

Free, Fun and Fantastic Group Activities in Amish Country

Free, Fun and Fantastic! What more could you ask for? Explore the many options from a complete list of activities that are perfect to fill out your itinerary without adding to your tour price. Whether you're planning a short trip or a multi-day adventure, these creative stops are the perfect addition.

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS OF MADE IN AMISH COUNTRY

RV Factory Tour, Destination Wide (60 minutes)

Welcome to the "RV Capital of the World"! Over 80% of the world's inventory of Travel Trailers, 5th Wheels, Class C & A Motorhomes, Truck Campers and Fold-Downs are all manufactured in this area. Your group will enjoy a plant tour through one of the numerous RV manufacturing facilities and see firsthand how these "moving homes" are built.

Ayr Kitchen Cabinet Factory Tour, Nappanee (60 minutes)

The Ayr story began in 1965, in the heart of the Amish community, in a small intersection called "Ayr" near Nappanee, Indiana. Founder David Miller Jr.'s dream was to build truly custom cabinetry to the highest standards possible. From those modest beginnings and with the same vision, Ayr Cabinet Company has established itself as a leader in the Custom Cabinet marketplace. As you tour the facility, you will see the vision and passion realized as seasoned craftsmen, with years of experience, pour their heart into every piece they build.



Silver Star Leather, Shipshewana (45 minutes)

Step into the rustic rural shop of Loren and Dorcas Yoder and the first thing that greets you is the irresistible aroma of finely cured leather. This is no assembly line. Hides hang from the walls; exotic skins drape Loren's workbench alongside tools for cutting, stamping and sewing. This Old Order Amish couple work with expertly tanned cowhides to rare skins like shark, python, eel and alligator. All are designed with expert craftsmanship, making each piece a unique work of art and a durable testament to fine workmanship. Watch as custom belts are hand cut. Learn how the Yoder's seek out the best materials to fashion into belts, purses, wallets and other leather goods. You'll leave with great memories and (we promise!) at least one piece of handcrafted perfection.



Teaberry Wood Products, Middlebury (60 minutes)

This unique little family-run wood shop nestled on a country road in the heart of Amish Country showcases exclusive hand-crafted walnut, cherry and other hardwood items. Whimsical wooden puzzles and beautiful wooden nativities are made on site as well as unique hand woven wooden baskets. Groups are welcome to take a shop tour and watch a demonstration on assembling wooden baskets. Be sure to allow time to browse the shop and pick up items not found anywhere else.

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NOTE: Offerings subject to change without advance notice.

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BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS OF MADE IN AMISH COUNTRY (CONT)

Sonshine Baskets, Millersburg (30 minutes)

Weave some fun into your tour with a stop at Sonshine Baskets in Millersburg, an authentic Amish Country handcraft experience. Lovely hand-woven baskets of every shape and for every purpose fill this Amish owned and operated country shop located on the family farm of Calvin & Anna Yoder. Watch as family members demonstrate and talk about the processes of turning plain reed into a beautiful yet functional work of art. Every family member is involved from weaving to making the fabric liners, from hand-staining to adding the leather handles that adorn many of the baskets. As Anna says, "We weave our way through life one day at a time!" After learning first hand, take time to shop for your own piece of authentic "made in Amish Country" basket.

Lippert Components – Interiors Plant 50, Goshen (60 minutes)

Your Journey Begins Here in the RV Capital! As the leading supplier of components to the recreational vehicle and residential housing as well as adjacent industries, Lippert Components has 10,000 team members working together to bring innovative product and service solutions to customers every day. Guided by three generations of family leadership and headquartered in the RV Capital of the World, Elkhart County, Lippert is thrilled to take you on a journey through the RV furniture and mattress making building on their senior friendly walking factory tour. You will get to see first-hand the processes of building mattresses and furniture in a state-of-the-art facility with focus on "Lean, Leadership and Safety." You will get to hear about Lippert's ground-breaking volunteer and community service initiatives and see how their "Everybody Matters" corporate initiative plays a heavy role in how they hire and live day by day.

