



photo credit: Steelcase, Inc.

Midwest Quilt Festival Week Extravaganza

August 19 - 22, 2020 | August 18 - 21, 2021 | August 24 - 27, 2022

Thousands of quilters and art appreciators converge on the Grand Rapids, Michigan area every year to enjoy four days of the best in international quilt and textile artistry. Hundreds of quilts will be on display, and tens of thousands of dollars in prizes will be awarded for quilting excellence each year. In addition, AQS QuiltWeek hosts a series of workshops with some of the top talent in the quilt industry and an extensive Merchant Mall comprised of both local, national and international vendors.

At the same time, a short 2.5-hour drive south in Amish Country of Northern Indiana, the Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail is at its peak and prime in August. Designated a *Best of the Best* by American Bus Association for seven years, this one-of-its kind 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 23 hand-painted giant quilt murals all combined in 6 welcoming communities along the 90 mile Heritage Trail and you have a quilters and gardeners dream tour. With the added bonus of exciting options, events, exceptional hands-on activities, dining and shopping, the Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail sets the stage for an exceptional group tour wrapped in quilting and gardening themes, packed with fun and sure to entice new clients all found in one of the nation's largest Old Order Amish areas.

Bring your group to the Midwest in August and enjoy the best of quilting and gardening in this two state artistic tour!

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NOTE: Offerings subject to change.



Amish Country of Northern Indiana for Quilters



Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail in Amish Country

Your local Master Gardener guide will take you down scenic backroads to each Quilt Garden sharing pattern information, insights, tips and tricks of the gardening trade to bring these living works of art to life. You'll hear how over 200 volunteers work over four months to keep this project fresh, welcoming and beautiful for all to enjoy while dealing with fickle Mother Nature!

Elkhart County Historical Museum "Stitches of Devotion" a Behind the Scenes Historical hands-on quilt program

Put on cotton gloves and get ready to see and touch rare quilts from the museum archives. Hear the remarkable history behind each quilt and learn about the people who lovingly crafted them. Take time to explore the museum considered to be one of the top ten history museums in the state. It's housed in the building that originally served as the county's first consolidated school. See the Quilt Garden during your visit.

Flower Power Petal Pin / Pin Cushion at The Quilt Shop at Das Dutchman Essenhaus

Groups will love the fun and fast "Make and Take" fabric flower project. Each person makes a fabric flower pin or pin cushion with no sewing machine or prior sewing knowledge required. Materials are provided. Best yet it takes just 30 minutes to complete and everyone takes home their flower creation! Discover how fast fabric flowers bloom at The Quilt Shop!

Enjoy the Quilt Garden at Krider "World's Fair" Garden

Enjoy the Quilt Garden displayed at historic Krider Garden. Take time to stroll through the "World's Fair" garden 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 elements for future generations to enjoy.



Amish Quilt Trunk Show

Rebecca Haarer, a nationally known quilt historian and collector of vintage Indiana quilts, tells the history of Amish quilting. In a format she describes as her "quilt museum on the road," Rebecca shows vintage Amish quilts and discusses how they've been influenced by the Amish culture including how changes in society have affected the Amish and their quilts.

Amish Quilting Bee & Haystack meal at an Amish homestead

Elaine Jones invites you to join her and family and friends in an Amish quilting bee. Begin with a delicious home-cooked, traditional Amish meal that is unique to Northern Indiana Amish Country, the haystack. Some say it is similar to an upside-down taco salad, Amish style ... others say it's just delicious! Afterwards, pull up a chair around 4 original quilt frames filled with hand pieced Amish quilts. The ladies demonstrate how to piece, mark and get the quilt ready to sew. Then, you'll get a chance to participate, watch, learn or just chat as these Amish ladies lead an old-fashioned quilting bee.

