



# GROUP EXPERIENCES



#INAmishCountry & #INElkhartCo

[AmishCountryTours.org](http://AmishCountryTours.org)



## Group friendly, flexible and ready to GO!

The Elkhart County, IN Convention and Visitors Bureau welcomes the opportunity to help you plan a full menu of group friendly activities.

FREE expert advice, creative itineraries and over 30 years of experience in customized group travel planning is what you'll get. We provide all the resources you need for a memorable, extended stay, including:

- Complimentary Travel Guides & maps
- Itinerary enhancements and travel tips
- Escort notes
- Special arrangement coordination
- Group lodging, dining and event options
- FAM tours and site visits
- Web links
- Photography, flyer shells and posters
- PowerPoint templates and DVD's
- Hotel bidding service

For personalized service, contact:

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c: 574.903.1148 | e: [Sonya@AmishCountry.org](mailto:Sonya@AmishCountry.org)

## Getting to Amish Country? It's as easy as pie!

Using a network of scenic highways, your group can arrive in the serenity of Amish Country with less than a day's journey from the Midwest's major metropolitan areas.

Amish Country is easily accessible from the Indiana Toll Road (I-80/90), State Road 120, State Road 19, US 6 and US 20.

Elkhart and LaGrange counties, home to the very popular group tour destinations of Nappanee, Middlebury and Shipshewana, are conveniently located just 100 miles east of Chicago in Northern Indiana.

Hundreds of groups from all over the country spend an average of two to three days enjoying the sites and sounds of Amish Country.

## Traveling on I-80/90?

Amish Country's highlights include nationally recognized destinations and off-the-beaten-path surprises. But one thing they all have in common - year-round - is easy and convenient easy-on, easy off access from the Indiana Toll Road (I-80/90).

The Indiana Toll Road, the Midwest's major east / west artery, skirts the northern edge of Amish Country. The convenience and concentration of attractions en route offers an ideal break for group tours passing through.

Whatever your destination, I-80/90 Exit 92 is the best location for a stop along the Indiana Toll Road. It offers the largest selection of franchise lodging and dining on the Indiana Toll Road.

- More than a dozen restaurants and over 1,400 hotel rooms with names you know and trust, including Cracker Barrel, Olive Garden, Staybridge Suites and Hilton Garden Inn. *For a full listing, visit [Exit92.org](http://Exit92.org).*



### Mileage to Amish Country

Chicago	100m/225km	Milwaukee	200m/322km
Cleveland	230m/370km	Pittsburgh	360m/580km
Detroit	165m/266km	St. Louis	390m/628km
Indianapolis	165m/266km	Toronto	440m/708km

# Group Friendly Lodging



## Elkhart at I-80/90, Exit 92

	Drivers Rate	Baggage Handling	# of Rooms	# of Non-Smoking Rooms	# of Handicap Rooms	Comp Policy	Welcome Reception	Indoor Pool	Outdoor Pool	Continental Breakfast	Wi-Fi	Restaurant	Bar	Pets Welcome
Baymont Inn / 574.264.7222	Y	\$3 T	123	112	5	1/20	•			H	•			•
Best Western Inn & Suites / 574.262.8761	Y	\$3 T	60	*	*	1/15		•		H	•			
Comfort Suites - North / 574.206.1555	*	\$3 TR	62	62	4	1/20	•	•		H	•			
Country Inn & Suites / 574.206.8488	Y	\$5 R	50	48	2	2/20	•			H	•			
Econo Lodge / 574.262.0540	*	*	35	35	2	*				•	•			•
Fairfield Inn & Suites / 574.970.1688	*	*	85	85	*	*		•		H	•			
Hampton Inn / 574.264.2525	*	\$3 T	62	56	4	*		•		H	•			
Hilton Garden Inn / 574.970.4444	Y	*	79	79	4	1/20		•		•	•	•	•	
Holiday Inn Express & Suites / <b>OPENING SUMMER 2018!</b>														
La Quinta Inns & Suites / 574.262.0014	*	*	63	63	4	*		•		H	•			
Staybridge Suites / 574.970.8488	*	\$3 PP	95	95	6	1/20	•	•		H	•			•

## Elkhart South

Comfort Suites - South / 574.293.9390	*	*	53	53	4	*		•		H	•			
Holiday Inn Express & Suites / 574.296.1110	Y	\$5 TB	72	44	4	% OFF		•		H	•			