TASTES AND TREATS ALONG THE HERITAGE TRAIL



Sample at the Wakarusa Dime Store, Wakarusa (30 minutes)

Satisfy anyone's sweet tooth at the Wakarusa Dime Store, famous for old-fashioned candy treats. The dime store's Jumbo Jellybeans are famous - they ship over 35 tons per year throughout the world. Free samples of their most popular treats are offered. Pick a favorite. Hot cinnamon? Black Licorice? Orange? Grape? Plus, the dime store offers a wide variety of nostalgia candy including Necco wafers, Chuckles, Buns, and Boston Baked Beans to name a few. After all of that sugar you may want to stop in the nostalgic Wakarusa Hardware store with its floor to ceiling "wall of 1,000 drawers" for a free peak at history.

Heritage Ridge Creamery, Middlebury (30 minutes)

Watch skilled Amish cheese makers practice their traditional art producing award-winning cheese. All of the cheese produced here is made with milk from local Amish farms. You can sample your favorites before you make a purchase!



Yoder's Popcorn, Shipshewana (30 minutes)

In 1936, Rufus Yoder started growing popcorn on his family farm. In the Amish custom, he shared his excess crop with his neighbors and friends. They told their friends and neighbors about the excellent quality of Yoder's Popcorn, and soon a business was born. In 1999, Yoder's Popcorn was purchased by Rufus' great niece, Sharon, along with her husband Richard and their youngest son, Russell. Together, they continue to provide the Yoder customers with the same excellent quality and service to which they are accustomed. Groups enjoy a free sample of their renowned Tiny Tender Popcorn while they shop in a popcorn lover's paradise.

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TASTES AND TREATS ALONG THE HERITAGE TRAIL (CONT)

E&S Bulk Food Store, Shipshewana (45 minutes)

Shop like the Amish in a bulk foods store with over 50 varieties of cheese, homemade baked goods, cold meats, soup mixes, candies, spices, snacks, nuts, cooking supplies and a large selection of gift items - all at a discount and in one convenient location.

Dutch Country Market, Middlebury (30 minutes)

Meet the Lehman family and their six children at their noodle making shop and Country Store. Watch as Katie's homemade noodles take shape right before your eyes. Observe honey bees at work in glass hives. Shop for natural real honey and other beehive products along with jams, salsa, popcorn and more.



Rise 'n Roll Bakery, Middlebury (30 minutes)

A visit to Rise 'n Roll wouldn't be complete without picking up some of their famous donuts! Their secret recipe yields donuts that melt in your mouth while still bursting with flavor, especially the original Cinnamon Caramel donut. Made fresh and preservative free every morning, these donuts always disappear quickly and many won't even make it home! Also, offering a wide variety of freshly baked, made from scratch, preservative free baked goods. Free cups of coffee and donut samples for each group member when reservations are made in advance.

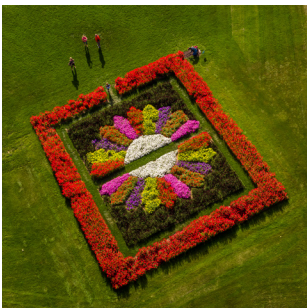
Olympia Candy Kitchen Shopping for Chocolates served to Presidents, Goshen (30 minutes)

The Olympia Candy Kitchen has been welcoming visitors for almost a century in its unchanged location in downtown Goshen, Indiana remaining a family run business, passed through 4 generations over 100 years. All of their candies are handmade from scratch including the famous Turtles, which are made with their own home-made caramel, plus the famous Chocolate-Covered Cherries, which were so popular that they were served at the Inaugural Balls of both President Reagan and President George H.W. Bush. They also offer a wide variety of the highest quality hand-dipped sweets, such as creams and chocolate covered peanuts plus a great selection of gummy candies, jelly beans, licorice, and other non-chocolate treats.

GARDENS GALORE AND OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Krider "World's Fair" Garden, Middlebury (30 minutes)

Take time to stroll through the "World's Fair" garden in Middlebury that blends a wide variety of plants, shrubs, trees and waterfalls with area history. The gardens were originally designed by Krider Nurseries for display at the 1933/34 Chicago World's Fair. The community restored those original garden's elements for future generations to enjoy.



