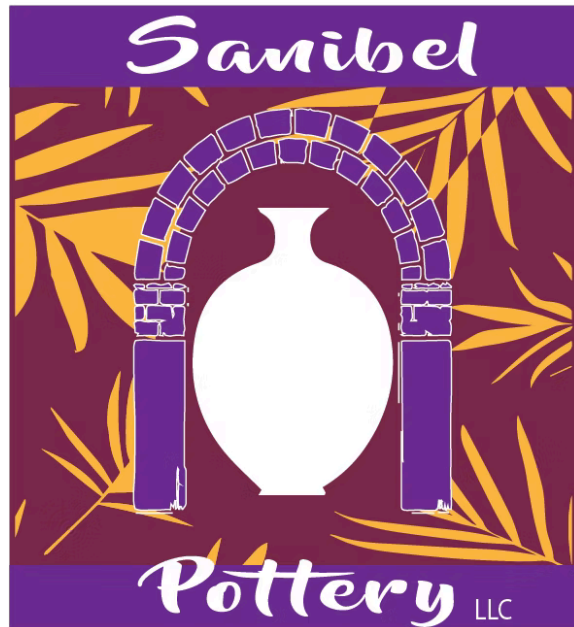




Itinerary for wood fire tour to Morean Clay Center.

Phase 1: Preparation & Loading (Days 1–2)

- **Prep wood and kiln:** Split and stack dry hardwood (oak, ash) and softwoods (pine, poplar). Clean shelves, grind the kiln floor, and apply fresh **kiln wash** (a protective coating to stop glazes from sticking to shelves). [\[1, 2\]](#)
- **Wad the pots:** Roll **wadding** (small balls of clay, sand, and alumina) to place under each piece. This stops pots from fusing to shelves from falling wood ash. [\[1, 2\]](#)
- **Load the chambers:** Place glazed and bisque-fired work from front to back. Set up **pyrometric cones** (small ceramic pyramids that melt at exact temperatures to measure heat work) at the spyholes. [\[1, 2, 3, 4\]](#)
- **Seal the door:** Brick up the kiln door tightly and seal the joints with clay slip.

Phase 2: The Firing (Days 3–4)

- **Preheating (Night 1 - Low fire):** Start a small campfire in the firebox. Keep temperatures low overnight to drive out any leftover moisture and prevent explosions. [\[1, 2\]](#)

- **Ramping up (Day 3 - Medium/High fire):** Increase the heat steadily (about 100°F per hour). Switch from softwoods to heavy hardwood as the interior reaches over 2,000°F. [\[1\]](#)
- **Stoking & Reduction (Day 3 night to Day 4):** Crews take turns stoking wood into the firebox every few minutes. Adjust the chimney dampers to starve the fire of oxygen. This creates a **reduction atmosphere** (a smoky environment lacking oxygen that pulls oxygen from the clay and glazes to create rich, earthy colors). [\[1, 2\]](#)
- **Peak & Finish (Day 4 afternoon):** Push the kiln to target temperature (cone 10–13, roughly 2,300°F–2,400°F). Hold the heat steady for several hours, then let the final wood embers burn down and seal the dampers. [\[1, 2, 3\]](#)

Phase 3: Cooling & Unloading (Days 5–7)

- **Cooling down (Days 5–6):** Leave the kiln completely sealed to cool naturally. Cooling usually takes as long as the active firing.
- **Unloading (Day 7):** Open the brick door once internal temperatures drop below 125°F. Carefully pry pots off their wads, clean up the ash deposits on the bottoms, and sort the work. [\[1, 2, 3, 4\]](#)