

The Garden Tourist's CHARLESTON & SAVANNAH

Wednesday, March 20–Tuesday, March 26, 2024



Featuring Historic Homes, Private Gardens, Middleton Place, Magnolia Plantation, Brookgreen Gardens and more!



Includes:

- Small group tour with author Jana Milbocker and Friendship Tours
- 7 days, 6 nights at Courtyard Charleston Historic District
- 76th Annual Festival of Houses and Gardens Tour
- Charleston Garden Club House and Garden Tour
- 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners including dinner cruise
- Hotel and restaurant gratuities
- Sightseeing, admissions and coach per itinerary
- Limited to 30 travelers
- Airfare and hotel transfers not included



ITINERARY

ARRIVAL: Wednesday, March 20, 2024

DEPARTURE: Tuesday, March 26, 2024

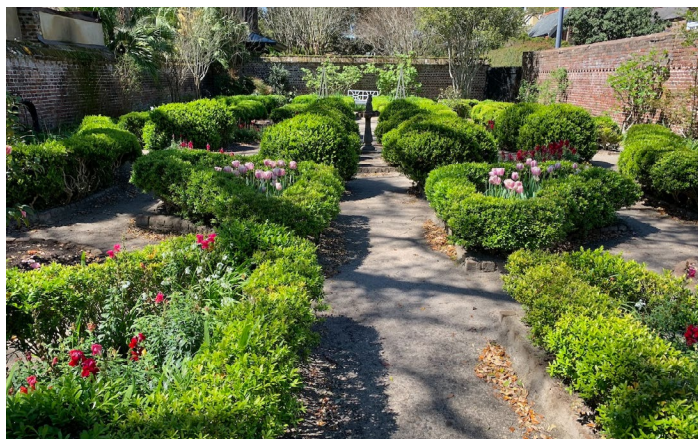


Often described as “a city set in a garden”, Charleston has a rich gardening tradition dating back to Colonial times. Many of the homes and public buildings of Charleston date from the mid 1750s, when this colony was a booming, cosmopolitan port city with ships delivering staples and luxuries from Europe.

This tour was planned to visit Charleston during peak azalea and camelia bloom time, and enjoy early spring in this lovely city!

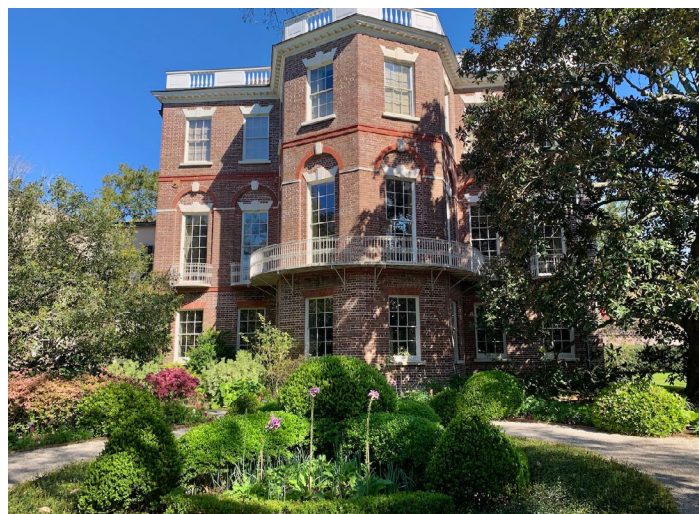
DAY 1: ARRIVAL We fly independently into Charleston and check in to our hotel, the Courtyard Charleston Historic District. We then meet for a **Welcome Dinner at 6:30 pm** at Hyman’s Seafood to sample some of Charleston’s famous seafood dishes (included).

DAY 2: We begin the day with a narrated horse-drawn **Carriage Tour** of historic Charleston. From there we tour the 1808



Nathaniel Russell House, widely recognized as one of America’s most important neoclassical homes. The interior is adorned with elaborate plaster ornamentation and a stunning free-flying staircase. The mansion is set in a formal garden of Southern magnolias, live oaks, azaleas, and boxwood parterres accented with wrought iron and statuary. Lunch is on our own at one of the many restaurants in the vicinity of Charleston’s **City Market**. Established in the 1790s, this historic landmark is one of the oldest public markets in the U.S. There’s everything from handmade crafts, trinkets, and jewelry to the city’s most prized souvenir—the woven sweetgrass basket.

