



WORLD AFFAIRS  
COUNCIL OF  
PHILADELPHIA  
& PARTNERS

# A MISSISSIPPI RIVER VOYAGE

Aboard the *American Splendor* Paddle-Wheeler

**MARCH 3-11, 2026**

Featuring a Keynote Address by  
Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-Winning author

**DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN**





## Highlights

- Begin the program with an exclusive keynote address by **DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN**, esteemed Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author.
- Cruise down the Mississippi River from Memphis to New Orleans in the **CLASSIC PADDLEWHEELER RIVERBOAT**, *American Splendor*.
- Visit **HISTORIC VICKSBURG** where the North gained control of the Mississippi River after 47-day battle during the Civil War.
- Choose between **A VARIETY OF EXCURSION OPTIONS** along the way, including the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the Grammy Museum in Cleveland, and the Garden District of New Orleans.
- Tour **OPULENT MANSIONS AND FORMER PLANTATIONS** downriver in St. Francisville and Vacherie, Louisiana.
- Delight in an **ENRICHING AND ENGAGING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** throughout the cruise and discover how the Mississippi River has shaped U.S. history, from the Civil War to the birth of Blues and Rock 'n' Roll.

## DEAR COUNCIL TRAVELERS,

Join us for a cruise down the mighty Mississippi River from Memphis to New Orleans aboard the 185-berth *American Splendor*. Built in 2016 in the classic paddle-wheeler style, *American Splendor* offers modern amenities alongside 19th-century riverboat opulence and features stylish cabins, fine cuisine, and lively performances by onboard musicians.

Begin in Memphis, Tennessee, home to Elvis' Graceland, and uncover its diverse heritage while strolling iconic Beale Street or exploring iconic sites such as the Stax Museum of American Soul Music or the National Civil Rights Museum. Embark *American Splendor* and cruise downriver visiting sugar plantations, Creole cottages, and lush landscapes of Bayou country. In Cleveland, Mississippi, choose to visit the Grammy Museum, take a guided tour of the Mississippi Blues Trail, or venture to Mound Bayou, an all-Black community considered an oasis during the turbulent beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement. See the location where a 47-day Civil War battle raged in Vicksburg before control of the Mississippi River was taken by the North. Continue to Natchez and discover how its architectural grandeur reflects the prosperous Steamboat Era of the early 1800s. Downriver in St. Francisville and Vacherie, Louisiana, investigate magnificent mansions and historic plantations, including Oak Alley and Creole Laura Plantation. The journey concludes in New Orleans in the architecturally distinct French Quarter. On optional tours, admire the gorgeous homes and landscapes of the Garden District and visit the renowned National World War II Museum.

An incredibly rich educational program makes this Mississippi River experience like no other. Begin with a keynote address in Memphis by Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, **Doris Kearns Goodwin**, and throughout the voyage, enjoy panel discussions and opportunities for direct engagement with an outstanding lineup of lecturers. This unique journey along one of North America's great waterways is expected to sell out, so we encourage you to reserve your space today!

We look forward to traveling with you,

Andrew Haught  
Director of Travel  
World Affairs Council of Philadelphia

**SCAN ME**  
with your  
iPhone or tablet  
to register online.





# ENRICHMENT LECTURER



**DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN** is a world-renowned presidential historian, public speaker, Pulitzer Prize-winning and #1 New York Times best-selling author, and a partner in Pastimes Productions. Goodwin is often called upon by the news media, late-night TV hosts, and hundreds of companies, educational institutions, government agencies, and nonprofits to share her vast knowledge of leadership and provide historical context for current-day events.

Her eighth book, *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s*, was published in Spring 2024 and became an instant #1 New York Times bestseller. Artfully weaving together biography, memoir, and history, this new book takes readers on the emotional journey Doris and her husband, Richard (Dick) Goodwin, embarked upon in the last years of his life as they delved into more than 300 boxes of letters, diaries, documents, and memorabilia that Dick had saved for more than fifty years. The Goodwins quickly realized they had before them an unparalleled personal time capsule of the 1960s — the events and pivotal figures of the decade: John Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Kennedy, Eugene McCarthy, and especially Lyndon Johnson, who greatly impacted both their lives.

