

VISIT THE USA

TRAVEL SOUTH

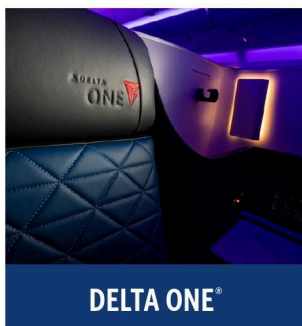


VisitTheUSA.com

TRAVEL SOUTH  USA



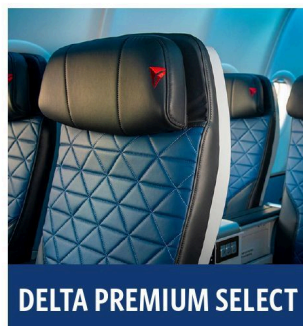
DELTA IS PROUD TO OFFER SIGNATURE PRODUCTS UNLIKE ANYTHING ELSE IN THE SKY.



DELTA ONE®

HIGHER ALTITUDE LUXURY

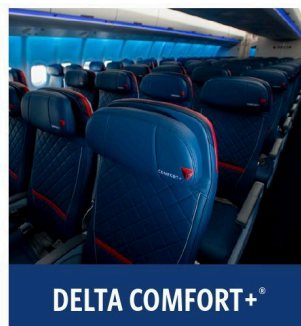
- Individual aisle access, spacious 180-degree fully flat-bed seat with luxury in-flight bedding
- Larger entertainment screen, noise cancelling headset, Someone Somewhere handcrafted amenity kits
- Premium lounge or Delta Sky Club® access and Sky Priority® airport experience¹



DELTA PREMIUM SELECT

A SUPERIOR CABIN

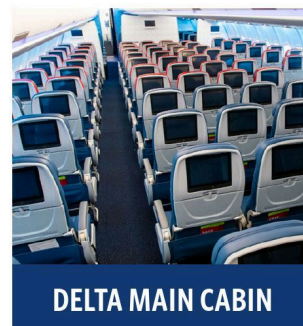
- Separate cabin featuring wider seats with additional legroom and recline, adjustable leg and footrests²
- Elevated dining experience and dedicated service touchpoints
- High-resolution, larger seat-back screen with noise-reducing headset and Someone Somewhere handcrafted amenity kits
- Sky Priority check-in, security and expedited baggage handling



DELTA COMFORT+®

PLUS MEANS MORE

- More legroom and recline², seat at the front of Main Cabin
- Dedicated overhead storage for carry-on items
- Complimentary headset and amenity kit with eyeshade, ear plugs, toothpaste and toothbrush²
- Freshly prepared and locally inspired cuisine, snacks and complimentary alcoholic³ and soft beverages



DELTA MAIN CABIN

A HIGHER STANDARD

- Greater flexibility, seat selection in advance or upgrades to a premium cabin
- Individual entertainment screen, in-seat power, free mobile messaging⁴ and complimentary sleep kit
- Complimentary meals, snacks and alcoholic³ and non-alcoholic hot and cold beverages

¹Sky Priority services include: dedicated check-in, expedited security and baggage handling. Delta Sky Club or partner's lounges: all Delta Sky Club rules apply to Delta Sky Club. To review the rules, please visit delta.com/skyclub. ²On long-haul international flights. Seat configurations may vary depending on aircraft type and size. ³Alcoholic beverages 21+ old, drink responsibly. ⁴Available via iMessage, WhatsApp & Facebook Messenger; text and emojis only. ⁵Wi-Fi is available at a fee, availability may vary depending on aircraft type. All information correct at time of publishing/printing.

FROM THE EDITOR

I have visited – and written about – every one of the 50 American states but must admit that my heart remains in the American South. Perhaps that's because I was born in, lived in or regularly visited relatives in seven of the Southern states. However, as my travels extended into the five other Travel South states, I became more and more fascinated by the region's rich – if sometimes turbulent – history, its beautiful cities and charming small towns, its delicious food and life-affirming drink and the great creativity of its musicians, artists and writers, all of which I hope you, too, will be able to experience when you next visit the USA.

While there, why not spend some family time in a log cabin or on a campground in one of the region's beautiful state parks – as a **Virginia** teenager I discovered they offer great canoeing, swimming, fishing and star gazing; learn a new water sport along the Atlantic or Gulf of Mexico coasts – my college roommate taught me to sail and waterski in **North Carolina's** Albemarle Sound; hike part of America's most-famous footpath, the Appalachian Trail, as I did with friends in **Georgia**; relax on an island – one of my favourite seaside sojourns was on **South Carolina's** Hilton Head; or cruise up the mighty Mississippi on the *American Queen*, disembarking along the way at charming small towns in **Louisiana** and **Mississippi** ... perhaps over-nighting at a plantation.

Enjoy some urban time in exciting cities, making sure to dine at some of their award-winning restaurants or colourful diners and also checking out some of their outstanding museums – I was particularly taken by one of the region's newer ones, the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, **Arkansas**.

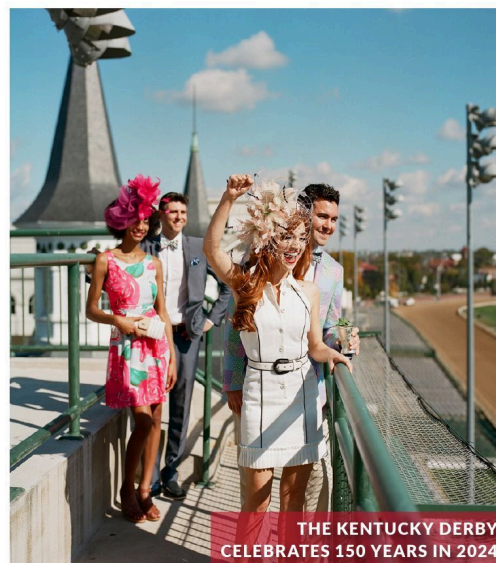
Drive along the **Missouri** stretch of fabled Route 66, checking out the caves and vineyards along the way; follow part of the thought-provoking American Civil Rights Trail through **Alabama**; visit the indigenous Cherokees in their **North Carolina** Appalachian Mountain homeland; white-water raft through **West Virginia's** New River Gorge, America's newest National Park; and explore the country's most-visited National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains in eastern **Tennessee**. While there, you can check out nearby Dollywood or even sip some of the moonshine produced at Shine Girl Distillery, run by Dolly's niece, Danielle, in Dolly's hometown of Sevierville.

Finally, consider scheduling your visit to coincide with one of the South's unique annual events such as Louisville's **Kentucky** Derby, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2024, or New Orleans' flamboyant Jazz & Heritage Festival, both of them staged each spring.

Or create your own adventures, perhaps via a special road trip with the aid of this guide. So, please, read on and enjoy planning your next trip to the American South.



THE EDITOR IN MOBILE, AL



THE KENTUCKY DERBY
CELEBRATES 150 YEARS IN 2024

Mary Moore Mason

PHOTO CREDITS: COVER: Chef Wallace, **Travel South Brand Ambassador**, Mississippi Development Authority (MS), **IMAGES PROVIDED BY:** Alabama Tourism Department (AL), Arkansas Tourism (AR), Georgia Department of Economic Development (GA), Kentucky Department of Tourism (KY), Louisiana Office of Tourism (LA), Missouri Division of Tourism (MO), Mississippi Development Authority (MS), Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TN), Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (NC), South Carolina Office of Tourism (SC), Virginia Tourism Corporation (VA) West Virginia Department of Tourism (WV); pg 9: AL/Ted Danson; pg 31: Jacqui Agate; pg 33: The American Queen Voyages; pg 60: GA/Mercer Music at Capricorn; pg 40: Zack Smith, Jeff Anding; pgs 64-65: Zoey Goto; pg 68: Joyce Brace; pg 70: MS/Randy K Schmidt



GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN, NC

WELCOME TO

AMERICA'S TRAVEL SOUTH REGION

DEAR INTERNATIONAL VISITOR,

Welcome to the vibrant and diverse Southern United States! Here, you will find a region infused with authentic cultures, flavors, and experiences like no other.

The surge in excitement to travel is undeniable, and the South has much to offer. From bustling cities to small towns, this region is set apart by its commitment to diversity and the celebration of unique voices. As you travel the area, you will find a multitude of cultures that infuse local economies with rich traditions and innovative ideas.

Plan your road trip traversing our charming towns and lively cities, savoring Southern cuisine, sipping locally-crafted spirits,

embracing outdoor adventure, joining in on a festival or two, and tapping your feet to a menagerie of our music.

The stories and vibrant pictures in this guide give just a taste of the enriching and surprising experiences that can be found here, so we hope this will convince you to come see for yourself.

We raise our glass to you as you read on, and we look forward to seeing you in the South!

Mike Mangeot
Commissioner, Kentucky
Department of Tourism
Board Chair, Travel South USA



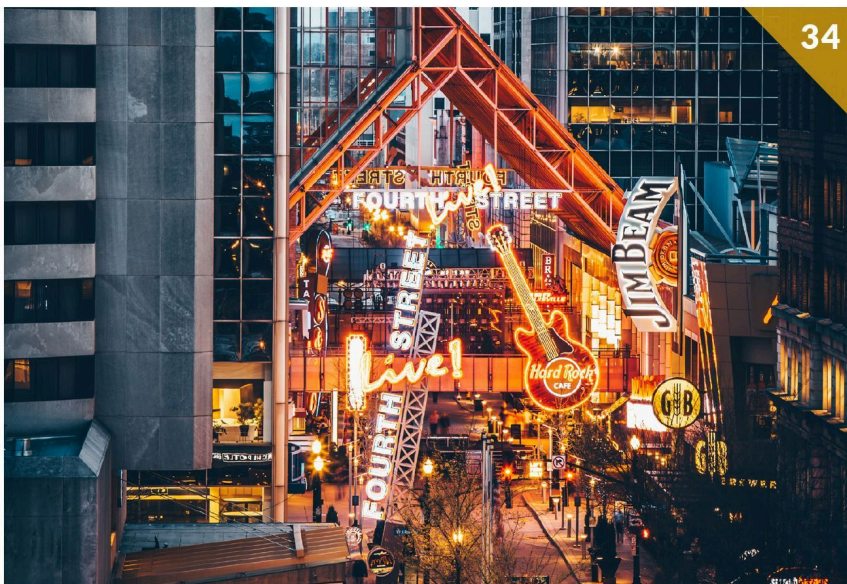
f [travelsouthusa](#)

📷 [travelsouthusa](#)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 06** REGIONAL MAP & GATEWAY AIRPORTS
- 08** TWELVE ALLURING STATES - EACH DELIGHTFULLY DIFFERENT
- 26** DISCOVER THE ROMANCE OF A ROAD TRIP
- 34** ATTRACTION-FILLED CITIES & CHARMING SMALL TOWNS
- 50** THE GREAT OUTDOORS - FIND YOUR ADVENTURE
- 56** MAGICAL MUSIC - LEGENDS & LOCATIONS
- 68** CREATIVE CUISINE & LYRICAL LIBATIONS



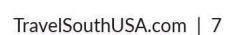
REGIONAL MAP



INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY AIRPORTS

- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL)
- Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CTL)
- Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport (DFW)
- Kansas City International Airport (MCI)
- Orlando International Airport (MCO)
- Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD)
- George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH)
- Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD)
- Lambert-St. Louis International Airport (STL)
- Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU)
- Nashville International Airport (BNA)
- Memphis International Airport (MEM)
- Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY)
- Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG)
- Charleston International Airport (CHS)





BALD HEAD ISLAND, NC

TWELVE ALLURING STATES



EACH DELIGHTFULLY DIFFERENT

Within the Travel South region are the country's most visited and most recently proclaimed National Parks, hundreds of recreation-rich state parks, the highest – and some of the most beautiful – mountains in the eastern USA, America's largest blackwater and river swamps, a sizeable portion of America's largest estuary, the Chesapeake Bay, the longest stretch of America's most famous footpath,

the Appalachian Trail, sparkling lakes, spectacular waterfalls, exhilarating white-water rivers, and lush and lovely hills and valleys, known for their prize-winning horse-breeding stables, orchards and wineries.

In their midst are some of America's most beautiful and historic cities and small towns, the birthplace and/or proving grounds of most of America's most popular music genres, the homes of

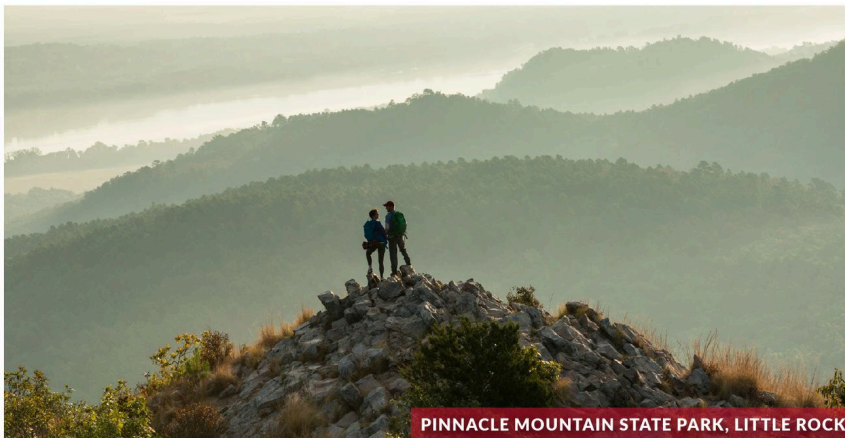
many of its most famous authors, award-winning restaurants and chefs producing some of the country's most creative and delicious cuisines, not to forget those life-enhancing beverages – wine, beer, Bourbon and Whiskey. And then there are those annual festivals saluting not only food, wine and spirits but also everything else from music to motor sports, pirates to peanuts and glorious gardens to goodness knows what.



BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL PARK, MOBILE

ALABAMA

From 32 miles of golden sand beaches along the Gulf of Mexico to adventures in the rolling foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Alabama is a triumph of treats: Huntsville is home to the world's largest space museum; Mobile, to a colourful museum commemorating America's first Mardi Gras; and Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma to numerous thought-provoking Civil Rights sites. That's not to forget its rich music heritage found in such places as Muscle Shoals, Florence and Tuscumbia and the literary heritage of such towns as Monroeville (inspiration for *To Kill a Mockingbird*) and Bayou La Batre (*Forrest Gump*).



PINNACLE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK, LITTLE ROCK

ARKANSAS

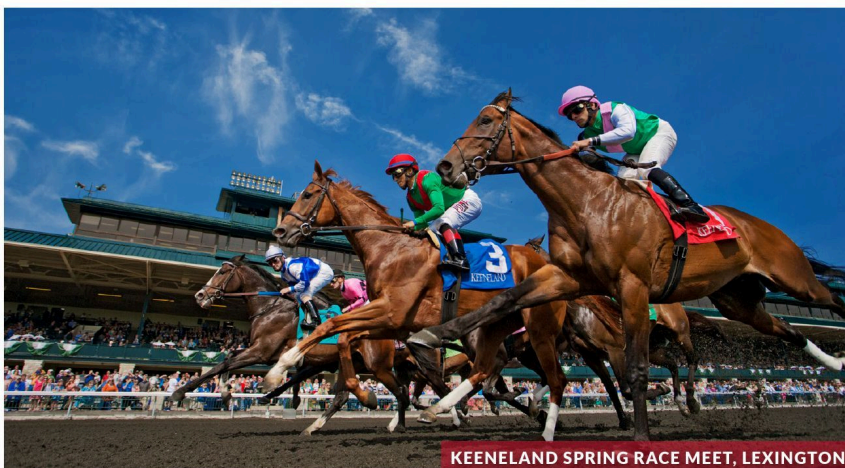
America's 'Natural State' offers a wealth of outdoor adventure opportunities – hiking, mountain biking, river floating, fishing and much more – plus an impressive human heritage that includes the Hope birthplace of former US President Bill Clinton and his museum, and Civil Rights sites in the state capital, Little Rock. And then there is the renowned spa town, Hot Springs, and the impressive Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art founded by Walmart heiress Alice Walton in Bentonville, where her dad, Sam, set up his merchandising empire.



ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDENS

GEORGIA

Home to Atlanta, the South's largest city and site of the world's busiest airport, Georgia considers itself 'The South Reinvented'. For although the beautiful scenery and Old South mansions depicted in the epic, if over-romanticised book and film *Gone With the Wind* still exist, they are balanced by the Atlanta sites honouring the life and heritage of Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Other unmissable places include seductive, historic Savannah and the idyllic Golden Isles, with all their resort offerings.



KEENELAND SPRING RACE MEET, LEXINGTON

KENTUCKY

Nicknamed the 'Bluegrass State' after Lexington area's lush meadowlands grazed by championship horses, Kentucky is best known for Louisville's thrilling annual Kentucky Derby, which celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2024, and Muhammad Ali Center, which commemorates the life and legacy of the city's most-famous son. That's not to forget its wealth of Bourbon distilleries in Bardstown and beyond, and such natural wonders as Mammoth Cave and Cumberland Waterfall, 'The Niagara of the South', or the fact that its myriad of state parks are celebrating their centenary this year, that its Lake Cumberland is the 'Houseboat Capital of the World', and that the new air service from London into Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport makes it the South's latest international gateway state.

LOUISIANA

Best-known for fabulous, fun-loving New Orleans, Louisiana is also graced by Baton Rouge with its unique skyscraper State Capitol; Lake Charles, known for its casinos, restaurants and pirate legacy; and a wealth of beautiful old plantation homes and charming towns easily reached both by road and Mississippi River cruises. Also on offer: its unique Cajun culture, which still thrives in Lafayette and other picturesque towns and villages found in the bayou country west of New Orleans, its ever-expanding array of award-winning restaurants and its huge choice of fun and flamboyant music festivals.



BLUE MOON SALOON, LAFAYETTE

MISSISSIPPI

Not only does this state share its name with the mighty river flowing along its western border but also many of its attractions: riverfront Natchez, which offers spring and autumn pilgrimages to the opulent mansions built by cotton tycoons when it was the wealthiest town in America; Vicksburg, famed for its Civil War heritage and Military Park; and the historic music sites and museums in the Delta Country, birthplace of The Blues. Also unmissable: the state capital, Jackson, and Tupelo, Elvis Presley's hometown.