## Goshen

Comfort Inn / 574.533.0200	*	\$5 TB	75	75	*	*				H	•			
Quality Inn & Suites / 574.534.3133	*	*	92	92	4	*	•	•	•	H	•			
Hampton Inn / 574.533.8800	*	*	66	*	*	*		•		H	•			
Holiday Inn Express & Suites / 574.533.8800	Y	\$5 TB	76	48	4	% OFF		•		H	•			

## Middlebury

Essenhaus Inn and Conference Center / 574.825.9447	*	\$3 TB	89	89	4	1/15		•		H	•	•		
Hampton Inn & Suites / 574.822.0288	*	\$5 TR	74	74	5	1/20		•		H	•			

## Nappanee

Inn at Amish Acres / 574.773.2011	Y	\$3. <sup>50</sup> T	64	64	3	1/15	•		•	H	•			
Countryside Inn / 574.773.5999	Y	\$3. <sup>50</sup> T	66	66	3	1/15	•		•	H	*			

H = Hot Breakfast \* = ask for Details Y = Drivers Rate Available T = Round Trip R = Per Room B = Per Bag PP = Per Person

PLEASE NOTE: Rates are subject to change and may be higher for Notre Dame home football games, special events and holidays.  
Properties listed below provide specialized group services. Visit [AmishCountry.org](http://AmishCountry.org) for a full listing of available properties.  
The Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau does not maintain responsibility for lodging information contained herein.



## Top Group Attractions



### **Amish Acres Heritage Resort**, Nappanee, IN

p: 800.800.4942 or 574.773.4188 ext 240  
beckymaust@amishacres.com | AmishAcres.com

An immersive, all-inclusive Amish Country experience spread over 80 rural acres - a not-to-be-missed, group friendly destination in the heart of Nappanee that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Tour the historic farm and experience group exclusive hands on activities including Shoofly Pie Making or the popular Candy Kitchen
- Dine beneath the hand-hewn beams in the century-old Amish-built Restaurant Barn
- Take your seat in the 400-seat Round Barn Theatre for Broadway style classic musicals
- Relax and recharge at The Inn at Amish Acres, the host hotel for Amish Acres
- Browse four on-site specialty shops packed with sweets, cheese, smoked meats, quilts, baked goods and more
- Each August, enjoy the Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival
  - an ABA Top 100 Event
- Ring in the New Year with a special musical cabaret, dinner, Broadway musical, chocolate buffet and fireworks at Midnight.

### **Das Dutchman Essenhaus**, Middlebury, IN

p: 800.455.9471 or 574.825.0052  
hannah@essenhaus.com | Essenhaus.com

An unforgettable Amish Country experience, nationally recognized for its restaurant and bakery (a pie-lover's paradise with 30 delicious varieties made daily). On-site shops, a charming and comfortable inn, horse-drawn carriage rides and unique "groups-only" interactive opportunities round out your stay!

- Dine in Indiana's largest restaurant - with room for over 1,100 guests
- Enjoy traditional family-style meals or menu options for lighter appetites
- Shop for truly unique gifts, home accents, baked goods, specialty items, souvenirs, and accessories - coupons provided!
- Well-appointed and spacious guest room accommodations with all the amenities you appreciate and enjoy at the Essenhaus Inn and Conference Center (breakfast included)
- Stop by both the Essenhaus Quilt Garden and Mural, one of 27 stops on the official Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail
- Enjoy an enriching, creative and family-friendly entertainment performance inside the intimate Heritage Hall



## Top Group Attractions



### **Shipshewana Flea Market**, Shipshewana, IN

p: 260.768.4129

[lora@tradingplaceamerica.com](mailto:lora@tradingplaceamerica.com) | [TradingPlaceAmerica.com](http://TradingPlaceAmerica.com)

The Shipshewana Auction & Flea Market is the Midwest's largest featuring nearly 900 open-air booths on 40 acres! Your group will enjoy shopping 26 gigantic flea market aisles finding bargains on home décor, clothing, tools, crafts, books, beauty supplies, furniture, produce, and everything imaginable. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8am - 5pm, May thru September.

