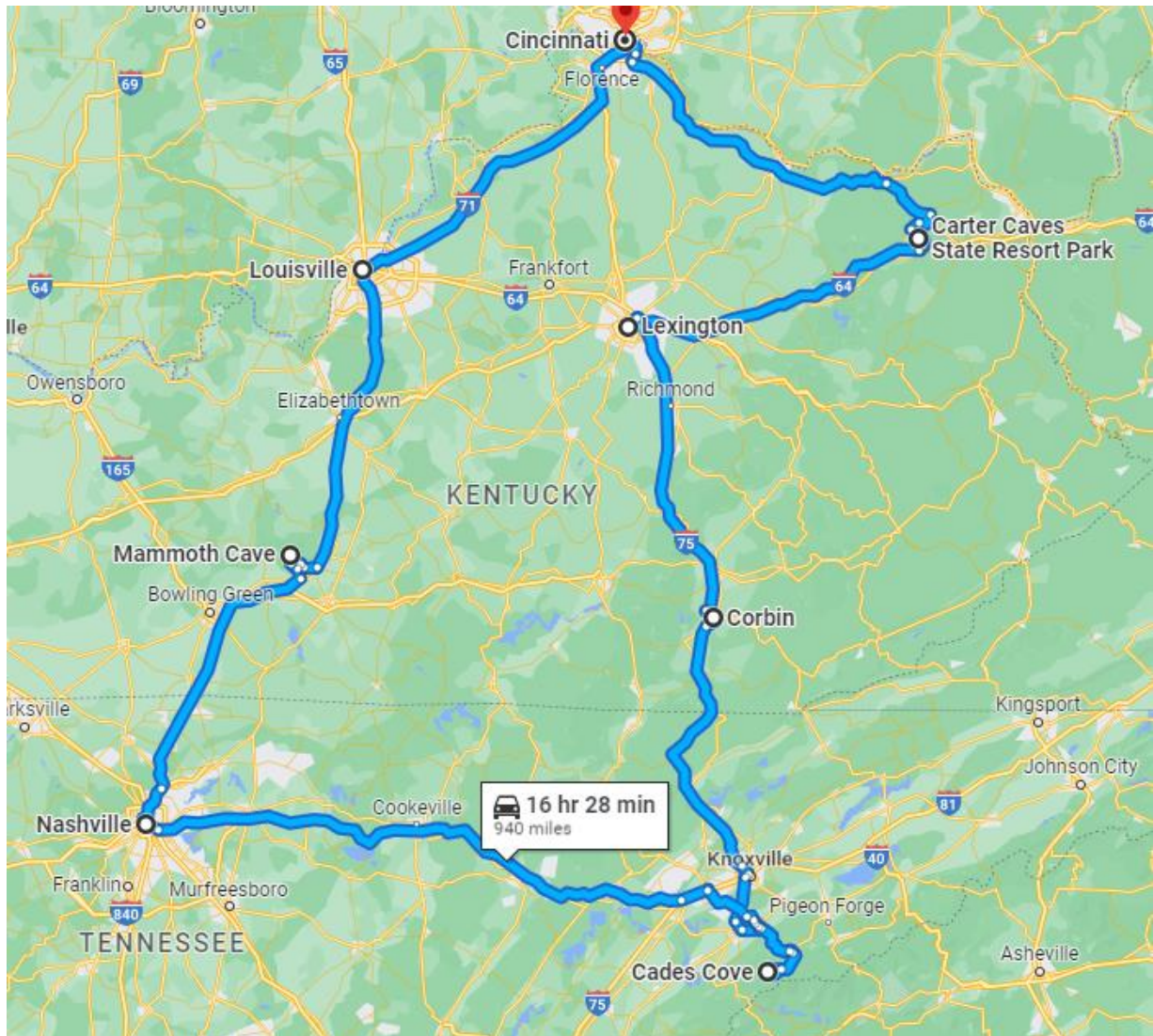


## KENTUCKY AND THE GREAT SMOKIES



Known world-wide as the home of the famous Kentucky Derby horserace, this charming state sits at the crossroads of northern ingenuity and southern charm and thankfully blends them both with ease. Every corner of the state has quaint and peaceful small towns with surrounding rolling green hills that can fill any road trip and no visit would be complete without a stop to see the exquisite horse farms around Lexington and the largest cave system in the world at Mammoth Caves National Park. Add visits to the wondrous Great Smoky Mountains National Park and all the musical history and entertainment of Nashville, and two weeks in this fascinating and beautiful region might not be long enough!

## Day 1

Before collecting your RV and heading south to enjoy the delights of Kentucky and Tennessee, we do suggest you spend a few days exploring the fascinating city of Cincinnati. Founded in 1788, it became an important supply point for pioneers heading west on flatboats and rafts, and its population rocketed in 1811 with the establishment of a major steamboat river port. Today, Cincinnati is a dynamic city with a definite European flavour, rich in architecture and culture. It is also a proud sporting city, home to America's first professional baseball team, the Reds, and the Bengals American football team. Spend time at the striking National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and visit local Newport, with its famous history of casinos, criminals and speakeasies. Or explore The B-Line, Northern Kentucky's self-guided craft bourbon tour. After your time here, collect your RV and head to Carter Caves State Park.

118 miles to Carter Caves State Park. Enjoy some amazing hikes, trails, and caves. Or, if you fancy some water activities, Cave Run Lake nearby offers paddling & kayaking.