COASTAL MISSISSIPPI

MISSOURI

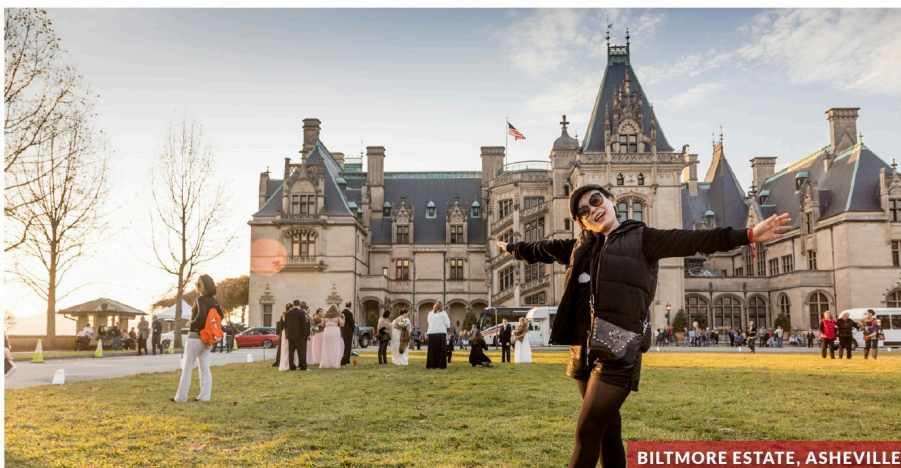
The 'Show Me' state in fact has much to show you, from St. Louis's towering riverside Gateway Arch symbolising its role in America's westward expansion to a sizeable portion of legendary Route 66; from Kansas City, renowned for its jazz heritage and succulent barbecue, to Branson, buzzy with its array of live music shows; and from Hannibal, hometown of Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain, whose epic novels put Ole Man River on the international map, to Independence, home of and museum about former US President Harry Truman.



GARY'S GAY PARITA SINCLAIR ON ROUTE 66 ASH GROVE

NORTH CAROLINA

From its convoy of Outer Bank Atlantic coastal islands, enhanced by wild ponies and photogenic lighthouses, to its beautiful western mountains that reach their zenith with Mount Mitchell – at 6,684 feet, the tallest peak east of the Mississippi River – North Carolina offers a delectable diversity of attractive places to visit, including a triangle of lively university cities – the state capital, Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill, the vibrant business hub, Charlotte, and mountaintop Asheville, home of the majestic Biltmore Estate, the largest private home in America.



BILTMORE ESTATE, ASHEVILLE



KIAWAH OCEAN CLUBHOUSE, KIAWAH ISLAND

SOUTH CAROLINA

Not only is Charleston considered one of the South's most-beautiful and romantic cities, but lively Myrtle Beach up the Atlantic coast is one the region's most-multi-faceted beach resorts offering everything from Las Vegas-style shows to great golfing. Down the coast are a litany of lovely resort islands such as Hilton Head, known for its great golfing and photogenic lighthouse; centrally-located Columbia is home to the handsome State House, museums and a zoo; nearby Camden is renowned for its equine events, and the western foothills of the Appalachian Mountains are full of hiking, biking and other outdoor sporting opportunities.



BURGESS FALLS STATE PARK

TENNESSEE

No American state has a richer music heritage than Tennessee, home to Nashville, 'Music City USA', where attractions include the Grand Ole Opry, the Country Music Hall of Fame and the newer American Museum of African American Music; Memphis, where you can visit the clubs along buzzy Beale Street and Elvis's Graceland mansion; and Sevierville, Dolly Parton's hometown. But the state also has such natural attractions as America's most-visited National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains, and the recreation-rich Land Between the Lakes.



VIRGINIA BEACH

VIRGINIA

The birthplace of English-speaking America – at Jamestown in 1607 – takes pride in its early American heritage: its colonial capital, Williamsburg, is now one of the world's largest living history museums, and it also encompasses two of America's most-popular presidential homes/museums – George Washington's Potomac Riverside Mount Vernon south of Alexandria and Thomas Jefferson's mountaintop Monticello outside Charlottesville. That's not to forget that Richmond's State Capitol doubled as the Capitol of the Confederacy during the American Civil War or that the state also encompasses beautiful mountain and coastal scenery that includes Virginia Beach, the longest pleasure beach in the USA.



NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

WEST VIRGINIA

The 'Mountain State', which boasts that it's "Almost Heaven", is indeed divinely endowed with opportunities for outdoor adventures. The third most-forested state in America, it has 1,500 miles of hiking trails, ski resorts, and the country's highest density of whitewater river runs as well as its newest national park, The New River Gorge, which is full of opportunities to whitewater raft, mountain bike, fish and rock climb. Also of note: riverside Charleston, dominated by its gold-domed State Capitol; lively Morgantown, home of West Virginia University; and lovely Lewisburg, gateway to the renowned Greenbrier Resort.

SPECIAL FEATURE

GULF SHORES

ALABAMA

HEART AND SOUL
OF THE SOUTH

"Sweet Home Alabama" is more than a song. It's a place where the skies really are so blue – a land of history, culture, music and adventure. Here, gospel is sung in churches, and folks dance to blues, country and jazz in bars. Locally owned restaurants dish up meals of mouth-watering barbecue and fresh seafood from Alabama's fishing villages. Each meal is a celebration. Alabama's top attractions include the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum, sites along the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, and the legendary studios of Muscle Shoals where famous musicians have recorded since 1959. Visitors can enjoy world-class golf on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Surrounded by great cities – New Orleans, Memphis, Nashville and Atlanta among them – Alabama is the heart and soul of any Southern USA trip.

MUSCLE SHOALS / FLORENCE

Visit the studios where Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, and The Rolling Stones made their records, 3 hours from Memphis and Nashville.

HUNTSVILLE

Huntsville is home to the U.S. Space & Rocket Center and Space Camp (astronaut "training" for kids and adults). Just 2 hours from Nashville and Atlanta.

BIRMINGHAM

Come to the Dinner Table of the South where you'll find fantastic dining and shopping. Visit 16th Street Baptist Church and explore Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum. Just 2.5 hours from Atlanta.



DEXTER BAPTIST CHURCH, MONTGOMERY



U.S. SPACE & ROCKET CENTER, HUNTSVILLE

MONTGOMERY

Voted one of the best historic cities in America, Montgomery is home to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s church and home, as well as dozens of museums. Only 2.5 hours from Atlanta.

MOBILE

Mobile was the first U.S. city to host Mardi Gras. Top attractions include nature tours and the WWII battleship the USS Alabama. Less than 2.5 hours from New Orleans.

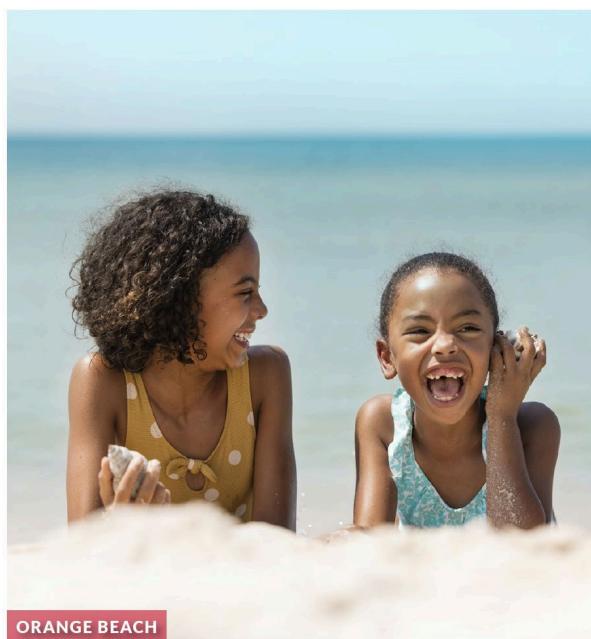
GULF SHORES / ORANGE BEACH

Enjoy 50 km (32 miles) of white-sand beaches, along with nightlife and fresh seafood, all less than 3.5 hours from New Orleans.

Visit alabama.travel to learn more.



MARDI GRAS, MOBILE



ORANGE BEACH



FULL MOON BAR-B-QUE, BIRMINGHAM



MUSCLE SHOALS STUDIO, MUSCLE SHOALS



ONLY IN KENTUCKY DO BOURBON TASTINGS
FEATURE FOUR-LEGGED GUESTS OF HONOR.

From unique bourbon experiences to experimental spirits,
Kentucky brings a distinct flavor and finish.

This is Kentucky - Come see for yourself.

TEAM
KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

kentuckytourism.com

SPECIAL FEATURE

KENTUCKY

RAIL EXPLORERS, VERSAILLES, KY



A TASTE OF THE BLUEGRASS STATE

Immerse yourself in a grand tradition hundreds of years in the making in the place that produces 95% of the world's bourbon. Soak up its spirited culture with a tour and tasting at iconic and craft distilleries, where you can stroll landscaped grounds, join master distillers at work, hear fascinating stories and breathe in the "angel's share." Discover Kentucky Horse Country, where you can tour rolling farms and working barns nestled in pastoral settings before spending an exciting day at the races. This is, after all, the home of Keeneland, Churchill Downs and the famed Kentucky Derby. Adventure seekers can explore an outdoor wonderland, where guests marvel at the world's longest cave, see stunning gorges, hike to hidden waterfalls, kayak underground and soak up breathtaking vistas. Then visit the sites, museums and landmarks that capture the lives and stories of these influential Americans. As the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, Muhammad Ali and Bill Monroe, "The Father of Bluegrass Music," Kentucky has played a big role in U.S. history. And, of course, Colonel Sanders perfected his secret recipe for fried chicken and launched his global KFC empire here. You'll find plenty of places for exploration, relaxation or escape in every part of Kentucky.



KISMET FARM



CUMBERLAND FALLS STATE RESORT PARK



LUX ROW DISTILLERY



MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK



IN MY LOUISIANA,
**MUSIC IS A
WAY OF LIFE.**

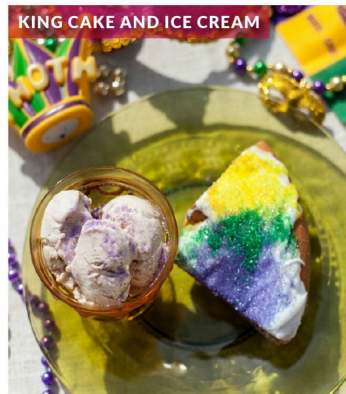
LOUISIANA
Feed Your Soul.

[ExploreLouisiana.com](https://www.exploreLouisiana.com)

SPECIAL FEATURE



CAJUN VILLAGE



KING CAKE AND ICE CREAM



MARDI GRAS, NEW ORLEANS



FOUNTAINBLEAU CAMPING

A trip to Louisiana is different for everyone. For some, it's an early start to find a tranquil spot where the rising sun sparkles off the rippling water, begging you to cast a line. For others, it's later and a little louder, in a jazz club or Cajun dance hall where you can let the music move you.

Or maybe it's exploring Louisiana's historic homes and museums, absorbing the culture of the state and learning about the influences of the French, Spanish, Germans, Africans, Native Americans and many, many more. Or perhaps it's the foodie's delight – eating and drinking a path through Louisiana. Sampling fresh seafood and authentic Louisiana cuisine like etouffée or a spicy bowl of gumbo and following it up with some of the amazing libations crafted to perfectly pair.

For the road warrior, Louisiana's 19 scenic trails and byways offer storied paths through natural beauty, rich history and authentic small towns. Or for a different kind of adventurous spirit, the state's 400-plus festivals showcase food, music and culture all at once.

No matter what feeds your soul, you'll find it in the sights, sounds and tastes that make Louisiana so unique. So come find your Louisiana.

Visit [FindYourLouisiana.com](https://www.findyourlouisiana.com) to start planning your trip.

SPECIAL FEATURE

GATEWAY ARCH RIVERBOATS, ST. LOUIS

MISSOURI

CROSSROADS OF
AMERICAN CULTURE

Travel to the Show-Me State for relic-filled road trips, fantastic food and drink, outdoor adventure, intriguing history, and a medley of music styles.

Hit the open road in Missouri for a nostalgia-fueled trip down Route 66. Along the way, explore motor courts and mom-and-pop shops, retro diners and roadside attractions, colorful murals and history museums.

Tree-lined routes will take you deep into the Ozarks for nature views, hiking, canoeing and kayaking at dozens of state parks, conservation areas and the Ozark National Scenic Riverways – the country's first national park area to protect a river system.

Along Highway 36, the Way of American Genius, discover creativity and ingenuity from Missouri's past. Highlights include the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum in Hannibal, the Walt Disney Hometown Museum in Marceline and the Pony Express National Museum in St. Joseph.

In St. Louis, ride a tram to the top of the Gateway Arch for breathtaking views of the Mississippi River and the city's skyline. Head to the National Blues Museum where interactive exhibits, programs and concerts celebrate the genre – considered the foundation of American music. The Blueberry Hill restaurant and music club pays tribute to Chuck Berry, the father of rock and roll. The city is known for its award-winning cuisine, from gourmet fare to local specialties, including toasted ravioli and gooey butter cake. Tour the original Anheuser-Busch Brewery, dating back to the 1850s, and artisan distilleries that transform Missouri-grown fruit and grain into flavorful spirits.

Forest Park is an urban oasis in the middle of the city that offers more than 1,300 acres of trees, lakes and streams, as well as the Saint Louis Zoo, Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis Science Center and The Muny, the oldest outdoor theater in the United States.



PONY EXPRESS NATIONAL MUSEUM, ST. JOSEPH



ANHEUSER-BUSCH BREWERY, ST. LOUIS

Leave your car behind and travel across the middle of the Show-Me State on the Katy Trail, the longest developed rail-trail in the United States. Cycle along the Missouri River and through historic wine country and trailside towns filled with locally owned inns, shops, wineries, breweries and restaurants.

In Kansas City, pitmasters at more than 100 barbecue restaurants turn out meat smoked to perfection and served with a selection of sweet and tangy sauces – earning the region a reputation for the best barbecue in the nation. The historic 18th & Vine district commemorates Kansas City's contributions to jazz. Visit the America Jazz Museum and spend an evening at one of the area's iconic jazz clubs.

History buffs are drawn to the city's remarkable museums. The National WWI Museum and Memorial contains the world's most comprehensive collection of World War I artifacts. The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum pays tribute to some of the greatest athletes to play the game and examines how baseball helped break through America's segregated past.

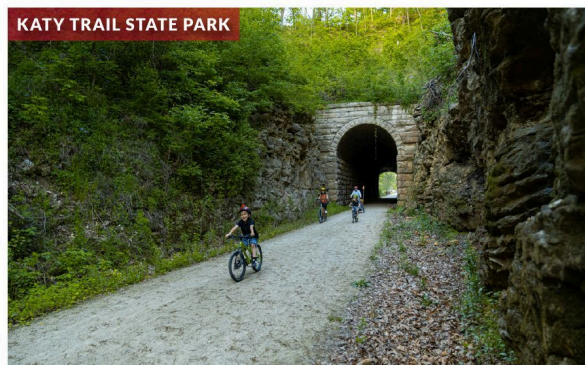
An array of live entertainment – classic country, pop and rock – attracts music lovers to more than 20 theaters in Branson. The southwest Missouri town is surrounded by the stunning beauty of the Ozarks where state parks and sparkling lakes are a prime destination for hiking, biking and water sports. The city is home to dozens of family-friendly attractions, including Silver Dollar City theme park, featuring thrilling rides and artisans displaying their craft.



THE HAYGOODS, BRANSON



SILVER DOLLAR CITY, BRANSON



KATY TRAIL STATE PARK



Q39 BBQ, KANSAS CITY

Even today, *the king of the blues* still reigns.

B.B. King took blues music to a global stage with his singular voice, his masterful guitar playing, and his relentless touring schedule. Despite his fame, the King of the Blues never forgot his hometown of Indianola. That's where you'll find the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center. Their collections include King's "Lucille" guitars, a replica of his home recording studio, and even his tour bus. Plan your music tour of Mississippi at [VisitMississippi.org/MusicMuseums](https://www.visitmississippi.org/musicmuseums).

#WanderMS



VISIT
MISSISSIPPI



B. B. King Museum and Delta
Interpretive Center | Indianola, Mississippi

SPECIAL FEATURE

WINDOW ROCK, CLARKSVILLE

ARKANSAS

THE NATURAL STATE



BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER



ARKANSAS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS



MOUNT MAGAZINE STATE PARK

When you vacation in Arkansas, you'll not only enjoy our Southern hospitality – you'll also discover year-round outdoor recreation, renowned arts and culture and scenic beauty at every turn.

Arkansas is known as The Natural State for good reason. You'll find practically endless options for year-round outdoor fun here, from world-class mountain biking trails to fly-fishing. Spend time exploring our 52 state parks, with free admission to hundreds of miles of hiking trails, scenic rivers for kayaking and canoeing and much more.

Interested in arts and culture? You're in luck. Enjoy world-renowned collections and architecture at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville and the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts in Little Rock. Then, discover the roots of American blues and country music at the Delta Cultural Center in Helena-West Helena and the Historic Dyess Colony: Johnny Cash Boyhood Home.

While you're here, don't miss the chance to walk through American history. In Little Rock, explore the Historic Arkansas Museum, a preserved 1850s farmstead, and the Old State House Museum, which preserves, shares and celebrates the history of Arkansas. And at the Hot Springs National Park Visitors Center, learn about the history of Bathhouse Row, including the period in the early 20th century when the city was a playground for some of America's most famous gangsters.

Ready to enjoy an affordable, action-packed trip away from the crowds? We can't wait to welcome you to The Natural State. Learn more and plan your trip today at [Arkansas.com](https://arkansas.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE

COROLLA BEACH

NORTH CAROLINA

EXPERIENCE
DIVERSE WONDERS

Coastal charm, rugged mountains, and exhilarating adventures await throughout our three regions. Along the pristine coastline, relax along our sunny shores or delve into the fascinating world of oyster farming. Witness firsthand the delicate balance between nature and sustainable seafood production.

Venture east and stand in awe of Grandfather Mountain, a distinguished UNESCO International Biosphere Reserve. Among these 5,000 acres, habitats for 16 distinct ecological communities and 72 rare or endangered species blend conservation with human interaction creating an exceptional ecological impact. Traverse its rugged trails, drink in breathtaking vistas, and immerse yourself in the splendor of an untouched natural realm.

