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LOUISVILLE



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Kentucky's largest city will host the Junior National Hereford Expo July 15-21, 2017.

by **Kindra Gordon**

As host of the Kentucky Derby, race horses may be what Louisville is best known for, but come July 15-21, 2017, Herefords will take center stage. Louisville's Kentucky Exposition Center, often dubbed the KEC, will host the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) with the theme "Showin' for the Roses."

During the week, more than 900 Hereford youth from more than 40 states are anticipated to exhibit approximately 1,500 head of cattle and to participate in leadership and educational competitions. In addition, there will be opportunities to explore this unique city's signature attractions. Here's a quick guide to plan your visit.

Churchill Downs

If there is one must-see in the city, put your money on Churchill Downs and the adjacent Kentucky Derby Museum. The famous Kentucky Derby Thoroughbred horse race has been held here each May since 1875, making it the longest continually running sporting event in America. The "Twin Spires" that adorn the top of the grandstands were added in 1895 and today serve as a symbol of the racetrack.

On Derby day, 165,000 visitors throng Churchill Downs, but

smaller races are hosted at the track from April through June and in September, October and November.

Begin your visit at the Kentucky Derby Museum, where admission includes a 30-minute guided walking tours of the Churchill Downs

racetrack. Additionally, the museum exhibits feature "The Greatest Race," an 18-minute video via a screen that surrounds the entire room; there are also two floors of family friendly interactive exhibits featuring racing memorabilia, horse history and



bloodlines, and fashionable outfits worn to the Derby. A horse-themed gift shop and the Derby Café are also on-site. Several specialty tour options giving behind-the-scenes experiences are available via derbymuseum.org.

Museum Row

The West Main District of Louisville's downtown is known as "Museum Row" because of the half dozen or more museums clustered here, giving nod to traditional topics like science and the arts but also some unexpected themes including baseball bats, and boxer Muhammad Ali, who was a Louisville native.

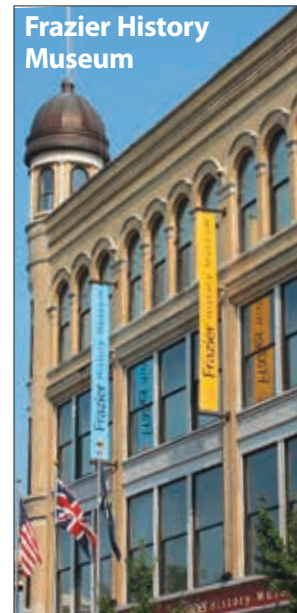
- The most popular venue on the row is the **Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory**. It's easy to spot because the world's tallest bat — rising 120 feet — leans against the building.

The towering bat is said to be an exact-scale replica of Babe Ruth's 34-inch Louisville Slugger bat.

The museum portion of the facility includes an extensive collection of famous bats used by the likes of Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle and a host of others. There are also a batting cage and a simulated pitching area to let visitors get in on the action. Factory tours showcase the process that transforms wood into bats, and after the tour everyone gets a free miniature Louisville Slugger bat of his/her own. Learn more at sluggermuseum.com.

Also located along Museum Row are:

- **Kentucky Science Center**, which features three floors of interactive exhibits, workshop labs and a four-story digital theater. (kysciencecenter.org)
- **Frazier History Museum**, with exhibits including knights' armor, Civil War artifacts,



Daniel Boone's Bible, Teddy Roosevelt's "Big Stick," and some 10,000 toy soldiers. This Smithsonian affiliate displays a 1,000-year spectrum of world history through performances, costumed interpreters and collections. (fraziermuseum.org)

- **The Muhammad Ali Center**, a cultural center and museum devoted to champion boxer Muhammad Ali is designed to "promote respect, hope and understanding." Opened in 2005, the six-story building features a 40,000-square-foot two-level theater, interactive exhibits, galleries with boxing memorabilia and Ali's history, and a plaza. One exhibit is a

mock boxing ring recreated from Ali's Deer Lake Training Camp. (alicenter.org)

Other star attractions

There are several other significant attractions throughout Louisville, one of which is **The Zoo** (louisvillezoo.org/). Established in 1969, the 134-acre zoo exhibits more than 1,500 animals in their natural habitats. The Africa zone features rhinos, giraffes, elephants, hippos, warthogs – and even a gorilla forest. In the Glacier Run zone, exhibits include bears, seals, owls and eagles. Other zoo zones include an island theme with penguins and an area with animals

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from Australia. A zoo tram shuttle traverses the park with several stops for hopping on and off. There are opportunities to enjoy camel rides, a petting zoo, a carousel, giraffe feeding and even a splash park for cooling off, as well.

Louisville also boasts the one-of-a-kind **Mega Cavern**, (louisvillemegacavern.com), which provides the opportunity for an underground adventure to explore the history, geology, mining and building technology of Louisville. The vast man-made cavern is part of 17 miles of corridors that run beneath the city. Tram tours are offered, providing a historical overview of the unique space. For



additional excitement, consider exploring the cave on the challenging ropes course or via the world's only underground zipline course.

Another fun way to see the city is from the water. Moored at the Fourth Street Wharf, the **Belle of Louisville** is the world's oldest

operating steamboat. The 1914 stern-wheeler is a National Historic Landmark that was restored and repaired in 1963. Today, the Belle of Louisville offers sightseeing cruises on the Ohio River, which divides Louisville from Jeffersonville, Ind. A smaller, newer riverboat, dubbed the **Spirit of Jefferson**, also offers a variety of cruises on the Ohio River. Learn more about both at belleoflouisville.org.

Nearby, the **Big Four Bridge** at Waterfront Park is a former railroad truss bridge that spans the Ohio River, connecting Louisville with Jeffersonville, Ind. (louisvillewaterfront.com/explore-the-park/features/big-4-bridge/). Constructed in 1895, the impressive bridge spans a length of 2,525 feet across the water and was converted into a pedestrian and bicycle bridge that opened to the public in 2013.

There are urban green spaces on either end of the bridge, featuring lawns, fountains, pavilions and a children's playground for relaxing and enjoying the outdoors. From twilight to 1 a.m., the bridge is lit with a vibrant array of colors via an LED lighting system. It may offer the perfect way to end a day after a full schedule of activities at the JNHE. **HW**



More Louisville landmarks

While in Louisville, take time to seek out the **Louisville Clock**, also known as the Derby Clock, located on Fourth Street in Theater Square. The 40-foot-high ornamental clock was designed by architect Barney Bright and was created to look like a gigantic windup toy that incorporates the horseracing culture of Kentucky and the world famous Kentucky Derby race.

The clock features a five-lane race track with hand-carved statues of figures with local significance, including King Louis XVI of France, Thomas Jefferson, Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark and the Belle of Louisville. A Victorian gazebo shades several other notable Louisvillian figures such as Zachary Taylor, D.W. Griffith, Mary Anderson, Oliver Cooke and Henry Watterson. Each day at noon, a bugle announces the beginning of the race.

Another Louisville landmark is the ornate **Brown Hotel**, which was built in 1923 and features hand-painted relief ceilings and a gilded marble second-floor lobby. The hotel's restaurant, the English Grill, features the original Louisville sandwich — The Hot Brown. You might also add a slice of Derby pie for dessert. **HW**

