

Castles & Trains

Travel Dates: April 28—May 1, 2026

Cost Per Person:

Double: \$1,386.00 | Triple: \$1,294.00 | Quad: \$1,247.00 | Single: \$1,656.00

Final Payment Due: March 16, 2026



Though the United States is a relatively young country, you will definitely find some medieval-style castles in our midst. Interestingly, five of these **elaborate castles can be found in Pennsylvania** and today, and most are being used for different purposes than they were originally built for. Join us as we explore unique castles, learn about their history, hear some fascinating stories and take a modern train ride.

Tuesday, April 28th - This morning we will travel to Pennsylvania, enjoying the spectacular scenery along the way for the daffodils, hyacinths, pansies and primroses should be bursting with color. Add to the colorful flowers, a tour of a castle, and you have a magnificent day! Our tour today will be at **Glencairn Museum**. The castle-like home was built between 1928 and 1939 in **Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania**, a religious community that was started in the 1800s by members of the New Church, a Christian denomination. You will definitely find the castle beautiful and the history extremely interesting. After our tour, we will continue on our way to our hotel in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. (D)



Wednesday, April 29th - After a delicious breakfast we will visit **Pearl S Buck's home and museum**, a National Historic Landmark. Pearl Buck was a Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winning author who spent most of her life working as a historian and a humanitarian. When you enter her beautiful farmhouse,

you'll feel as if she is still there. . . the typewriter on which she wrote *The Good Earth* and a closet full of board games her family played, truly let you feel as if you have stopped for a personal visit with the author.



This will truly be a memorable tour. Then we're off to see what you do with **a castle that no one wants**. In this case, the castle that was built in 1890 has gone from a home to an orphanage to a film location to . . . apartments. Interesting! Lunch will be in the cute little town of Amber before we make our way to another unique medieval castle – **Eastern State Penitentiary**. It's a combination of Quaker ideals meeting prison reform and getting a little twisted. This Gothic fortress, which once housed Al Capone, was built to scare prisoners and the public. The concept became so popular that 300 more were built in other countries. The history and the personal stories are like none other you have heard. Who knew?!?

Then it's off for a delightful dinner before returning to our hotel for the night. (B, D)

Thursday, April 30th - Today we will visit three more unique castles that center around the life, work and collections of Henry Mercer, an American archaeologist, collector, and tile-maker. Our first stop will be at **Fonthill Castle**, the home of Henry Mercer. He built it as a house but also to showcase his collection of ornate handmade tiles. Our guided tour of this 44-room concrete castle will be most interesting. Next, we will visit **the Moravian Pottery and Tile-works** that Mercer started and which is still in use today, producing handmade tile and mosaics in the same style as Mercer's original designs. After lunch we will tour a truly unusual castle, **Mercer Museum, a concrete castle built in 1916** to house materials from daily life. Fearful that people would



discard “old things” due to the Industrial Revolution, Henry Mercer, collected almost 30,000 items in order to preserve our past. From a Conestoga wagon and whale boat hanging from a ceiling to smaller items, Mercer’s castle is a treasure trove of life before machine-made goods. Our last stop today will be at **a castle which was built in the 1970’s and based on a fortress in Bratislava, Slovakia**. An enjoyable wine tasting in a most enchanting “castle” is a great way to end the day. (B, D)



Friday, May 1st - After a leisurely breakfast, we will turn our motorcoach south, stopping in Philadelphia, where **we will board an Amtrak train** for a unique and modern train experience that combines the comfort with the scenic beauty of the areas you will be passing. We will disembark in Richmond and continue home on our motor coach. Wow! From visiting some of America’s castles, learning about history plus interesting people and then ending with a modern and scenic train ride – it’s going to be a wonderful adventure. Come join us! (B)



Included Meals:

3 breakfasts & 3 dinners

Pick-up Locations:

Suffolk VA | Windsor VA | Colonial Heights VA

Included in your trip:

- ◆ transportation,
- ◆ overnight accommodations,
- ◆ all meals indicated by (B), (L), and (D) each day,
- ◆ sightseeing and admissions as outlined in the itinerary,
- ◆ any local guide service used and their gratuities,
- ◆ tax and tip for all included meals,
- ◆ baggage handling in the hotels,
- ◆ the services of a Tour Director (available at all times of the day or night while on the tour),.

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