



Leading Missouri in becoming one of America's most memorable tourist destinations.
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Missouri Wineries Continue to Receive Top Honors

Missouri's claim to the title of premier wine destination in the Midwest continues to be enhanced as the state's wineries capture more awards in national and international competitions.

Recently Stone Hill Winery in Hermann found its way to the top of the medals podium at the Wineries Unlimited Seminar and Trade Show in Lancaster, Pa. For the past five years, the prestigious event, which is now in its 30th year, has sponsored the "Best of the East" gala, where top wines are honored based on their accumulated scores for medals awarded during 2005 regional and national competitions.

Stone Hill Winery earned the top award for "Best Native Varieties Wine" with its 2002 Norton and also captured the five-year achievement award for having the "Most Wines in the Top Ten" since the Best of the East portion of the event began in 2000. The contest, sponsored by Vineyard and Winery Management Magazine, draws attendees from more than 30 states and provinces representing the Eastern and Midwestern wine industries.

Rocheport's Les Bourgeois Winery products also took top honors in a recent competition. At Jerry D. Mead's New World International

Wine Competition the Les Bourgeois 2004 Estate Bottle Collector's Series Chardonee captured gold medals for Best of Varietal and Best of Class. Silver medal honors went to the Riverboat Red wine and judges awarded a bronze medal to the Pink Fox wine.

The competition, established in 1990, is open to wines produced in the "New World" – the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Les Bourgeois was named in the April 2006 issue of Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel as one of the elements contributing to make Rocheport one of America's Coolest Small Towns.

Arrow Rock Named as Distinctive Destination

The National Trust for Historic Preservation named Arrow Rock as one of its 2006



Distinctive Destinations. The 12 winning communities best portrayed well-managed growth, a commitment to historic preservation with a protected historic core and meaningful context, interesting and attractive architecture, cultural diversity, activities for families with children, an economic base of locally-owned small businesses, and walkability for residents and visitors.

"It is encouraging to see communities so committed to the preservation of their historic landmarks, the revitalization of their downtown areas, and the protection of their unique heritage," said Richard Moe, president of

the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "These 12 communities represent a truly distinctive slice of America that makes them exciting alternatives to the homogenization of many other vacation spots. It is my hope that more American cities and towns will follow the lead of these great destinations in preserving their own spirit of place."

Since 2000, the National Trust has honored 84 Dozen Distinctive Destinations covering 41 states. This year nearly 93 destinations across 39 states were nominated by individuals, preservation organizations and local communities. For a complete list of winners, visit www.nationaltrust.org.

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Dire Scrapes

by John Robinson

There are bigger rapids. Niagara Falls comes to mind. And more dangerous rapids lurk in Missouri, too, like the whitewater washing through Millstream Gardens in March.

But each spring, Smash Rock stands between me and inner peace.

As our rendezvous approaches, I concentrate on little else. My sole mission hardens into a successful negotiation past this looming lorelei. Smash Rock could care less, having stood like a giant troll at the gate for a good forty million years, as a swift current breaks and barrels under its jaw.

Normally, it's only accessible in the spring, when

there's plenty of water in the upper Jacks Fork River, a few miles below the Prongs. That's when I tilt my bow toward the rock.

The initial sensory overload is auditory, as I ride the current on a collision course with the giant boulder, easily the size of a Lincoln Navigator. The river gulps my canoe toward the rock, until at the last moment, I dig furiously to veer left, brushing my stern against the rock as I pass. It's a signature of sorts left upon the rock's face, a guest book of canoe scrapes.

Here, the danger begins, as my canoe must slalom through a boulder field the length of Graceland's drive-

way. The water level determines the degree of difficulty. High water offers a glide over the rocks. Low water lets me carom between them. Middle water, most dangerous, turns the rocks into fists that lurk just beneath the rolling surface, ready to snag my keel, and turn me sideways into the torrent.

Some paddlers compare Smash Rock to the Falls on the North Fork River, only longer. I compare it to a Tilt-A-Whirl, only wetter.

Oddly, I've never succumbed to Smash Rock ... safe passage every time I've tried. Credit concentration. On the other hand, I've dumped canoes in easier waters. But that happens during lapses best described as rectal-cranial inversion.

It's a metaphor for life, maybe, or travel. You prepare for the big event, and the little blip surprises you. That's what makes the journey interesting.

Or as Mary Chapin Carpenter likes to quote Mark Knopfler, "Sometimes you're the windshield. Sometimes you're the bug."



Anderson House
Battle of Lexington State Historic Site

Civil War Events

The Missouri Division of Tourism encourages you to submit your summer event listings for **VisitMO.com**. Specifically, MDT has received many recent requests for information regarding Civil War events and reenactments. If you know of a Civil War event or other tourism-related event you would like to submit, please use our free online extranet program at **www.VisitMo.com/directory**. If you have any questions about how to register or submit your listing,

please contact Web site editor Laura Holloway at 573-522-9593 or **Laura.holloway@ded.mo.gov**.



Conferences Focus On Cultural Tourism

Upcoming cultural tourism conferences offer the opportunity for the tourism industry to learn more about this growing market. Missouri Division of Tourism Director John Robinson will speak at the Professional Arts Management Institute's "Focus on Cultural Tourism" seminar June 23-25 in Chicago. This intensive three-day seminar will utilize the experience of top travel and cultural professionals, and focus on the opportunities for both arts and tourism organizations to create dynamic partnerships. For more information on this seminar, visit www.aebmedia.com/pami.

Closer to home, West Plains will host the Strengthening Communities through Cultural Heritage Tourism Conference, May 4-5. The goal of the conference is to assist communities in strengthening their economic base through the development of cultural tourism. For more information, visit <http://extension.missouri.edu/howell>.