For thrill-seekers, the Nantahala Outdoor Center beckons with a plethora of heart-pounding activities. Raft down the roaring Nantahala River, hike amidst lush woodlands, conquer the legendary Appalachian Trail, or soar through the treetops on a ziplining adventure. Each experience guarantees an adrenaline rush in the lap of Mother Nature.

The need for speed finds its home in the Charlotte region, where the thunderous echoes of NASCAR racing dominate the scene. Immerse yourself in the NASCAR experience, witnessing the mastery of drivers as they navigate high-speed turns and straightaways, or even take the wheel yourself for an unforgettable adventure.

North Carolina's commitment to preserving its natural beauty is embodied in the Outdoor NC Leave No Trace initiative. This essential campaign promotes responsible outdoor practices, ensuring that the trails, rivers, and mountains remain unspoiled for generations to come.

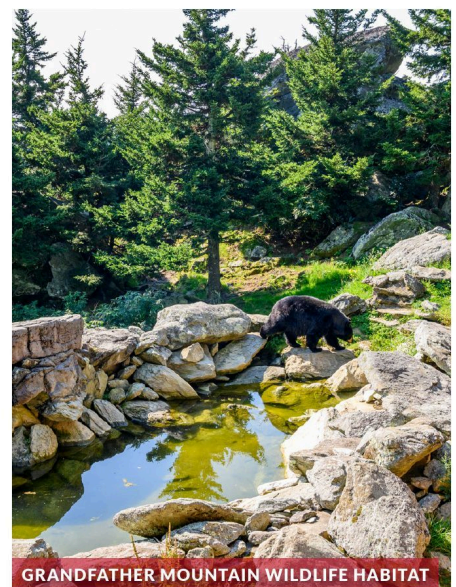
From coastal delicacies to mountain grandeur, thrilling adventures to responsible recreation, North Carolina invites you to explore its multifaceted treasures. Embark on a journey that embraces the essence of the state's diverse landscapes and preserves their magnificence for future adventurers.



CHARLOTTE MOTOR SPEEDWAY



OYSTER FARMING



GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE HABITAT

DISCOVER

South Carolina



Hilton Head Island, SC



Myrtle Beach, SC



Charleston, SC



Hilton Head Island, SC

Travel to a place where there's always something new to discover. South Carolina's coast is home to some of the most scenic areas in the country, not to mention some of the most iconic destinations on the East Coast—the Grand Strand, Charleston and Hilton Head Island. Bask in the Southern sunshine, bike along secluded, seaside pathways or dine outside year-round as you enjoy South Carolina's unique coastal culture and Southern hospitality.

Plan your holiday today at DiscoverSouthCarolina.com/coast

YOUR VACATION IS NOW PLAYING IN TENNESSEE

ROBERT'S WESTERN WORLD — 7:25 PM

TENNESSEE

SOUNDS PERFECT

TNVACATION.COM

SPECIAL FEATURE



Nature, uncrowded and pure, a West Virginia getaway awaits you with world-class outdoor recreation, rushing waterfalls, charming mountain towns and welcoming locals. Home to America's newest National Park, New River Gorge National Park & Preserve, and 1.5 million acres of parks and public land, the Mountain State has been named a "must-visit" destination by TIME, USA Today, Lonely Planet, Conde Nast, and more.

Known as a 4-season destination of world-class outdoor recreation, in West Virginia you'll find more than 1,500 miles of trails to hike and bike, pristine waters for fishing, the greatest density of whitewater for rafting in the U.S, and three certified International Dark Sky Parks that will make a getaway here more heavenly than ever. Whether you enjoy kayaking on the clear blue waters of the first new state park added in over 30 years, Summersville Lake State Park, or heart-pumping adventure of skiing or snowboarding at Snowshoe Mountain Resort, West Virginia can deliver.

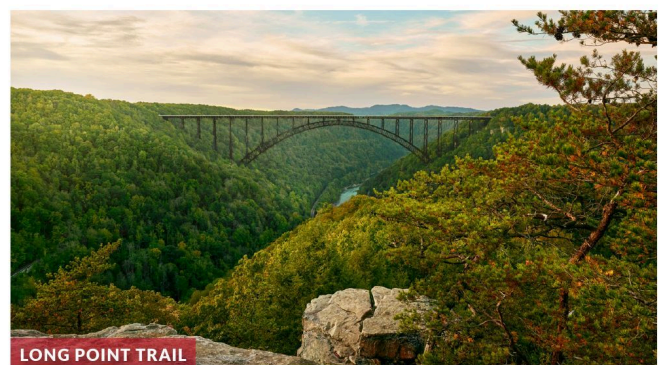
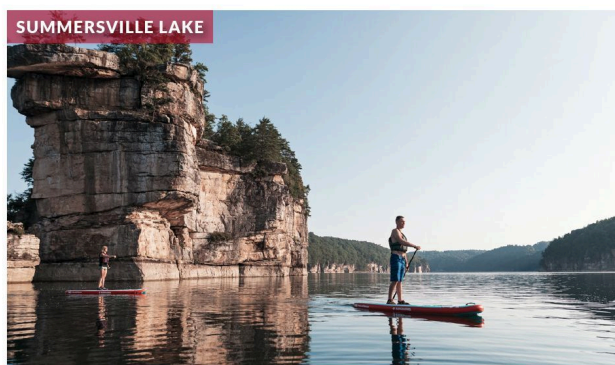
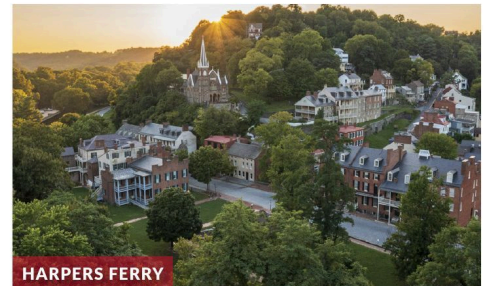
Looking for a new, one-of-a-kind experience? Take things underground and discover the West Virginia wonders that await in the incredible caves and caverns. Here, trained guides will lead the exploration of incredible formations and rich histories.

The best part – all this and more can be discovered and explored surrounded by charming mountain towns. In West Virginia, each mountain town is unique, but is guaranteed to offer picturesque streets, farm-to-table dining, local shopping and entertainment, southern hospitality, and cozy places to stay.

Discover rich culture in the mountain town of Harpers Ferry, known for its abundance of deep-rooted history, delicious dining, and picturesque landscape. This charming mountain town truly has it all as it's part of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Here, determining just how to spend your day is a difficult task as museums, exhibits, and hiking and biking trails are steps away. Visitors are quick to realize why it was named one of the most underrated U.S. travel destinations to visit.

And after adventuring and exploring all day, the only question left is where to stay? West Virginia offers accommodations for every budget, including a range of high-end resorts such as The Greenbrier to idyllic cozy cabins hidden within the forest of the Appalachian Mountains.

With so much endless beauty and adventure, it's easy to see why John Denver referred to the beloved state as "Almost Heaven".



SENECA ROCKS, WV

DISCOVER THE ROMANCE



OF A ROAD TRIP

There are so many wonderful reasons to embark on an American road trip, some quite realistic – it's one of the easiest, most-flexible ways to see and experience the country – and others quite romantic – just picture yourself out on the open road, perhaps with the car roof down, breezes rippling your hair, American music surging from the radio, and spectacular scenery, maybe something you have seen in a Hollywood film, rolling by on either side.

And where better to experience this adventure than in the 12 American Southern States that offer such an unrivalled array of scenic and cultural attractions?

Getting there is so easy: the region is served by 11 modern, multi-faceted international gateway airports. Each of them is not only a hub for flights to other appealing regional destinations but there are many ground transport options: rental cars, shuttle buses, trains and, sometimes, even longer-distance bus links.

You then have a choice: to settle down and relax for a few days in your gateway city and then continue on your travels, or to hop in a rental car or already-booked motorhome and head out immediately on a pre-determined itinerary.

But how do you decide where to go? Is

it based upon one or more places you've always wanted to visit, a particular adventure or experience you have always wanted to have, or perhaps a legendary route you'd particularly like to travel along? Among the options: The Great River Road bordering six of the Southern states; the scenically-spectacular Blue Ridge Parkway, which soars 469 miles along the Appalachian mountaintops from **Virginia's** Shenandoah National Park to the **North Carolina** homeland of the eastern band of the Cherokee Native American Nation; or the attraction-rich section of Route 66 bisecting **Missouri** – or something else.

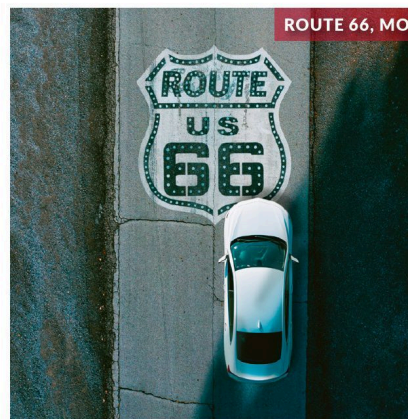
Not sure? Then check out the Trips section of Travel South's website: travelsouthusa.com. Among its suggested road trip itineraries are *Southern Movies on Location*, *Southern Culture and Cuisine*, and such state-specific options as *Small Towns and Country Roads through Louisiana and Arkansas* and *Barbecue and Blues from Missouri to Kentucky*.

Whichever way you decide to travel, distances are not always as daunting as you might think. For instance, if you wanted to include key destinations in **Georgia**, **Alabama**, **Tennessee** and **Louisiana**, you could fly to Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International, spend a few days in Atlanta, the South's largest city, and then drive two hours to **Alabama**'s Birmingham, a key spot on the Civil Rights Trail, as is Montgomery, another 1.5-hour drive away. Or instead, you could head 1.5 hours from Atlanta to Huntsville, Alabama, known for its Space Age attractions or 2.5 hours from Montgomery to the charming waterside city of Mobile, Alabama. It, in turn, is a couple of hours' drive from New Orleans, whereas Huntsville is only a two-hour drive

to Nashville. (Both Nashville and New Orleans are also served by international gateway airports.)

Once your itinerary is decided, you could soon be on your way, choosing with the aid of your GPS between a fast, efficient interstate highway or a quieter highway, or even a tempting rural road that might lead to a delightful, off-the-beaten-track destination. Particularly on – or just-off – the motorways there are tourist information stops, moderately-priced, family-friendly motels and diners and restaurants that sometimes focus just on standard fast food but at other times dish up delicious local specialities.

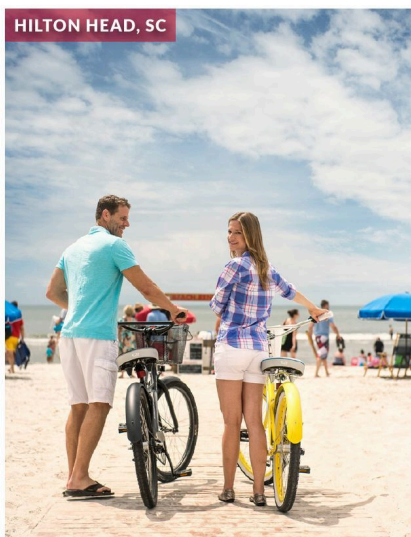
However, if your scheduling is more relaxed you should slip away from the motorways and sample the accommodation and cuisine in one or more of the interesting cities or charming small towns along the way, noting that there's often a local tourist office that can provide guidance on accommodations, dining and the place's attractions, particularly useful during the busy holiday and school-break periods.



ROUTE 66, MO



VICKSBURG, MS



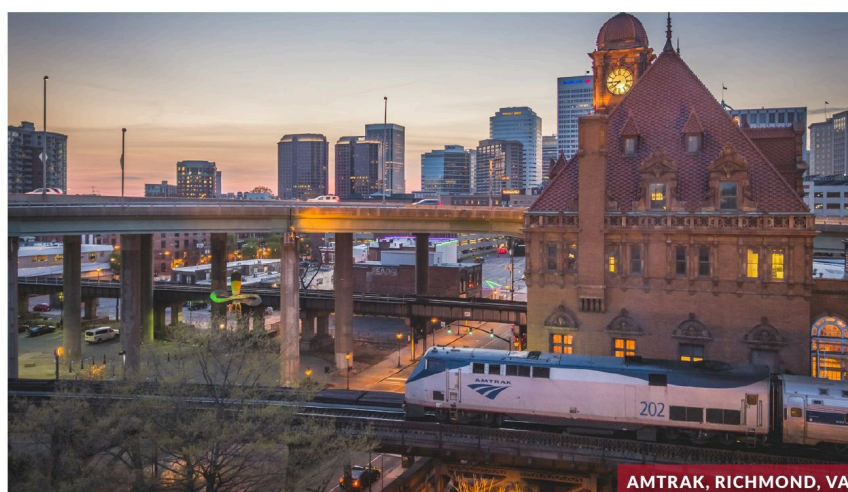
HILTON HEAD, SC



THE ST. CHARLES STREETCAR, NEW ORLEANS, LA



LINN COVE VIADUCT, NC



That's not to forget other transport options. If you arrange to collect a motorhome upon arrival, there are many RV parks along the way, sometimes within or close to recreation-rich national and state parks. And there is also train and bus travel. For instance, northern **Virginia's** Washington Dulles International Airport not only offers links to Amtrak rail service and rail tours to certain Virginia destinations but also the twice-daily Virginia Breeze bus service along three different routes. In fact, many large and smaller cities throughout the region are served by the Amtrak rail network and, late in 2023, a long-awaited, twice-daily rail service was launched

linking up those two great tourist cities New Orleans and Mobile, even as St. Louis and Kansas City are linked by the Missouri River Runner rail service.

There is also a wide range of all-inclusive tours, which are best booked before you leave for the USA, as well as trolley, bus, boat and rail excursions you can book upon arrival and, of course, fabulous paddleboat trips down the Mississippi River. And that's not to ignore options for hikers and bikers which are covered in the Outdoor Adventures section of this publication.

To add some other road trip suggestions to this feature, we asked three of our writers to describe their personally created motoring

adventures. We follow on with Jacqui Agate's *A Southern Literary Pilgrimage* and Mary Moore Mason's *Exploring the Great River Road By Auto and Riverboat*. Look for Zoey Goto's *On The Road With Elvis and Dolly* in the Magical Music section of this publication.

For road trip
inspiration visit:
[travelsouth.
visittheusa.com/
travel-south-trips](https://travelsouth.visittheusa.com/travel-south-trips)



America's Favorite Island®

YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



32°08'06.2"N 80°45'53.8"W

The beaches. The year-round seasonality. The cocktail hours.
The sea-to-table menus. For all these reasons and more, plan your
next vacation on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.

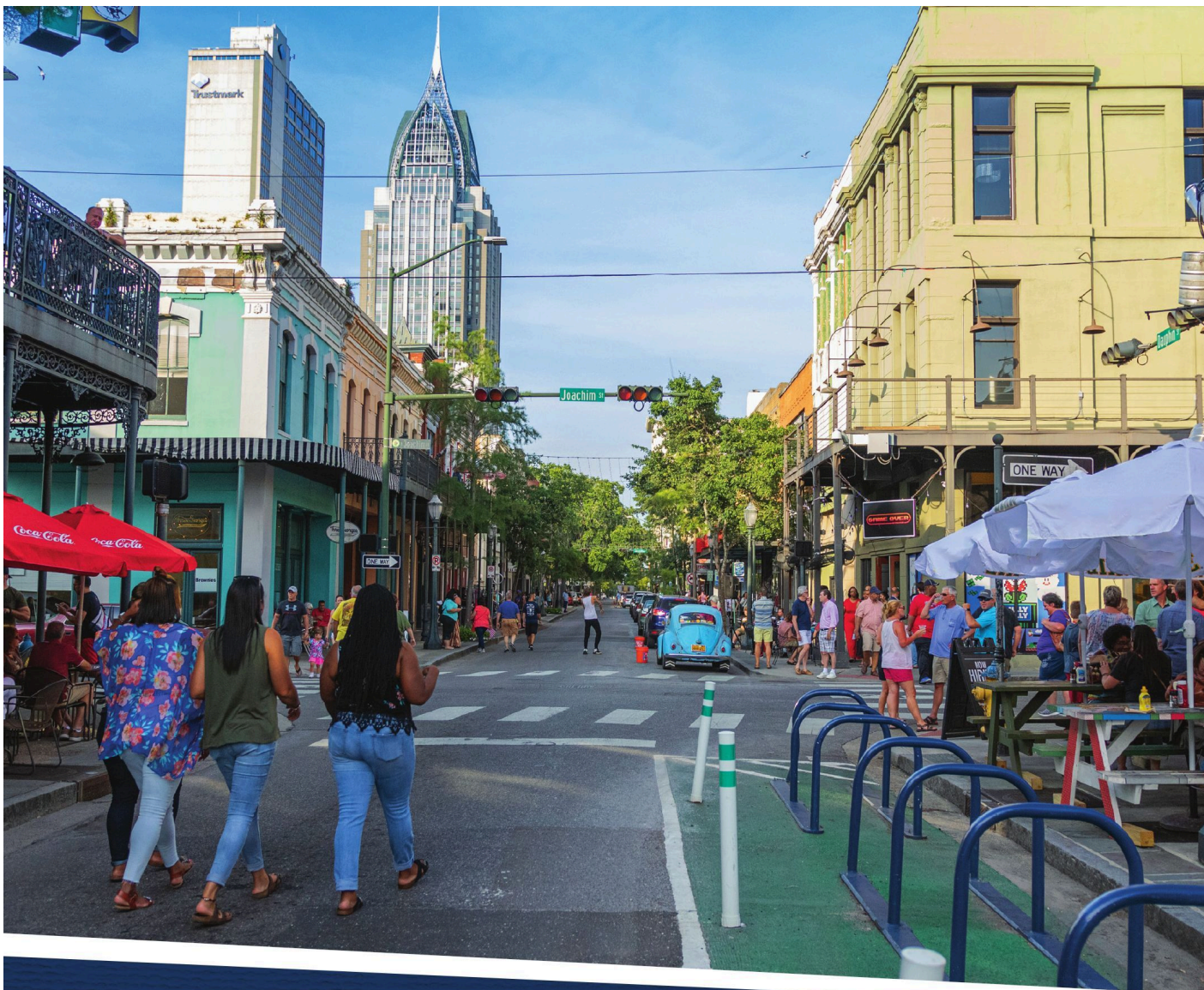
HiltonHeadIsland.org

HILTON HEAD ISLAND

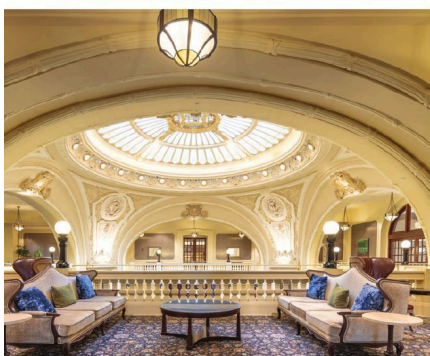
SOUTH CAROLINA

SAVANNAH
HILTON HEAD
INTERNATIONAL

DISCOVER
South Carolina



**YOUR TRIP.
OUR DESTINATION.**



MOBILE.ORG



@VISITMOBILE



@VISITMOBILEAL

A SOUTHERN LITERARY PILGRIMAGE

BY JACQUI AGATE



CAROUSEL BAR, NEW ORLEANS, LA



WILLIAM FAULKNER HOME, OXFORD, MS



THE AUTHOR IN MONROEVILLE, AL



MONROEVILLE COURTHOUSE, AL

I was in college when I first thumbed through F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, its pages glittering with Long Island mansions and jazz-soaked New York City speakeasies. What followed was a lifelong love affair with American – and, eventually, Southern – literature that had me delving into William Faulkner's imagined *Mississippi*, following Harper Lee to the fictitious *Alabama* town of Maycomb, and joining Tennessee Williams in fizzing New Orleans.

