O’ Say Can You See…
(A Star-Spangled Journey)

Maryland’s Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the poem that later became the US National Anthem, after he witnessed the British attack on Baltimore’s Fort McHenry on September 13 and 14, 1814. (The battle was part of the War of 1812.) Key was so inspired by the Americans’ valiant defense of the fort that he wrote a poem that he called “The Defense of Fort McHenry.” This poem was quickly set to the tune of a British drinking song, but it took 116 years for that song to be adopted as the United States’ official anthem. Today it is perhaps the most recognizable national anthem in the world.

Day 1:
Start your day at the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House, a fun-filled, interactive experience where your group will become part of one of the most important stories of our nation’s history. Here, you’ll step into living history as you meet Mary Pickersgill, the spirited woman and seamstress that created the 30’ by 42’ foot flag which, flying over Fort McHenry, inspired Francis Scott Key to write the words that became the national anthem. You’ll learn first-hand from Mary, her family and friends what life was like in the 19th century and kids can take part in activities that let them experience it for themselves. The museum contains a theater, hands-on exhibits and military artifacts from the War of 1812. The Great Flag Window shows the exact size of the flag that flew over Fort McHenry.

Take in a Narrated City Tour. Hear some of the city’s best known stories and see some local movie and television sites. Enjoy a memorable Baltimore tour highlighting the city during its growth and see the statuary and historic homes in Mt. Vernon Place, the Basilica of the Assumption and the Grave of Edgar Allan Poe.

Then visit the Maryland Historical Society, where the original manuscript of the Star-Spangled Banner is on display. The original draft of Key’s poem, which was likely written aboard an American truce boat (not on a British ship, as legend may have it), is on display as part of the museum’s collection. The museum also includes other artifacts from the War of 1812 as well as significant pieces from throughout Maryland’s history.

After lunch at the Inner Harbor take a narrated harbor tour for a great view of Fort McHenry. Entertainment Cruises’ Seadog of Baltimore will have you have “barking” with laughter for a “howling” good time. You’ll even see the Francis Scott Key Bridge!

Next, it’s off to Fort McHenry National Monument & Shrine. After watching the film, your group will see “where our flag still waved” after the British bombardment. You will feel the impact of those special words as you catch site of the flag flying high over the fort. This star-shaped fort is probably the most famous War of 1812 site, thanks to Key’s connection to it. A film shown at the fort’s visitor center quickly outlines the War of 1812, the battle at Fort McHenry and Key’s role in that historic occasion. When weather permits, a grand 30’ x 42’ flag flies over the fort.
Enjoy dinner in Fells Point, a vibrant neighborhood just past the Inner Harbor. An historian, or maybe even Francis Scott Key himself, can describe the emotions that led up to America’s second battle for independence. If time permits, attend a baseball game at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, what better place to hear the national anthem than at a start of a ball game. Or hear the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra play the 1812 Overture.

Day 2:
Start your day in Annapolis with a visit to the Maryland State House, the oldest state house in continuous legislative use. You’ll see homes owned by signers of the Declaration of Independence and learn the role tobacco played in the development of Maryland.

Visit the United States Naval Academy, the Chapel and the Crypt of John Paul Jones, and Bancroft Hall, where the midshipmen live. Special discussions on the American Navy leading up to the War of 1812 and they’ll highlight the Uniforms, Weaponry & Paintings with special exhibits. The U.S. Naval Academy Museum has reopened and it’s FREE! The oldest, continuously operating Navy museum in the country, it has undergone extensive renovations. New exhibit include: “Don’t Give Up the Ship” flag, flown during the Battle of Lake Erie (War of 1812); the Gallery of Ships, contains models dating from 1650 to around 1840; and four life-size dioramas. You will want to see the renovations of the Naval Academy Chapel. The $2.3 million project begun in 2009 included restoring the wooden floors and pews, repairing the plaster trim, replacing pew cushions and carpeting, returning the building to its original color scheme, and sprucing up the chapel’s majestic dome.

Enjoy lunch at the Dry Dock Restaurant on the grounds of the Academy and be sure to check out the Naval Academy Gift Shop. Another option is to dine at Middleton’s Tavern, serving guests since 1750. Spend some the afternoon browsing the unique shops around Annapolis City Dock and then an afternoon cruise on the Severn River.

Enjoy a Craft-Brewed Beer Tour of Historic Annapolis, a two-hour guided beer tasting of some of the region’s most delicious brews while visiting several of Annapolis’ most popular watering holes. Highlights include stories of the Fordham Brewing Company which originated in Annapolis, Baltimore’s National Bohemian, and Flying Dog from Frederick, one of the state’s largest breweries.

Eat with your hands at Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament or see future “STARS” at Toby’s Dinner Theatre, either in Baltimore or Columbia. Each will provide you with a delicious meal and entertainment.