<https://parks.ky.gov/olive-hill/parks/resort/carter-caves-state-resort-park>

## Days 2/3

Spend the morning in Carter Caves State Park before continuing to Lexington, the Horse Capital of the World and home to more than 450 Thoroughbred and Standardbred farms, with many open to the public. If you are in Lexington in April or October, make an afternoon of racing at the historic Keeneland Racecourse. Located near Keeneland, the Kentucky Horse Park offers an authentic equine experience and is the only park in the world dedicated exclusively to the horse; it also hosts seasonal and annual events such as the Kentucky Three-Day Event.

90 miles to Lexington. Take in nearly 200 years of history at the Shaker Village at Pleasant Hill, with the country's largest private collection of original 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings.

<https://kyhorsepark.com/campground/>

## Day 4

Journey to Corbin via Cumberland Falls State Park. Known as the "Niagara of the South," the thundering waters of Cumberland Falls are 65 feet high and 125 feet wide. When the Cumberland River is at flood stage the width of the falls can quickly expand to 300 feet. Most visitors see, hear and feel the mist from the Cumberland Falls from behind protective railings above and below Kentucky's largest waterfall. Then there are those who hop into a raft and feel the falls' power just downriver from its dramatic drop, as they embark on a white water rafting trip on the Cumberland River.

90 miles to Corbin. Stop by the original Colonel Sanders Cafe and Museum. Visit the museum and dining room, where you will be served the traditional Kentucky Fried Chicken foods.

<https://koa.com/campgrounds/corbin/>

## Day 5

Drive south and just west of Knoxville at Exit 364 on I-40 is Oak Ridge. During World War II, Oak Ridge was America's Secret City, where 75,000 workers lived in total secrecy while producing the first atomic bomb. The American Museum of Science and Energy explains the rise of nuclear energy, tells the extraordinary story of life in the Secret City, and even includes a photo of guards frisking Father Christmas!

86 miles to Knoxville. Spend time along the banks of the Tennessee River and its Volunteer Landing includes refreshing waterfalls and fountains, historical markers and locally-owned restaurants. Volunteer Landing is also the location of the Star of Knoxville riverboat and Three Rivers Rambler Railroad.

<https://www.southlakervpark.com/>

## Day 6/7

Continue to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, America's most visited, stretching for half-a-million acres across Tennessee and North Carolina. Hike, cycle, ride a horse, drive or rent a motorbike and explore the scenic roads of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Be sure to stand across the state line with one foot in Tennessee and the other in North Carolina at Clingman's Dome.

50 miles Cades Cove. Enjoy all the action and entertainment of nearby Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville and Townsend offering a wide array of activities from mini Nascar racing to zip-lining and of course Dollywood theme park with all its rides and family-fun.

<https://www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/cades-cove-campground.htm>

## Day 8/9

Travel along the I-40 through northern Tennessee to the wonderful city of Nashville. The city may be best known for its country roots, but the word is out that it's also home to a diverse mix of other music genres (rock, Americana, bluegrass, blues, gospel) as well as the largest songwriting community in the world. Spend an evening at The Bluebird Cafe, Nashville's legendary hotspot where you'll enjoy songwriters performing original material in an intimate in-the-round-setting. Or experience Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, the world's longest-running radio show, to see some of country music's rising stars perform live. Take a backstage tour and see the dressing rooms and famous Green Room. The Opry is on every Friday and Saturday and select Tuesdays and Wednesdays year-round.

217 miles to Nashville. Explore the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum, the world's largest museum dedicated to music! Catch a concert or take a tour of the Ryman Auditorium. The Ryman is a National Historic Landmark, renowned for its exceptional acoustics. Go honky tonkin' at Nashville's world-famous bars on Broadway including Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, Robert's Western World and Legends Corner to see where many country music legends got their start.

<https://koa.com/campgrounds/nashville-north/>

## Day 10

Head north back into Kentucky and to a highlight of the trip, the mighty Mammoth Cave National Park. This is the largest known cave system in the world, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve. Plus, unlike most national parks, there is no fee to enter the park! We suggest you spend the night in one of the well-equipped national park campgrounds which are very close to the visitor's center and attractions.

[94 miles to Mammoth Cave. Explore the caves, hike, kayak or fish in this beautiful part of the world.](#)

<https://www.nps.gov/macac/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

## Day 11

Enjoy views of rolling, wooded hills from the comfort of your lakeside campsite, which welcomes RVs. The 5,100-acre Rough River Lake offers opportunities for boating and fishing.

[54 miles to Axtel River Park. Enjoy outdoor fun renting pontoons, johnboats, and jet skis at the nearby marinas.](#)

<https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233408/campsites>

## Day 12/13

Drive to Downtown Louisville, which rolls gently down towards Main Street then abruptly lunges down to the river where the historic Belle of Louisville leaves for daily sightseeing cruises. Don't miss the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory and be sure to sample the Urban Bourbon Trail along Whiskey Row and around town.

[74 miles to Louisville. Visit the Muhammad Ali Center where Ali was born Cassius Clay in 1942. Head to Bardstown \(voted America's most beautiful small town\) and the Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center, driving the Bluegrass Parkway and visit the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site in Hodgenville.](#)

<https://koa.com/campgrounds/louisville-south/>

## Day 14

Drive the 90 mins back to Cincinnati to return your Cruise America RV.

Depart: Cincinnati or Nashville

Duration: 14 days

Distance: 973 miles