Goodwin previously authored six critically acclaimed and New York Times bestselling books, including the Carnegie Medal-winner, *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism* and *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. *Team of Rivals* is often cited as an inspiration for business and political leaders, including President Barack Obama, and was awarded the prestigious Lincoln Prize, the inaugural Book Prize for American History, and Goodwin in 2016 was the first historian to receive the Lincoln Leadership Prize from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation. Goodwin was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in History for *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt*.

Doris Kearns Goodwin has served as a consultant and has been interviewed extensively for PBS and the HISTORY Channel's documentaries on Presidents Johnson, both Roosevelts and Lincoln, the Kennedy family, and for Ken Burns' "The History of Baseball" and "The Roosevelts." Goodwin has received numerous awards for her books and career, including the inaugural American History Book Prize from the New-York Historical Society, the Gold Medal for biography from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and most recently the Washington Irving Medal for Literary Excellence from the Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York for *An Unfinished Love Story*. Goodwin graduated magna cum laude from Colby College and was invited to deliver the commencement address there in 2024. She earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Government from Harvard University, where she taught Government, including a course on the American Presidency.



Mississippi River,  
New Orleans



## ITINERARY

### TUESDAY, MARCH 3

#### **Home/Memphis, Tennessee**

Depart home and arrive in Memphis independently and check into the Guest House at Graceland. Just steps away from Elvis' Graceland, this property reflects Elvis' iconic style combined with the Southern charm of Memphis. This evening, meet fellow travelers at a festive welcome reception and dinner, featuring a keynote address by eminent Pulitzer-winning historian Doris Kearns Goodwin.

*The Guest House at Graceland*  
(R,D)

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

#### **Memphis, Tennessee**

Following an opening lecture, spend the morning exploring Memphis' diverse heritage. Choose between three optional tours: **1)** Stroll down Beale Street, the home of the blues and the birthplace of rock 'n' roll; **2)** Visit the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, which has preserved a multitude of soul music artifacts within vibrant and interactive exhibits; or **3)** Tour the National Civil

Rights Museum, a moving and historically significant museum built on the site of the former Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. In the afternoon, board the *American Splendor* and begin the journey down the mighty Mississippi River.

*American Splendor*  
(B,L,D)

### THURSDAY, MARCH 5

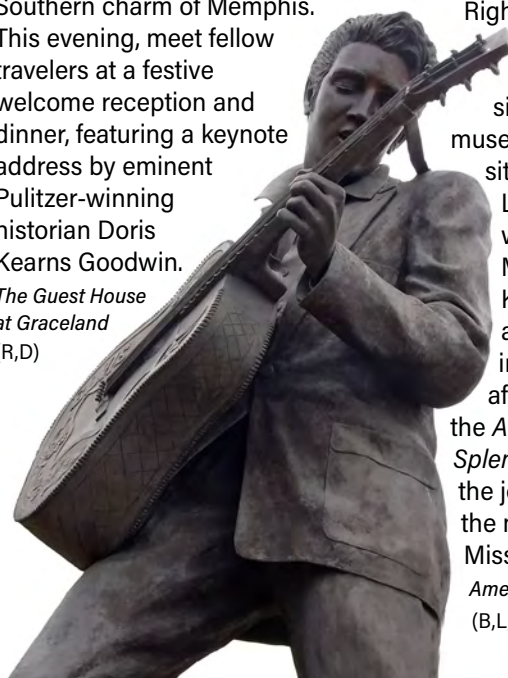
#### **Cleveland, Mississippi**

Today the *American Splendor* arrives in Cleveland, Mississippi. Choose between a visit to the Grammy Museum, a guided tour along the Mississippi Blues Trail, or an excursion to the nearby town of Mound Bayou, an all-Black community known as an oasis during the turbulent beginnings of the Civil Rights movement. *American Splendor*  
(B,L,D)

