



www.TakeAFunTrip.com

Heartland Culinary Tour: *from Magnolia to the Merc*

Explore the fantastic foods and lifestyles of the Heartland, from “The Magnolia Effect” created by Chip and Joanna Gaines, to Ree Drummond’s Country Life and Style of “The Pioneer Woman” at the Merc. You may have seen it on TV or through the computer screen, but now you can experience it first-hand.

Day 1 - Arrive in Waco, Texas

Arrive in **Waco, Texas**, home to **Chip and Joanna Gaines**, the HGTV’s *‘Fixer Upper’* superstars and creators of the phenomena known as “**The Magnolia Effect**”, appropriately named after the Gaines’ company and Joanna’s favorite tree. Enjoy a **Welcome Dinner** at a local hotspot along the Riverfront. In business since 1993, the restaurant was the first to open in downtown Waco and helped to kick off its revitalization. Relax and take in the beautiful views and sample the best Cajun and classic American food in town! Depart to **check-in** at your local **hotel** for the evening. (Meals: D)

Day 2 - Magnolia Table, Armstrong Browning Library, and Cheese!

This morning, meet your **Waco Guide** in the hotel lobby and depart. Start your day off right with **breakfast** at **Magnolia Table**, one of Chip and Joanna’s popular renovation and preservation projects now serving some of the best of Joanna’s breakfast recipes. Later, you’ll be treated with a visit to the **Armstrong Browning Library**. The focus of the library is intricately linked to the Victorian poets, Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. One of the most remarkable aspects of the building is its sixty-two stained glass windows, believed to be the largest collection of secular stained glass in the world. These beautiful, brilliantly hued windows are featured on all three floors of the building. You will be amazed at the architecture and art housed in the library. Afterwards, our culinary discoveries take us on a journey to **Homestead Craft Village, Café, and Cheese Shop**. First, enjoy a delicious meal featuring locally-sourced, natural, and organic ingredients. Visit **The Cheese Shop** for a tasting program followed by a peek into the **Cheese Cave** and **free time** to visit with the artisans and explore the shops full of hand-crafted items, gifts, heirloom furniture, organic grains, baking mixes, and more. Stop by the hotel to rest and freshen up before departing for your **included dinner** at one of the *‘Top 25 New BBQ Joints’* in the state. Depart and return to your hotel for the night. (Meals: B, L, D)

Day 3 - Magnolia Market, Dr. Pepper, and a Distillery

Enjoy **breakfast** at your **hotel** this morning. Explore the **Magnolia Market at The Silos**, a shopping complex encompassing two city blocks in downtown Waco. Marked by two 120’ high silos and built in 1950 as part of the Brazos

Valley Cotton Oil Company, the complex is now owned by Chip and Joanna Gaines. Enjoy **lunch on own** while exploring. This afternoon, you’ll visit iconic “foodie destination” **The Dr. Pepper Museum and Free Enterprise Institute**. Dr. Pepper is a “native Texan” and Waco is where it all began. Originating at Morrison’s Old Corner Drug Store, it’s the oldest major brand of soft drinks in America. Like its flavor, the origin of Dr. Pepper is out-of-the-ordinary. Charles Alderton, a young pharmacist working at Morrison’s store, is believed to be the inventor of the now famous drink. He liked the way the drug store smelled, with all of the fruit syrup flavor smells mixing together in the air, and decided to create a drink reflecting the smell. The **Dr Pepper Museum and Free Enterprise Institute** houses a collection of over 100,000 objects and is continuously growing. Moving on to a stronger taste, stop to sample the *spirit* of Waco at **Balcones Distillery**. It all started in an old welding shop under a bridge in Waco. For the next year, roofing was replaced, walls knocked out, bricks laid, pipes cut, and copper pot stills from Portugal installed. Distilling began in 2009. It’s no secret to brewers and chefs alike: ingredients matter. Balcones meticulously seeks out specific ingredients for their richness in flavor. From blue corn grown in New Mexico to the first Texas-grown barley, Balcones aims to get the most out of raw materials to make a better whisky. Every spirit made adheres to the Balcones philosophy: it should be recognizable and delectable. **Dinner is on own** at **Union Hall**, home to new culinary concepts, highly creative talent, and some of the tastiest food in Texas. Return to your hotel for the evening. (Meals: B)

