

MISSISSIPPI...PICTURE IT.

Historic Highways Leading to New Adventures

A journey down the historic Natchez Trace Parkway is a trip that reflects the American past, yet looks ahead to new adventures. The Natchez Trace winds from Natchez, Mississippi, to Nashville, Tennessee, following a picturesque route through deep forests and lush vegetation, beside sparkling streams and flowering plants, past carefully preserved sites where history was made.

This scenic path, over 8,000 years old, was originally "traced out" by buffalo, then followed by Indians, and finally trampled into a crude road by traders, trappers, and missionaries. Early settlers braved hazardous journeys through the deep wilderness along the Trace, keeping a wary eye out for murderous bandits, savage Indians, and ferocious wild animals. A fledgling United States Postal Service used the Trace to deliver mail, and Andrew Jackson and his troops trekked the Trace on their way to the Battle of New Orleans. Flatboats floated merchandise downriver to markets in New Orleans, but the return trip north was along the Natchez Trace. From 1800 to 1820, the Trace was the busiest highway in the Southwest. By the late 1820s steamboats made travel along the Natchez Trace impractical, and the once-busy road dissolved into the brush. In 1909, the Mississippi Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution began a campaign to mark the Old Trace, and their work culminated in the modern Natchez Trace Parkway.

Today's highway closely follows the original trail, leading visitors down paths once trekked by frontiersmen. The Trace wanders through a national forest and meanders through miles of blooming shrubs, cypress swamps, stately pines, and moss-draped oaks. Markers along the way denote the sites of significant historic events and provide a complete history of the old Natchez Trace. The Parkway is generously sprinkled with picnic areas, state parks, and nature trails, and features two public campgrounds. No advertising or commercial traffic is allowed on the Trace, resulting in a wonderfully unobstructed view of nature. Today's Natchez Trace Parkway is one of the most accessible, unspoiled highways in the United States.

Cities and towns just off the Trace offer a variety of attractions and activities well worth a side trip. The Parkway begins in Natchez, the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River. A magnificent collection of antebellum mansions and an inviting atmosphere of warmth and charm make this bustling river town a delightful stop. Further along are Port Gibson, the town General Grant declared "too beautiful to burn," and the tiny community of Rodney, rendered a ghost town when the Mississippi River changed courses in 1864.

Just off the Trace is Jackson, Mississippi's exciting capital city, and the center of political, social, and commercial activity for the entire state. Jackson features an abundance of shopping facilities, restaurants, and night spots, and a handful of historic landmarks that survived the city's Civil War torching. Just outside Jackson is the beautiful Ross Barnett Reservoir, popular with fishing and boating enthusiasts.

Kosciusko, located in central Mississippi, developed around the old Natchez Trace.

The town's first establishments were a blacksmith shop and a tavern serving travellers on the Trace. Wrap up your Mississippi journey on the Parkway with a stop in Tupelo, where you'll discover fascinating historic exhibits at the Natchez Trace Parkway Headquarters and the humble birthplace of Elvis Presley, the King of Rock and Roll.

"Walk down the shaded trail and leave your prints in the dust," one historical marker urges, "not for others to see, but for the road to remember."

The Great River Road

Ever since the Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto first saw the Mississippi River in 1541, Ole Man River has played a major role in the economic and historic development of the State of Mississippi. One of the best ways to see both the mighty river and the state that bears its name is to travel along the Great River Road, a highway paralleling 3,000 miles of the Mississippi River. The Great River Road begins south of Venice, Louisiana, and crisscrosses the "Father of Waters" northward to the river's origin in Lake Itasca, Minnesota.

Begin the 230-mile Great River Road journey in Mississippi by crossing the river at Greenville on U.S. Highway 82. For a close-up view of the Mississippi, stop at Warfield Point Park, nestled inside the levee off U.S. 82. The park features an observation tower and full-service camping. Head south on MS 1 through the Delta town of Greenville to MS 12 and Leroy Percy State Park for a personal visit with the park's alligator population.

Visitors observe the scaly reptiles from a raised boardwalk over their hot artesian water home.

Back on MS 1, put on the cruise control and explore long stretches of flat road wandering beside catfish ponds and through vast fields of cotton, soybeans, and rice. This fertile farmland was the birthplace of the Delta Blues, a combination of mournful wails, bawdy lyrics, and wry humor declared by some to be the only original American music.

Intersect U.S. Highway 61 at the small community of Rolling Fork, and notice the change in landscape as the flat road gives way to rolling hills near Vicksburg. The monuments and carefully preserved trenches, fortifications, and bluffs of the

Vicksburg National Military Park

commemorate the Siege and Battle of Vicksburg.

South of Vicksburg on U.S. 61, notice the profusion of green vines covering everything along the way. Kudzu, once hailed as the remedy for the erosion of valuable farmland, became more of a nuisance when its growth could not be contained and it began to swallow up other plants, trees, and buildings. The lush green vegetation waits at every turn, providing a year-round backdrop of thick greenery. An incredible growth rate is the kudzu vine's hallmark—don't stand still for too long!