### FRIDAY, MARCH 6

#### **Vicksburg, Mississippi**

During the Civil War, Vicksburg served as a key to Union victory as General Grant's successful 47-day siege in the summer of 1863 brought control of the Mississippi River. Today visit the National Military Park, considered the best-preserved battlefield in the United States; the iron-clad gunboat Cairo; and the Lower Mississippi River Museum, with exhibits depicting life in historical Vicksburg and an aquarium featuring local fish species. Later, explore Vicksburg's historic downtown area independently. *American Splendor* (B,L,D)







Stanton Hall,  
Natchez



Slave Cabin,  
Laura Plantation, Vacherie



New Orleans

## SATURDAY, MARCH 7

### Natchez, Mississippi

Having suffered little destruction during the Civil War, Natchez is home to the largest concentrations of restored pre-Civil War properties in the United States. Today visit your choice of three of these historic homes: Longwood, with its unique octagonal design; Rosalie, which served as Union headquarters during the Civil War; and Stanton Hall, constructed in 1851 and regarded today as one of the most opulent historic mansions in the country. There will also be an opportunity for free time in central Natchez with an optional lunch ashore. *American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## SUNDAY, MARCH 8

### St. Francisville, Louisiana

Today visit the once-thriving cotton port of St. Francisville to learn about the town's rich legacy. In the Historic District, take optional excursions to magnificent mansions and plantation homes including a walking tour of historic St. Francisville; Rosedown Estate and Garden, one of the few privately maintained formal gardens of the 19th century;

Myrtles Plantation, reputed to be one of the most haunted homes in America; the Oakley Plantation, the home of John James Audubon; and Port Hudson Historic Site, where you will learn about the culminating battle and Campaign to open the Mississippi River.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## MONDAY, MARCH 9

### Vacherie, Louisiana

Disembark on the west bank of the Mississippi River to explore historic Oak Alley, a grand Greek Revival plantation home famous for its namesake double row of 18th-century canopy oak trees lining the approaching path. Nearby Laura Plantation, a restored Creole plantation, is a fascinating contrast to Oak Alley, illuminating the personal stories and culture of its inhabitants and boasting twelve buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, including slave quarters. For those that feel adventurous, embark on a swamp tour through the ecologically rich Louisiana Bayou and navigate through cypress and pine for an up-close look at waterfowl and

other Bayou creatures. Arrive late this evening in New Orleans, where *American Splendor* will remain docked for the next two nights.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## TUESDAY, MARCH 10

### New Orleans, Louisiana

Spend the day exploring New Orleans with optional tours of the extravagantly styled and landscaped Garden District and the highly acclaimed National World War II Museum. Here immersive galleries tell the story of American courage and sacrifice in the war that changed the world. *American Splendor* will remain docked overnight, allowing for time to enjoy all that New Orleans has to offer.

*American Splendor* (B,L,D)

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

### New Orleans, Louisiana/ Home

After breakfast disembark and transfer to the airport for afternoon flights home.