- Free admission & motorcoach parking
- Exclusive coupons to use at flea market booths
- Reusable shopping tote for motorcoach driver and group leader
- Greeter to welcome you to the market
- Shuttle to electric scooter rental available
- Free group "Shop Hop" activity with door prize
- Stay in our Amish-inspired Farmstead Inn & Conference Center directly across the street, within walking distance to downtown
- Participate in Wednesday Antique & Livestock Auctions Year-Round
- Enjoy year-round events including our NEW Indoor Market, open October - December 1

### **Coppes Commons**, Nappanee, IN

p: 574.773.0002 (for reservations)

[mike@coppescommons.com](mailto:mike@coppescommons.com) | [CoppesCommons.com](http://CoppesCommons.com)

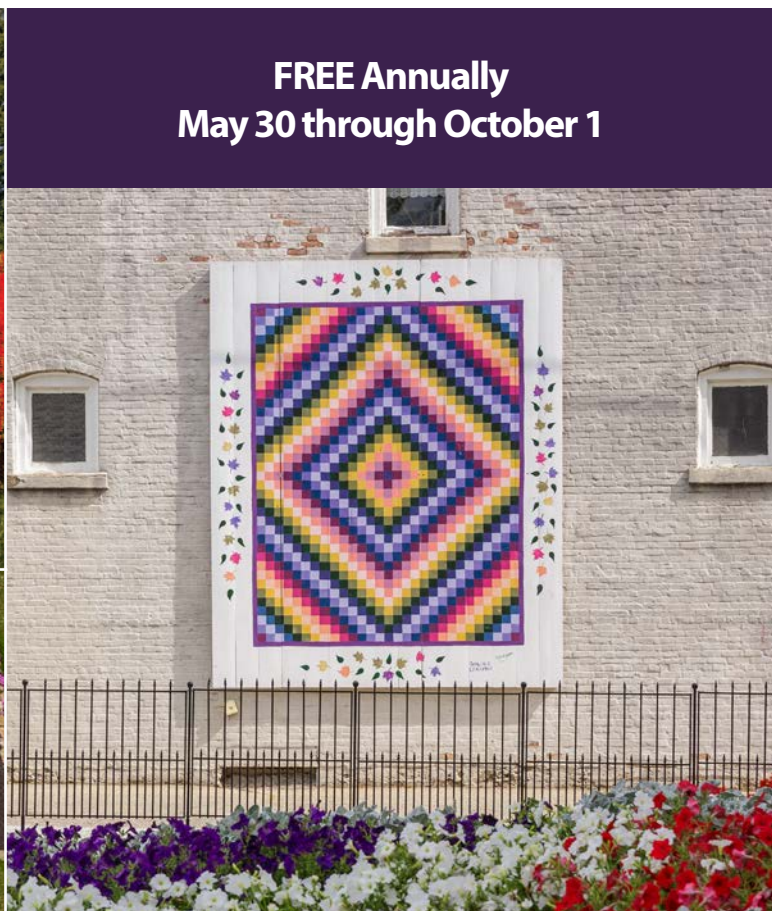
Originally the factory for Coppes Cabinets that once produced the famous "Hoosier Cabinet," the renovated factory now houses a variety of small businesses perfect for shopping for locally made, hand crafted and fresh baked.

- Taste "out-of-this-world" ice cream at Rocket Science, which uses 320° below zero liquid nitrogen to flash freeze tasty, made-to-order ice cream perfection
- Visit the historic Hoosier Cabinet "museum/exhibit" with Coppes Commons' resident historian
- Meet a local artist and "stay at home Mom" as you personally paint your own rustic cabinet door with a Hoosier Cabinet and Indiana history design theme





**FREE Annually  
May 30 through October 1**



# Quilt Gardens

*... along the Heritage Trail*

**Over a million glorious blooms in  
18 super-sized Quilt Gardens *plus*  
21 handpainted Quilt Murals in the  
unique and welcoming communities  
of Elkhart, Goshen, Middlebury,  
Nappanee, Bristol & Wakarusa.**



**#QuiltGardens**

**QuiltGardens.com**



## Group-Friendly Events



### Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival

Nappanee; [AmishAcres.com](http://AmishAcres.com)  
August 2 - 5, 2018; August 1 - 4, 2019

ABA Top 100 Event for eight years!  
This nationally-recognized, award winning annual event is a shopper's delight!

- 350 juried artists and crafters plus 4 stages of entertainment included in admission
- Festival food booths with pre-paid lunch vouchers available



### Elkhart Jazz Festival

Elkhart; [ElkhartJazzFestival.com](http://ElkhartJazzFestival.com)  
June 22 - 24, 2018; June 21 - 23, 2019

- Festival showcases 100+ performers and draws an audience of 15,000 to celebrate America's classic art form - jazz
- Group-exclusive passes start at \$30pp
- Jazz Speakeasy cocktail hour and tour of Beaux Arts Mansion, Ruthmere, offers 1920s swinging fun (\$40pp)
- Start the jazz weekend early listening to a live jazz concert at 'Groovin' in the Gardens' (June 21, 2018) at Wellfield Botanic Gardens



**Have you had clients asking about touring Amish Country of Northern Indiana but you've never seen it yourself ... and have no idea where to begin?**

Or have you been sending groups to Shipshewana or Nappanee for years and wonder "what am I missing that should be added"?

