

Christmas in Bethlehem

Featuring Amtrak's *Pennsylvanian*



HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Allegheny Mountains ~ Horseshoe Curve ~ Christkindlmarkt Bethlehem
Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe ~ Moravian Music Christmas Production
Bethlehem by Night Tour ~ Allen Organ Museum ~ Sands Casino Resort
Lancaster ~ Sight & Sound Millennium Theatre ~ Miracle of Christmas

~ ITINERARY ~

Day 1: Home City ~ Greensburg, PA ~ Amtrak's "Pennsylvanian" ~ Horseshoe Curve ~ Harrisburg ~ Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe ~ Historic Bethlehem ~ Sands Casino - Depart by motorcoach to Greensburg where we board Amtrak's "Pennsylvanian" for an exciting and scenic train ride to Harrisburg. Travel across the state aboard Amtrak's spacious passenger cars equipped with comfortable reclining coach seats. Journey into the heart of the Alleghenies and around Horseshoe Curve, an engineering masterpiece completed in 1854 which revolutionized rail travel. Enjoy spectacular views that can only be seen by train. Later this afternoon we arrive in Allentown and visit historic Immaculate Conception Church. Founded by Saint John Neumann in 1857, the church now houses the National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The shrine features a reproduction of Our Lady of Guadalupe that is striking similar to the original in Mexico. Later this afternoon we travel east to Bethlehem for a memorable two-night stay. This evening we visit the new Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem which features eight restaurants, 3,000 slot machines and electronic table games and more than 35 upscale stores.

Day 2: Allen Organ Museum ~ Christkindlmarkt Bethlehem ~ Moravian Music Christmas ~ Bethlehem by Night Tour - This morning we explore the sounds, stories and history of the world's largest producer of church organs at the Allen Organ Museum. Later this morning we visit Christkindlmarkt. Recognized as one of the top holiday markets in the world by Travel & Leisure Magazine, Christkindlmarkt features aisles of exquisite handmade works by the nation's finest artisans, the heart-warming sounds of live holiday music and food from around the world. This afternoon enjoy the charm and history of an old-fashioned Moravian Christmas. Visit the beautiful 200-year-old Central Moravian Church and hear wonderful Christmas carols and traditional Moravian Christmas hymns. Following the presentation gather for a delicious group dinner at a local restaurant. This evening we embark on a delightful tour of Bethlehem. Experience the wonderful architecture and beautiful colonial-era buildings of Bethlehem's historic district on the scenic ride through this lovely city. The evening concludes with a breathtaking view of Bethlehem and the entire Lehigh Valley from atop South Mountain, home of the famous Star of Bethlehem.

Day 3: Lancaster ~ Sight & Sound Millennium Theatre ~ Miracle of Christmas ~ Journey Home - Today we leave Bethlehem and travel to Lancaster for the Miracle of Christmas performance at the Sight & Sound Millennium Theatre. A child, the Son of God, is to be born to a virgin named Mary, by the Holy Spirit. Her espoused husband, Joseph, never having heard of such a phenomenon, wants to protect her from being stoned to death, since this was the punishment for adultery. However, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph and reveals the heavenly plan of God. It is to be a miracle, unlike any of which Mary or Joseph have ever heard. The miracle baby is to be Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, sent into the midst of mankind to save them from their sins. Following the show enjoy a delicious Pennsylvania Dutch dinner at a local restaurant. Later today we depart Lancaster and begin our journey home with periodic rest and meal stops.