



Learn Like a Local During an Educational Vacation

New Skills Make the Perfect Souvenir

November 6, 2018 – The year may be coming to an end, but it’s never too late to learn something new. This fall, start planning an educational vacation that allows you to explore new areas, introduce yourself to new cultures, and learn skills that reflect the region. Return home with not only the memories made but also with a new appreciation for the local culture. All kinds of participatory and educational adventures await in MBPR’s client destinations.

Start from Scratch:

- In Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, Alabama, visitors can learn how to build the perfect sandcastle right on the beach thanks to [Sand Castle University](#). Groups of all ages and skill levels can learn from a true expert in sandcastle architecture during “Sand Castle 101.” Sand Castle University specializes in teaching sandcastle building techniques, and once those skills are well on their way to being perfected, “Sand Castle 102” is logically the next step, with advanced techniques and special tools (note: not a sandcastle pail). The best part? The University even films a time-lapse video of each group so that there’s proof of the sugar-white sand castle masterpiece even after the waves crash into the beach. To book a class, visit [gulfshores.com](#).
- South Carolina visitors can learn the Lowcountry tradition of sweetgrass basket weaving using the same methods and materials that have been used for generations. Originally playing an important role on Southern rice plantations, today sweetgrass baskets are treasured for their artistry and cultural significance. Guests visiting Georgetown, South Carolina, and the [Hopsewee Plantation](#) can learn how to weave these unique baskets during workshops taught by Vera Manigault, an eighth-generation weaver from Mount Pleasant, where the baskets are still made and sold. Basket weaving classes can be booked online at [hopswee.com](#).
- Teach a man to fish, or teach him how to ... build a boat to take him fishing? In Lockport, Louisiana, part of Louisiana’s Cajun Bayou, visitors can learn how to build their own boat from resident boat builder Ernie Savole, who specializes in marine plywood “pirogues” (a Cajun canoe), bateaus, mudboats, row boats, and lake skiffs at the [Center for Traditional Louisiana Boat Building](#). If building a boat from scratch sounds too daunting, the Center also

has completed boats for sale that were built during the boat building class by other visitors. The class takes place on Monday evenings, and by appointment.

- Back to the fishing ... fly fishing, that is. [Mossy Creek Fly Fishing](#) is the most active fly fishing school in Virginia, and for good reason. They teach hundreds of new anglers each year, and the Orvis-endorsed school teaches classes on private trophy trout waters just minutes from their shop in Harrisonburg, which is part of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Following a classroom presentation on the necessary equipment, proper knots, selecting a fly, and reading the water, participants will be ready to hit the water for hands-on casting instruction. Mossy Creek Fly Fishing offers half-day beginner classes or two-hour casting clinics. All fly fishing gear is included, and reservations can be booked online at [mossycreekyflyfishing.com](#).

Take Existing Skills to the Next Level:

- Cooking classes come to life as visitors learn how to make everything from apple cake and sweet potato curry soup, to homemade focaccia bread, to the perfect Christmas morning meal at the [Culinary Craft School](#) at Silver Dollar City in Branson, Missouri. Classes take place in a turn-of-the-century style farmhouse complete with warm timber-frame construction and a welcoming wraparound porch with an amazing view of Echo Hollow Amphitheatre. Class participants enjoy tiered seating and large plasma TVs that enable them to capture every detail of the delicious recipes made in the demonstration kitchen. Classes typically run 60 minutes, and the [class schedule is available online](#).
- Never pay for a floral arrangement again (a true thorn in one's side) after officially being named a "floral arrangement" expert during a visit to Greater Wilmington & the Brandywine Valley. At [Longwood Gardens](#), visitors can be certified in the art of flower arranging as they become a part of one of the Northeast's most respected and forward-thinking floral design programs, with diverse courses such as "Magnificent Mantels," wreath-making, and themed classes throughout the year. Whether it's an individual course or the pursuit of a Certificate of Merit in Floral Design, visitors will take away a skill that will last longer than the flowers they bring home with them.

Whether learning something new or perfecting an existing skill, visitors will delight in all that these destinations have to offer. After all, not all souvenirs were meant to fit in a carry-on.

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