



TOPDECKER, meet North America

Kick things off with Bayou beats and Cajun treats in New Orleans, then prepare to tap those toes as we get bluesy in Chicago, have a fling with country and western in Nashville and rock 'n' roll our cares away in Memphis. Bonus: these trips coincide with some of the USA's best festivals. Hot damn. Ready to eat, drink and be merry? Yeah, you are!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Limited Editions



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?
The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- 360 Chicago Tower with TILT experience
- Driving tour of Nashville
- Sun Studio tour

YOUR ITINERARY



DAY 1 | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Chicago! Get excited: you're in the home of the blues AND deep-dish pizza. After an included welcome dinner with the crew, we'll take a trip to the top of the famous 360 Chicago tower. If you thought the views couldn't get any better, wait for the TILT experience to kick in. Note: don't forget to pack your head for heights.



MEALS:

- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- 360 Chicago Tower with TILT experience

DAY 2 | CHICAGO

Today is all about Chicago's awesome optionals. Pedal your way around on a bike ride, take to the water on an architecture cruise, go up, up, and away on a helicopter tour over the city, or get shady with a gangster tour and see what Chicago was like during the 20s and 30s.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Bike hire
- Architecture cruise
- Heli-tour over Chicago
- Gangster tour

DAY 3 | CHICAGO

Wow, time flies – it's your last full day in Chicago! What you do with it is your call, but we recommend that you get your fill of exploring while you still can. Or, if you're here for the food, make sure you get your fill of deep-dish pizza. Either way, you do you.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 4 | CHICAGO TO NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

See ya later, bluesy vibes. Hello, country and western! Zip up those cowboy boots and get ready to scoot, 'cause we're on our way to Nashville. First up: we'll take you around the city's main sights on a driving tour. Tonight, we'll sit down to some good old fashioned eats at our included dinner.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Driving tour of Nashville

DAY 5 | NASHVILLE

You've got a free day to see all this lively city has to offer. Centennial Park, Belle Meade Plantation and the Parthenon (spoiler alert: it's a replica) await, so get cracking. Got a hankering for some more country music? Then the optional visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame has your name written all over it.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit the Country Music Hall of Fame

DAY 6 | NASHVILLE TO MEMPHIS

Time's up in Nashville, ya'll. Today we're rockin' and rollin' into Memphis, the city Elvis Presley called home. If that's not enough to get you thrusting, this place is also renowned for its ah-mazing BBQ food. You'll see why at dinner.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 7 | MEMPHIS

We're not going to lie – today's got a pretty strong musical theme. Kick things off with a visit to Sun Studio (the 'Birthplace of Rock N' Roll') to whet your appetite for all things tuneful, then take your pick between today's optionals: a visit to the Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum OR the one and only Graceland. Wowee.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Sun Studio tour



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit the Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum
- Elvis experience, Graceland

DAY 8 | MEMPHIS TO NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Bayou! Get excited: you're in the home of jazz music AND finger-lickin' Cajun food. What better way to get acquainted with the city (and your fellow Topdeckers) than by getting down with the legendary party vibes of Bourbon Street? Make sure you grab a Hand Grenade cocktail – they're the bomb.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 9 | NEW ORLEANS

Po'boys, gumbo, jambalaya... just how do they get Cajun food to taste so damn good? Learn the secrets behind New Orleans' tastiest treats with an optional cooking demonstration. Not your thing? You could always go party-hunting around town. There's bound to be a festival going on somewhere!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Cooking demonstration

DAY 10 | NEW ORLEANS

Feeling the after-effects of last night? No worries. Today you're free to chill. If you fancy seeing another side to New Orleans, why not hop on an optional swamp tour and check out the alligators? If you'd rather steer clear of swamp monsters, there's also an optional paddleboat cruise down the Mississippi to get on board with. How civilised!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Swamp tour
- Paddleboat cruise

DAY 11 | NEW ORLEANS

Today, our BBQ & Blues trips sings its swan song – time to say goodbye. If you're not ready to go home, an encore could be in order...



MEALS:

- Breakfast

MEALS

Your included meals are detailed in the 'Included Essentials' section of this document.

Breakfasts (usually continental breakfasts) are included every day, except on the first morning of your trip. A typical continental breakfast may consist of cereals with milk or yogurt, bread, croissants, cold meats, and cheese – with fruit juice, tea or coffee to drink. It is rare to get a hot breakfast, though on some occasions some hot food may be available.

Included meals will be provided in a mixture of local restaurants and places in which we stay. In most cases, table water is provided with meals. If you wish to purchase additional drinks, you can do so at your own expense.

If you have any dietary requirements, we'll make every effort to cater to your needs – as long as you advise your travel agent or Customer Service Consultant when you book. You can also make a note of dietary requirements in the Topdeck app when you check-in.

PLEASE NOTE: Although we'll do everything in our power to cater to your needs, we cannot guarantee this will be possible in every restaurant we visit. We also cannot cater to tastes or dislikes, as most of our included evening meals feature a set menu.

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Your Topdeck Trip Leaders and Drivers never expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. We also know how much tipping can cost you. So go ahead – spoil yourself with the money you save travelling with us (just don't forget Mum's souvenir).

TIPPING CULTURE IN NORTH AMERICA

In North America, tipping is customary. Please bear in mind that you will be expected to leave a tip for optional meals and activities, as well as during nights out.

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts

- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket
- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!