



Roots, Resilience, and Reunion:

A Paducah Itinerary for the Eighth of August Emancipation Celebration

Make the most out of your visit for the Eighth of August Emancipation Celebration by visiting some of Paducah's Black-owned businesses and attractions while you're in town. With a full list of official Eighth of August Events, you're sure to stay busy, but don't forget to find time for a little extra exploration while you're here!

Day 1 – Arrive

1. Lunch at [XMan's BBQ & More](#)

1535 Broad St.

After checking in to your hotel, visit Xman's BBQ & More, a family-owned barbecue joint known for smoked ribs, brisket, and pulled pork, plus Southern sides and fried catfish. Satisfy your sweet tooth with one of their homemade banana puddings or peach cobbler!

2. Visit the [Market House Museum](#)'s Helen LaFrance Exhibit

121 Market House Square

Continue the day with the work of Helen LaFrance, a Graves County native and one of Western Kentucky's most celebrated self-taught artists. The exhibit features 14 original oil paintings on loan from the Paducah Historical Preservation Group. Her vivid "memory paintings" (cotton and tobacco harvests, barn dances, church picnics, family reunions) capture both the Black experience in the Jim Crow-era South and a

broader, fading slice of Southern life. The exhibit runs through the end of December and it's a perfect stop to soak in the culture of Western Kentucky.

3. Retail therapy at [Creative Fitz](#) and [Self-E Boutique](#)

2227 Broadway St. / 104 Broadway St.

After exploring the Helen LaFrance exhibit, wander Downtown Paducah and all of the shops it has to offer! Discover the locally owned boutiques and find your new favorite style. Stop in Self-E Boutique on the first block of Broadway and add fresh styles and inspiration to your closet. Visit Creative Fitz for plus-size options and options for every "body"!

Find more of Paducah's retail options at
www.paducah.travel/things-to-do/shopping.

4. Dinner at [Big Ed's](#)

701 N. 8th St.

Wrap up your day at Big Ed's with a delicious, homestyle meal. Try the award-winning BBQ ribs, fried chicken or catfish, or their daily lunch & dinner specials in Downtown Paducah! This homemade buffet is the perfect spot to satisfy that craving for southern cookin'.

Day 2

1. Explore the [African American Heritage Driving Tour](#)

Begin your second day in Paducah with a self-guided African American Heritage Driving Tour that highlights 26 stops spanning the people, places, and events that shaped the advancement of equality in the region. Points along the route include the Hotel Metropolitan, Burks Chapel A.M.E. Church, the MLK Jr. monument, and the Wall-to-Wall Floodwall Murals, which depict the Eighth of August celebration itself.

2. Lunch & coffee at [The House of Ross Coffee Bar and Cigar Lounge](#)

227 N 13th St.

Wind down (or caffeinate back up) at this cozy coffee bar and cigar lounge owned by a Paducah native. Known for personalized coffee drinks made to order and a warm, welcoming atmosphere, The House of Ross is a great low-key stop to refuel for your journey.

3. Visit [Hotel Metropolitan](#)

724 Oscar Cross Ave.

End your trip with a visit to Hotel Metropolitan, a restored 1908 hotel and former Green Book/Chitlin' Circuit stop that hosted Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and B.B. King. Immerse yourself in an inspiring introduction to the heritage of the Uppertown neighborhood and the spirit of the Black community in Paducah, Kentucky!

4. Visit [Yeiser Art Center](#)'s "The Journey: Exhibition of Dale McReynolds"

200 Broadway St.

Paducah's oldest nonprofit arts organization, Yeiser Art Center showcases the work of Dale McReynolds in downtown Paducah. McReynolds, a Paducah native, explores the Black experience from the Jim Crow era to the present day through pastels on paper.