Quilt Gardens, Destination Wide (15 minutes to multi-days and stops)

Designated a TOP 100 EVENT by the American Bus Association for seven years, this one-of-a-kind FREE experience starts annually May 30 and continues to September 15. We've packed 150,000 plants, with over 1 million blooms into 17 giant gardens planted in the shape of Quilt Patterns. Add in 21 hand-painted giant quilt murals all combined in welcoming communities along the 90-mile Heritage Trail and you have a tour that touches the heart, soul and all the senses. With the added bonus of exciting new options, events, exceptional hands-on activities, dining and shopping, the Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail sets the stage for an exceptional group tour packed with fun and sure to entice new clients. Free escort notes are provided for an "on your own" experience.

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GARDENS GALORE AND OUTDOOR ADVENTURES (CONT)



Calendar Garden by Elkhart County Parks Self-Guided Walking Tour, New Paris (30 minutes)

The Calendar Garden nestled within River Preserve County Park is an enchanting showpiece filled with blooming colors and full moons. Walk under the wisteria filled arbor onto circular paths that lead through the garden where bricks mark the days of the month, plants show the cycle of the seasons and charming gazebos symbolize the solstice and equinox. Blooms progress in a clockwise pattern, and tucked in between plants are elements of time. The garden's centerpiece is a pond filled with lush water lilies and just like the seasons, the views in the garden are ever-changing.

Linton's Enchanted Gardens, Elkhart (30 minutes to 90 minutes)

Explore the many themed gardens of this new, large garden center including the Japanese Tea House, Southwestern garden with Mine Shaft, Victorian House, Dutch Gardens and Grist Mill all at no charge. Explore the 25,000 square foot gift shop emporium for home décor, ladies apparel, gardening items and Vera Bradley. Enjoy a gourmet coffee, glass of wine or grab lunch at the reasonably priced on-site Garden Café.

QUILTS, CULTURE, CHURCHES AND ECLECTIC COLLECTIONS



St. John's Episcopal Church, Elkhart (30 minutes)

Established in 1895, St. John's Episcopal Church in Elkhart, Indiana, has been a classic example of Gothic architecture for over one hundred years. The church's floor plan is in the shape of a cross. Its many features include; a square bell tower, beautiful stained glass windows illustrating parables, a Victorian brass filigree pulpit, a bracketed vaulted ceiling with suspended finial acorns and carved grape clusters. A focal point is the beautifully paneled and carved altar which is framed by reredos. Be sure to look behind the reredos to discover the magnificent world class Casavant pipe organ. A work of art itself, St. John's houses many fine examples of superior wood craft as well as twentieth century art.

Quilt Shop Hop, Destination Wide (one hour to all day)

Amish Country is home to over 100,000 bolts of quilting fabric found in a dozen or more quilt shops throughout the destination. From the famous Yoder's Department store featuring over 12,000 bolts alone to the popular and colorful Lolly's Fabrics in downtown Shipshewana quilters will find numerous fabrics, kits, patterns, notions, books and creative ideas in this area. Take the backroads to country quilt shops such as Calico Point, Lavendar Patch and even visit the only shop offering RV fabric in Elkhart at Sew Common Threads. Hands on programs for an additional fee can be also added on to your shopping time inside the Lavender Patch Quilt Shop in Bristol or the Pumpkinvine Quilt Shop in Middlebury.



Classic Car Cruise-In at Das Dutchman Essenhaus, Middlebury (60 minutes)

Get a "blast from the past" as you enjoy this weekly event from the first week of May thru the last of September on the Essenhaus grounds. Compare makes, models, motors and memories as you explore on your own the numerous vehicles. Most Thursday evenings over 200 and sometimes 300 classic cars are found on the grounds. Not interested? Browse The Village Shops for the latest in fashion, home décor, games, furniture and baked goods.

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QUILTS, CULTURE, CHURCHES AND ECLECTIC COLLECTIONS (CONT)



Stephenson's Ladies Apparel Group Presentations, Elkhart (45 minutes)

Since 1931, Stephenson's of Elkhart has offered the very finest in women's fashions. The store has grown to include sportswear, dress, coat, shoe and accessory departments. In this age of super-stores, Stephenson's has steadfastly offered, the epitome of personal service and ageless fashion direction. Groups can choose from any of the following fashion focused presentations prior to shopping for the latest offered at great prices, discount racks and specials for groups. Choose from:

Dressing for Your Body Type: This presentation would include tips on selecting flattering styles for different body types. It focuses on the use of patterns, textures, and colors for different shapes and sizes. They also look at how to emphasize and disguise your strong and weak spots.