In the afternoon, we step beyond the garden gates and piazzas to visit private homes and gardens during Historic Charleston Foundation’s award winning tour. The **76th Annual Festival of Houses and Gardens** showcases Charleston’s distinctive history, architecture, gardens and culture. Dinner is on our own.





DAY 3: In the morning we tour another Charleston landmark, the **Heyward-Washington House**. Built in 1772 for Thomas Heyward, Jr., signer of the Declaration of Independence, and later used by George Washington, the home was opened to the public in 1930 as Charleston's first house museum. Here you will see a superb collection of colonial era Charleston-made furniture, and ornamental gardens with boxwood parterres in the style of the period. Lunch will be on our own at one of the many downtown restaurants featuring authentic Southern cooking.



In the afternoon we enjoy intimate glimpses into some of the most beautiful private homes and gardens during the annual **House and Garden Tour** hosted by the Garden Club of Charleston. Every year, a different Charleston neighborhood is selected for this special event. Dinner will be on your own.

DAY 4: This is our day to visit beautiful **Savannah**, the crown jewel of the Georgia coast. In this historic city, architecture, trendy boutiques, art, music, and haunted stories all create an experience



unmatched anywhere else.

We will first enjoy a **Guided Walking Tour** of Savannah's Historic District. The district is famous for its stunning period architecture, beautiful cobblestone streets, and 22 historic squares. Our tour will end at Forsyth Park with its iconic fountain, and we will enjoy



lunch in the park's own cafe, **Collins Quarter at Forsyth**.

After lunch we will take a tour of Savannah's most notorious home, the **Mercer Williams House**. Thirty years since author John Berendt wrote about it in his *New York Times* Best Seller, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, thousands of visitors still trek to Savannah to gawk at the spot where Danny Hansford's shooting occurred.

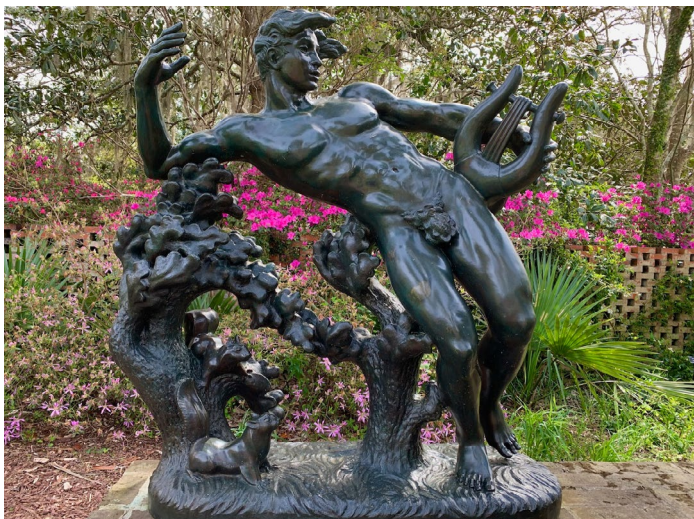
We will have time for shopping and dinner on our own before returning to Charleston for the night.



DAY 5: In the morning we depart for **Brookgreen Gardens**, a former plantation that is now a unique melding of art, nature, and history. One of the South Carolina's most magnificent hidden treasures, the 9,100-acre Brookgreen Gardens is the oldest and largest sculpture garden in the United States. The property was purchased as a winter home for industrialist Archer Huntington and his wife, sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington in 1929. They



opened it to the public as a wildlife sanctuary and sculpture garden with more than 2,000 pieces of figurative American sculpture by such artists as Frederic Remington and Daniel Chester French. Each sculpture is carefully set within garden rooms and outdoor galleries graced by elegant trees, colorful flowers, and peaceful ponds. The historic Live Oak Allée is comprised of trees that were planted in the early 1700s when the property was four thriving rice plantations. The gardens are lush with azaleas, camellias



and annuals in early spring, and include a kitchen garden and a delightful children's garden.