Canadian Visits to Missouri Increase

Results from a CY04 Statistics Canada study show a 16.9 percent increase in Canadian visitors to Missouri, compared to CY03. Visitor numbers totaled 148,800, with 99,800 of these visitors arriving from Ontario. The average size of a visiting party increased five percent, and the average spending per night increased six percent.

Top reasons for travel to Missouri included holiday vacations, visiting friends or relatives and trade conferences, seminars and meetings. Study results for CY05 are expected in August.

Already Making Plans For Summer Travel

According to January's TIA/Synovate Voice of the Traveler Survey, a substantial majority (81 percent) of Americans who are planning to travel this summer have already started thinking about plans for their longest summer trip. Not only is this earlier than many travelers typically think about their summer plans, but many have already committed to plans for their longest summer trip.

Nearly one out of three Americans planning to travel this summer will plan their longest summer trip earlier this year than they did last year (30 percent). However, 43 percent are starting their planning the same time as they did last year. Fewer than one in ten travelers will plan their longest summer trip later this year compared to last year.

The survey found that 21 percent of Americans who are planning to travel this summer have already arranged lodging at their destination, and 38 percent have decided upon or booked their mode of transportation.

"The message for travel marketers is that many travelers are making summer travel destination choices very early in the year, and they may want to launch summer travel campaigns earlier this year than in the past," says Sheri Lambert, Senior Vice President of Synovate's Travel & Leisure practice. "But, despite the shift back to earlier planning and booking patterns evident in our survey and also reported by many travel companies, the majority of would-be travelers this summer have not yet selected their destination or booked transportation or lodging. Significant opportunities still remain for the travel industry to influence Americans' travel choices for this summer," adds Dr. Suzanne Cook, Senior Vice President of Research at TIA.

Important Cooperative Marketing Dates

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| April 15, 2006 | FY07 Destination advertising applications due at MDT by 5 p.m. |
| May 31, 2006 | Notification of FY07 awards Quarterly Project Update/Reimbursement Request deadline for FY06 projects |
| June 30, 2006 | FY06 Program year ends |
| July 1, 2006 | FY07 Program year begins FY07 Brochure application due at MDT between July 1, 2006, and April 15, 2007 |
| Sept. 1, 2006 | FY06 small project winter/spring marketing applications due at MDT by 5 p.m. |
| Questions? Call 573-751-3246 OR 573-526-1551 | |

Add Your Business to the 2007 MISSOURI VACATION PLANNER



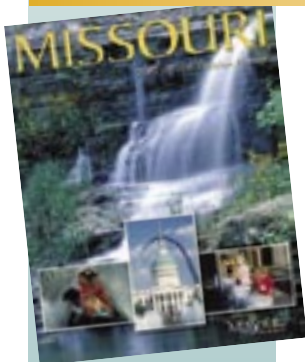
Between now and June 15, 2006, the Missouri Division of Tourism is accepting submissions for inclusion in the 2007 Official Missouri Vacation Planner.

The annual publication carries more than 3,000 listings and chart items for attractions and accommodations around Missouri. Each year, a half million Vacation Planners spread the Mis-

ssouri message to travelers throughout the United States and abroad.

Industry members must use the Missouri Tourism Web site extranet (www.VisitMO.com/directory)

- **Accepting submissions until June 15, 2006**
- **MVP carries more than 3,000 listings**
- **Industry members must use the extranet to submit listings**
- **No listings from the 2006 Vacation Planner will be automatically carried over**



to submit their listings for the 2007 Planner. Username and password information, extranet usage instructions and detailed descriptions of listings categories and criteria are available at the extranet web address. Industry members may contact Mike Murray, Vacation Planner editor, at 573-522-5501 if they run into difficulties submitting their listings.

No listings from the 2006 Planner will be automatically carried over to the 2007 edition. Industry members must update and re-authorize their listings online even when there has been no change in their business information.

Copies of the 2006 Official Missouri Vacation Planner may be ordered by calling 800-519-2100 or logging on to the Missouri Tourism Web site, www.VisitMO.com.

Missouri Tourism Says Goodbye to Tourism Friend



Long-time Ste. Genevieve tourism leader Fran Ballinger passed away April 2. Ballinger's dedication to Ste. Genevieve tourism is well-known and admired throughout Missouri. She spent more than 30 years working with local tourism organizations, including the Ste. Genevieve CVB, and served as president of the River Heritage Tourism Commission for four years. Her efforts resulted in several awards, including MDT's statewide Ambassador Award. She will be missed by the Missouri tourism industry.

Important Calendar Dates

April 17-19

TIA Travel Commerce Conference and Expo,
New York, N.Y.

May 4-5

Cultural Heritage Tourism Conference,
West Plains

May 6-10

International Pow Wow 2006,
Orlando, Fla.

May 13-21

See America Week / National Tourism Week

June 4-6

Missouri Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus Annual Meeting,
Branson

June 12-13

Missouri Tourism Commission meeting,
Lake of the Ozarks

June 23-25

Focus On Cultural Tourism,
Chicago

July 18

Joint Meeting Planner's Tradeshow,
Jefferson City

August 19-22

ESTO,
St. Paul, Minn.

August 20-21

Missouri Showcase Marketplace,
Excelsior Springs

September 18-20

Missouri Governor's Conference on Tourism,
St. Charles

September 28-29

Censtates TTRA Marketing / Research Conference,
St. Charles, Ill.

October 10-11

National Conference for Attraction Professionals,
Boca Raton, Fla.

October 11-13

TIA Marketing Outlook Forum,
Boca Raton, Fla.