



The Southern & Eastern Kentucky Tourism Development Association (SEKTDA) can assist groups with reservations, scheduling, hospitality, boxed lunches, or special entertainment if needed. SEKTDA can also put you in touch with other local contacts.

Call toll free 1 888-733-7359 or visit us at [www.tourseky.com](http://www.tourseky.com)

## Along the Heritage Landmarks

### Day One

Depart Lexington via US 27 (Nicholasville Road) for Nicholasville. From Knoxville, take I-75 to Exit 59, then US 150 and US 27 to Nicholasville. Check in to the Country Hearth Inn, Holiday Inn Express, or Super 8 Motel, and then drive to Camp Nelson Heritage Park, the supply depot for the Union Army of the Ohio and one of the main recruitment and training centers for African-American troops in the Civil War.

During the Civil War, the Union Army turned the quiet countryside around Nicholasville into an expansive military operation involving 300 buildings and fortifications on 4,000 acres. As the third largest recruiting and training depot for African-Americans in the nation, Camp Nelson had over 10,000 black soldiers pass through the Union Army here. A refugee camp sprang up when many black soldiers brought their families with them. Since Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation applied only to states in rebellion, volunteering was one of the few ways Kentucky slaves could become free men. Family members of these men lived either with the recruit or in hastily built shanties.

Camp Nelson Heritage Park now has 408 of the original 4,000 acres. Tour the c. 1850 White House, used as the officers' quarters by Union troops and restored as an interpretive center. The White House headquarters has been meticulously restored and furnished and contains artifacts recovered at the site. Also tour the grounds via the interpretive trail system, which includes reconstructions of original earthen forts. Visit the Camp Nelson National Cemetery next door.

Follow US 27 south to Stanford and have lunch at the Kentucky Depot, serving great home-cooked food. After lunch, follow US 150 to the 1785 William Whitley State Historic Site, which was located on the Wilderness Road that ran up from Cumberland Gap and was a stopping point for pioneers headed west. The earliest horse track in Kentucky is on the property. Take a guided tour of the restored Georgian-style mansion and the grounds. Learn about William Whitley, a Revolutionary War veteran and famed Indian fighter, who was killed during the War of 1812.

Return to Nicholasville for overnight.

### Day Two

After breakfast, visit the William Whitley State Historic Site, if time did not permit on the previous day and have lunch at the Kentucky Depot. Then, drive to London and visit the Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, where Boone's Trace to Fort Boonesborough diverged from the Wilderness Road. Take a guided tour of the museum, early settlers' buildings, McHargue's Mill, and original sections of Boone's Trace and the Wilderness Road. An option is to drive directly to the park, then take I-75 to Exit 29 in Corbin and stop at the Harland Sanders Café & Museum for lunch at the original Kentucky fried chicken restaurant with memorabilia of Colonel Sanders and the history of KFC.

After lunch in Corbin, follow I-75 and US 25W to Cumberland Falls. See the 'Niagara of the South.'

Return to I-75 and drive to Renfro Valley. Check in to the Country Hearth Inn next door to the Renfro Valley Entertainment Center at I-75 Exit 62 or the Days Inn, Econo Lodge, or other motels at Exit 62 or Exit 59. Watch a video presentation of the history of the Renfro Valley Entertainment Center, one of the three oldest country music establishments in the U.S., operating continuously since 1939. Explore the shops, and then visit the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame & Museum next door and view exhibits on Kentucky's music heritage. Return to Renfro Valley for a family boarding house-style dinner, serving good country cooking, then attend a live stage show at The Barn of country music, family comedy, and top artists.

Options include overnight at motels in London, a convenient headquarters for exploring scenic areas and historical and cultural attractions along the I-75 corridor in southern Kentucky.



### Options & Extensions

Multiple days can be added to your itinerary. From Renfro Valley or London, follow I-75 south to Williamsburg. Check in at the Cumberland Inn. Visit the Cumberland Museum—including over 2000 animals mounted in natural settings, a collection of over 6000 crosses, and Blair's Christmas Collection—on the property and the Craft Shop, featuring Appalachian crafts. Dine at the Athenaeum Restaurant. The Hal Rogers Family Entertainment Center, including Kentucky Splash Water Park, is nearby, offering swimming and other entertainment. Options include lunch at the buffet in the full-service restaurant at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park. The park is also able to accommodate group tours overnight and offers educational activities, hiking trails, horseback riding, and swimming. Alternatively, after visiting Cumberland Falls return to London for overnight.

From London or Williamsburg, drive to Stearns and ride the Big South Fork Scenic Railway into the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area with stops at Barthell Mining Camp and Blue Heron Historic Outdoor Museum, a unique National Park Service interpretive facility on the site of a former coal mining 'camp.' Have a Coal Miner's lunch on site. After lunch, ride the train back to Stearns and visit the McCreary County Museum with interesting historic exhibits about life in local logging and mining towns. Alternatively, from London, drive to Cumberland Gap on US 25E along nearly the entire length of one of Kentucky's newly designated National Scenic Byways—the Wilderness Road. Visit Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, the Lost Squadron Museum, and the Abraham Lincoln Museum. Take a guided hike (moderately strenuous) on the newly restored Wilderness Road, the original route that Daniel Boone and the early settlers followed through the Gap. Hike up to Gap Cave, a familiar landmark to the early pioneers. The National Park Service offers guided hikes through cave, lasting about 1 hour (moderately strenuous). Overnight at Pine Mountain State Resort Park or the Best Western Inn or Holiday Inn Express in Middlesboro. Dine at the buffet in the park's full-service restaurant or at restaurants in Middlesboro.

Heading north on I-75 from London or Renfro Valley, stop at the Rockcastle River Trading Company, a gift store with many items for home and garden, on US 25, on the banks of the Rockcastle River near I-75 Exit 49. From late spring to early fall, the grounds are planted in magnificent gardens. Then, stop at Fort Boonesborough State Historic Site, a short distance off I-75. It is a living history museum and a reconstruction of the original wilderness settlement founded by Daniel Boone on the Kentucky River in 1775.