Our day at the garden will include lunch on our own at one of Brookgreen's three cafes, and a guided **Creek Excursion** on a 48-ft. pontoon boat. As we cruise along, we will learn about the history of rice cultivation in the Lowcountry, and the plants and animals that call this area home including alligators, waterfowl, and birds of prey. We will stop for dinner in Murrell's Inlet on our way back to Charleston (included).



DAY 6: We will spend our last full day touring Charleston's most famous plantation gardens: Magnolia Plantation & Gardens and Middleton Place. Selected as one of "America's Most Beautiful Gardens" by *Travel & Leisure Magazine*, **Magnolia Plantation** has been in the Drayton family for more than 300 years. In the early 1840s, Rev. John Grimké Drayton began to design an informal, "romantic style" garden to showcase his azalea and camellia collections. The garden was opened to the public shortly after the Civil War. Today, visitors can wander down the original paths, marveling at the magnificence that has inspired poets,

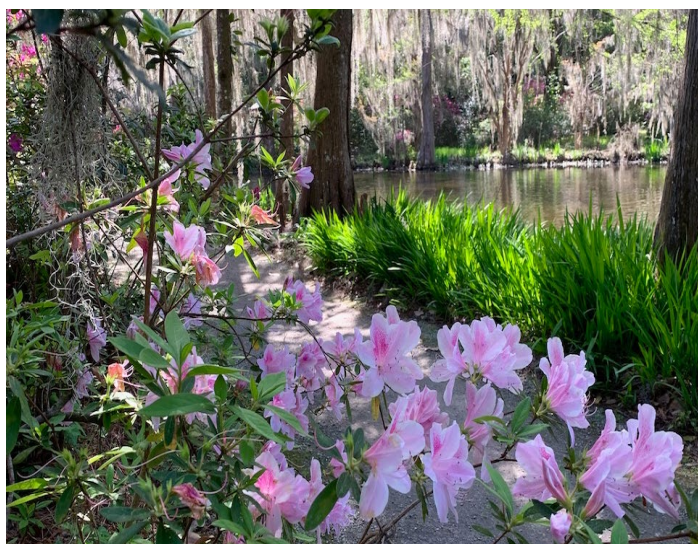


painters, and authors for 180 years. We will enjoy a ride through the grounds on the Nature Train and then tour the many acres of gardens. Horticultural highlights include a Biblical Garden, a Camellia Garden and a conservatory.



Once a 7,000-acre rice plantation, **Middleton Place** is now the most famous garden in the Charleston area. The property was the family seat of four successive generations of Middletons who played important roles in American History as patriots, revolutionaries and politicians.

The gardens, which Henry Middleton envisioned and began to create in 1741, reflect the grand classic style that was in vogue in Europe at the time. Middleton followed the principles of André Le Nôtre, the designer of Versailles. His landscape incorporated rational order, geometry, and balance; vistas, focal points, and surprises. Working with an English gardener, Middleton created the feature that earned Middleton Place the title of “the most interesting and important garden in America.” It is a gravel



carriageway leading through a greensward to six shaped turf terraces and a pair of hand-dug “Butterfly Lakes.” Later generations of Middletons added camellia walks, sunken gardens, and the dazzling azalea hillside.

We will enjoy a guided tour of the 65-acre gardens, lunch in Middleton’s restaurant, and experience 18th and 19th century plantation life with displays, artisans, and historic animal breeds in the Stableyards.



Our last dinner will be aboard the **Spirit of Carolina**. As we dine on a delicious multi-course plated dinner, the Spirit of Carolina will cruise through the beautiful Charleston Harbor at sunset, past Fort Sumter, along the Battery and beneath the Ravenel Bridge.

DAY 7: DEPARTURE From Charleston Airport.

Please Note: The first 3 days will be without a coach, so there will be a significant amount of walking.