Strings and Thread, played by hand and made by hand

Experience the beauty of a live harp concert with a backdrop of hand-stitched quilts. Local harpist Anna Hagen weaves together a variety of musical genres from favorite hymns to rock 'n' roll while showcasing family quilts passed down to her by her mother and grandmother. Anna's stories connect quilt patterns with musical performance, showing how these arts are pieced into the fabric of our lives. Your group will be entranced by the combination of elegant music created by the world's oldest string instrument as they learn the intricacies of its workings while they laugh at Anna's home-spun anecdotes.

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Amish Country of Northern Indiana for Quilters (cont.)



Amish Country Backroads Quilt Shop Hop

Join a local expert quilter as your guide and travel the backroads visiting numerous locally owned, often times Amish, quilting and fabric shops. The first stop is Calico Point in Wakarusa, where fabrics (a couple of thousand bolts in stock at all times including batiks) are displayed on swinging racks. Visit Das Dutchman Essenhaus, Middlebury, where The Quilt Shop is located in an old corn crib - "full to the rafters" with Amish and locally hand-stitched quilts and wall hangings, quality fabrics, books, patterns, kits, notions, and a huge selection of stencils. Welcome to a Quilter's "little bit of Heaven" found at Lolly's Fabrics, in Shipshewana where you will find over 13,000 bolts of fabric, finished quilts, wall hangings, and an assortment of fabric collections. Round out your shop hop at Yoder's Department Store, Shipshewana, where there is something for everyone inside the 50,000 square foot building including over 15,000 bolts of fabrics, notions, and patterns plus clothing, shoes and an Amish hardware store.

Lace, Lunch & Linens at The Wood & Gage

Get ready for an afternoon "laced" with fun at The Wood & Gage, a cozy neighborhood restaurant favorite filled with gifts, baked goods and home décor. Sit down to a house specialty luncheon of creamed chicken in a potato basket served by the friendly staff. After lunch, spend a fascinating afternoon with Dot Hansen, an antique dealer specializing in vintage linens. Dot goes way beyond just putting grandma's doilies on the dresser. She tells how to take treasured vintage linens out of hiding in the linen closet to enjoy and show them off. See and learn about the various kinds of handwork found in vintage linens, hear the secrets to using and taking care of these treasures and discover fun, new ways of repurposing linens and lace.



The Garden Cafe at Linton's Enchanted Gardens Group Box Lunch and Shopping at the Garden Center

Welcome to Linton's home of a large indoor gift emporium and expansive outdoor garden center where enchantment comes to life down every path. A petting zoo and animal center, train rides and "be young again games" complete the experience. The Garden Cafe features over one hundred handcrafted hot and cold drink choices plus fresh baked cookies. Groups enjoy a gourmet box lunch including your choice of sandwich served with veggie chips and Linton's own mango lime salsa, a fresh baked cookie and soft drink.

Quilty Note Cards at The Quilt Shop at the Essenhaus

Located inside a restored chicken barn, The Quilt Shop located on the grounds of Das Dutchman Essenhaus in Middlebury, offers an activity that will make one special "quilty" note card that is blank inside. Basic quilt block components in various colors (special green themed patterns will be featured for this tour in March) are precut and you can arrange them to create a quilt block for the front of your card. This is a beginner activity and only requires the ability to use a glue pen. A short introduction talks about the history, technique, construction, and sample of a locally sourced quilt. Allow 30 minutes for one completed card per person.

Amish Rug Weaving Demo & Cookie Break

Leo & Lorene Miller welcome you to their Old Order Amish home where Leo has been hand-weaving rag rugs for years. Taught by his family, Leo will demonstrate how he weaves and creates his beautiful and functional rugs. Meanwhile Lorene, his wife, will serve you her fresh from the oven cookies and cold lemonade as both the Miller's welcome your group and answer questions about their personal Amish lifestyle.

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Amish Country of Northern Indiana for Quilters (cont.)