More than a decade later, I threw a few dog-eared Southern tomes into a suitcase and hit the road to *Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi* – with their rich literary heritage they promised to be a real page turner.

Where better to begin, I decided, than in New Orleans, a city that's been home to a Who's Who of literary greats for many a decade. After swilling a Sazerac cocktail or two at Hotel Monteleone's Carousel Bar – the likes of Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote were regular barflies – I headed out into the French Quarter in search of Williams' many former places of residence and then ducked into Faulkner House Books, a quaint bookstore in a building where the *As I Lay Dying* author once lived.

From 'The Big Easy' I headed north-east to *Alabama's* Monroeville, the inspiration for the fictional town of Maycomb in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The courthouse, the town's showpiece, contains displays on Lee and her work and hosts annual theatre performances that bring her novel to life.

Another drive 100 miles or so north-east and I was in Montgomery, the hometown of Zelda Fitzgerald, F. Scott's great love and an author and artist in her own right. The city's literary highlight is the Fitzgeralds' former home, whose ground floor is now a museum focused on the couple, and where I spent a memorable night in one of the house's two sumptuous suites enhanced by period furniture, artwork and books.

My all-too-short literary safari ended with a four-hour drive north-west to Oxford, *Mississippi*, and Rowan Oak, the elegant Greek Revival home of William Faulkner. Long his residence and now preserved as a museum, it is crammed with books, newspaper cuttings and the writer's own typewriter. It was the perfect conclusion to the ultimate literary pilgrimage.

EXPLORING THE GREAT RIVER ROAD BY AUTO AND RIVERBOAT

BY MARY MOORE MASON

ST. LOUIS ARCH AND SKYLINE



Ever since childhood, I was fascinated by the Hollywood film *Showboat* I have wanted to explore the mighty Mississippi River if not by boat at least by car. And a few years ago my wish was granted. I'd just finished a visit to St. Louis, **Missouri**, its waterfront dramatised by the welcoming 630ft Gateway Arch, when I checked my calendar and discovered I surprisingly had time on my hands. Time to drive down the southern portion of the legendary Great River Road, which stretches around 3,000 miles from the river's Minnesota headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico.

Alas, there was no time to head upriver to Hannibal, the Missouri hometown of Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain, whose picturesque 19th-century novels about the boyhood adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn put Ole Man River on the international literary map. Instead, I headed downriver, passing through Missouri's oldest town, Ste Genevieve (1735), and Cape Girardeau, its impressive history depicted in massive murals.

Then I couldn't resist heading off-route to Paducah, **Kentucky**, a UNESCO Creative City, with its own Ohio Riverside murals as well as the outstanding National Quilt Museum. While there, I also toured Hotel Metropolitan, one of the 'Green Book' houses hosting African Americans – in its case, the likes of Duke Ellington and Bessie Smith – during the racially-segregated Jim Crow era. Back on route, my next stop was Memphis, **Tennessee**, where I focused on such waterfront attractions as the river's longest pedestrian bridge and Mud Island Park's scale model of the Lower Mississippi. Next came the cotton-growing Mississippi Delta Country where another bridge led to **Arkansas'** riverside Helena, home to impressive pre-Civil War and Victorian mansions as well as the Delta Cultural Center, host to the King Biscuit Time radio show launched in 1941 and thus America's longest-running daily radio broadcast.



DELTA CULTURAL CENTER, HELENA, AR



NATIONAL QUILT MUSEUM, PADUCAH, KY

VICKSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, MS

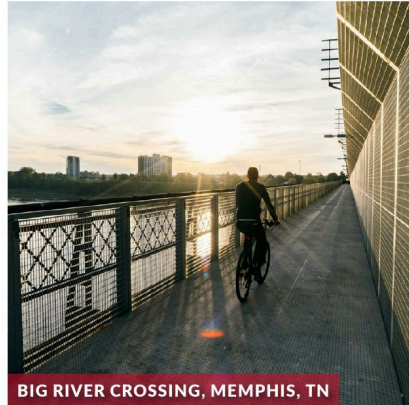


Now back in the Mississippi Delta, known as 'The Birthplace of the Blues', I stopped by Clarksdale's Delta Blues Museum, with its colourful tributes to such iconic musicians as Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters, and Indianola's BB King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center.

Next came Vicksburg, where the National Military Park highlights the 18-month Civil War battle and brutal siege which, when won by the Union Army, sped the demise of the Southern Confederacy. Seventy-four miles downriver I lingered in seductive Natchez, the river's oldest (1716) permanent settlement and home to majestic, open-to-the-public mansions built by cotton barons prior to the Civil War when this was the wealthiest town in America.

Moving into **Louisiana** I was also enchanted by St. Francisville, home to handsome garden-surrounded Rosedown, the reputedly-haunted Myrtles Plantation, and Oakley, where John James Audubon painted 32 of his finest 'Birds of America' series. At Baton Rouge's Art Deco-style State Capitol, a guide regaled us with tales of the life and times of colourful, controversial State Senator and former Governor Huey Long who, on September 8, 1935, was assassinated there. There was also time to visit some of the outstanding LSU (Louisiana State University) Rural Life Museum's 32 historic structures, which evocatively tell the story of the state's rural working people, both black and white.

Then I was lucky enough to overnight across the river at White Castle's Nottoway, once the plantation home of a sugar-cane magnate and now the South's largest existing antebellum mansion. Following a tour, a couple of mint juleps, a delicious meal, and a good night's sleep, I was ready for the adventures awaiting me in New Orleans, 80 miles down The Great River Road.



BIG RIVER CROSSING, MEMPHIS, TN



NOTTOWAY PLANTATION, LA

BACK FOR A VISIT ON THE AMERICAN QUEEN

Back in 'The Big Easy' a few years later, I booked myself on a 10-day *American Queen* cruise to reunite with some of the places previously visited. As the huge red paddle wheel churned up the mighty Mississippi in its wake, we made our stately journey up-river to St. Francisville, Nottoway Plantation, Natchez, Vicksburg and Memphis. This time I obviously didn't have to do the driving, consult a map or GPS, stop for petrol or search for somewhere to eat and to overnight. Instead, I relaxed in a comfy chair watching the scenery roll by, consulted the ship's story-telling Riverlorian for added information, disembarked to stroll, bike or take hop-on, hop-off bus tours, enjoyed delicious meals and jolly evening stage shows and then snoozed the nights away in my comfy stateroom.



THE AMERICAN QUEEN



ALABAMA

CITIES – While visiting **Huntsville**, the state's largest city, make sure to check out the US Space and Rocket Center, the world's largest space museum. **Birmingham** is best-known for its prominent role in the Civil Rights movement – learn more in its Civil Rights Institute and in the nearby cities of **Selma** and state capital **Montgomery**, where Dexter Avenue played a pivotal role in both the American Civil War and the American Civil Rights movement. Then check out colourful, coastal **Mobile**, where the fun and funky Mardi Gras Museum is a reminder that the first such festivity was held there in 1703, 15 years before New Orleans was founded.

SMALL TOWNS – **Monroeville** in the south-west is a must-visit for lovers of Harper Lee's book *To Kill a Mockingbird* – scenes from it are performed each spring on the grounds of the local courthouse and the work went on to inspire both the 1962 film starring Gregory Peck and, more recently, a lauded stage play. Pretty **Fairhope** on Mobile Bay not only has a lovely public beach but is also a centre for arts and crafts, celebrated at an annual March festival.



ROCKET CITY USA

HUNTSVILLE, AL

HUNTSVILLE
we've got space

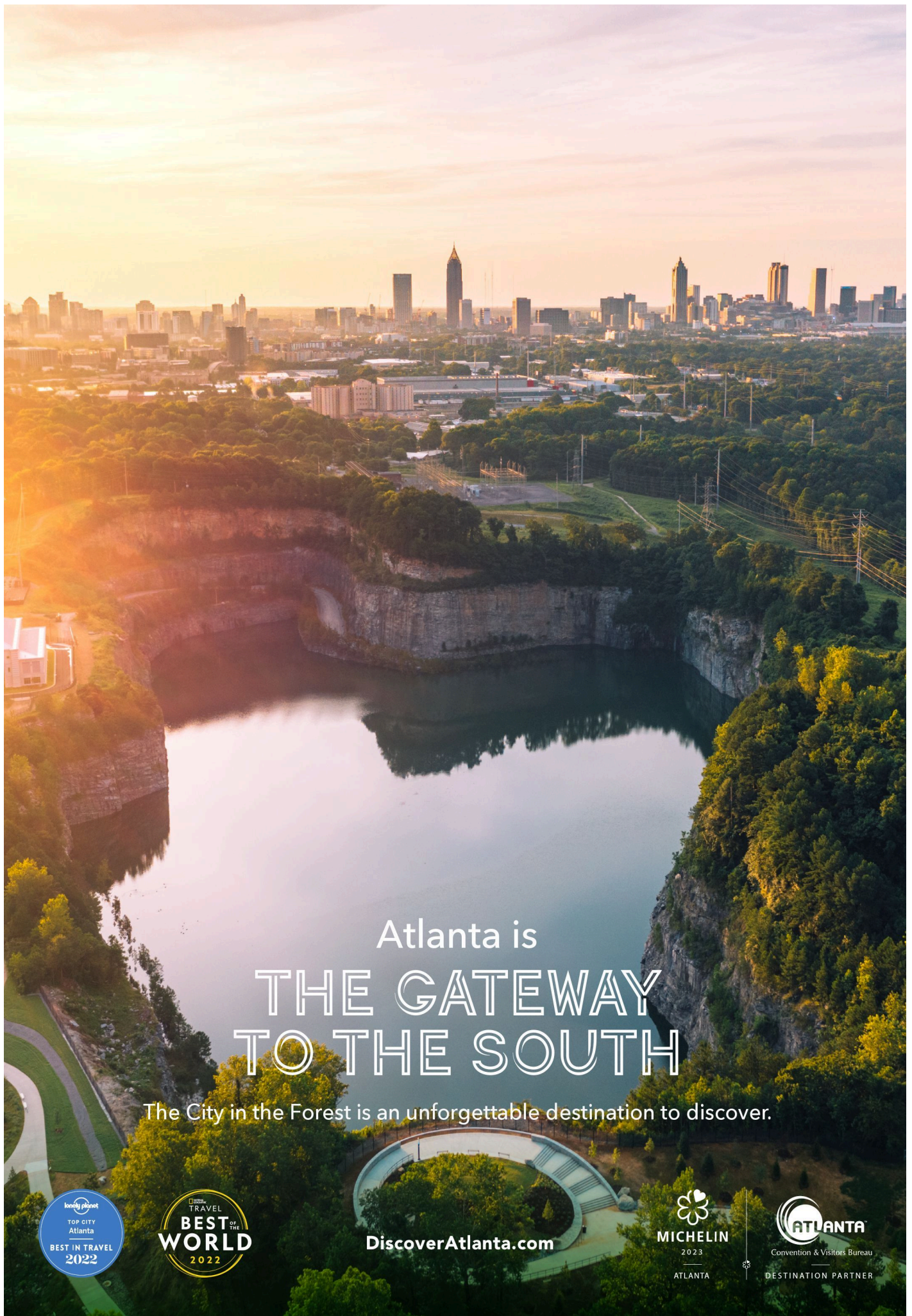
LAUNCH INTO ADVENTURE

Discover More in Rocket City

At the crossroads of the Southeast lies Huntsville, AL, a beacon of Southern hospitality and innovation. Home to the world's largest space museum, "Rocket City" has much to explore. Featuring world-class attractions and amenities, breathtaking outdoor vistas, a diverse culinary scene, and tours and trails for everyone, Huntsville is more than a destination, it's a discovery.

huntsville.org

-  [HuntsvilleCVB](#)
-  [VisitHuntsvilleAL](#)
-  [Go2HuntsvilleAL](#)



Atlanta is
**THE GATEWAY
TO THE SOUTH**

The City in the Forest is an unforgettable destination to discover.



[DiscoverAtlanta.com](https://www.DiscoverAtlanta.com)





CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, BENTONVILLE

ARKANSAS

CITIES – **Little Rock**, the state capital, is the home of both a museum celebrating the life and times of former US President Bill Clinton and the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, a major stop on the Civil Rights Trail.

Hot Springs' natural thermal springs, now part of a national park, inspired the creation of historic Bathhouse Row, and Sam Walton put **Bentonville** on the map when he established the home office of his Walmart shopping empire there in 1962. Make sure to visit Walton's fascinating museum on the town's Main Square when it reopens after renovation early next year, the soda fountain next door and the stunning Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art founded by his daughter, Alice.

SMALL TOWNS – **Wilson**, near the Mississippi River, has a picturesque main square, some Tudor-style architecture, a state park showcasing Native American artefacts – and is only 15 minutes' drive from the Dyess boyhood home of Johnny Cash. And the hilly streets of fun and funky **Eureka Springs**, tucked away in the state's north-west corner, are lined with art galleries and interesting buildings, including an allegedly haunted hotel.

GEORGIA

CITIES – **Atlanta**, acclaimed as 'The Gateway to the South' and home to the world's busiest airport, is particularly well known for sites associated with Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Also of note: the outstanding High Museum of Art, the World of Coca-Cola, the Georgia Aquarium, 1,000 vivid street murals and some beautiful residential neighbourhoods. Coastal **Savannah**, the state's oldest city, is graced by 22 lovely garden squares and elegant homes set in one of America's largest National Historic Landmark Districts, as well as such sites as Bonaventure Cemetery, which featured in John Berendt's best-selling, non-fiction novel *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.

SMALL TOWNS – **Thomasville** in the state's south-west corner is known for its Rose Garden, handsome Victorian-era architecture and a range of independent shops and restaurants. Centrally-located **Milledgeville** – one of the state's oldest towns (founded in 1803), a former state capital and home to the Clement Railway Museum – offers narrated Millie the Trolley tours, and, from **Blue Ridge**, known for its brewery and vineyards, you can take a scenic railway trip through the Appalachian foothills of north Georgia.



FORSYTH PARK FOUNTAIN, SAVANNAH



LOOK at LEXINGTON

THE KENTUCKY-EST GETAWAY



No place embodies America's natural beauty, warm hospitality and sense of adventure better than Lexington, Kentucky. Tour majestic horse farms and award-winning Bourbon distilleries, dine on Southern classics, and immerse yourself in the rich culture of the Horse Capital of the World.

TEAM
KENTUCKY.

Plan your trip today at [VisitLEX.com](https://www.visitlex.com)





BOURBON BARRELS, BARDSTOWN

KENTUCKY

CITIES – **Louisville** may be best known for one of the world's most-famous equine events, the Kentucky Derby, which celebrates its 150th anniversary in May 2024, and as the home town of World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Muhammad Ali, whose charisma and career are celebrated in the local namesake centre. However, it's also home to a myriad of bourbon bars, a rich performing arts scene and, under the town centre, a massive limestone cavern containing a zip-line and the world's largest indoor bicycle park. **Lexington**, the 'Horse Capital of the World' and home to the renowned Keeneland racecourse, is surrounded by beautiful horse farms, some of which you can visit.

SMALL TOWNS – Only 40 miles south of Louisville, **Bardstown** has two major claims to fame: as the hub of 11 unique area distilleries, it's 'The Bourbon Capital of the World', and its Old Kentucky Home State Park is the site of the annual *Stephen Foster Story* musical and of Federal Hill, frequently visited by the famous 19th-century composer. **Maysville**, located on the Ohio River in north-eastern Kentucky, is full of historic buildings and offers great sightseeing and shopping. (For **Paducah** see our Great River Road driving tour.)



RIP VAN WINKLE GARDENS, NEW IBERIA

LOUISIANA

CITIES – There's life – and lots of it – beyond **New Orleans'** fab, fabled French Quarter. For panoramic views of the city and the Mississippi River, soar up to the top of 34-storey Vue Orleans, along the way viewing unique exhibits depicting local life. To indulge in the beauty of the romantic Garden District, hop on the St. Charles Streetcar. For insight into one of the modern world's most-defining periods, tour the Arts/Warehouse District's fascinating World War II Museum. Then head west to **Lake Charles**, which celebrates its colourful pirate heritage with a flamboyant annual festival and is popular with lovers of gaming casinos, good food and water sports. (For the capital city **Baton Rouge**, visit our Great River Road driving feature.)

SMALL TOWNS – For an insight into the state's unique French Canadian-originating Cajun heritage head west to **New Iberia**. Founded by Spaniards in 1779, its attractions include the Bayou Teche Museum and the majestic Shadows-on-the-Teche pre-Civil War mansion. If you are a fan of the 1989 film *Steel Magnolias*, check out its location sites in **Natchitoches**, founded in 1714 on the Cane River in north-western Louisiana.