Is it time to get new ideas for something different and not "Amish" so your business can grow beyond the already popular Amish Country tours?

If the answer is YES to any of these questions we invite tour professionals, motorcoach operators, travel companies and group planners to participate in an opportunity to experience Amish Country "up close and personal" to meet your business objectives.

Three options available include:

- **FAM-on-Demand**

These FAMs are planned with individuality in mind. We invite you and your fellow organization tour planners to work with us on a one-on-one FAM tour which provides the ultimate level of personalization and attention to specific details for your tour planning needs.

- **'Field Trips' for tour professionals**

These 'field trips' are for those that live within a few hours drive of Amish Country for bite-sized touring perfect for special events and daytrips maximizing your time and proximity.

- **Official Professional Organized FAM Tours**

We invite you to join other tour planners on two different date options to experience themed special events and group friendly stops as we showcase examples of overnight suggested theme tours and itineraries. Join us on the **Official 2018 Tour Planner FAM Tour** (July 31 - August 3, 2018; fees apply).

Email [sonya@amishcountry.org](mailto:sonya@amishcountry.org) or call 800.262.8161 to take advantage of any of these opportunities today!

# Guided Group **EXPERIENCES**



# Down the Road Tours

*Offering 18 years tour planning experience  
throughout entire region*



## Brown Bag Tour ... along the Heritage Trail

- Travel the Heritage Trail, a 90 mile scenic winding loop exploring welcoming communities, area attractions and Amish life.
- Step-on Guides narrate a group experience on gravel and paved roads telling the history of the area, traditions and customs.
- Each tour group member receives a "Brown Bag" and a special treat from each unique, locally owned shop along the Heritage Trail (multiple options to choose from).
- Seasonal Heritage Trail tours include Fall Treats and Christmas Stocking Stuffer tours.
- **NEW! THREE FUN STOPS AND OPTIONS!**  
Shop where the Amish shop and visit authentic buggy makers, camel dairy farmers and coffin makers.

## Real Indiana Amish Country Housewives

Get a first-hand look at a day in the life of Amish women. Learn how these ladies do household chores without electrical appliances and run their businesses without modern technology. Enjoy a cinnamon roll demo with Elaine or Mary Lou. Visit Carolyn's home for a haystack lunch and a peanut butter crumb pie making demo. Chat with a basket weaver about her thriving business. Meet an Amish school teacher and find out how she manages her classes in a one-room school. Everyone gets a whoopie pie to take home. At the end of the day, groups go home with a renewed respect for these women who live a simple life, yet they're anything but simple.

## Other tours include:

- **Munch a Bunch in Amish Country**  
Delight in every bite on this tour that samples the culinary specialties of Amish Country. On the list - an Amish bakery known for its addictive cinnamon-caramel donuts and an Amish cheese factory with tasting among others. Top off this food foray with a cooking demo and hearty meal in an Amish home complete with a hefty slice of just-baked pie. It's the perfect end to a delish tour.
- **Pieces, Pies & Posies Tour**  
Enjoy a fabulous fabric shop hop where group members collect yummy quilt-fabric "pie" charms. Add gigantic portions of fun plus exceptional hands-on activities, events, dining and shopping.

# Great Life Tours

*Offering unparalleled levels of group services*



## My Amish Life

- Have you ever wondered what it's like to run a household without electricity or live without owning a car? How do the Amish host a wedding for 800 guests or keep their house so clean? This tour answers those questions and so many more.
- Hear the story of the Amish from the Amish themselves.
- Learn about new cultures without traveling abroad and gain new perspectives on these gentle peace-loving people.
- Hear the story of the Haystack lunch then enjoy this popular Amish fundraiser meal.
- Shop the town square of the former "Slab Town".

## Heritage Trail Backroads

Get ready to explore the nationally recognized Heritage Trail with a guide who has Amish and Mennonite roots. It's like visiting another culture without traveling abroad! You'll start at the bakery to find out about Amish crack, donuts that is ... Then we'll make our way to see the workshop where the Teaberry Collection is created. We'll take the Amish Turnpike to the noodle and cheese shops where you'll sample to your hearts content. Consider adding lunch at the Yoder's for a delicious Thresher meal and her fabulous pies. Then we make our way into town to the Amish Trader Joe's before saying farewell to your guide at the end of a memorable day.