The Nappanee Center and Historical Collection PLUS paint an Amish Quilt Barn Art piece

Explore inside the Nappanee Center and see the quilts depicting historical Quilt Gardens while enjoying the fascinating display chronicling Nappanee's storied past. Enjoy the beautiful Quilt Garden on site and then sit down with local artist, Linda Pieri, and be shown painting secrets developed throughout the ages. You will be able to observe a demonstration on acrylic painting then follow step-by-step instructions that will help you create your own masterpiece. This is not a paint by number situation. Linda helps each person discover the creative artist inside of each of them for their perfect momento to take home.

Create a Wooden Quilt Block with Great Life Tours

Meet LaVern and Rachel, the Amish-Mennonite dynamic duo that has made Teaberry Wood Products one of Great Life Tour's most requested stops. This experience appeals to men and women with a something-for-everyone flair! Groups enjoy one-on-one time with this artisan team creating a wall quilt pieced entirely with beautiful exotic hardwoods. The experience will include a woodshop tour, "weaving" demo, hands-on wood quilt kit with choice of materials and shopping time. Participants leave with an 8"x8" quilt block complete with engraved center tile and hanger. It is a work of art worthy of gifting or kept as a treasured memory of their travels. Highly collectible, a new pattern each season - keeping it fresh and new year after year. This is endlessly customizable with two frames, optional holiday and decorative laser engraved tiles available to choose from.

Wellfield Botanic Garden & Quilt Garden

Wellfield Botanic Gardens accepts as truth that mankind is inseparable from nature while sharing a natural and man-made environment of unique beauty that attracts, inspires, and educates. The Gardens is situated on 36 acres including 18 acres of water and includes a ½ mile paved walking trail-path to a variety of themed gardens featuring water displays, sculptures, plants and beauty of nature.

Experience Grand Rapids, Michigan for Quilters

American Quilter's Society QuiltWeek Grand Rapids

More than 450 quilts will be on display, in addition to a series of workshops with some of the top talent in the quilt industry. Shop an extensive Merchant Mart, comprised of both local and national vendors. Special exhibits and evening events by world-renowned celebrities presenting their unique spin on fabric, quilting, and life round out the experience. Admission to AQS QuiltWeek includes access to all special exhibits and the Merchant Mall with hundreds of quilting items for sale. Hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday.



Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's top 30 "must-see" museums showcases a diverse mix of indoor and outdoor gardens plus the Midwest's most significant collection of outdoor sculptures. Meijer Gardens is the 2nd most visited tourist attraction in Michigan and is an exciting day-long excursion for groups. The gardens offer a variety of experiences including year-round guided tours and comfortable tram tours of the outdoor grounds daily.

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Experience Grand Rapids, Michigan for Quilters (cont.)



Grand Rapids Downtown Market

This dazzling food emporium includes an indoor market of artisan food vendors, greenhouse, teaching kitchens and more. Enjoy a snack or a meal, shop for farm-fresh goods and unique pantry items, even take a cooking class. Wonderful as a group meal destination by offering cash-redeemable gift certificates, the market is perfect for independent meals of any size.



Frank Lloyd Wright's Meyer May House

A meticulous restoration complete with original furnishings and faithfully-executed reproductions, the Meyer May House provides the rare opportunity to experience a Prairie house exactly as Frank Lloyd Wright intended. Group tours are free of charge but are subject to availability. *Photo credit: Steelcase, Inc.*

Grand Rapids Public Museum

A place of never-ending inspiration and discovery with a focus on science, history and culture. With fascinating exhibits on three floors, the museum offers a unique and entertaining experience for everyone. A convenient drop off location for motorcoaches is available at the main entrance, under cover from the weather, and an elevator inside ensures access for everyone. The Museum Cafe overlooks the Grand River and the city center and offers homemade soups, snacks, salads, sandwiches, desserts and a daily special. Don't forget to make time for a stop at the Curiosity Shop!



Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

Experience America's most entertaining presidential museum, a multimedia tribute to the life and times of the city's most famous son. The exhibit teaches democratic citizenship and allows for quiet reflection. In addition to the permanent exhibits, changing temporary exhibits draw artifacts from museums all over the country. *Photo credit: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum*

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