Day 4 - Blake Shelton’s Ole Red and Bedré Fine Chocolates

Rise and shine, grab your **breakfast eats**, and get movin’! Travel north to **Oklahoma** where your first foodie stop is **Ole Red**, a restaurant, live music venue, and retail space by country music star **Blake Shelton** and (as fans know), named after his chart-topping hit *“Ol’ Red.”* This place is a lot like Blake himself: laid-back, genuine, and all about the music. Thanks to the partnership between Blake and the folks at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, there’s live music all weekend long, plus a regular schedule of special shows and events. Stop in **Junk Stars**, located next door to Ole Red, a unique store owned by Blake’s mother, Dorothy Shackelford. From artwork, to jewelry, unique decor - even vintage items - Dorothy says the heart of the store



www.TakeAFunTrip.com

comes down to one-of-a-kind items and a hometown feel. Indulge after lunch with delicious gourmet **Bedré Fine Chocolates** and a visit to their state-of-the-art, 34,600 square-foot manufacturing facility to see them in action creating their entire lineup of sweet sensations. Relax and unwind this evening at the **Artesian Hotel and Spa**, your Tour "Rest Stop". Enjoy **dinner on own** and **free time** to indulge in the luxurious property's amenities including: specialty spa services, shopping, swimming, and more. (Meals: B, L)

Day 5 - Chickasaw Cultural Center and The First Americans Museum

Breakfast is included at your leisure so sleep in or rise early - the choice is yours for how to spend your morning. Check out and depart for a visit to the **Chickasaw Cultural Center** where you'll sample authentic Native American cuisine and engage in connecting to the story of the Chickasaw people through powerful performances, re-enactments, collections, and walk-through exhibits. Depart for **Oklahoma City** and upon arrival, visit the new **First Americans Museum (FAM)**. In one place, visitors will experience the collective histories of 39 distinctive First American Nations in Oklahoma today. First Americans Museum will share the cultural diversity, history, and contributions of the First Americans. Only a few tribal Nations were indigenous to what is now the State of Oklahoma. All others were removed from homelands across the contiguous U.S. to Indian Territory. In 1907 Oklahoma became the 46th state to enter the union. The state's name comes from two Choctaw words "Okla" and "Homma" meaning Red People. Depart and **check-in** to your **local hotel** to rest and freshen up. This evening, stop by **The Land Run Monument**, an art installation by Paul Moore commemorating the Land Run of 1889 in the Unassigned Lands, on your way to a **Welcome to OKC Dinner included** at one of Bricktown's best! (Meals: B, L, D)

Day 6 - Cook Up the Culture in OKC's Vietnamese Community

Enjoy **breakfast** at your hotel this morning prior to **checking out**. Did you know Oklahoma City has one of the largest Vietnamese populations in the United States? Enjoy a **Guided Tour of the Asian District** area where a circular sign emblazoned with a golden dragon hangs from the structure like a gong, proclaiming "Asian District" in extravagant font. Situated among architectural marvels like the Gold Dome and Oklahoma City University, and the Milk Bottle Building, located on a former strip of Route 66, Oklahoma City's Asian District thrives as a space of community. This Mid-western enclave is home to folks of various Asian heritages, but the city's large Vietnamese population has given the district its colloquial name, "Little Saigon," and invigorated its culinary scene with more than 30 restaurants. Today, we'll explore the fusion of foods, learn about PHO and making spring rolls - a truly delicious tour! Depart for **Bartlesville** and a **Tour of Price Tower**, a truly unique building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, with living and business areas, eateries, dining options, an art gallery, a permanent historical collection of Frank Lloyd Wright located on the 2nd floor, and more. Enjoy a special **Price Tower Chef's Dinner**, prepared especially for this evening, and featuring the **Bartlesville Indian Women's Club Style Show**. In this style show, 6-10 women from different tribes wear their tribe's clothing, explain their significance, share stories,

jokes, dancing, and afterwards, guests can interact with the performers. **Check in** to your local hotel. (Meals: B, L, D)