The Garden Tourist's CHARLESTON & SAVANNAH TOUR

PRE-TOUR ZOOM PRESENTATION:

By Jana Milbocker, March 13 at 7:00 pm

RECOMMENDED READING:

Charleston by John Jakes

The Secret Gardens of Charleston by Louisa Pringle Cameron

The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

The House on Tradd Street by Karen White

The Indigo Girl by Natasha Boyd

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil by John Berendt
(book & movie)

The Prince of Tides by Pat Conroy (book & movie)

COST: \$3169 pp double, \$4219 pp single, based on 25 travelers

ARRIVAL: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at Charleston, SC Airport (CHS). Please arrive by 4:00 pm. Meet your guides and fellow travelers at the hotel to go out to Welcome Dinner at 6:30pm. Hotel check-in time is 4:00 pm. Bags can be held for you if you arrive early.

RETURN: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 depart for home from Charleston, SC Airport (CHS). Departure transfers and times are at your discretion. Hotel check out is by 11:00am

AIR TRAVEL: This trip is based on a minimum of 25 travelers. Do not purchase air until you have been advised that the minimum number of travelers for this tour has been met. Flight arrangements and transfers to hotel are not included in this tour package.

RESERVATIONS VIA FRIENDSHIP TOURS:

CALL: 800-243-1630 and ask for **The Garden Tourist's Charleston & Savannah Tour**

ON LINE : www.friendshiptours.net/group-travel and select "Group Sign In". Enter the Tour Code **24MAR20GARDEN** in the box labeled "Make a New Reservation".

DEPOSIT: \$900 per person with reservation to secure your spot.

FINAL PAYMENT: December 20, 2023

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Friendship Tours, 705 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield, CT 06002

CANCELLATION POLICY: If a passenger cancels from deposit to January 31, 2024 fee of \$500.00 pp; February 1, 2024 to February 17, 2024 fee of \$1,500.00 pp; no refunds if canceled after February 18, 2024 unless a substitute is provided.

TRIP PROTECTION COVERAGE: is strongly recommended. Aon Affinity administers the NTA Travel Protection plan designed specifically for members of the National Tour Association. The Pre-existing medical condition exclusion can be waived by purchasing the Enhanced Plan within 14 days of your deposit or initial payment. Purchase of the plan within this time period also provides eligibility for the Financial Insolvency benefit. Traveling companions / roommates are required to take the same plan (Basic or Enhanced) in order to be properly covered. Premium is non-refundable once paid. Three ways to enroll:

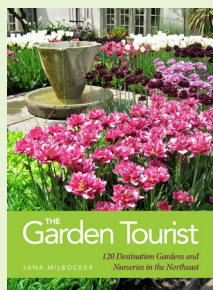
1. Website: <https://nta.aontravelprotect.com> Tour Operator Location #076068. You can also view plan details on this site.
2. Call Aon 1-800-388-1470. Tour Operator Location #076068. Customer service agents can also answer questions about each plan.
3. Call Friendship Tours / The Ship Shop 860-243-1630 or 800-243-1630

TRIP PROTECTION COVERAGE with CANCEL FOR ANY REASON coverage is available through Travel Insured International when purchased within 14 days of your initial deposit—ask Friendship Tours / The Ship Shop for more information.

This package is subject to our full terms and conditions which can be found on our website at <https://www.friendshiptours.net/tour-policies>. Paper copies are available upon request. By signing up to participate in the tour, you are agreeing to be bound to these terms and conditions. Therefore, you must read the terms and conditions in their entirety. By signing up for the tour, making a payment and continuing to use our services, you are agreeing to be bound by the Terms and Conditions. Should you disagree with any of the terms you must speak with us before signing up for a tour.



Jana Milbocker is a garden designer, speaker, and author of **The Garden Tourist** travel guides. She combines horticulture, design, and travel tips to educate, inspire and delight both new and seasoned gardeners. EnchantedGardensDesign.com



Friendship Tours has been operating group tours for more than 40 years, including custom trips for the Connecticut Horticultural Society, Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, and New England Botanic Garden. **FriendshipTours.net**