SPECIAL FEATURE

ROYAL STREET

NEW ORLEANS

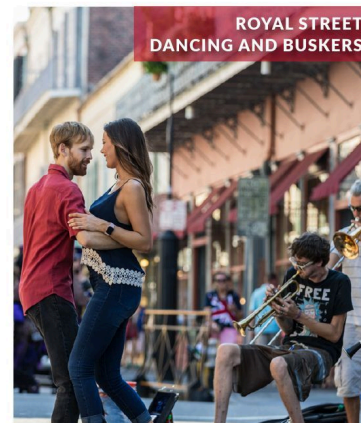
LOUISIANA

EXPERIENCE THE JOIE DE VIVRE

For more than 300 years, New Orleans has been inspiring stories. Our Spanish, French, African and Caribbean influences create a cultural gumbo of distinctive architecture, cool jazz and celebrated cuisine that only New Orleans knows how to dish out. From second line parades to centuries-old streetcars, this timeless city offers something amazing around every cobblestone corner. We invite you to stay in our hotels that once served as inspiration for renowned literary figures and performance venues for jazz greats. See the French Quarter come to life over a cup of café au lait and a plate of powdered sugar covered beignets. Take in the exquisite European architecture as you stroll down Royal Street, browsing antique shops and art galleries. Explore the city's mystical side with an above-ground cemetery tour or a fortune teller reading.



SEAFOOD GUMBO

ROYAL STREET
DANCING AND BUSKERS

JACKSON SQUARE

GET LOST IN THE VIBRANT CULTURE

Visit New Orleans to ride the historic streetcar under a canopy of live oak trees, taking in breathtaking views of mansions along St. Charles Avenue. Discover art, history and culture at world-class museums or pose for pictures in front of colorful parade floats at Mardi Gras World. Watch the sunset from the mighty Mississippi River on a lively riverboat cruise. Wine and dine your way through eateries specializing in traditional Cajun and Creole cuisines or modern fusion restaurants featuring globally inspired dishes. Follow the brass bands to live music venues along Frenchmen Street and end the evening with a horse-drawn carriage under the stars. However you choose to dive in, feed your soul in Louisiana and start creating your New Orleans story today! **To learn more, visit [NewOrleans.com](https://www.neworleans.com)**



Seasoned to Celebrate

Whatever time of year you come, there's always something to celebrate in Lafayette. Come on over, we'll add the spice.

LAFAYETTE
LOUISIANA
Seasoned to Celebrate

LafayetteTravel.com/Seasons 800 346 1958




LOUISIANA'S SWEET SPOT
ASCENSION PARISH, LA

DISCOVER LOUISIANA'S SWEET SPOT

Ascension Parish is a rare gem located between Baton Rouge and New Orleans and lies on both sides of the mighty Mississippi. Rich in history, it's the ideal spot for those interested in the perfect mix of Louisiana's history and culture.

visitlasweetspot.com | @visitlasweetspot   



WHERE HISTORY, ADVENTURE, AND FLAVOR COLLIDE

Visit Louisiana's River Parishes and experience our authentic Creole and Cajun cultures along the East and West banks of the Mississippi River. Out here, our heritage connects with French, German, African, Native American, Spanish, and Italian history, and our cultures present our traditions through our historic homes, beautiful architecture, unique agriculture, and our own gourmet Creole and Cajun cuisine. We offer a distinct collection of museums and a cluster of festivals and events that tell the stories of our past and present uniqueness.

~ LOUISIANA'S ~
RIVER PARISHES
LARiverParishes.com



COLUMBUS, MS

MISSISSIPPI

CITIES – Located on the Pearl River in central Mississippi, the state capital, **Jackson**, is home to America's first state-founded Civil Rights Museum – its premises are shared with the interesting Mississippi History Museum, and the Medger and Myrtie Evers House National Monument, dedicated to the courageous, assassinated Civil Rights leader and his wife. **Biloxi**, founded on the Gulf of Mexico coast by the French in 1699, is known for its wide sandy beaches, photogenic Old Lighthouse and Beauvoir, the post-Civil War home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

SMALL TOWNS – **Columbus**, near the state's eastern border, is known for around 100 antebellum homes, some open to visitors during the annual spring pilgrimage. **Oxford** is renowned as the home of the famous Southern author William Faulkner and of the University of Mississippi. And book-ending the state's 44-mile stretch of gulf shores is the charming **Ocean Springs**, particularly known for its museum devoted to the work of artist Walter Anderson. (For **Natchez**, see the Great River Road driving tour.)



SILVER DOLLAR CITY, BRANSON

MISSOURI

CITIES – Best known for America's tallest public monument, the 630ft- tall waterfront Gateway Arch, **St. Louis** is also a major stop on legendary cross-country Route 66. In addition to the fascinating museum at the Arch's base, it is home to such attractions as the weirdly-wonderful City Museum and the renowned Anheuser-Busch brewery. **Kansas City**, 253 miles to the west, is the home of the outstanding Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, and America's only World War I Museum, whereas **Branson**, near the state's southern border, is a mecca for those who love extravagant live music shows and such family attractions as Silver Dollar City, a recreated mining town offering thrill rides and shows.

SMALL TOWNS – Located on the Missouri River west of St. Louis, **Hermann** is best known for its German heritage and numerous wineries. **Weston**, just north of Kansas City, offers a variety of local shops and restaurants, a brewery and distillery, museums and Green Dirt Farm, which features a tasting room known for its delicious home-made cheese. And in **Marceline**, north-west of St. Louis, you can visit the Walt Disney Hometown Museum documenting the famous film-maker's childhood days.



explore
st.louis

OUR WORLD RENOWNED CULTURE *has* ALL YOUR BASES COVERED

Take a tour and a sip at the legendary Anheuser-Busch Brewery and find out why St. Louis was named "The Best Beer Scene" by USA Today. Or cheer on the 11-time World Champion Cardinals at Busch Stadium or Ballpark Village. And no trip is complete until you've experienced the city's thriving live music scene or learned about its history at the National Blues Museum.

Discover more reasons to visit here at explorestlouis.com.



CHARLESTON

South Carolina

Experience the timeless charm and unrivaled hospitality found only in Charleston, South Carolina. The perfect stay awaits.

Explore Charleston

EXPLORECHARLESTON.COM



@EXPLORECHARLESTON

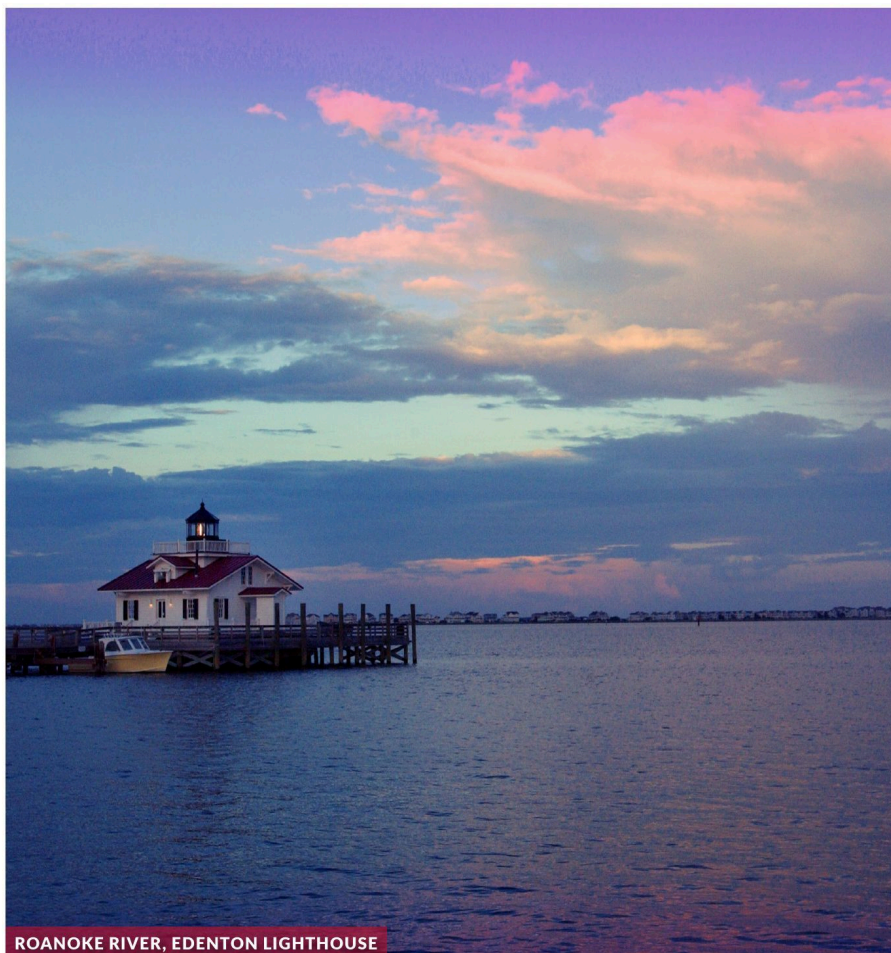


@EXPLORECHS

NORTH CAROLINA

CITIES – Served by a major international airport, **Charlotte** is not only the state's largest city and a major business hub but also home to the NASCAR Hall of Fame and the Carowinds theme park. Another international airport is shared by the university cities of state capital **Raleigh** and **Durham**, the former tobacco-manufacturing hub, both of which offer a selection of attractions. Both Raleigh and Durham are home to interesting art and science museums and outstanding outdoor spaces. Raleigh's parks encompass pedal boats, a miniature train, a 1911 carousel and a still-working 1750 grain mill, and **Durham** is home to the splendid Sarah P. Duke Gardens and the Duke Lemur Center, which houses the largest collection of lemurs outside their native Madagascar. Crowning the western Appalachian Mountains, lively, artistic **Asheville** is best known for its 8,000-acre Biltmore Estate, home of the majestic Vanderbilt Mansion, America's largest private home.

SMALL TOWNS – Reached by the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway, mountain-top **Blowing Rock**'s quaint downtown is full of unique shops and among the state's coastal treasures is **Edenton**, known for its 1767 courthouse and photogenic 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse.



ROANOKE RIVER, EDENTON LIGHTHOUSE



MYRTLE BEACH SKYWHEEL

SOUTH CAROLINA

CITIES – Acclaimed as one of the South's most beautiful and historic cities, **Charleston** is home to an array of splendid antebellum mansions, lovely old churches and a colourful street market, all of which can be seen via a horse-drawn carriage tour. The International African American Museum, opened in 2023, is set on the waterfront site where the enslaved ancestors of 45 percent of today's African Americans first arrived in America. Centrally-sited **Columbia** attracts visitors to its impressive State Capitol, university, museum, zoo and gardens, and Atlantic coastal **Myrtle Beach** is home to numerous waterfront and other attractions including exciting live shows and the 187ft-tall SkyWheel, which offers picture-perfect views of land and sea.

SMALL TOWNS – Harbourfront **Beaufort**, 132 miles south of Charleston, is known for its beautiful 18th-century homes and film sites, some of them based on the books of local author Pat Conroy (*The Prince of Tides*, etc.). It's also a great launching pad for visits to Hilton Head and other resort islands just down the coast. Set near the state's western border, **Aiken** is not only home to lovely Hoplands Gardens but also to a range of equestrian events, including polo matches and horseback-riding tours.



NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM, MEMPHIS

TENNESSEE

CITIES – There is much more than music to **Nashville** and **Memphis** (both covered in our Magical Music section). For Nashville, it's the State Capitol, Fine Arts Center and replica of the Athens Parthenon in Centennial Park, and for Memphis, it's the impressive National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, and the Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum located in the house that harboured slaves attempting to escape along the Mississippi River. **Knoxville**, gateway to the scenic Smoky Mountains region of eastern Tennessee encompasses interesting museums, art galleries, a historic theatre and the grounds of the 1982 World's Fair featuring the golden dome-topped Sunsphere.

SMALL TOWNS – Easily reachable from Nashville are three small towns of note: **Granville**, known for its Sutton Homestead and Pioneer Village; **Bell Buckle**, which features alluring antique and arts shops; and **Dickson**, home to the Clement Railway Museum and a shop- and restaurant-lined historic downtown Main Street. That's not to forget **Jonesborough** in the north-east corner of the state as it is Tennessee's oldest town (1779) and home to the acclaimed October National Storytelling Festival.

VIRGINIA

CITIES – Riverside **Richmond** is graced by its elegant, hilltop State Capitol, designed by Thomas Jefferson and doubling as the Capitol of the Confederacy during the American Civil War, which is impressively covered by the city's American Civil War Museum. Also, check out the wealth of colourful street murals, the acclaimed Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and such diverse and colourful neighbourhoods as The Fan District, Church Hill, Ginter Park and Windsor Farms. Sited beside the wide Potomac River, with Washington, DC on the horizon, **Alexandria**, a treasure house of beautifully preserved 18th- and 19th-century buildings, offers free trolley service, tempting shops and restaurants along buzzy King Street, an interesting waterfront area and cruises downriver to George Washington's stately waterfront Mount Vernon plantation.

SMALL TOWNS – Take a walking or horse and buggy tour through eastern Virginia's 18th-century colonial capital **Williamsburg**, now the world's largest living-history museum, and then tour nearby **Jamestown**, the birthplace (1607) of English-speaking America, and **Yorktown**, site of the conclusive battle of the American War of Independence. Then head to the state's south-western tip for delightful **Abingdon**, site of the Barter Theatre, America's longest-running professional theatre.



HORSE AND BUGGY TOUR, WILLIAMSBURG



life. at your pace.

Visit
WILLIAMSBURG
JAMESTOWN ▼ YORKTOWN

WEST VIRGINIA

CITIES – Impressively dominated by the golden dome of its State Capitol, Kanawha riverside **Charleston** is enhanced by historic architecture, an eclectic music scene and a wide range of dining and drinking options. **Huntington**, on the Ohio River west of Charleston, is home to the Heritage Farm Museum and Village, a prestigious Smithsonian affiliate, and **Morgantown**, on the state's north-central border, owes much of its youthful spirit, range of restaurants and vibrant nightlife to the presence of West Virginia University.

SMALL TOWNS – Sited along the Potomac River in the Eastern Panhandle and the state's oldest (1762) community, **Shepherdstown** has award-winning restaurants and a thriving music, arts and theatre scene. Not far from the south-eastern border with Virginia, historic and easily walkable **Lewisburg** features dozens of boutiques, antique stores and art galleries and is close to the renowned Greenbrier Resort offering great golf, a spa and much more. The tiny mountain town of **Davis**, perched on the edge of the Monongahela National Forest in eastern West Virginia, is an ideal base for such outdoor pursuits as hiking, biking, hunting, fishing and skiing.



Interested in a marvellous medley of big city and small town adventures? Check out the Travel South road trip **North Carolina and the Virginias Loop: Small Towns and Exciting Cities** (travelsouth.visittheusa.com/trip/north-carolina-and-virginias-loop-small-towns-and-exciting-cities). Beginning in North Carolina's lively state capital, Raleigh, and ending in its largest city, Charlotte, it includes Virginia's lovely capital city, Richmond, and such enticing West Virginia small towns as Shepherdstown and Lewisburg, gateway to the renowned Greenbrier Resort.





MOUNTAIN LAKE LODGE

"The Ideal Setting To Have The Time Of Your Life"
-Travel + Leisure

Located in the heart of Virginia's Blue Ridge!

2023 Travelers' Choice
Tripadvisor

Experience More... Naturally

Follow Us:
 mountainlakelodge
 @MtnLakeVirginia
 mtnlakelodge

Home of ...
Kellerman's
 GIFT SHOP

www.mtnlakelodge.com
 Inquiries: lhale@mtnlakelodge.com



Visit
NATCHEZ

Experience the magic of Southern hospitality and get face-to-face with Natchez's history and cultural legacy.

Natchez has it all!

SCAN ME 

500 Main St. Suite 1
 601.492.3000
 visitnatchez.org

ELK RIVER FLY FISHING, AL

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

FIND YOUR ADVENTURE

Do you love the Great Outdoors? Then you've come to the right place. The 12 Southern states have it all: thousands of miles of golden sand beaches along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts; great stretches of the mighty Mississippi River – and of the country's most-famous footpath, the Appalachian Trail; North America's largest blackwater swamp; eastern America's tallest mountains; deep, clear lakes and spectacular rivers; the country's most-visited and most-recent national

parks; and a myriad of state parks that offer everything from hiking and mountain biking to camping and canoeing.

If sand, sea and sun are at the top of your agenda, head for the Atlantic coast; it's lined with such family-friendly, attraction-packed waterfront communities as Virginia Beach and **South Carolina's** Myrtle Beach. And if you prefer more tranquillity, you can opt for the numerous just-offshore islands that range from **North Carolina's** Outer Banks, known for

their picturesque lighthouses and wild horses, to **South Carolina's** Sea Islands and **Georgia's** Golden Isles, popular for their golf, tennis and boating resorts. And that's not to forget the beaches, hiking trails, birdwatching sites and great fishing found along **Mississippi's** and **Alabama's** Gulf of Mexico coasts – or the fact that there are sailing and other boating opportunities in **Virginia's** massive Chesapeake Bay and **North Carolina's** Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds.

OKEFENOKEE NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE, GA

ELAKALA TRAIL, BLACKWATER FALLS, WV

Alabama is also known for its Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, which links 26 courses on 11 sites and thus joins such other famous golf destinations as **North Carolina**, where the Pinehurst-Southern Pines-Aberdeen area offers 30 courses, **South Carolina**, where Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head and Kiawah islands are renowned for their golf courses, and Augusta, **Georgia**, home to the prestigious Masters Tournament. Not to forget **Missouri's** claim to fame: Payne's Valley, the first public course designed by Tiger Woods.

When it comes to hiking, **Virginia** claims the longest stretch – 550.3 miles – of the famous 2,200-mile Appalachian Trail. Originating in Maine and also passing through **West Virginia**, **North Carolina** and **Tennessee**, it terminates near northern **Georgia's** Amicalola Falls, one of the South East's tallest waterfalls. Other spectacular cascades include **Kentucky's** seven-storey-high Cumberland Falls, the only one in the Western Hemisphere that can boast a moonbow on certain clear, moonlit nights, and it's worth noting that **West Virginia** has

a Waterfall Trail leading to two dozen of the more-than 200 in the state, whereas **North Carolina's** Sliding Rock waterfall offers a 60ft slide into a deep mountain pool.

As for other hiking opportunities, **Missouri's** 240-mile Katy Trail, which runs along a former rail bed, is the longest developed rail trail in the USA; the **Alabama** coast offers a 28-mile hiking, biking and even Segway trail; **Louisiana's** 180-mile Creole Nature Trail leads to Gulf of Mexico beaches, small fishing communities and great wildlife viewing – watch out for the Alligator Crossing notices along the way; and the 444-mile Natchez Trace Parkway, which stretches from Nashville, **Tennessee**, to Mississippi Riverside Natchez, **Mississippi**, and is ideal for both hikers and bikers.

