



Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau

“Antebellum to Antigravity Experience”

Huntsville, Alabama

Sample Itinerary

History is rarely more fun than when you cram two centuries into a few days in the Rocket City. We'll take you from the first steps toward Alabama becoming a state to the first steps on Mars, with detours for some awesome art, beautiful botanical gardens, and, of course, some fantastic food.

Day 1:

When you arrive in Huntsville, prepare to be **“SPACENAPPED”!** Representatives from the Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau will greet your group at a predetermined location where your driver will stop for them to board the motorcoach under the pretense of “kidnapping” your group (of course with fun as they know who we are). The group will be taken to our Visitor Center for a special welcome.

12-3:00 p.m.

BLAST OFF IN 3, 2, 1...

For just a moment, imagine you're an astronaut getting ready to board a rocket heading toward the moon or Mars. It's your first flight. How are you feeling at this very moment? Are you nervous? Anxious? Scared? Excited? If you're like me, your adrenaline is pumping. These feelings and much more can be experienced at the **U.S. Space & Rocket Center**. Huntsville is the Rocket City, so where better to start your tour of the city than here!?

Whether you're exploring the history of the U.S. space program, taking a virtual journey inside a motion-based simulator or experiencing three times the pull of gravity inside a centrifuge, you're sure to have an out of this world experience!

Visit online at www.spacecamp.com/museum

3:15-5:15 p.m.

LOWE MILL ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Start your sojourn at **Lowe Mill ARTS & Entertainment** with a tasty treat; conveniently before you even go inside, you can hit Pizzelle's Confections or Piper & Leaf for some tasty chocolates or tea. (Make note: the opposite corner is home to Suzy's Pops and Alchemy Lounge, so you can re-fortify mid-visit.) Lowe Mill is the largest privately owned arts facility in the United States. With approximately 200 working artists, small businesses, restaurants, and live performance venues, this huge historic textile mill is now a rising home for music, art, and culture. Visitors are encouraged to

enter the studios and speak with artists to learn about their work processes, inspirations, and to purchase work. Groups can also participate in a wide range of art inspired activities taught by the artists themselves including chocolate making, screen printing, and painting. www.lowemill.net

5:30-6:30 p.m. Once you've returned to Earth and indulged at Lowe Mill, it's time to check into your hotel. Enjoy some rest and relaxation before your next adventure!

7 p.m.

PHANTOMS OF THE DEPOT

Get ready to transition from the solar system to the supernatural, as we visit the Huntsville Historic Depot – a museum that showcases local Civil War history, houses rare trains and cars, and may well be the most haunted building in Huntsville. Up the creaking steps and down the shadowy hall of the Depot, you'll learn about the history of this original 1860s building, its role in the Civil War and the townsfolk who walked the Depot floors. You'll hear about sightings and actual readings taken by trained paranormal experts, and perhaps you too will see evidence of the supernatural as you experience a ghostly lantern-lit tour of one of the nation's oldest remaining railroad structures. Enjoy a spirited dinner served in the lobby of the Depot. Visit online at www.earlyworks.com

Day 2:

Begin your day with breakfast at the hotel and prepare for an early start of Day Two of your Huntsville adventure.

8:15 -9:15 a.m.

THE PAST PRESERVED FOR THE FUTURE

You'll have the opportunity to learn more about Huntsville's history at museums later today, and there's no better way to prepare than to enjoy the ambience of historic Huntsville by walking some of the city's oldest streets. Listen to and enjoy intriguing stories told about the early merchants, bankers and attorneys who built the fashionable brick homes in the **Twickenham Historic District**, Alabama's largest district of antebellum homes. Many of the homes were seized by the Union Army during the Civil War from 1862-1865. (Step-on guide or themed walking tours)

9:30-10:30 a.m.

THE HISTORIC WEEDEN HOUSE MUSEUM

After admiring the outside of so many beautiful historic homes, you'll be wishing you could go inside and check one out. Your wish is granted at the Weeden House. Built in 1819, this house was home to the 19th century poet and artist, Maria Howard Weeden, and today is preserved much as it was around the time of the Civil War when she lived there. This white, two-story brick house, located in the Twickenham Historic District, is distinguished by a remarkable leaded glass fanlight over the front door. Learn how Maria Howard Weeden used literature, architecture, language, tradition and values to contribute to the development and transmission of culture. View Weeden's exquisite portraits and learn how she captured the spirit of her models. Visit online at www.weedenhousemuseum.com

10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

HUNTSVILLE MUSEUM OF ART and lunch at **Pane e Vino**

Did someone mention art? How better to follow up a visit to the home of one of Huntsville's most notable artists than with a visit to the Huntsville Museum of Art? Named as one of the state's "Top 10" destinations by the Alabama Tourism Department, the nationally accredited museum fills its 16

galleries with a variety of exhibitions throughout the year, including prestigious traveling exhibits and the work of nationally and regionally acclaimed artists. The museum's own permanent collection of more than 3000 pieces forms the basis for several exhibitions each year. In addition to its exhibitions, the Museum offers art classes for children and adults along with special programs, lectures, and musical presentations that add extra dimensions to the art work on display. Docent lead tours are available to enhance your group's experience. Outside and surrounding the museum, are pieces of public art that are part of our city-wide, ever-expanding **SPACES**, Sculpture Trail.

