Nature endowed the American South with a beautiful coast and breathtaking mountains. Man provided the drama — the successes, failures and follies — that created the region’s fascinating, complex and sometimes volatile history. Long home to several Native American tribes, the South also became home to British colonial settlers and African slaves in the 17th century. Southern culture and history is firmly planted in the colonial years. The plantations, stately mansions and many of the other historic monuments we treasure were built in the Palladian-influenced Georgian style that was so popular in England during the early 18th century. Discover the legacy of the colonial South while visiting sites in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. See the history of the South unfold as you visit noted landmarks such as the Ashley River colonial plantations; stunning Biltmore House, a French château built on American soil; Jekyll Island, once a resort for the world’s wealthiest families; and gracious cities such as Savannah and Charleston, which convey the best of Southern charm and hospitality.
Program Highlights

• Immerse yourself in the culture and history of the colonial South during a **10-night exploration** of this storied region.
• Discover **Biltmore House**, a lavish estate built by the Vanderbilt family.
• Explore **Charleston**, founded by colonists in 1670 and an important Southern city ever since.
• Enjoy the majestic natural beauty of the **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**.
• Travel back in history with visits to the **Ashley River colonial plantations** and the charming town of **Beaufort**.
• Receive a **Savannah museum pass** to use during leisure time.
• Discover the joys of fine living at **Jekyll Island**, once the exclusive retreat of the rich and famous during the late 1800s.
• Informative discussions on the culture and history of the region lead to a greater understanding of America’s colonial south.
• Your exclusive colonial South experience will accommodate a maximum of **36 passengers**.

Included Features

Accommodations

• Accommodations in **deluxe hotels**.

Transportation

• Travel by **deluxe, air-conditioned motor coach**.

Activities and Events

• All excursions as outlined in your program itinerary.
• Attend a **Welcome Reception**.
• Gather for a **Farewell Dinner**.

Extensive Meal Program

• Enjoy 10 breakfasts, three lunches and two dinners, and tea or coffee with all meals.
• Sample **authentic regional specialties** during select meals.
• Take advantage of **leisure time** to try the **local cuisine** independently.

Many Included Extras

• Consultation services of a dedicated **Passenger Service Representative** prior to departure.
• Detailed **travel and destination information** to assist in planning.
• Services of an experienced **AHI Travel Director** throughout your trip.
• **Tipping** of excursion guides and drivers.
• Complimentary **travel wallet**.

Previous page: Asendorf House and horse-drawn carriage, Savannah
Above: Forsyth Park; Drayton Hall; Smoky Mountains; The Citadel
DAY 1 - IN TRANSIT
Arrive in Charlotte, North Carolina, and transfer to the Omni Charlotte Hotel.

DAY 2 - CHARLOTTE/ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
Educational Focus: The Colonial South.
This morning, journey to Asheville and the Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park.
Excursion: An American Castle. George Vanderbilt unveiled palatial Biltmore House, which took six years to build, on December 24, 1895. Still family owned, the home continues to enchant visitors with its opulence and exquisite details.
This evening, gather with fellow travelers for a Welcome Reception.

DAY 3 - THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS
Excursion: Cherokee Heritage. In the Cherokee ancestral homeland, explore Oconaluftee, a village featuring traditional dwellings. Discover Cherokee medicine, crafts and storytelling. Before continuing with a scenic drive through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Drive through Newfound Gap and along the Blue Ridge Parkway through Maggie Valley as you return to Asheville.
Educational Focus: The Cherokee Nation.
Local Flavor: Enjoy lunch at a restaurant during the excursion.

DAY 4 - ASHEVILLE/CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
Today, make your way to Charleston and The Mills House Hotel.

DAY 5 - CHARLESTON

DAY 6 - CHARLESTON
Excursion: Ashley River Colonial Plantations. Begin the day at Middleton Place, which boasts the oldest landscaped garden in America. After lunch, continue to Drayton Hall, the oldest example of Georgian architecture in the U.S., offers an interpretive look at colonial life. The excursion concludes with a drive through the campus of The Citadel.
Educational Focus: The American Revolution in South Carolina. At Drayton Hall, interpretive guides give you an exclusive look at military life during the revolution. Examine replicas of uniforms and learn how soldiers set up camps and practiced drilling.
Local Flavor: Lunch is served at Middleton Place.

DAY 7 - BEAUFORT/JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA
Depart for Jekyll Island and the Jekyll Island Club Hotel.
Excursion: Beaufort. This old South Carolina town, which will turn 300 in 2011, is rich with history and natural beauty. Uncover the history of the city during a walking tour. Visit St. Helena; this Episcopal church, established in 1712, is one of the oldest active churches in the country. Continue to Jekyll Island.
Local Flavor: Dinner is served at the Jekyll Island Club Hotel.

DAY 8 - JEKYLL ISLAND
Excursion: Jekyll Island. The story of the historic district unfolds during a guided tram tour. Learn how a group of the most powerful and wealthy men in the United States bought the island and built the exclusive Jekyll Island Club in the late 19th century.
The remainder of the day is at your leisure.