## Other tours include:

- **Grab Bag Tour**  
We'll supply the bag and the treats while you grab the fun! Every stop is a treat when your guide hands you goodies at every stop. We've added a twist offering colorful bags for a nod to the seasons. We'll visit Amish artisan shops, the bakery and a buggy maker too. You'll enjoy a scrumptious Thresher meal in an Amish home on us.
- **Tour for a Cause**  
Support the cause that matters to you most. You'll raise money for the non-profit of your choice with a donation from us. For every seat purchased we'll donate \$5 on your behalf. We'll work with you to customize an itinerary to match the tour to your cause. This is a twist on our popular Grab Bag Tour.



# Cathy's Countryside Tours

*Offering creative and unforgettable experiences*



## Tasty Delights

- Explore the food and culture of the Amish in Northern Indiana on this fun and delicious tour! The essence of Amish cooking is in the farm-to-table experience. This tour gives you the opportunity to engage with farmers growing the food, millers grinding the wheat and families preparing the meal.
- Delight your senses with the flavors of the area. Savor a sweet bite of a cinnamon caramel donut.
- Watch as wheat, eggs and milk become flour, noodles and cheese.
- Smell the hand-crafted fruit butters made one small batch at a time.
- See the popcorn in the field become a tasty treat. Taste natural, pure, simple and delicious foods while you are here.
- Bring home your favorites!

## Countryside Makers

Welcome to a place of invention, creativity and resourcefulness. Here in Northern Indiana we love company and can hardly wait to introduce you to our local makers. From chimes to wooden baskets to noodles to quilts, this tour immerses you in the Amish culture, where life is natural, straightforward and easy to understand. You'll experience up-close-and-personal visits with the popcorn grower, RV builder and leather-worker to learn about their crafts. Be welcomed with a smile and warm hospitality on an authentic Amish farmstead as you experience true Amish cooking with a traditional Thresher's Meal and participate in a quilting bee.

## Other tours include:

- **Patchwork Sampler Tour**  
Every block in a patchwork sampler quilt is different – just like the Quilt Gardens you will discover during your visit to Northern Indiana. In addition to the blooming splendor, explore local shops along the Heritage Trail for heirloom-quality quilts created by local Amish women, fabrics, ideas and inspiration for your own quilt artistry. Experience a small slice of life in an Amish home with a meal and quilting bee, where you'll be invited to quilt and chat with Amish women. Highlight your visit with a special event like the Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival, Honeyville Quilt Auction or the Shipshewana Quilt Festival.

# Group **EXPERIENCES**





## Whether just passing through or planning a multi-day stay ...

Amish Country Northern Indiana / Elkhart County is an easy-to-reach destination (one of the most popular for groups in the Midwest!) is home to the third-largest Amish settlement in the country and has a wealth of unique experiences and must-see attractions.

Choose one (*or more!*) of the following or ask us to customize an experience that best fits your tastes and timetable.

**Visit [AmishCountryTours.org](http://AmishCountryTours.org) for more ideas or contact Sonya at [sonya@amishcountry.org](mailto:sonya@amishcountry.org).**

## Kids' Grand Time with Grandma & Grandpa

Plan an experience that spans generations and lasts a lifetime. It's one big happy family as grandparents and grandkids have a grand time and make new friends. Relive TV and comic-book memories at a Super Hero museum. Step into history at a still operating gristmill. Milk a cow and see Amish farm life firsthand. Pass platters of home-made foods and finish with fresh-baked pie dining in an Amish home. Make pretzels and gobble them up. Ride a carousel. Meet an Amish buggy maker. Peek into an Amish coffin - empty of course! Pet and feed camels at a real camel farm. Reconnect. Have a blast. And go home with lots to talk about and memories to share.

## The Capital's Finest

Elkhart boasts the titles of both "RV" and "Band Instrument Capital." The RV/MH Heritage Museum showcases that history with an intriguing display of vehicles dating back to the early 1900's.

What a comparison when groups tour a local RV manufacturing facility! Enjoy a guided tour at Ruthmere, the Beaux Arts House Museum located along the river. The step-on guide gives the "scoop" on the area's musical manufacturing history along with history of the largest populated city in Amish Country as Elkhart's founding father Havillah Beardsley.