Day 3:
Today, travel to our nation’s capital, Washington, D.C. Upon arrival, walk through Arlington National Cemetery to see the Changing of the Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Kennedy graves and the Challenger Memorial. Your guide will highlight the many monuments and memorials with photo opportunities at the Capitol and White House and a
possible visit to the **Supreme Court**. Have lunch with a voucher at **Union Station** before exploring the **Smithsonian Institute**. Did you know the term “White House” was first used during the War of 1812?

The real site to see is Old Glory herself at Smithsonian’s **American History Museum** and **The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag That Inspired the National Anthem** exhibit. The almost 200-year old, 30-by 34-foot flag is displayed in a special environmentally-controlled chamber. An interactive table with a tactile image allows visitors to investigate key details of the flag and how it was made. The exhibition explores the flag as a family keepsake in the 19th century, the Smithsonian Institution’s efforts to preserve the artifact since 1907, and how Americans have used the Star-Spangled Banner—both the flag and the song—to express diverse ideas of patriotism and national identity.

Dinner this evening is at **Phillips FLAG-ship Restaurant**. Dine on one of the area’s largest all-you-can-eat seafood buffets. Then travel to the **Kennedy Center** for a rooftop tour of the city and a stop at the **Lincoln, Vietnam** and **Korean Memorials**.

**OPTIONAL ADD-ONS:**

**A Day in Frederick**
Spend the day in Historic Frederick. Possible visits include the **Roger Brooke Taney & Francis Scott Key Museum**, a drive by of Key’s law offices and a stop at **Mount Olivet Cemetery**. Key was originally buried in Baltimore, the city where he died. But his family remembered his wish to be buried “beneath the shadow of the everlasting hills,” so in 1866 his remains were moved to Mount Olivet. Today there’s an impressive monument and a flag -- to honor Key’s memory. You could possibly visit Francis Scott Key’s birthplace, **Terra Rubra**. This historic building is currently being restored and closed to the public, however may be available for groups. No baseball game begins with the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner. This evening, hear that patriotic song before enjoying a ballgame, by watching the **Frederick Keys**.

**A Day in Havre de Grace**
The tour begins in the historic town of **Havre de Grace**. Havre de Grace is a small waterfront town where the Susquehanna River meets the Chesapeake Bay. In 1814, the British fleet sailed up the bay from Baltimore. While most of the citizens of Havre de Grace left, John O’Neil stayed to protect his beloved town. The town constructed the **Concord Point Lighthouse** and the O’Neil family served as the light keepers until its automation in the mid-1900s. A step-on guide will tell you both sides of the legend of John O’Neil and visit the lighthouse, the light keeper’s house and other sites in this historic town. The tour concludes with a delightful luncheon aboard a replica of a Mississippi Steamboat, the **Lantern Queen**. Sit back, relax and enjoy a peaceful cruise on the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay.

**St Michaels/Georgetown**
Depart for **St. Michaels**, “the town that fooled the British.” In the dark morning hours of August 10, 1813, a number of British barges had planned an attack on the town and a fort on the harbor side. The residents of the town hoisted lanterns to the masts of ships and in the tops of the trees,
tricking the British by causing the cannons to overshoot the town. This first "blackout" was effective and only one house was struck. Now known as "The Cannonball House," a cannon ball penetrated the roof and rolled down the staircase as Mrs. Merchant carried her infant daughter downstairs. The house still exists as a private residence. Visit the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and the Hooper Straight Lighthouse. Spend free time exploring the charming shops in town. Board the Patriot for a narrated tour of waterfront historic homes, aquatic life, and the fishermen who harvest blue crabs and oysters. In Kent County, Kitty Knight pleaded with British troops to spare the structure during the May 6, 1813 attack on Georgetown. The house is now a restaurant and bed and breakfast. Enjoy dinner at the Kitty Knight House before departing for home.

**Solomons/Southern Maryland**

Drive to Solomons and visit the Calvert Marine Museum. Displays and exhibits explain the British invasion route up the Patuxent River. Tour the museum and climb through the hatch of Drum Point Lighthouse. Next, visit Cove Point Lighthouse, cruise the local waters on the Wm. B. Tennison and enjoy lunch on the water or among outdoor sculptures at Annmarie Garden in Association with the Smithsonian Institution. After lunch, visit Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, a site on the National Register of Historic Places. Learn about the significance of the First and Second Battles of St. Leonard Creek. Take a guided tour of Point Farm, the remarkable home of the late Mr. And Mrs. Jefferson Patterson, which preserves many artifacts or 20th century history; afternoon tea may also be arranged. Enjoy dinner or a crab feast at one of Solomons’ beautiful waterside restaurants. Other options include touring during the annual War of 1812 Re-enactment and Tavern Night, held in September, visiting the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, a local winery or strolling the Riverwalk.

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