Shopping Habits That Make Sense: This presentation focuses on pointers for how to stretch your budget, and make your shopping dollars go further. Tips include where, how & when to shop for certain essentials, along with when to splurge and when to save!

Closet Organization: The best tricks on cleaning out your closet and making room for new pieces! This presentation focuses on the use of easy tricks to figure out what you're not wearing anymore and when it's time to donate.

Jeans!: This presentation focuses on different fits, styles, and washes of jeans. What's the difference between regular jeans and jeggings? Featured is the Booty Lift Jean by Democracy (a local favorite) and the comfort panel pull-on jean by JAG.

Accessorize: Features how to accessorize with scarves, handbags, and jewelry. How to use accessories to add a "pop of color", make a statement, or enhance an already statement –making outfit.



Hoosier Cabinet Museum at Coppes Commons, Nappanee (60 minutes)

Nappanee's colorful history comes alive when visiting Coppes Commons. Originally the factory for Coppes Cabinets that once produced the famous "Hoosier Cabinet," the 100,000 s.f. renovated factory now houses a variety of small businesses perfect for shopping for locally made, hand crafted and fresh baked. Groups are given a fascinating historical glimpse into the Coppes Kitchens, on a self-guided tour, once ordered by Frank Sinatra and President John F. Kennedy, while touring this rustic and rambling brick structure. See the large Hoosier Cabinet museum with a variety of styles, makes, and models of the famous cabinet all on display in one area. Guided tours available for a nominal fee.

Topeka General Store (30 minutes)

Welcome to the charming and rural small town community of Topeka, Indiana and the Topeka General Store. This large, bright store is located in the heart of this small town farming community. You'll shop where the Amish and locals shop for everything from Amish clothes and black hats, to kitchen wares, home décor, games, toys, garden items and lawn care. Each group member receives a 10% discount off of purchases.

Topeka Pharmacy (30 minutes)

Walk across the street during your time in downtown Topeka to the Topeka Pharmacy where you're sure to be welcomed with a smile. This unique place offers bolts of beautiful fabrics and notions, craft projects, gift items, Amish made quilts, all items expected in a pharmacy plus fresh flowers. It's a pleasant surprise in this quaint town square.

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SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP



Shipshewana Flea Market & Auction, Shipshewana (60 minutes to three hours)

The Shipshewana Flea Market is a do-not-miss Hoosier tradition with nearly 900 booths in an open-air market covering 100 acres. The vendors are open 8:00 am-5:00 pm every Tuesday and Wednesday, May through September. Also, open Memorial Day, 4th of July & Labor Day! Vendors offer a variety of products and truly have something for everyone - quirky novelties, fresh seasonal produce, crafts, home decor, dollar items, clothes, garden supplies, cleaning supplies, beauty essentials, paper goods, jewelry, snacks, accessories, games, books, toys, furniture, baked goods, signs, silk flowers, t-shirts, pet supplies and everything in between. Open rain or shine. There are food courts, a sit-down restaurant and rest areas throughout the market. The antique auction barn, open Wednesdays year-round, has up to 10 rings simultaneously auctioning antiques and collectibles. The livestock barn features cattle auctions open to the public on Wednesday's and horse auctions open to the public on Friday's. Guests can also stroll the short couple of blocks into downtown Shipshewana to browse over 90+ retail stores for additional shopping.

Davis Mercantile, Shipshewana // Old Bag Factory, Goshen (60 minutes to three hours per location)

Take your "power shopping" indoors to one or all of these three Amish Country "malls". Each offer multiple booths, floor, and shops all at one easy location. Enjoy your visit in the beautifully timber framed Davis Mercantile complete with elevators to transport you and your bags up and down four floors. From the quilts to the lady's apparel, to the home décor, candies and hot-out-of-the-oven pretzels...there is something for everyone inside the Davis Mercantile. Artistic shopping is found inside the restored Old Bag Factory in Goshen. Rustic hardwoods and handcrafted pottery studios, Amish furniture, homemade chocolates to name just a few of the surprises found in this multi-level structure.

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