Lounge

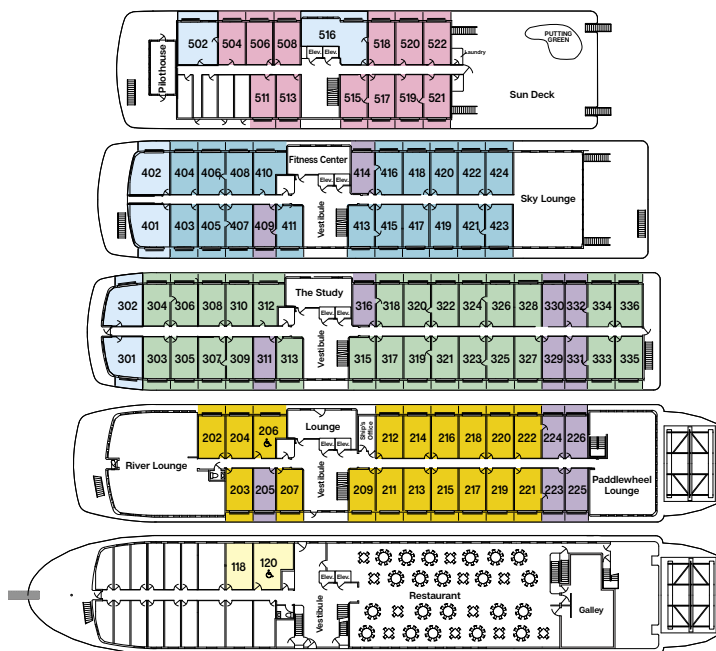


Stateroom

## AMERICAN SPLENDOR

*American Splendor* allows guests to experience the nostalgia of classic paddle-wheeler travel while enjoying modern comfort and amenities. Recently renovated, *American Splendor* features serene color palettes, luxurious textiles and linens, new furniture and carpets, and updated artwork and flourishes. From the staterooms and suites to the lounges and dining rooms, the new décor pays homage to the legendary Mississippi River. On board, guests can relax in a casual ambiance while admiring panoramic views of the passing scenery. Each spacious stateroom is outward facing, allowing commanding views of the riverside landscape, and includes all of the amenities you expect from a fine hotel. These staterooms also offer a sitting area, desk, and full-size bathrooms, and most feature floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors with a private balcony. With only 180 passengers, fellow travelers will quickly become new friends.

| PROGRAM FEES (per person): |  | DOUBLE   | SINGLE   |
|----------------------------|--|----------|----------|
| <b>A</b>                   | <b>STANDARD STATEROOM</b> Deck 1; window; 290 ft <sup>2</sup>          | \$8,990  | --       |
| <b>B</b>                   | <b>PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 2, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>               | \$9,790  | \$10,990 |
| <b>C</b>                   | <b>PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 3, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>               | \$10,590 | \$13,790 |
| <b>D</b>                   | <b>PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 4, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>               | \$11,390 | --       |
| <b>E</b>                   | <b>PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Deck 5, 245 ft <sup>2</sup>               | \$12,190 | --       |
| <b>F</b>                   | <b>OWNER'S SUITE</b> Decks 3,4,5; Private balcony; 375 ft <sup>2</sup> | \$13,690 | --       |
| <b>S</b>                   | <b>PRIVATE BALCONY SUITE</b> Decks 2,3,4; 185 sq. ft.                  | --       | \$10,290 |



## General Information

### PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE

All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary ■ Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures and presentations ■ Keynote address by Doris Kearns Goodwin in Memphis ■ Departure group transfer from the ship to the airport in New Orleans ■ Baggage handling ■ Gratuities to porters, waitstaff, guides and drivers ■ Gratuities to shipboard personnel ■ Port charges ■ Entrance fees ■ Welcome reception and dinner including all drinks ■ Daily cocktail hour and nightly entertainment while on board *American Splendor* ■ Filtered water on motorcoaches ■ Professional tour managers throughout the program

### AIR ARRANGEMENTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., can help with airline arrangements for this trip and can be reached at 877-376-1754. You are also welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

We consider this to be a moderately active program, with considerable walking at some destinations. Daily activities can involve up to two miles of walking, unaided, over varied terrain (e.g., uneven walkways, steep and sandy trails, dirt streets and paths in some locations). Participants must be physically fit, in good health, and capable of undertaking this level of activity without assistance from tour staff. In March, the weather is generally mild and comfortable, with high temperatures usually in the mid-70s, and rain is always a possibility.

### GROUP SIZE

This program can accommodate 160 participants, including travelers from World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, Harvard Alumni Travel, MIT Alumni Travel, National Trust Tours, and Princeton Journeys.