Mountain bikers on the other hand might want to head for the Ozark Mountains of **Arkansas**, where there are five International Mountain Bicycling Association EPIC routes; the Brevard area of western **North Carolina**, which refers to itself as the 'Cycling Capital of the South'; and the Little River Blueway in **South Carolina's** Sumter National Forest, which offers 21 miles of single-track trails.



OUACHITA VISTA TRAIL, AR



BADIN LAKE, NC

THOUSANDS OF MILES OF GOLDEN SAND BEACHES ALONG THE ATLANTIC AND GULF OF MEXICO COASTS; GREAT STRETCHES OF THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI RIVER – AND OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST-FAMOUS FOOTPATH, THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL; NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST BLACKWATER SWAMP; EASTERN AMERICA'S TALLEST MOUNTAINS; DEEP, CLEAR LAKES AND SPECTACULAR RIVERS; THE COUNTRY'S MOST-VISITED AND MOST-RECENT NATIONAL PARKS; AND A MYRIAD OF STATE PARKS THAT OFFER EVERYTHING FROM HIKING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING TO CAMPING AND CANOEING.

coastalTM
MISSISSIPPI
TOURISM



Adventure awaits you!

With miles of scenic shoreline, endless attractions and activities, and the most delightful Gulf-to-Table seafood, you're sure to find just what you're looking for in Coastal Mississippi.



/



SeeCoastalMS



CoastalMS

COASTALMISSISSIPPI.COM

Explore more!





The mountainous areas are also a great source of beautiful and sometimes-turbulent rivers, which can offer everything from great canoeing, kayaking and fishing up to thrilling level IV whitewater rafting experiences. Among them is the Bryson City area of **North Carolina**, where Olympic-bound athletes train before heading to the state's largest city, Charlotte, to qualify at the thrilling Whitewater Center. Other great boating and outdoor activity bases include Montgomery, **Alabama's** new Whitewater Park, located along the Alabama River and featuring not only boating but also zip-lining and rock climbing, and Columbus, **Georgia**, which claims the world's longest urban whitewater course as well as three zip lines spanning the Chattahoochee River between **Georgia** and **Alabama**.

For additional thrills, head for **West Virginia**, home to the highest density of whitewater runs in the country. Of particular note are the New River (actually one of the oldest rivers on earth), where you get everything you need for up-to a level IV experience from the outfitters in Fayetteville, and the Gauley River, which from September until mid-November reaches its thrilling heights with a dam release.

As for more tranquil water experiences, **Kentucky's** Lake Cumberland on the south-central border with **Tennessee** is the 'Houseboat Capital of the World'. Houseboating is also available on Tennessee's Center Hill and Hollow Lakes,

and there are numerous water sports experiences in the western Land Between the Lakes area shared by the two states.

Missouri's Lake of the Ozarks, near the live entertainment hub of Branson and bordered by two state parks, is popular with boaters, rafters and tubers, and you can scuba dive into an underground lake in the state's former Bonne Terre Mine. Western **North Carolina's** Lake Lure and south-west **Virginia's** Mountain Lake Lodge were key locations for that popular 1987 lakeside romantic film *Dirty Dancing*. **Louisiana** offers a variety of swamp tours that feature alligators and other wildlife in its Atchafalaya Basin National Heritage Area and you can not only take a boat tour into **Georgia's** Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, North America's largest blackwater swamp, but also sleep there overnight on an open-air platform. **Mississippi** provides boat rental and launching facilities along its famous namesake river, and **Alabama** offers kayaking in its Mobile-Tenshaw Delta, dubbed 'America's Amazon'.

Other great freshwater fishing opportunities can be found along **Arkansas's** Buffalo River, and in **Tennessee's** Bill Dance Signature Lakes. There is also fabulous saltwater fishing along Mississippi's and **Alabama's** Gulf of Mexico shorelines. For instance, **Alabama's** Orange Beach is known as the 'Red Snapper Capital of the World' but grouper and amberjack are also options ... and if you catch a big one, many of the local restaurants will cook it for your dinner.

Surrounded by water.

Engulfed in memories.

Escape to Alabama's 32-mile island and experience a vacation like no other. Relax on sugar-white sand beaches, indulge in our coastal cuisine and discover one-of-a-kind adventures, all in one unforgettable place.

GET YOUR FREE VACATION GUIDE

GulfShores.com
OrangeBeach.com
877-341-2400



YOU BELONG AT *The Beach.*



VISIT
Myrtle Beach
SOUTH CAROLINA



Scan to start
planning your trip.

Make Waves at America's Best Beach.

With 60 miles of wide-open beaches and more than 2,000 restaurants to choose from, there's a reason we're known to Americans as simply *The Beach.*

[VisitMyrtleBeach.com](https://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com)



MCGEE'S ATCHAFALAYA BASIN SWAMP TOURS, HENDERSON, LA



TUSCARORA TRAIL, VA

There's skiing in the Appalachian Mountains of **North Carolina** and **Virginia** and particularly in **West Virginia**, where the Snowshoe Resort and other destinations are said to offer some of the best winter sports options in both the south-eastern and mid-Atlantic states.

Kentucky and **South Carolina**, both known for their equine spectator events, also offer horseback riding experiences. You can rise to the heights by hang-gliding near **North Carolina's** Kill Devil Hill, where the Wright Brothers launched the world's first powered flight on December 17, 1903, or descend into the depths in **Kentucky's** Mammoth Cave, at the heart of the world's largest cave system, in **Virginia's** Luray Caverns, known for their fantastic stone formations, or at numerous sites in the 'Cave State' of **Missouri**.

There are beautiful gardens to visit, notably at Magnolia Plantation and Middleton Place outside Charleston, **South Carolina**; great birding areas – **Alabama** alone claims more than 430 species; and seductive star-gazing opportunities in **Virginia's** and **West Virginia's** International Dark Sky Parks. And then there are all those outdoor activity options as well as camping facilities in America's most-visited National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains in **Tennessee**, or **West Virginia's** New River Gorge, America's newest National Park. And best of all are the hundreds of state parks found throughout the South, each with its own unique appeal. For instance, you can zip-line through the trees in **Alabama's** Lake Guntersville State Park, and **Arkansas's** Crater of Diamonds State Park is the only place in the world where the public can search for naturally-occurring diamonds – and keep what they find.



ONONDAGA CAVE STATE PARK, MO



MYRTLE BEACH, SC

Are hiking, mountain-biking, whitewater rafting and trail riding your thing? Then you might want to opt for the **Mountain Escapes Through Georgia and South Carolina** road trip (travelsouth.visittheusa.com/trip/mountain-escape-through-georgia-and-south-carolina). Beginning and ending in Atlanta, it includes the spectacular mountains of Georgia, resplendent with waterfalls, whitewater rivers and the final stretches of the famous Appalachian Trail, and then moves on to the highlands of South Carolina, known for the biking, hiking and trail-riding options around Greenville and Aiken.







WC HANDY MUSIC FESTIVAL, FLORENCE, AL

The culturally-rich American South is the region where most of America's numerous genres of popular music were born and fine-tuned and where they continue today to be celebrated with great style and sentiment. In fact, there is much to decide when planning a Southern American Safari of Sound – should it be based on a preferred venue, artist or geographic location?

Let's start with **Mississippi's** Delta Country, for it was there that the musical laments of the African slaves labouring in the cotton fields of such plantations as Dockery Farms gave birth to 'The Blues'. You can follow their story by visiting Cleveland's Grammy Museum, Clarksdale's Delta Blues Museum and Indianola's BB King Museum and then settle down for some magical music at the latter city's Club Ebony or a choice of two venues in Clarksdale: Ground Zero Blues Club, co-owned by actor Morgan Freeman, and Red's Juke Joint.

For complete immersion in the local scene, stay overnight in a former cotton-worker's cabin such as Clarksdale's Shack

Up Inn or Greenwood's Tallahatchie Flats. Then continue to Tupelo for a visit to Elvis Presley's unpretentious birthplace, now a museum, and the hardware store where his mother bought his first guitar.

In neighbouring north-western **Alabama's** Muscle Shoals you can both listen to live music and tour part of the FAME studios, which, along with the site's Sound Studio, recorded the chart-topping creations of the likes of Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner and the Rolling Stones. And in nearby Florence you can view the log-cabin birthplace, now a museum, of 'Father of the Blues' WC Handy, inspiration for an annual blues festival.

Not far away in Tuscumbia, the Alabama Music Hall of Fame honours more than 1,000 state musicians, from jazz visionary Sun Ra to one of the great country groups, Alabama. The venue also pays tribute to Hank Williams, a superstar of country music songwriting and performances, as does the Hank Williams Sr. Boyhood Home & Museum in the small south-central Alabama town of Georgiana and his namesake museum in Montgomery.



HANK WILLIAMS MUSEUM, MONTGOMERY, AL



DOCKERY FARMS, CLEVELAND, MS



BB KING MUSEUM, INDIANOLA, MS



Memphis

HOME OF BLUES,
SOUL & ROCK 'N' ROLL

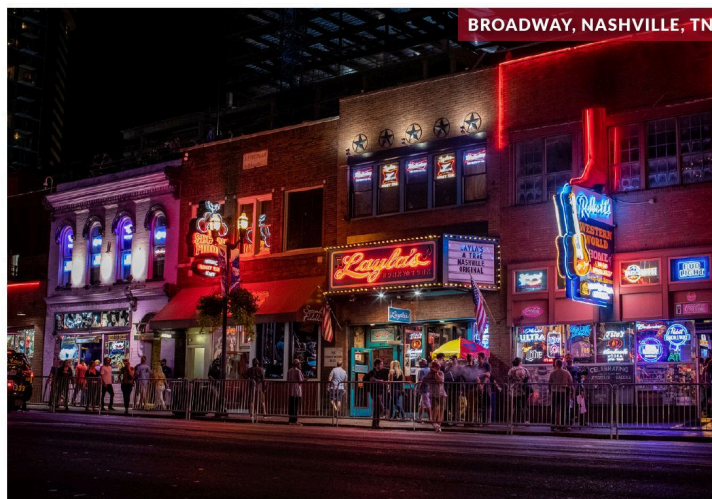
Memphis, the destination for blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll. Let us help you plan an unforgettable experience in our legendary city. Discover the best attractions and activities, stay updated on what's new in Memphis, and get valuable planning tips. Start your adventure now!



MEMPHISTRAVEL.COM



MOUNTAIN STAGE, WV



BROADWAY, NASHVILLE, TN

An optional music-themed itinerary could take you north from the Mississippi Delta Country into **Tennessee's** Mississippi riverside Memphis, home to buzzy Beale Street's BB King Club, Sun Studios – where such music superstars as Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Roy Orbison met – the Memphis Music Hall of Fame and other genre-specific museums covering soul, rock 'n' roll and blues. And, of course, you will want to visit Elvis's Graceland mansion and museum, exuding the personality of the 'King of Rock-and-Roll'.

If you are a Tina Turner fan, you may want to drop by the tiny West Tennessee Delta Heritage Center & Tina Turner Museum in Brownsville, which is based in her former Nutbush school house, before you head about 200 miles east to Nashville, 'Music City USA', making sure to visit its latest attraction, the National Museum of African American Music, which covers everything from the African roots of gospel, rhythm, blues and jazz up to today's funk, disco and rap.

Then make sure to visit such hallowed sites as the Ryman Auditorium, fronted by a statue of Bill Monroe, 'The Father of Bluegrass Music', both the Country Music and Musicians Halls of Fame and Museums, and tribute museums to such superstars as Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, George Jones and Glen Campbell. For live music, head to the Grand Ole Opry, which has been showcasing such top stars as Dolly Parton, Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson and Garth Brooks for decades. To enjoy performances of even more present-day and

would-be stars, cruise along the Honky Tonk Highway, book yourself into the Bluebird and Listening Room cafes, and check out Cannery Row venues famed for great rock shows and the Nashville Palace where you can both listen to live music and line dance. And if you are a Dolly fan, you will want to make for her eastern Tennessee hometown, Sevierville, and the nearby Dollywood Theme Park.

Just across the border in **Virginia**, Bristol's Birthplace of Country Music Museum celebrates the fact that it was there in 1927 that a team from a New York studio made the first recordings of such then-unknown regional country and mountain musicians as Jimmie Rogers and the Carter Family. June Carter and

her husband, Johnny Cash, visited and performed at nearby Hiltons' quaint Carter Family Fold, still a lively music venue and one of the stops on the Crooked Road, **Virginia's** Heritage Music Trail. Along its way northwards you can enjoy an evening of pickin', strumming and clogging festivities at the Floyd General Store, and drop by Galax's Rex Theater, which has been hosting live old timey and bluegrass music since 1940s as well as the weekly Blue Ridge Backroads Live radio show.

At the upper end of **Virginia's** legendary Shenandoah Valley, Winchester is home to the Patsy Cline Historic House Museum, and near Washington, DC, Wolf Trap is the only National Park dedicated to the performing arts.



HERITAGE MUSIC TRAIL, VA



SUN STUDIO, MEMPHIS, TN



CAPRICORN SOUND STUDIOS, MACON, GA

West Virginia's Mountain Stage, based in Charleston's Cultural Center Theater, has, for more than 30 years, staged live performances that are transmitted throughout the USA via National Public Radio. And music lovers visiting Thomas in the state's eastern ski area can drop by the Purple Fiddle for music and dancing on Friday and Saturday nights.

Western **North Carolina's** buzzy Asheville is known for such venues as the Orange Peel and Rabbit Rabbit (national and regional touring acts) and the Grey Eagle (indie rock and other genres), and Raleigh, 247 miles to its east, is home to the Red Hat Amphitheatre, which hosts major new acts and touring superstars, as well as to the Lincoln Theatre, Pour House Music Hall & Record Shop and Slim's Downtown.

Charleston, **South Carolina**, on the other hand, has two special music claims to fame: the inspiration for America's most-famous home-grown opera, *Porgy and Bess*, composed in 1935 by George Gershwin, and the home of the unique late-April/early-May Spoleto Festival, which features opera, jazz, classical music and more. Last year, a Pulitzer Prize was awarded to a Spoleto-premiered opera, *Omar*, inspired by the memoir of an African man sold into slavery in Charleston. You can also find a great music scene at the Windjammer on the nearby Isle of Palms.

Up the coast, North Myrtle Beach Fat Harold's Beach Club, OD Pavilion, Duck's and other venues feature music inspired by the area's 1940s Shag dance craze. And Myrtle Beach itself is home to musical extravaganzas, including Legends in Concert and the Carolina Opry.


Athens, **Georgia** is the birthplace of rock 'n' roll superstars R.E.M. and the B-52s and home to the acclaimed 40 Watt Club and historic Georgia Theatre, venue for many top music performances. To its south, Macon, home to Otis Redding and Little Richard, has such attractions as the Allman Brothers' Big House Museum and Capricorn Sound Studios and Museum. And, of course, Atlanta, known for its lively rap scene, is home to numerous music venues.


New Orleans, **Louisiana**, is not only the 'Birthplace of Jazz' and home to such major annual events as the late-April/early-May New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and the August Summer Satchmo Fest, inspired by the late/great Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong, but it is also full of great music venues.




BLUEGRASS MUSICIANS, ASHEVILLE, NC

ELVIS' STORY BEGINS IN TUPELO

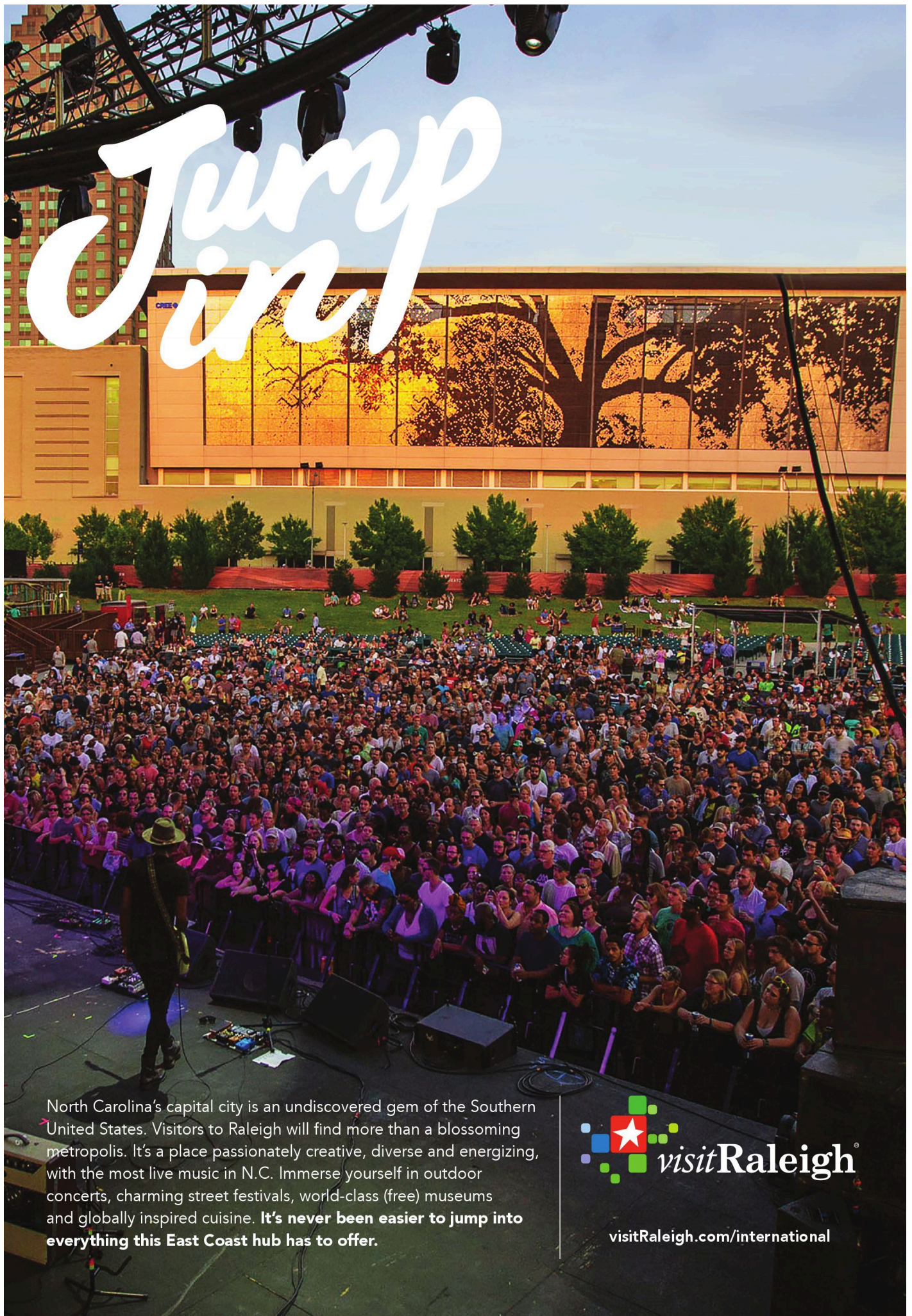





Just 90-minutes from Memphis, walk in the footsteps of the King of Rock 'N' Roll by exploring the Elvis Presley Birthplace, Elvis' Tupelo Driving Tour or Self-Guided Bicycle Tour, and so much more. Visit tupelo.net to learn more about Elvis' Tupelo and imagine what you can do here! **#MyTupelo**



