

# Your Ken Burns Road Trip: How You Can Travel With 'America's Story-Teller'



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*Director/producer Ken Burns speaks onstage during 'The Vietnam War' premiere at the 2017* [+]

The winner of several Emmy Awards and twice nominated for Oscars, documentary filmmaker and historian Ken Burns has earned the nickname “America’s Story-Teller” by carving out a uniquely beloved spot showcasing the American narrative. Over the past quarter century, millions have watched his films on widely varied topics including the Civil War, Baseball, Jazz, the American West, Prohibition, the National Parks, and many others.

Burns has lived all over the world, while researching and making his movies requires a lot of time in the field, so he knows a thing or two about travel. For several years, Burns has partnered with [Tauck Tours](#), one of the world's leaders in upscale guided travel to deliver co-branded itineraries and exclusive travel experiences. Based in Connecticut and still owned and operated by the third generation of the Tauck family in its 92-year history, the company has an excellent reputation and has won numerous awards, most recently being named one of the "World's Best Tour Operators" by *Travel + Leisure Magazine* - for the 18th consecutive year.

Burns himself headlines a special annual Tauck event that changes location every year. For 2017 it will be in New York City, October 5-9, 2017, showcasing a deep-dive into the Big Apple's history with tours, guided site seeing and visits to exclusive venues and events, highlighted by Burns' keynote address about New York and the opportunity to meet him.

The trip is based at the city's famous Plaza Hotel for four nights, and opens with an evening welcome reception. The next day will examine "The First Families: The Gilded Age of Wealth & Politics," a look at uptown Manhattan through the eyes of the Roosevelts, Astors, Carnegies and more. One of Burns' documentaries was on the Roosevelts, so the event includes a private tour of the historic Roosevelt



Ken Burns meets with a Tauck guest during [+]

House and a lecture on the Roosevelt in New York City by Emmy Award winning editor, author, historian and writer Geoffrey Ward, who collaborated with Ken Burns on several films. Day two is “The Land of Opportunity,” and goes downtown to explore compelling, centuries-old stories of the pursuit for new opportunities in America, from immigration to urban legends. In the evening, Burns will deliver his keynote address at Lincoln Center, followed by a question and answer session at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The theme for day three is “New York Innovation,” and focuses on midtown Manhattan and the dreams and aspirations of those who created the city, past and present. Highlights include tours of Grand Central Terminal and Rockefeller Center. The evening concludes with an after-hours visit to Ellis Island for a private reception with music by the acclaimed 11-piece New York jazz band Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks, in keeping with Burns’ jazz documentary.

The annual Ken Burns Event delves deeply into a single destination with Burns in attendance, and for 2018 will be held in Washington, D.C. But there are two other components to the [Ken Burns American Journeys](#) partnership with Tauck. The filmmaker has produced more than 150 original film vignettes exclusively for Tauck guests to view on tours that include his insights about the destinations. These are called Exclusive Stories by Ken Burns. Then there are the “Crafted by Tauck & Ken Burns” itineraries co-created by the filmmaker and travel company that immerse guests in the themes of particular Burns films. According to Tauck, “On all ‘Crafted by Tauck & Ken Burns’ itineraries, Ken is very hands-on with creating the itinerary - everything

from mapping out the tour route and what places and local people are must see and meet, to help naming the tour.” One notable standout is the Hidden Gems of New England tour, on which guests privately visit Burns’ studio in Walpole, NH, where he lives.

“Working with Tauck has been a joy, and it’s given me an entirely new medium through which I can tell America’s stories,” said Burns said (via release). “I recognize in Tauck the same drive to get it right - the same quest for excellence - that we strive to bring to our film. Having enjoyed an insider’s look at how meticulously Tauck crafts their travel experiences, I’m more excited than ever about the partnership.”

There are a couple of new additions tied to his next production, the 10-part, 10-years-in-the-making documentary *The Vietnam War* premiering on PBS in September. Because of this, the partnership has launched two new 16-day itineraries that visit Vietnam, both enhanced through the Burns angle. “Indochina: Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos” and “Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand” will both feature a number of Stories by Ken Burns filmed vignettes beginning in 2018. These are the first of the trips outside the U.S., and the 10 to 15-minute exclusives will be viewed by guests during the Vietnam portion of their itineraries, featuring insights and perspectives by Burns, his co-director Lynn Novick, and producer Sarah Botstein. Among other topics, the vignettes explore how cultural and political divides exposed by the Vietnam War continue to echo in America today, how the changing media landscape of the 1960s and early 1970s shaped the course of the conflict, and the origins and consequences of the

powerful mythologies surrounding the war. Between eight and ten vignettes are being produced. 2018 will also see the introduction of a new itinerary exploring Montana and Yellowstone National Park, America's First, tied to his hit documentary on this topic.

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