### PROGRAM RATES DO NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic airfare ■ Medical expenses and immunizations ■ Arrival airport transfers ■ Departure airport transfer

outside of group departure date ■ Travel and trip cancellation insurance ■ Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options ■ Airline baggage charges ■ Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; liquor or soft drinks except as noted ■ Laundry or dry cleaning ■ Telephone and internet charges ■ Room service ■ Other items of a personal nature

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance for trip cancellation and interruption, medical problems, baggage loss and delay, etc., is highly recommended. Information about travel insurance will be sent to confirmed participants.

A NOTE ABOUT RATES

Tour rates are based upon current fuel prices, taxes, tariffs, and a minimum number of participants. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change. If there are significant changes, details and costs will be advised prior to departure. Complete Terms and Conditions including Statement of Responsibility will be made available to you at time of registration, or in advance upon request. A signed "Terms & Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause" is required from each applicant prior to participation on the tour.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

Reserve your space online at [https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/WAC/260303\\_MIS/tour](https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/WAC/260303_MIS/tour), or return the completed reservation form with your \$1,000 per person deposit (payable to Criterion Travel) to: Criterion Travel, 4250 SW Hall Blvd., Beaverton, OR 97005. Balance of payment is due **November 3, 2025**. After November 3, 2025, full payment is due upon registration. **Final payment may be made by check, wire transfer or credit card (credit card payments will incur a processing fee of 2%).**

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Upon payment of a deposit, all reservations are subject to the cancellation provisions set forth below and by which the passenger agrees to be bound. Cancellations shall not be effective until they are received in writing and confirmed by the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia. Deposits are refundable (less a \$250 per person admin fee) if written notice of cancellation is received within 30 days of booking; after that, deposits are 100% nonrefundable. After the November 3, 2025, final payment deadline: All payments are 100% nonrefundable, regardless of booking date. For this reason, we strongly urge participants to purchase trip cancellation insurance. No refunds will be made for any part of this program on which you choose not to participate. **NOTE:** Neither the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia nor Criterion Travel, the tour operator, accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in conjunction with this tour.

HEALTH

All participants should be in good health and capable of keeping up with an active group of travelers. By forwarding the deposit for passage, the participant certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants.

ITINERARY CHANGES

The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and Criterion Travel, the tour operator. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and the tour operator reserve the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant.

California Seller of Travel  
Program CST #2088800-40

A MISSISSIPPI RIVER VOYAGE  
MARCH 3-11, 2026



RESERVE  
ONLINE

RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place online visit [https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/WAC/260303\\_MIS/tour](https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/WAC/260303_MIS/tour), or contact the World Affairs Council by phone at **(800) 942-5004**. For more information, please visit our website at [www.wacphila.org/travel](http://www.wacphila.org/travel) or email [travel@wacphila.org](mailto:travel@wacphila.org).

NAME #1

NAME #2

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

PREFERRED TELEPHONE NUMBER

EMAIL

Are you traveling with any other parties on this program? ☐ Yes, \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person, payable to Criterion Travel) for \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on **A Mississippi River Voyage**.  
☐ Please charge my deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person) to my ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

NAME ON CREDIT CARD

CARD #

EXP. DATE / CVV SECURITY CODE

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE

ACCOMMODATIONS (not guaranteed)

Cabin category preference: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_  
Bed Preference: ☐ King/Queen ☐ Twins

SINGLE TRAVELERS (choose one)

☐ I prefer single accommodations (*limited availability*)  
☐ I plan to share accommodations with: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I'd like to know about roommates.

I am a ☐ non-smoker ☐ smoker

*I understand that if a roommate cannot be found by the final payment deadline of November 3, 2025 I will pay the single rate.*

*I/We have read the General Information section of the brochure and agree to the Terms and Conditions stated therein.*

SIGNATURE #1

DATE

SIGNATURE #2

DATE





Featuring a Keynote Address  
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**DORIS KEARNS  
GOODWIN**

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Philadelphia, PA 19103

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