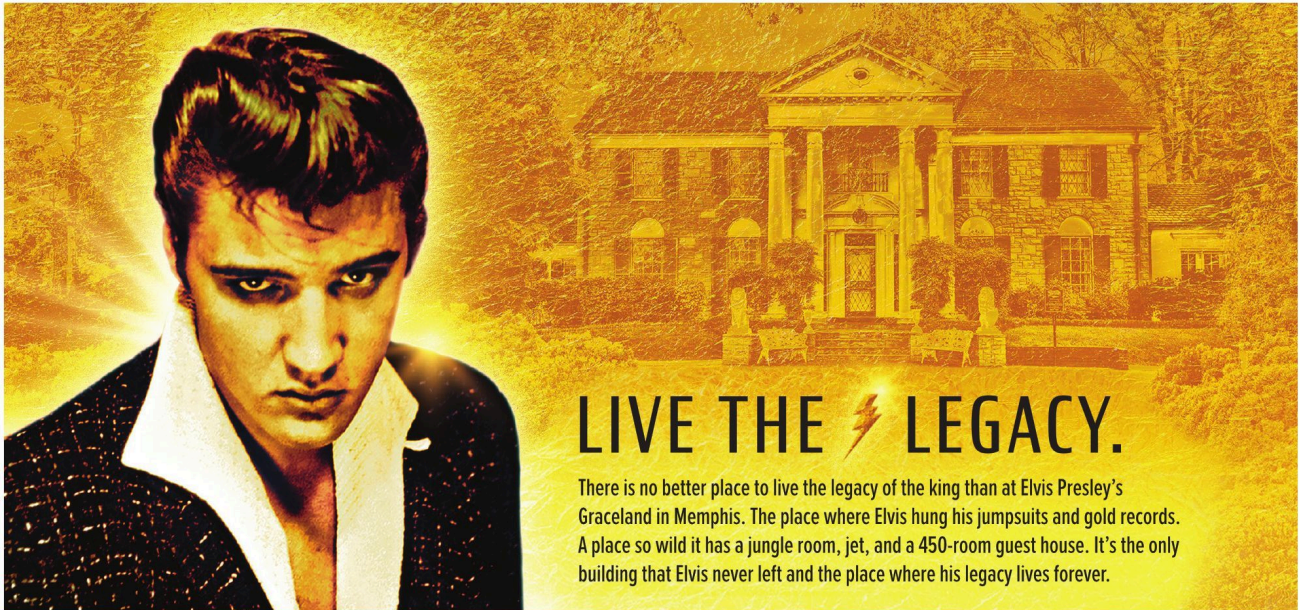
tupelo
tupelo.net



North Carolina's capital city is an undiscovered gem of the Southern United States. Visitors to Raleigh will find more than a blossoming metropolis. It's a place passionately creative, diverse and energizing, with the most live music in N.C. Immerse yourself in outdoor concerts, charming street festivals, world-class (free) museums and globally inspired cuisine. **It's never been easier to jump into everything this East Coast hub has to offer.**



[visitRaleigh.com/international](https://www.visitRaleigh.com/international)



LIVE THE ⚡ LEGACY.

There is no better place to live the legacy of the king than at Elvis Presley's Graceland in Memphis. The place where Elvis hung his jumpsuits and gold records. A place so wild it has a jungle room, jet, and a 450-room guest house. It's the only building that Elvis never left and the place where his legacy lives forever.

GRACELAND®

THE HOME OF ELVIS PRESLEY™

© EPE. Graceland and its marks are trademarks of EPE. All Rights Reserved.

Graceland.com



Heart of it all.
Feel the beat.

KANSAS CITY

FROM THE HEART

VISIT KC **VISITKC.COM**

KC



THE CAROLINA OPRY THEATER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

Best known are the French Quarter's iconic Preservation Hall, a mecca for lovers of traditional jazz since 1961, the convoy of clubs along lively Frenchmen Street and Tipitina's, located in an old warehouse off Napoleon Avenue and which featured Professor Longhair as its artist-in-residence until his death in 1980.

Mandeville, on the other side of Lake Pontchartrain, has been home to Ruby's Roadhouse, a popular venue for African America performers since the 1930s, as well as to the Dew Drop Jazz & Social Hall, located in a 1895 wooden building and staging traditional jazz concerts.

Westward in the steamy, scenic bayou country there's Cajun music at Lafayette's Blue Moon Saloon, Mamou's Fred's Lounge, which is presided over by the frisky widow of its founder, and Breaux Bridge's Buck and Johnny's, where you can begin the day with a zydeco breakfast and enjoy music and dance until late evening.

Also west of New Orleans, Lake Charles's Panorama Music Hall is known for its sometimes-wacky events – you can attend some performances in your pyjamas – while up the Mississippi River, Baton Rouge's Manship Theatre hosts Cuban, Motown and Grammy Award-winning groups, and, in the far north-west corner of the state, Shreveport's Municipal Auditorium, best-known for staging Elvis' first major performance in 1954, is still a music venue offering backstage tours.

Cross the river near Memphis to **Arkansas** and you can continue to Mountain View's Ozark Folk Center State Park where the Blacksmith Stage and the Ozark Highlands Theatre host performances of Southern mountain music featuring mandolins, dulcimers and autoharps as well as fiddles, banjos and guitars. To its east, in Dyess, is the bungalow-style Johnny Cash Boyhood Home. North-west across the **Missouri** state line lies Branson, the 'Live Entertainment Capital of the World' and home to more than 100 live performances, including such dinner shows as Dolly Parton's Stampede, Showboat Branson Belle and Mel's Hard Luck Diner, the latter enhanced by singing servers.

Jazz lovers may then want to head to Kansas City, 216 miles north, as it is home to the historic 18th & Vine jazz district, the American Jazz Museum and such lively clubs as The Gem. Across the state in riverside St. Louis you can enjoy the scene in Blueberry Hill's Duck Room, where the late/great Chuck Berry used to perform (his statue is nearby), and then drop into the National Blues Museum to create your

own music via interactive exhibits before heading for such live music venues as Blues and Soups and BB's Jazz.

And back down the Mississippi and eastward along the tributary Ohio River lies Owensboro, **Kentucky**, home to the Bluegrass Hall of Fame & Museum, where you may just happen upon a live music performance – it's also home to the annual ROMP bluegrass festival. And, of course, **Louisville** is also home to numerous festivals and live music venues.



THE KING BISCUIT BLUES FESTIVAL, HELENA, AR

If you like your music enhanced by great American food and life-affirming drink you'll want to follow the **Bourbon, Bluegrass and Barbecue** trail (travelsouth.visittheusa.com/trip/bourbon-bluegrass-and-barbecue-touring-louisville-ozarks) through Kentucky, Arkansas and Missouri, along the way sampling world-renowned barbecue, seductive Bourbon cocktails and a medley of bluegrass, soul and jazz. Or for more bluegrass and old-time country music opt for the road trip **Music Cradles** (travelsouth.visittheusa.com/trip/music-cradles) including Bristol "The Birthplace of Country Music," straddling the Tennessee/Virginia state line, and other buzzy places in the tri-state area, also including North Carolina.



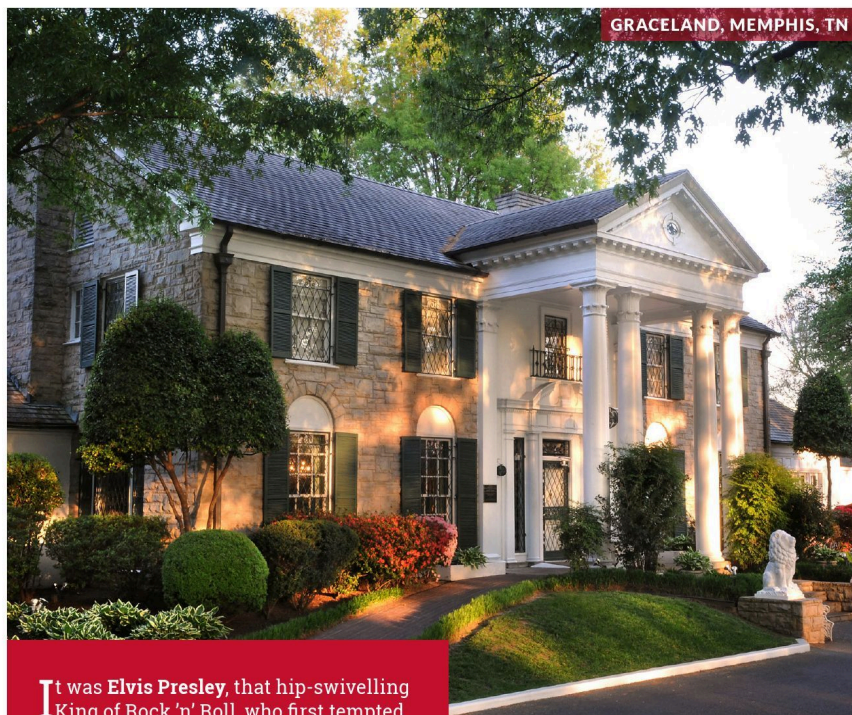
NATIONAL BLUES MUSEUM, ST. LOUIS, MO



BLUEGRASS MUSIC HALL OF FAME MUSEUM, OWENSBORO, KY

ON THE ROAD WITH ELVIS AND DOLLY

BY ZOEY GOTO



It was **Elvis Presley**, that hip-swivelling King of Rock 'n' Roll, who first tempted me to **Tennessee**. But it's **Dolly Parton** and her ever-expanding entertainment empire that keeps me returning.

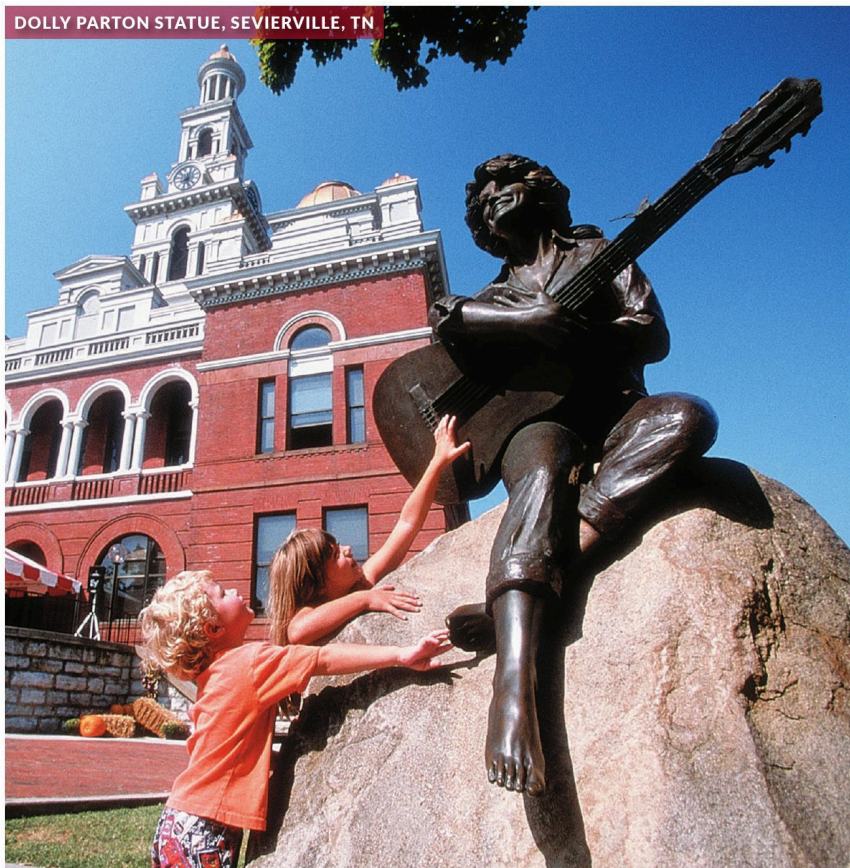
It's no coincidence that both of these legendary songbirds nested in **Tennessee**, a state that's famed for creating the rootsy soundtrack of America ... and thus perfectly pitched for a music-themed road trip. Blues music is still drifting from **Memphis** clubs and juke joints even as the twang of steel guitars resounds all along **Nashville's Honky Tonk Highway**.

I started by paying my respects to Elvis in his beloved **Graceland** mansion, situated in Memphis in the south-west of the state. In recent years, a sprawling complex of shifting exhibits and retail stores has sprung forth in the mansion's shadows but it's the inside of the house that remains the unrivalled main act.

In the **Jungle Room** – Elvis's ultimate man cave – a neon-lit waterfall trickles gently down the wall, while a river of green shag-pile flows across the floor and ceiling, vividly reminding us of Elvis's distinctive flair for the theatrical. I then checked out the **Lauderdale Courts** apartment where Elvis lived as a teenager – you can book an overnight stay via its Facebook page – before taking a seat in The King's booth at the **Arcade Restaurant** to feast on his favourite treat, fried peanut butter and banana sandwiches.



DOLLY PARTON STATUE, SEVIERVILLE, TN



From Memphis, I zipped three hours down the highway to explore Nashville sites fulsome with Dolly Parton's sparkly legacy. Beginning at RCA Studio B on Music Row, where the songstress laid down her Coat of Many Colors track, I then headed to the Grand Ole Opry to hear country music enthusiastically performed by some of the young artists who have taken Dolly's musical baton and run with it. No time, alas, but I could have bedded down for the night at the Graduate Hotel, where the hotel's kitschy-cool interiors have taken the Queen of Country as their inspiration.

Instead, I headed around 200 miles east to Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains, Dolly's birthplace and home to her Dollywood theme park, which attracts a staggering three million visitors each year. After riding the vintage wooden rollercoasters, I visited a replica of Dolly's humble childhood cabin and admired her razzle-dazzle costumes in the Chasing Rainbows Museum before stopping off in her hometown, Sevierville, where a statue of the star – barefoot and cradling a guitar – takes centre stage. Then, as night fell, I headed to Dollywood's DreamMore Resort & Spa, where, in return for a queenly fee, guests can now stay the night on Dolly's former tour bus; waking up in her dinky, fuchsia bed under a ceiling of twinkling rhinestones. It doesn't get more rock 'n' roll than that!

DOLLYWOOD'S DREAMMORE RESORT & SPA, WHERE, IN RETURN FOR A QUEENLY FEE, GUESTS CAN NOW STAY THE NIGHT ON DOLLY'S FORMER TOUR BUS; WAKING UP IN HER DINKY, FUCHSIA BED UNDER A CEILING OF TWINKLING RHINESTONES. IT DOESN'T GET MORE ROCK 'N' ROLL THAN THAT!

LIVING ROOM AT GRACELAND, MEMPHIS, TN



THE AUTHOR IN DOLLY PARTON'S FORMER TOUR BUS, DOLLYWOOD, TN

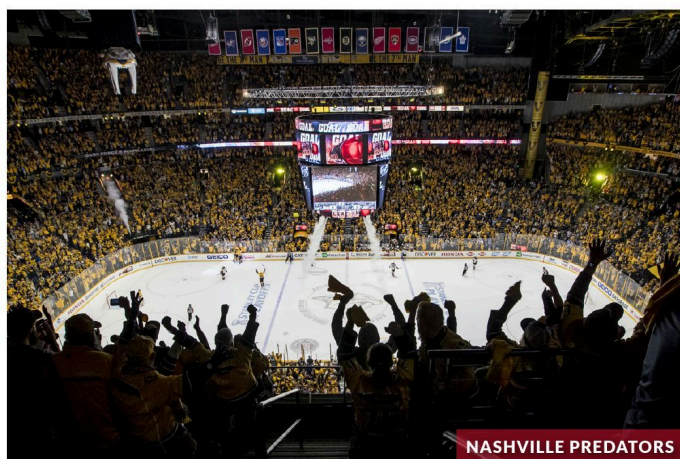
SPECIAL FEATURE



MARTINS BBQ RIBS



RYMAN AUDITORIUM



NASHVILLE PREDATORS

Music is the universal language, and it all comes together in Nashville where the music is written, recorded and performed. Home to more than 180 live music venues, from the historic Ryman Auditorium and the Grand Ole Opry to independent venues such as The Bluebird Cafe and EXIT/IN, there is a unique experience for everyone in Music City.

With more music museums than anywhere in the world, visitors can experience the rich history of music from any genre at the National Museum of African American Music or the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Just west of downtown, visitors can hear the legendary sound recordings of Dolly Parton and Elvis Presley at Historic RCA Studio B, located on Music Row.

In recent years, there has been an evolution in both the quality of hotel rooms and quantity of rooms—from boutique to 5-star properties such as the Four Seasons Nashville, the Conrad Nashville and the 1 Hotel—which has broadened Nashville's appeal and the visitor's experience.

The culinary scene is also hotter than ever with award-winning chefs putting their mark in Music City and making Nashville a premier culinary destination with over 300 new restaurants opening in the past three years. Nashville has also become a hot bed for breweries and distilleries while southern staples such as Hot Chicken, meat-and-three, and Tennessee pork barbecue remain deeply embedded in the city's food culture.

Nashville is a year-round sports destination with four professional teams. In the fall, the excitement starts on Sundays with the city's NFL team the Tennessee Titans who are set to move into a new stadium in 2027 on the East Bank. The action continues downtown at Bridgestone Arena, home to the NHL's Nashville Predators. Nashville is also home to the largest soccer specific stadium—GEODIS Park—in the United States and Canada, and claims the Nashville Sounds, a MiLB team that recorded the highest total attendance of any team in the MiLB this past year.