By this time, you'll no doubt have worked up an appetite, so before you leave, you'll want to check out **Pane e Vino**, which is located on the first floor of the museum and offers indoor and outdoor seating overlooking the lagoon on **Big Spring International Park**. Pane e Vino offers delicious, Italian-inspired dishes.

1:00-2:00 p.m.

ALABAMA'S BIRTHPLACE

Now that you've got a sense of what life is like in Huntsville, your next stop will let you experience what life was like here 200 years ago! Hear the whir of the spinning wheel...learn from the blacksmith...turn the great wheel lathe in the cabinetmaker's shop...and visit with villagers busy with their daily tasks, seemingly unaware that nearly two centuries have come and gone. **Alabama Constitution Village** dates back to 1819 and is the actual site where forty-four delegates gathered to forge the way for Alabama's statehood. Become a part of Alabama's history as villagers dressed in period clothing take you through eight reconstructed Federal style buildings.

Visit online at www.earlyworks.com

2:15-3:30 p.m.

HARRISON BROTHERS HARDWARE

From the Village, you'll stroll around the corner to Harrison Brothers, the oldest continuously operating hardware store in Alabama. Founded in 1879 by brothers James and Daniel Harrison as a tobacco store, the business was moved to its present location in 1897. Harrison Brothers is more than a glimpse of old Huntsville, it is a shopper's delight. Cotton throws, local art and books, marbles by the scoop, and cast iron cookware share space with garden gadgets, bird feeders and whirly-gigs. Goods nestled up high are reached from tall rolling ladders, the rope elevator is hand operated, and a pot-bellied stove helps warm the store in the winter. Nearby, a tall desk displays an untidy mound of old invoices, catalogs and calendars, just as the last Harrison brother left it. When you are searching for a souvenir to take home or just browsing, Harrison Brothers is the place to visit.

Visit online at www.harrisonbrothershardware.com

Before you leave the courthouse square, stroll around for a moment to enjoy more pieces of public art from the **SPACES** Sculpture Trail or hunt for a duck in the **Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt**. When you're done, it's time to head to the Huntsville Botanical Garden.

3:45-5 p.m.

WHAT'S GROWING ON?

For the last big stop of the day, savor the natural beauty at the Botanical Garden. Enjoy the NEW visitor welcome center whose design is reminiscent

of a historic Southern mansion and the serene Nature Center, the largest seasonal butterfly house in the nation. Galaxy of Lights, one of American Bus Association's Top Events, is open nightly from Thanksgiving through New Year's. The all new Table restaurant serves delicious lunches and the Gift Shoppe is always filled with eclectic items. Several major festivals such as Huntsville Blooms, Green U, Scarecrow Trail plus many more, prove that at the **Huntsville Botanical Garden** – there's always something growing on! Golf cart tours are available upon request. Visit online at www.hsvbg.org

5:30-6:30 p.m. After a packed day, return to the hotel for some rest and relaxation before dinner.

7-9 p.m. **ENJOY DINNER AT ONE OF OUR WONDERFUL LOCAL EATERIES**

If you need suggestions, we'll be happy to provide them. Or, if something more casual is your group's style, check out a concert and picnic dinner at **Lowe Mill Arts and Entertainment (seasonal)**.

Day 3: Breakfast at a local eatery.

10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. **A LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM—BURRITT ON THE MOUNTAIN**
Burritt on the Mountain provides a great place to kick off the tour, providing an amazing overview of the city, both literally and figuratively. The vista from atop the mountain is unmatched, and Burritt offers a primer in the city's story. Start with Dr. William Henry Burritt's eclectic mansion, add a historic park with restored 19th century houses including barnyard and animals, and finally throw in the artistic side with concerts, plays and exhibits, and you have a delightful mixture of old and new! In 1955, Dr. Burritt willed his mansion and surrounding 167 acres of land to the city of Huntsville (making it Huntsville's first museum). Since that time, original log homes from the area have been moved to Burritt. Interpreters are always busy demonstrating activities as one would see on a 19th century farm. Visit online at www.burrittonthemountain.com

Extend your visit with shopping at **Bridge Street Town Centre** or a golf game on the **Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Hampton Cove**.

Book your **Antebellum to Antigravity** tour today!

Contact **Pam Williams**, Tourism Sales Manager
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