## Hoosier Highlights

From South to North and even in the middle, Indiana offers can't miss highlights for group tours, including Amish Country of course! In the south, groups can't miss the ultimate luxury at one of the Best Historic Resorts in America at French Lick Springs plus a trip on a scenic railway and an up-close experience with three African elephants. In Lafayette groups love their own private "Howl with the Wolves" night complete with live handling demonstrations. Further north stop at Fair Oaks Farms for a fun-filled, up-close look at sustainable dairy farming including a dairy museum, 3D/4D movie, birthing barn, and cheese sampling. Next see the majestic Indiana Dunes and tour the famous University of Notre Dame before relaxing in scenic Amish Country with its many group favorites. Complete your Hoosier Highlights tour with your own ride around the famous Indianapolis 500 racetrack for this sure fire "Best of" Tour.

## Downton Abbey Afternoon Tour & Tea

Visit Ruthmere and experience what life was like for the affluent at the turn of the previous century. Tour the opulent home built in 1910 by Albert and Elizabeth Beardsley. Admire the elaborate window treatments, silk wall coverings, carved mahogany woodwork, revival-style furnishings and art works that adorn the mansion. Then enjoy a "Downton Abbey" style afternoon tea complete with hot tea, cold lemonade, fresh fruit and tea sandwiches served in the Game Room. Everyone goes home feeling grand.



## MOO Fun in Amish Country

Cultivate acres of smiles for groups with farm tours that yield plenty of memorable moments and surprises. Meet an Amish farm family and try hand-milking cows, or learn all about the wonders of camel milk at a camel farm. Walk on the wild side visiting an exotic animal farm, and take a trip to the Wild West at a bison ranch. Everything is just ducky touring a duck hatchery and pretty fishy at tilapia raising facility. Stand next to Percheron draft horses during a barn tour and learn the secret life of bees at a farm producing honey. All in all, you can "bet the farm" that these tours will sow fun for your groups.



## Made in Amish Country

- Enjoy cooking and baking demos
- Find out how Amish buggies, caskets, baskets, foods and more are made and meet the Amish people making the products
- Learn how Indiana's signature wine is made and taste it too
- Take factory tours of a Kitchen Cabinet Maker, Grand Piano factory and RV Manufacturer



## Warm Welcome in Middlebury

New small-town charm experiences await your group in Middlebury. Shop stylish wardrobe finds for every season beneath tin ceilings, grab whimsical gifts at the town hardware, seek yard goods where the Amish shop or handcrafted Amish hardwood furniture. Tour with a local as you learn about Gangsters, Saloons & Buggies on Roofs or see Giant Toadstools in a World's Fair Garden. Paint your own Amish Barn or Buggy for a memorable memento. Get WOWed at mealtime at West on Warren surrounded by original artwork in a clean urban design which is in perfect harmony with the cuisine. Enjoy family-friendly, enriching, creative and hopeful performances with Christian values at Essenhaus Heritage Hall. All of this can be found in Middlebury where the welcome mat awaits your group.



## Helpful Hints

- Remember Amish Country is on Eastern Standard Time (EST). Please plan accordingly from your departure time zone so you aren't late or too early.
- Most Amish businesses accept cash or check only and do not accept credit card for payments. This includes step-on guides. Please ask each business PRIOR to arrival to be sure of acceptable payment method.
- Make your trip the easiest possible with a step-on guide. Rave reviews are always received when groups hire a local to point out stories, tips, insights and history plus assist with navigation, routing and timing.
- Some Amish businesses are located on gravel roads and depending on the motorcoach equipment might require drivers to shut off exhaust systems. Check with your bus company PRIOR to your arrival to determine their policies on backroads THEN contact the CVB for options and suggestions to comply.
- Remember Amish Country excels at making people happy and smiling. It's the perfect destination whether your group is looking for "all things Amish" or for history and art, for the greatest mystery tour or a quirky stop.
- We're always adding new experiences! Visit [AmishCountryTours.org](http://AmishCountryTours.org) or call Sonya at 800.262.8161 to see what's new and exciting.



## History Revived – A Fabulous Mystery Trip

Experience the privileged lifestyle of 1910 touring Ruthmere, featured on A&E's "America's Castles." At the Midwest Museum of American Art, groups appreciate the artistry of Norman Rockwell viewing the Midwest's largest collections of his signed lithographs and collotypes.

Stroll paths brimming with blooms and relax in the peaceful artistic environment found at the new Wellfield Botanic Gardens. Linton's Enchanted Gardens is a shopper's paradise providing home decor and a gift emporium.

Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the newly renovated Lerner Theatre.