Day 7 - The Merc

Enjoy a leisurely **breakfast** at your hotel this morning. Depart for a day of fun, exploring and discovering at the **Pioneer Woman Mercantile**, a destination restaurant, bakery, and store in Pawhuska, Oklahoma! **Ree and Ladd Drummond** spent years renovating the hundred-year-old Osage Mercantile building on Main Street so that they could welcome visitors from near and far and give them a slice of small town hospitality. "The Merc" has gorgeous goods, comfort foods, fresh-made pastries, delicious coffee, and plenty of fun to dish out. Enjoy **lunch included** while visiting. Stop at the **Ben Johnson Cowboy's Museum** to see their amazing collection of the notable cowboys, cowgirls, and western heritage of Osage County. Next, visit **The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church** and gaze at the amazing stained glass windows and hear the incredible story of their history. It is a red brick cruciform church building which is significant mostly for its unusual stained glass windows designed by the **Bavarian Art Glass Company of Munich**, given dispensation to be placed in the church by special permission of the Pope. One of the two largest shows Columbus arriving in the New World and being met by Indians. The other shows the arrival of Father Shoemaker to meet the Osage tribe in Kansas, before the tribe was moved to the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Stop to rest and freshen up at the hotel to get ready for tonight's special event. Oil in Oklahoma made millionaires in the early 1920s and, along with it, romance, scandal, financial ruin, and mystery are also a part of Oklahoma's oil legacy. Experience the **E.W. Marland** story at your own **Oil Baron's Ball** tonight at the **E.W. Marland Mansion!** Return to the hotel for the night. (Meals: B, L, D)

Day 8 -

Check out and enjoy **breakfast** at your hotel this morning. Depart and visit **Standing Bear Park and National America Foundation** to hear the history, before touring the **Pioneer Woman Museum**, preserving the legacy of women of all races, creeds, and nationalities, who contributed to the development of Oklahoma. Stop for **lunch** at **Eskimo Joe's**, recommended to be a featured restaurant on Guy Fieri's Food Network program. Whether you're shopping for the grin that's always in or eating a plate piled high with their famous cheese fries, you're gonna' have a good time at Eskimo Joe's - guaranteed! Eskimo Joe's is Stillwater's Jumpin' Little Juke Joint! Voted everything from: "Best College Post-Game Hangout" by Sporting News, to ranked #3 in "The Perfect 10 College Sports Bars" by Sports Illustrated, Eskimo Joe's smilin' fun T-shirts are reputed to be one of the most collectible shirts in the country. After more than 40 years and millions of T-shirts, Joe's shirts have been spotted all around the globe and Joe's smile has truly become "The smile seen around the world!" And with a smile of your own, a full belly, and happy taste buds, bid a fond farewell as you **depart for home**. (Meals: B, L)



Mid-Atlantic Tours & Receptive Services

Post Office Box 1390 Stephens City, VA 22655; Phone: 540-869-1864; Fax: 540-869-1826

Tour Includes: 7 nights' hotel accommodation; 7 breakfasts; 6 lunches; 5 dinners; Tour & Tastings, admissions to events and guide service as stated in the itinerary. Fla. Seller of Travel Reg. No ST39040; State of California Seller of Travel Reg. No 2121204-40

www.TakeAFunTrip.com

(540) 869-1864

Info@takeafuntrip.com