



12 SECRETS OF CRYSTAL BRIDGES

by Robin Mero

1. Take a break from exploring the galleries and visit the tranquil library on the top floor. It has arguably the best views from the museum, plus comfy chairs to lounge in and public computers to check your email.
2. While you're in the library, look at the phenomenal books! The vast collection ranges from the rare, quirky, or ancient - to the most gorgeous, modern art books you'll ever see. See what's featured on the end panels or displays, or ask a library guide what's new. Join the book club. And watch schedules for a "Great Reveal" event, when the librarian pulls out a rare book for public view.
3. Visit on Tuesday, when the museum is closed, to view gardens and walk the trails. The grounds are unbelievably serene and you'll feel your visit is exclusive.
4. Definitely, definitely take tours and classes.
5. Don't be put off when you're asked brief questions at the door - such as whether it's your first visit and where you're from. This is how the museum tracks visitors, and staff uses all the information to plan programs and cater to you.
6. Yes, there are a few rules. Don't chew gum; they will notice. Stay a foot or more away from the art. It's so tempting to lean and admire delicate brush strokes and let your eyes feast on the details, but it's not good for the art and you'll be so advised. No ink pens and no flash photography!
7. If you don't understand why, for instance, the new Rothko painting could possibly be worth millions when it resembles a blurry orange pop tart (a comment that was recently overheard in the gallery) ask the staff to explain a work of art to you. Honestly, they want you to understand and will go out of their way to share the enthusiasm. Ask in the library for information about the work, or post a question on facebook.

8. Alice Walton herself narrates segments of the audio tours. You need to hear her charming story about growing to love the 1904 oil painting *Jeanne* by Alfred Maurer. At first the painting gave her goosebumps, “she was very threatening to me ... I was afraid I couldn’t live with her” but the oversized painting of a woman in a long white dress, hat and feathery boa, which resided in Alice’s home until the museum’s opening, came to be “the painting I had the hardest time seeing go out the door.”
9. Artisan-roasted coffee beans used at the museum are custom prepared by Bentonville’s own Airship Coffee, and you can buy beans to take home.
10. The last day to join as an “Original Member” is November 30. You’ll receive the inaugural membership card

designating you as such. As of December 1, the card design changes and the opportunity ends.

11. Curators, directors and educators are constantly seeking feedback from museum visitors, so take advantage of comment cards. Send emails, and talk to the staff. They are interested in your feelings about the art, what you like and what you don’t, and which events appeal to you.
12. To borrow titles from the art, dine Au Café, bring The Family and Old Companions, take your Time and experience The Way of Color and Love. After all, this is Our Town and we are Kindred Spirits. And yes, it’s Free!

See the Light: The Luminist Tradition in American Art through January 28, 2013

From the luminous paintings of Martin Johnson Heade in the 19th-century to Dan Flavin’s minimalist sculpture featuring fluorescent tubes in the 20th, light has inspired American artists for more than 100 years. See the Light: The Luminist Tradition in American Art features selected works from Crystal Bridges’ permanent collection combined with works on loan from other institutions.

One of the highlights of See the Light is the painting, “No. 210/No. 211 (Orange)” by Abstract Expressionist Mark Rothko, and has been in a private collection since the 1960s.

Moshe Safdie: The Path to Crystal Bridges through January 28, 2013

The use of light as a powerful design element is key to the signature style of Moshe Safdie, the world-renowned architect of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Walls of glass, skylights, exterior views, and manipulation of natural light to create space and mood are elements that can be traced throughout

Safdie’s career. His design for Crystal Bridges is completely unique, and yet references elements from several of his major national and international projects. Moshe Safdie: The Path to Crystal Bridges charts the design development of four key projects—Habitat 67 in Montreal, The Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, The National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles—which helped to inform the design for Crystal Bridges. Through models, architectural drawings, photographs and video, this exhibition illuminates Safdie’s path to Crystal Bridges by highlighting his aesthetic language of transcendent light, powerful geometric form, and metaphoric imagery.



Architect Moshe Safdie’s initial concept sketch for Crystal Bridges