



Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory



Outside at 21C



Around the turn at the Kentucky Derby



Louisville skyline

true louisville

The Kentucky Derby, the most exciting two minutes in sports, draws celebrities to Louisville and gives ladies a chance to wear big hats. But this historic French city enjoys a Derby influence year-round thanks to a legendary cocktail heritage, dynamic architecture and Kentucky's horse country.



THREAD COUNT

Opened in 1923, the luxurious **Brown Hotel** downtown, boasts a two-story lobby featuring Bottonecino marble flooring, mahogany furniture and Palladian-style windows (335 W Broadway, 502-583-1234).

Art buffs should stay at the **21c** on Museum Row. It's a contemporary art museum married to a boutique hotel that's also ranked as one of the top hotels in the world (700 W Main St, 502-217-6300).

A 1905 Beaux Arts Baroque masterpiece, the **Seelbach Hilton Hotel** has seen a fair share of celebrities check in from F. Scott Fitzgerald to Billy Joel (500 4th St, 502-585-3200).



FOOD FIX

Louisville is bourbon country, and the liquor shows up in unexpected places. **Bourbons Bistro** serves steaks topped with bourbon butter or a bourbon bacon veal reduction sauce (2255 Frankfort Ave, 502-894-8838).

Or dive into meats smoked using bourbon barrel bungs (stoppers) at **Limestone Restaurant** (10001 Forest Green Blvd, 502-426-7477). They also

create a delightful sour mash bourbon bread pudding.

Iron Chef America winner Edward Lee's **610 Magnolia** showcases his inventive New American fare with an ever-changing three- and four-course prix-fixe menu. If you're lucky, you can try the house-cured lamb prosciutto followed by Nova Scotia lobster served with Coppa ham, heirloom-speckled grits and curried corn sauce (610 Magnolia St, 502-636-0783).



NIGHT OUT

A sight to behold, the bartenders at **732 Social** work cocktail magic with bourbon and big blocks of ice (732 E Market St, 502-583-6882).

Stevie Ray's Blues Bar combines cheap drinks with an authentic, bass-strumming good time (230 E Main St, 502-582-9945).

For a taste of the local music scene, head to Louisville's most famous venue, the **Phoenix Hill Tavern** with a retractable roof that opens to the stars, (644 Baxter Ave, 502-589-4957). It's hosted the Kings of Leon among others as they've passed through town.

true louisville continued...



Glassworks



DON'T MISS

Anyone who's played baseball will want to stop by the **Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory** where you can grip Babe Ruth's bat (800 W Main St, 877-775-8443).

The **Crescent Hill Neighborhood** features eclectic local shopping—try Sister Dragonfly Gallery (2021 Frankfort Ave, 502-899-7675)—and Carmichael's, one of the best bookstores in the country (2720 Frankfort Ave, 502-896-6950).

Churchill Downs, home to the Kentucky Derby, allows you to view majestic thoroughbreds as they walk through the paddock between training sessions and learn about the legendary horses of the past at

its museum (700 Central Ave, 502-636-4400).



STONE'S THROW

Rent a car and follow the **Kentucky Bourbon Trail**, a scenic route along back roads and highways that swings by the distilleries of Jim Beam, Maker's Mark and Wild Turkey where you learn how bourbon is made and sip free samples. Or book a tour with **Mint Julep Tours** (140 N 4th St, 502-583-1433). They'll escort you to the bourbon makers and through famed Kentucky horse country with a stop at a couple thoroughbred farms. If you want more than a bottle to take home, they can arrange to have a barrel of bourbon shipped to you.



THE lowdown

Outgoing Maker's Mark president **Bill Samuels** looks forward to enjoying more of his hometown passions now that he's retiring. Here are his picks for the good life in Louisville.

EATS:

My wife and I had our wedding reception at **Pat's Steakhouse**. It used to be an old roadhouse and has been in the same family for about 50 years. Pat Francis is a butcher who cuts and ages all his own beef (2437 Brownsboro Rd, 502-893-2062).

MUST GO:

My favorite museum is the **Frazier International History Museum**, and my favorite piece is Frank James' pardon. I'm related to Frank and Jesse James through their stepfather (Dr. Reuben Samuels), who was a distant relative (829 W Main St, 502-753-5663).

JUST FOR KIDS:

The **Louisville Zoo** is spectacular. If you've got small children, that's the place to go (1100 Trevilian Wy, 502-459-2181).

WHAT \$100 BUYS YOU IN LOUISVILLE

- A group tour at **Glassworks**, where you can watch artists blow glass to a molten state (815 W Market St, 502-584-4510).
- The Big Wick, a 10- to 18-pound pizza packed with ingredients, at **Wick's Pizza** (975 Baxter Ave, 502-458-1828).
- A round of golf at **Seneca Golf Course**, home to this year's Senior PGA Championship (2300 Pee Wee Reese Rd, 502-458-9298).
- If you're interested in ghosts, Louisville's got them. **Ghost Walking Tours** (502-689-5117) will take you on a 90-minute ghost-walking journey that begins in the Brown Hotel (335 W Broadway).

Louisville-based writer and photographer **Fred Minnick** lives and breathes Louisville and has written for Wine Enthusiast, Tasting Panel and many other publications.