DAY 9 - JEKYLL ISLAND/ST. SIMON’S ISLAND/SAVANNAH
Make your way to Savannah and The Mulberry Inn via St. Simon’s Island.
Excursion: Fort Frederica and Savannah. Fort Frederica was built on St. Simon’s Island in 1736 by Georgia founder James Oglethorpe to prevent Spanish encroachment. Continue to Savannah, which has one of the largest National Historic Landmark Districts in the country. Visit Wormsloe Plantation, built by one of Georgia’s first settlers.
Local Flavor: Enjoy lunch at a restaurant en route to Savannah.

DAY 10 - SAVANNAH
Excursion: Savannah. Discover the city’s beautiful squares and visit the home of John Duncan, a local historian, to see one of Savannah’s distinguished old homes.
Independent Exploration: The afternoon is yours to explore Savannah at your leisure. You may wish to visit one of the city’s fine museums with the museum pass you will receive.
Tonight, join a Farewell Dinner at the Pink House Restaurant.

DAY 11 - IN TRANSIT
After breakfast, transfer to the airport.

NOTE: Itinerary sequence and/or scheduled events may change. Many excursions in this program involve an element of walking.
James Oglethorpe

James Oglethorpe, a member of Parliament, founded Georgia in 1733 for the English crown. At the time, he had already made a name for himself as a social reformer who led a campaign to reform Britain’s penal system.

Seeking an alternative to jailing debtors, Oglethorpe and others pondered the possibility of establishing a colony in America where the “worthy poor” could be transformed into working members of society.

They received a charter to pursue this goal, but the future colony of Georgia quickly became a commercial venture. Oglethorpe, however, was still one of the 21 Trustees appointed to run the new colony. He traveled to the New World with the first ship of settlers, who were not debtors, but skilled workers.

In February 1733, Oglethorpe and the colonists landed in the new colony. Soon after, Oglethorpe laid out the plan for the town of Savannah. To avoid the English class system, he designed identical houses and limited how much land an individual could purchase.

As a Trustee, Oglethorpe could not hold office, but he was the colony’s clear leader. He mortgaged his lands in England to help fund Georgia’s defense against the Spanish and he led the successful defense against the invaders. Today, he is regarded as Georgia’s first governor.

In 1743, he returned to England, where he remained involved in the governing of the colony until 1750.

Today, his name remains prominent in Georgia. A county, two towns, streets, schools and more bear the Oglethorpe name.

Accommodations

The Mills House Hotel

Charleston

Located in the heart of Charleston, The Mills House Hotel combines Victorian ambience with the utmost in modern comfort and friendly Southern hospitality. Keep up with your exercise plan at the fully equipped fitness center. Savor the meals prepared at the hotel’s restaurant, one of the most popular in the state. At the end of the day, retire to your elegant guest room, with its coffee and tea maker, hair dryer, cable/satellite TV and high-speed Internet access. Past and present meet at this hotel in a union that never ceases to delight.

Jekyll Island Club

Hotel

Jekyll Island

Rated one of the top 500 resorts in the world by Travel & Leisure magazine, the Jekyll Island Club provides excellent service and outstanding amenities. Nestled on a pristine, unspoiled barrier island off of Georgia’s southeastern coast, it was once the playground of some of the world’s wealthiest families. Among the many features it offers are a fitness center, shops, a putting green and a number of dining venues that serve a variety of fine cuisine. Each guest room features a flat-screen LCD TV with cable channels, coffee maker, direct-dial telephone with voice mail, hair dryer and a refreshment center.

The Mulberry Inn

Savannah

One of the finest luxury hotels in Savannah, The Mulberry Inn is renowned for its Southern charm and elegance. Admire period furnishings and intriguing art while experiencing the many modern amenities. The hotel’s services include a fitness facility, restaurant and lounge. The tastefully appointed guest rooms include a TV with cable and satellite channels, refrigerator, direct-dial telephone with voice mail, coffee maker and hair dryer.

Omni Charlotte Hotel

Charlotte

Located in the heart of Charlotte, the elegant Omni Charlotte Hotel is close to the city’s many cultural highlights. It combines numerous deluxe features with traditional Southern hospitality. Amenities include a rooftop swimming pool and sundeck, a beauty salon and a concierge. The hotel has a wide range of dining options, with restaurants serving everything from Mexican cuisine to Mediterranean fare. Each guest room is an oasis of comfort. The beautifully decorated rooms include a hair dryer, minibar, two direct-dial telephones with dual lines and voice mail, a coffee and tea maker, Wi-Fi and cable and satellite TV.

Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park

Asheville

A luxurious hotel near famous Biltmore House as well as the city’s shopping, dining and entertainment venues, the Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park boasts a fully equipped fitness center, a spa offering a full range of pampering treatments, and a swimming pool. The hotel’s restaurant uses local produce to create a delicious mix of gourmet and Southern dishes. Guest rooms are decorated in a modern style and have a dual-line direct-dial telephone with voice mail, coffee maker, hair dryer, marble bathroom and cable/satellite TV.

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