



## **“Ask the Guide in Amish Country”**

### **FAQ**

## **Down the Road Tours**

Our goal to make you happy and your clients happy by delivering exceptional service and exceptional tours. With 18 years of experience running my full-service receptive tour operator business in the Northern Indiana Amish Country area and beyond, you can be assured of Down the Road Tours' excellent reputation in the group tour business and the community. Over the years we have built solid, trusted relationships with individuals and businesses serving the area's tourism and group tour industries. Those trusted relationships build friendships. Our groups witness that friendship and feel a warm welcome the moment they step into a business or home on the tour. We would love to take your group “Down the Road”. Smiles and fond memories are guaranteed.

### **How would you define your business?**

Down the Road Tours is a full-service receptive tour operator providing top-notch, professional, affordable services for the group travel industry and delivering innovative group tour experiences that generate repeat business. In 2017 we hosted over 6,000 guests. It is also important to note strong relationship we've built with our destination's group friendly businesses; it's a relationship of trust and mutual respect,

### **How long have you been giving group tours?**

I have been in the business as a full-service receptive tour operator and provider in Northern Indiana for 18 years and received the Indiana Lt. Governor's Hospitality Award. Prior to that I planned and guided national and international tours for 15 years.

### **How would you describe the experience you provide groups?**

Fresh, one-of-a-kind, personal, memorable, time-travel, exciting all come to mind. We give them experiences they could never have on their own from behind the scenes looks at fascinating businesses to Amish schoolhouses to stepping into an Amish home to bake, quilt, dine or just gab about Amish life. We introduce them to interesting, friendly people. In fact, I often tell groups, "Today you are going to meet my friends." And they do.

### **What services do you provide groups?**

As a full-service receptive tour operator, Down the Road Tours provides groups:

- 18 plus years experience servicing the group tour business
- Affordable rates for quality service
- Customized, exclusive themed group tour packages and itineraries
- Specially focused itineraries geared to specific tour groups such as seniors, school groups, Rv'ers, church groups, special needs children and adults
- Reservations and payments for all tour activities including vendors and food services
- Experienced, courteous step-on guides
- Complimentary policies for escorts and drivers
- Specialization in tours within a 100-mile radius of our destination
- Established, trusted relationships with vendors and the region's group travel industry ensuring quality experiences
- Ability to plan tours in any area in the state of Indiana and Michigan

### **What do you specialize in?**

Down the Road Tours specializes in exclusive educational, cultural and historic tours for the group market. The exceptional experiences we offer in Northern Indiana include the Heritage Trail, Quilt Gardens, in-depth looks at the Amish and Mennonite culture, and specialized activities for quilters. We also develop itineraries tailored to particular group markets such as seniors, school groups, Rv'ers, church groups, clubs, and special needs children and adults.

### **Do you accept payment and make arrangements for ALL group components...?**

We provide a complete, customized itinerary, arrange and make payment for all activities including vendors and food services. We suggest lodging, shows and dining that complement the itinerary but do not book hotels or make reservations. The operator must follow up on that and make payment directly to provider.

### **Do you accept credit cards?**

We do not accept credit cards at this time.

**Do you request and advance deposit and if so when and what are your final payment-cancellation policies?**

We do not require an advance deposit unless vendors on the itinerary request one. Final count and payment is due 1 full week prior to the tour. We do not have a cancellation policy

**What is your comp policy for drivers and escorts?**

Drivers and escorts are comp with groups of 25 paid customers

**What is your minimum group size?**

Our minimum number for groups is 15 or how many can fit on one motor coach. We also provide guides for mini-motor coaches, and we can handle multiple coaches for operators.

**Do you offer tours for small groups in cars and vans? Price?**

Prices are negotiable for cars and vans. We can only provide guides for private groups off-season.

**How many guides do you have working for you?**

Down the Road Tours has 5-8 professional step-on guides depending on the time of year. Guides special expertise include: 2 Master Gardeners, 2 Amish guides, and 4 guides specializing in their own communities within the destination.

**How many tours can you give in one day?**

We have accommodated 8 motorcoaches in one day. They can be multiple tour companies with different itineraries.

**What specific towns...?**

We take tours to Elkhart, Goshen, Middlebury, Shipshewana, Topeka, LaGrange, Nappanee, Wakarusa, Warsaw, South Bend and Mishawaka. We can also go to other cities/communities in Northern Indiana as well as southern Michigan. Other areas throughout Indiana and Michigan can be considered.

**What do you like the most about working with groups?**

I really enjoy working with, meeting and getting to know people as do all of the guides with Down the Road Tours. We all strive to make sure our groups have a good time and get the best experience possible during their time with us. We consider all our groups our valued guests and treat them as such. And it's always a delight to see the same smiling faces of people returning from year to year.

**What are your most popular tours?**

Most popular are the Brown Bag Tour and Traveling along the Heritage Trail. Certainly seasonally themed tours such as our Stocking Stuffer and Fall Treats tours are also extremely popular. Our Quilt Gardens and quilt shopping/hands-on tours are also always in high demand. Of course, we can't leave out our very popular Mystery Tours that explore different communities within our destination and appeal to a wide variety of interests.

**Why do groups bring you repeat business?**

First off, our mantra is always good service with a smile. And we deliver that plus an excellent product with excellent step-on guides. We make sure the operators and their clients get the most "bang for their buck." Of course, we can't leave out the captivating people that groups meet, the exciting things they do, and the beautiful places they see along the way which makes them want to come back for more.