Growing at a sensational pace, there's something new to experience at every corner in Music City. Come see for yourself at [VisitMusicCity.com](https://www.visitmusiccity.com).



**CULTURE, COCKTAILS,
AND CORNBREAD.**

 As a city known for its exceptional restaurants, cafes and bistros, Birmingham continues to set the standard for what a food scene should be. But aside from our award-winning dishes, what you'll also find here is a place rich with history, filled with music, art, culture and southern hospitality. So pull up a chair at **The Dinner Table of the South**. And dig in to everything we have to offer.

DINNER TABLE *of* THE SOUTH

BIRMINGHAM

Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau

inbirmingham.com 800 - 458 - 8085



No American region can claim to be home to more creative cuisine and lyrical libations than the South. The climate helps: months of sunny skies, usually ample rainfall and often mild winters. And then there's the largess of nature: thousands of miles of marine-rich coastal waters, lakes and rivers, vast cattle-grazing

pastures, and fertile farmlands that produce everything from wheat and corn to orchards and vineyards.

But perhaps most important is the rich mixture of people and cultures. When the first European explorers and settlers arrived, they discovered often previously-unknown Native American ingredients –

succulent corn and tomatoes, potatoes and beans, pumpkins and peanuts, peppers and melons. They then added their own favourite ingredients, as did the enslaved African people – yams, watermelon, okra, black-eyed peas and kola nuts, the important base for both coffee and cola, plus their skill in rice cultivation.

Today, many a southern state boasts that it has the very best pork or beef barbecue, fried chicken or pecan pie, but each state also extols the virtues of its own favourite dishes and drinks. And where better to begin a Creative Cuisine Safari than **Louisiana** with its medley of distinctive French/Spanish/African-influenced Creole and Cajun dishes often labelled with intriguing French names.

You can start your day at New Orleans' landmark Cafe du Monde with a cup of strong black coffee and a *beignet*, a square-shaped piece of dough topped with powdered sugar or stuffed with savoury or sweet ingredients; proceed at lunchtime to Mother's Restaurant for a special roast beef *po'boy* sandwich served on crusty French bread with debris (pronounced duh bree) gravy or at the French Quarter's Central Grocery with a *muffuletta* sandwich crammed with Italian salami, ham, minced garlic, olives and cheese. And for dinner there's a wealth of places serving Louisiana's Official Dish, *gumbo*, a rich, roux-based stew of rice, seafood and or chicken and sausage plus onions, bell peppers and celery, and/or *jambalaya*, a rice dish with meat and vegetables mixed in with tasty spices.

But, of course, delicious dining is not limited to New Orleans. To the west, in the low-lying Bayou Country, communities such as Lafayette are known for their delicious Cajun and Creole cuisine and Lake Charles has more than 25 restaurants specialising in

boudin – rice, pork and spices in a smoked sausage casing – whereas the Andouille Trail running along the Mississippi River from the outskirts of New Orleans to the outskirts of Baton Rouge celebrates its namesake dish, which features smoked pork seasoned with salt, garlic and cracked black pepper.

And where better than in New Roads' Hot Tails restaurant north of Baton Rouge to indulge in another Louisiana specialty, crustaceans known as crawfish, possibly served in a succulent *étouffé* stew of rice, herbs and vegetables? Hot Tails is owned by husband-and-wife chefs Sam and Cody Carroll, who also have two other restaurants of that name in the same area.



TUJAGUE'S, NEW ORLEANS, LA



SWEET

AN AUTHENTIC LOUISIANA EXPERIENCE

Food is how we share our story with everyone who comes to Baton Rouge. Every crispy, powdery bite is a representation of the creativity that makes the food scene here in **The Capital City** unlike any other.

[VisitBatonRouge.com/restaurants](https://www.VisitBatonRouge.com/restaurants)

with a capital S.



ED'S BURGER JOINT, HATTIESBURG, MS

STRAIGHT TO ALE
BREWERY, HUNTSVILLE, AL

HUSK, CHARLESTON, SC

For more sensational seafood, head just across the **Alabama** border to Mobile's Hummingbird Way Oyster Bar. Among the unmissable offerings of owner and executive chef Jim Smith are crab claws and seared Alabama shrimp and grits in a Creole sauce. (The stone-ground white hominy corn known as grits is a Southern staple.) Other state specialties include barbecue cooked in a mayonnaise rather than a traditional tomato-based sauce, fried green tomatoes, pork chops and collard greens.

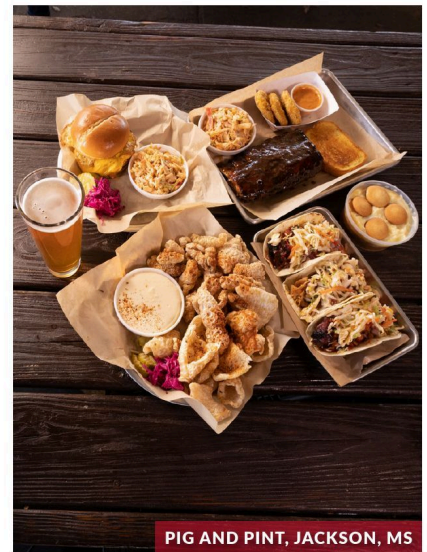
Like Alabama, neighbouring, coastal **Mississippi** benefits from its easy access to the rich marine life of the Gulf of Mexico as well as from the culinary leadership of people like award-winning chef Nick Wallace. Based in Jackson's Nissan Café, his menu features such things as wild berries, micrograins, garlic, onions and mushrooms that are foraged from the surrounding area. Among his special dishes is one featuring collard greens, hoe cake (fried cornbread encompassing eggs and buttermilk), and pickled onions served in a hot sauce featuring chilli peppers, cloves and a choice of vinegar.

Moving up the **Georgia** coast, Atlanta's popular Busy Bee restaurant has been dishing out such specialties as meatloaf and chicken giblets and rice since 1947 at its establishment on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. And in coastal Savannah, chef Mashama at The Grey restaurant, set in a former 1938 Art Deco Greyhound Bus Terminal, won the 2022 James Beard Outstanding Chef award for his creative cuisine.

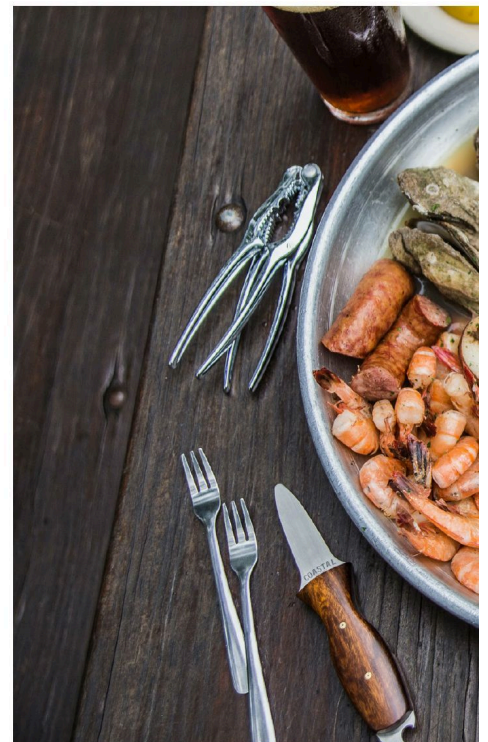
Long celebrated as a fab food destination, **Charleston, South Carolina**, has a litany of star-studded dining spots, some run by James Beard Award winners such as

chef Mike Lata of FIG (Food Is Good) and chef Rodney Scott, who elevates barbecue to gourmet status at Whole Hog BBQ, plus the convoy of such East Bay Street area restaurants as Magnolias, High Cotton, Slightly North of Broad, and Husk.

For great barbecue, head to Roy's Grill, located in the small town of Irmo just north of Columbia. It's presided over by chef Chris Williams – while there, check out the divine peach cobbler, enhanced with nutmeg. Another state specialty is Frogmore Stew, which consists of shrimp, corn, sausage and seafood seasoning. It originated from St. Helena, one of the just-offshore islands inhabited by the descendants of the enslaved West African Gullah people who have contributed so much to Southern cuisine. Other South Carolina specialties include shrimp and grits and crab cakes.



PIG AND PINT, JACKSON, MS





PERSIMMONS WATERFRONT RESTAURANT, NEW BERN, NC



PLEASURE HOUSE, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA



SHRIMP AND GRITS, CHARLESTON, SC

KIMBALL'S KITCHEN
RESTAURANT, DUCK, NC

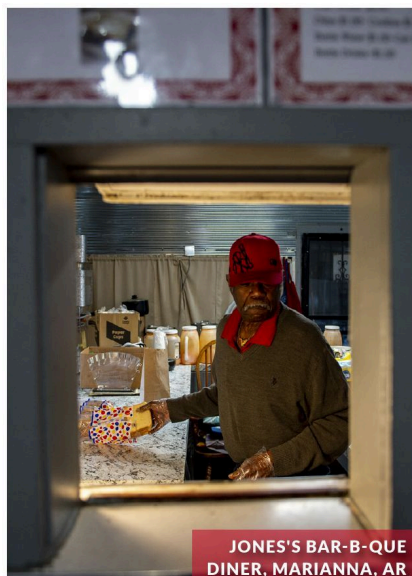
BOATHOUSE, HILTON HEAD, SC

North Carolina's Oyster Trail not only encompasses such coastal dining shrines as Wilmington's Seabird and Catch restaurants but also leads to award-winning Durham chef Ricky Moore's acclaimed Saltbox Seafood Joint. Of particular note: his charcoal-grilled Oyster Pamplico, garnished with chopped bacon, pimento cheese and toasted cracker crumbs.

The state is also renowned for its smoked-pork barbecue served in such award-winning places as The Skylight Inn, located in Ayden east of Raleigh, sweet potato dishes and hush puppies, aptly named fried cornmeal balls, created by hunters from left-over dough to placate their noisy hound dogs.

With its expansive frontage along America's largest estuary, the marine-rich Chesapeake Bay, **Virginia**, is the East Coast's largest producer of wild and farm-raised oysters. Sample them at places along its Oyster Trail while checking out the Bay's succulent blue crabs, either in-shell or out during the moulting season.

Smithfield, in the state's south-eastern corner, is particularly known for its peanut and ham production – enjoy some peanut soup and/or ham served on hot, crumbly buttered biscuits. The lovely, fertile Shenandoah Valley is full of apple orchards – sample the creamy apple butter sold in local shops – and up in the western mountains they are still tapping the trees for maple syrup, delicious on buckwheat pancakes.



JONES'S BAR-B-QUE
DINER, MARIANNA, AR



EQUUS JACK'S BOURBON RESTAURANT, LOUISVILLE, KY



HOT BROWN, LOUISVILLE, KY



ARTHUR BRYANT'S
BARBEQUE, KANSAS CITY, MO



CORDUROY INN, SHOWSHOE, WV



Neighbouring **West Virginia** is particularly proud of its numerous farm-to-table restaurants, among them centrally-located Buckhannon's Fish Hawk Acres. And for something really special try out Pork Chop Milanese served with a sweet potato purée and a mulled cider glaze at Charleston's 1010 Bridge restaurant. It's a creation of chef Paul Smith, a semi-finalist in the prestigious 2023 James Beard Awards.

Food guru James Beard himself had great respect for barbecuing and his first-ever America's Classic award to a barbecue restaurant went to Harold Jones's Jones's Bar-B-Que Diner in the small east-**Arkansas** town of Marianna. In business for more than a century, it is considered to be the South's oldest black-owned restaurant in continuous operation. Then, for something completely different, head to Little Rock's Boulevard Bread Company, where award-winning chef/owner Scott McGehee dishes out Arkansas Caviar, a perky combo of corn, field peas, peppers, tomatoes, onions, garlic and jalapeno. It's served with cornmeal-

based pone bread and green tomato pickle. Other state specialties include fried catfish and wild duck.

Kentucky, as we all are aware, is best-known for fried chicken and bourbon. You can pay tribute to the former by dropping by Harland Saunders Café and Museum in south-central-sited Corbin, for it was there that the colonel first tested his famous chicken recipe, later to be franchised around the world. As for bourbon, head

for Bardstown, home of the Bardstown Bourbon Company, where you can top up your tipples with a delicious selection of food – according to chief commercial officer Herb Heneman, this was the first distillery to open a restaurant.

Headed for Louisville instead? Then check out the historic Brown Hotel's signature dish, the Hot Brown, which is layered toasted bread, turkey, bacon and tomatoes topped by a rich Mornay sauce.



Q39 BBQ, KANSAS CITY, MO



BARDSTOWN BOURBON COMPANY, KY



HOLY SMOKES BBQ, DUBLIN, GA

The Savoury Southern Cuisine road trip (travelsouth.visittheusa.com/trip/savoury-southern-cuisine) is the ultimate movable feast – not only does it serve up sensational seafood and creative Creole delights in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mobile, Alabama, but there also are added gourmet treats in Biloxi and Gulfport along the Mississippi coast and in big city Atlanta, Georgia.



Another Southern sipping superstar is **Tennessee**, which reaches its zenith at the Jack Daniels Distillery sited in Lynchburg in the south-central part of the state. Although due to local laws you cannot get an alcoholic drink in the town or surrounding county, you can sample Tennessee whiskey (and buy bottles of it) on tours of the distillery. If lucky, you may meet JD's first female distiller, Lexie Phillips, whose favourite Jack Daniel's cocktail is a Bonded Sweet Tea Old Fashioned, which includes English breakfast tea, syrup, creme de peche and peach bitters. She also recommends the pecan pie produced at the acclaimed local Miss Mary Bobo's Restaurant – not only is it infused with Jack Daniels but the whiskey is also included in the whipped cream and sugar topping.

Nashville is known for its hot chicken, coated with a red sauce spiced with cayenne pepper and usually topped with slices of pickle and served on white bread. It can be found in such restaurants as Hattie B's and Prince's. And Memphis is considered by many to be the go-to city for barbecue.

However, Kansas City in **Missouri** considers itself 'The BBQ Capital of the World' as it has more barbecue restaurants per capita than any other destination. Among them is the acclaimed Arthur Bryant's, but whichever place you choose, ask to sample burnt ends, the savoury, thinner end of the beef brisket.

According to Rob Connoley, the owner/chef at St. Louis's Bulrush, other Missouri specialties are Toasted Ravioli, Goopy Butter Cake, which features a sweet custard centre and a crusty top, and Vinegar Pie, which includes cornstarch, lemon juice, eggs, butter and fruit vinegar. He also serves up tasty Route 66 fried chicken with mashed potatoes and gravy.

RAISE A TOAST TO SOUTHERN DIVINE DRINKS

When the European colonists first arrived in the American South, bringing with them their own special life-affirming drinks, they discovered a new ingredient to add to the mix – corn. They also found a way to outsmart and sometimes outrun the tax- and law-enforcing government agents, particularly during the Prohibition era, by producing the resulting 'moonshine' or 'white lightening' in their own backyards, particularly if those backyards happened to be deep in the Appalachian Mountains.

It is fun to learn that you can now sample the potent brew at such places as the Shine Girl Distillery in Sevierville, **Tennessee**, which is owned by Dolly Parton's niece, Danielle, or at the Hatfield & McCoy Moonshine Distillery in mountainous Gilbert, **West Virginia**, its name was inspired by those of two famous feuding hillbilly families.

Kentucky, which produces 95 per cent of the world's bourbon, tempts you (and a designated driver) to visit at least one of the 18 distilleries along its Bourbon Trail; the Tennessee Whiskey Trail offers a choice of 30 possible stops; and **Virginia**, which has been producing wine since colonial times and now boasts more than 330 boutiques wineries, also claims it is America's Birthplace of Whiskey – you can visit the Mount Vernon Distillery, where George Washington was producing rye in pre-American Revolutionary days.

A number of other Southern states such as **Missouri** have thriving wine-producing regions as well as a vast number of breweries. Once again, Missouri comes to the forefront as home of St. Louis's visitor-welcoming Anheuser-Busch Brewery.

And then there are those fab cocktails to sample: New Orleans' signature Sazerac, Mint Juleps, Old Fashioneds, Whiskey Sours and more. And if you really want to try something different, check out the gin-based Corpse Reviver, which is served in a former coffin shop that is now part of **North Carolina's** Durham Distillery, or sweet potato vodka produced by the Delta Dirt Distillery in Helena, **Arkansas**.



BOURBON IS A PLACE.



BOURBON CITY

[GoToLouisville.com](https://www.gotolouisville.com)

TEAM
KENTUCKY.

SPECIAL FEATURE



WISEGUY LOUNGE

NORTHERN KENTUCKY

GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH



LIBBY'S SOUTHERN COMFORT



JOHN A. ROEBLING SUSPENSION BRIDGE



OKTOBERFEST ZINZINNATI

When planning any great Southern adventure, Kentucky is a must-add to the list. With our amazing outdoor attractions, authentic Southern hospitality, and endless Kentucky bourbon experiences to enjoy, you're sure to leave with lasting memories. The perfect way to start your Southern adventure is at the gateway to the South, Northern Kentucky.

Northern Kentucky is a unique mash-up of 36 Kentucky cities at the top of the Bluegrass State, across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, Ohio. It is also the home of CVG International Airport, servicing international direct destinations such as Toronto via Air Canada, London via British Airways and Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport via Delta/Air France, plus more than 50 direct US domestic connections. The region is known for its unique culinary swagger in Covington and Newport as well as being an official Gateway to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, with seven craft distilleries and a self-guided bourbon experience called The B-Line. Enjoy a leisurely steamboat cruise and sightseeing adventure on BB Riverboats or relive the gangster history of Newport, once the country's gambling hub, and see why before there was Las Vegas, there was Newport, Kentucky. When it comes to events, we boast the biggest Oktoberfest in America and so much more.

Northern Kentucky is a region that blends the energy and excitement of big-city experiences with small-town charm. Visit [MeetNKY.com](https://www.meetnky.com) to begin planning your next Southern adventure.

**MEET LINDA. SHE'S A PRO AT STANDUP PADDLEBOARDING,
KAYAKING, AND SWIMMING, INFUSING EVERY MOMENT
WITH PURE JOY. THIS IS HOW SHE PACKS FOR JOY IN
LAKE CHARLES - LOUISIANA'S PLAYGROUND.
HOW WOULD YOU?**

