests around the state eventually led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Visit the Brown Chapel AME Church, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. launched the voting rights march. Tour the National Voting Rights Museum & Institute, the cornerstone of the contemporary struggle for voting rights and human dignity, and the Slavery & Civil War Museum. See the Old Depot Museum, home of collections ranging from prehistoric Native American history to the Civil War, continuing through the Depression and the historic path of the Civil Rights Movement, and illustrating how a site that was once home to a Confederate foundry became a critical repository for the preservation and interpretation of key documents, artifacts, and photographs related to Bloody Sunday and its aftermath. For lunch, enjoy some southern "comfort food" and live music at a local

historic restaurant, followed by a Q&A with the musician to learn how the influence of Mississippi Delta blues and the sounds of Appalachian Folk Music blend with native Jazz sounds to form a unique style of music in Alabama and to discuss the role of music in the American civil rights movement. See the Old Live Oak Cemetery, where America's first black congressman, Benjamin Sterling Turner, is buried. Continue on to Montgomery (1 hour drive) following the Selma-to-Montgomery Trail. En route, stop at the Viola Liuzzo historic marker, where white housewife and mother of five, Viola Liuzzo, was shot and killed by four Klansmen while giving black marchers a ride back to Selma following the Selma-to-Montgomery march. before transferring to your hotel to check in. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Overnight: Renaissance Montgomery (B, L)

Day 3: Montgomery to Atlanta, Georgia

This morning, visit the Legacy Museum, built on the site of a former warehouse where black slaves were imprisoned, and explore the legacy of black America from slavery to modern-day mass incarceration. Visit the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, known as the "Lynching Memorial," the nation's first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved black people, the terror of lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color who continue to be burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence. Have lunch with a representative from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a non-profit organization that monitors the activities of domestic hate groups and other extremists groups around the country, publishes investigative reports, trains law enforcement officers, and shares key intelligence and analysis to the media and public. Visit the Civil Rights Memorial, dedicated to those killed in the struggle for the equal and integrated treatment of all people, regardless of race, during the 1954-1968 civil rights movement. See the Alabama State Capitol, the birthplace of the Confederacy and the final stop along the Selma-to-Montgomery march. Stop at the Rosa Parks Museum, an active memorial to the life of civil rights icon Rosa Parks, housing information, exhibits, and artifacts from the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott. Then, travel to Atlanta (2.5 hour drive) with a discussion on peaceful activism and the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King en route. Upon arrival in Atlanta, settle into your hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure.

Overnight: Atlanta Marriott Marquis (B, L)

Day 4: Atlanta

Visit Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Dr. King delivered his first sermon in 1947 and served as associate minister and later co-pastor with his father. Visit the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, consisting of Dr. King's boyhood home, a museum that chronicles the American civil rights movement, and a firehouse displaying an exhibit on the desegregation of the Atlanta Fire Department. Stop at the King Center (The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change), pay your respects to Dr. King's legacy, and learn how his legacy continues today. Over lunch, sit down with a representative from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and learn about their role in several historic civil rights activities including the March on Washington, the Selma Voting Rights Campaign, and the March to Montgomery as well as their modern day mission to educate

youth and adults in the areas of personal responsibility, leadership potential, and community service to ensure economic justice and civil rights and to eradicate racism wherever it exists. This afternoon, visit the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, a museum that connects the American civil rights movement to today's global human rights movements, from women's rights to immigration to child labor to LGBTQ+ issues. Permanent exhibits include a timeline about the civil rights movement, Dr. King's personal papers, and a lunch counter similar to the ones where black students staged sit-ins demanding to be served food alongside whites. This evening, relax and unwind with dinner and a live blues or jazz performance.

Overnight: Atlanta Marriott Marquis (B, L, D)

Day 5: Atlanta to Augusta

Begin the day with a visit to the APEX (African American Panoramic Experience) Museum, devoted entirely to African-American history as a means of promoting cultural awareness and the social contributions of African-Americans in Georgia. Then, set off through the scenic Oconee National Forest toward Augusta (2.25 hour drive). Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, followed by a visit to the Lucy Craft Laney Museum, a small local home turned museum, displaying the legacy of a prominent African-American educator and founder of the first African American school in Augusta. Continue on to Redcliffe Plantation Historic Site, for a private guided tour of the former estate of James Henry Hammond, cotton planter and politician, three generations of his descendants, and the numerous African-American families who worked at the site as slaves and later as free men and women. Explore the experiences of the enslaved, discuss the institution of slavery, and reflect on the historical experiences and impact of the white and black families who lived and worked on the plantation, as you tour the mansion, slave quarters, and idyllic magnolia-lined lane. Then, settle into your hotel for a night of reflection and relaxation.

Overnight: Partridge Inn, Augusta (B, L)

Day 6: Augusta to Charleston, South Carolina

Arise early this morning and continue on to Charleston (3 hour drive), stopping en route in Orangeburg, the center of South Carolina's desegregation movement from 1950 to 1972, and site of the Orangeburg massacre, a civil rights protest at South Carolina State University (SC State) in 1968 that turned deadly when highway patrolmen opened fire on 200 black student protestors, killing three and wounding 28. Compare and contrast the legacy of civil rights protests from the 60s and 70s with current events today. Upon arrival, enjoy lunch in a local restaurant and then set off on a tour of historic Charleston, exploring the history of African Americans from slavery to modern day, including the Old Slave Mart Museum, a converted slave auction gallery that tells the story of Charleston's role in the domestic inter-state slave trade from 1856 to 1863, and Gadsden's Wharf, the first destination for an estimated 100,000 enslaved Africans during the peak of the international slave trade. Meet with a director from the International African American Museum, currently being constructed at Gadsden's Wharf, for a discussion on race relations in Charleston and how communities in the south and nation-wide can build bridges toward racial empathy and understanding. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure before meeting up with the group for a farewell dinner at an historic Charleston restaurant.

Overnight: The Vendue, Charleston (B, L, D)

Day 7: Departure from Charleston

After breakfast this morning, meet with a director from the Center for the Study of Slavery at the College of Charleston and examine the impact of slavery and race-related issues in Charleston and the surrounding region. Then, visit the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission and try your hand in African sweetgrass basket making, while learning about the importance of memory and the preservation of traditions for the Gullah Geechee people, descendants of enslaved Africans throughout the lower Atlantic coast. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure for beach time or explore Charleston on your own before departing for home today. *(B)*