Next stop is Port Gibson, where the attractions include antebellum homes, the Grand Gulf Military Park, and the ghostly Ruins of Windsor, the eerie remains of the largest antebellum home ever constructed in Mississippi. Windsor survived the Civil War, but burned to the ground at the hands of a careless smoker in the 1890s. Continue down U.S. 61 to Lorman and a stop at the Old Country Store, in operation for over 100 years.

Enter the Natchez Trace Parkway off MS 552 for a short trip along another of America's most scenic highways, then rejoin U.S. 61 just outside Washington, the old capital of the Mississippi Territory and the home of Historic Jefferson College. Rest in the shade of the moss-draped oaks surrounding the restored campus buildings, and try to picture long ago students practicing their military drills.

From here, it's only a few miles to the magnificent antebellum mansions of Natchez. The drive south from Natchez to Woodville on U.S. 61 affords views of forests, open farmland, and working plantations. Travel west of Woodville on MS 24 to the historical marker at Fort Adams, an important frontier post of the 1700s, for one last look at the river before leaving Mississippi.

A distinctive emblem—a river pilot's wheel—marks the Great River Road route.

The Hospitality Highway

From Ocean Springs to Waveland, Mississippi, a chain of cities and small villages is linked by wide stretches of sugar-white sand, the longest man-made beach in the world. With such a beautiful backdrop, it's only natural that a favorite pastime on the Mississippi

Gulf Coast is cruising along oak-studded

Highway 90, the "Hospitality Highway" that borders the beach on one side and mile after mile of elegant old vacation homes on the other. Influenced by French, Spanish, Irish, and

Oriental residents, the Mississippi Gulf Coast boasts an energetic culture and diverse heritage.

Ocean Springs has served as a restful retreat from worldly woes for over a century. In the early 1850s a New Orleans physician established a spa in the tiny village then called Lynchburg, capitalizing on the presence of sparkling spring waters that the Indians claimed held magical healing powers. Shortly afterward, the community adopted the name Ocean Springs. Ocean Springs was the home of eccentric artist Walter Anderson, whose colorful murals adorn the walls of the Ocean Springs Community Center.

The Hospitality Highway runs past the tourist-intense cities of Biloxi and Gulfport—a once-quiet resort area now characterized by its unique juxtaposition of antebellum grandeur, contemporary hotels, exciting night spots, and fine restaurants specializing in the freshest of seafood. Standing watch over land and sea in the center of Highway 90 is the Biloxi Lighthouse, which has guided seafarers home since 1848. The beach is briefly interrupted by the Gulfport banana boat terminals, among the largest in the world.

Past these resort areas lie surprisingly tranquil scenes of blue sky, pristine white sand, and sun-spangled waters, broken only by the small towns of Long Beach and Pass Christian, where stately mansions surrounded by ancient live oaks look out across the Gulf of Mexico. Some contemporary homes and occasional vacant lots with steps leading to nowhere attest to the 1969 fury of Hurricane Camille, but enough breezy homes still look out over the winds and mists of the Gulf to evoke images of wealthy aristocrats escaping steamy summers. The town's splendid summer mansions are surrounded by oversized camellias and azaleas, planted generations ago by wealthy southern aristocrats.

At first glance, Bay St. Louis appears to be a sleepy little village characterized only by rustic fishing piers stretching far into the Gulf. This deceptively tranquil setting

is the home of NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center, where all of America's space shuttle main engines are tested.

Highway 90 continues through tiny Waveland before it hits I-10, the route to New Orleans. According to legends forever shrouded in mystery, Waveland was once a haven for pirates. Blake House, commonly referred to as the "Pirate's House," was constructed by the notorious leader of the Gulf Coast pirates. The house was rumored to feature a hidden tunnel leading from beneath the basement to the waterfront. Hurricane Camille swept both the house and its dark secrets into the sea.

The scenic drive down the Hospitality Highway ends at Bayou Caddy, the quaint home of the Waveland shrimp fleet. Picture-book marinas and old-time fishing fleets make charming photographs.

Travel the Natchez Trace Parkway, Great River Road, and Hospitality Highway—your paths to a wealth of historical, natural, and scenic delights. Explore the picturesque highways of Mississippi, where a fascinating discovery awaits around every bend.



STATE PARKS	Number of Days of Camping	Water Sports	Hunting	Fishing	Boating
North Mississippi					
Trace Bellevue (601) 488-2958	•	•	•	•	•
Hugh White Grenada (601) 226-4954	•	•	•	•	•
Wall Doney Holly Springs (601) 252-4251	•	•	•	•	•
J. P. Coleman Iuka (601) 423-6515	•	•	•	•	•
George P. Cossar Oshtemo (601) 623-7356	•	•	•	•	•
Great River Road Resdale (601) 759-6762	•	•	•	•	•
John W. Kyle Sardis (601) 487-1345	•	•	•	•	•
Tishomingo Tishomingo (601) 438-6914	•	•	•	•	•
Tombigbee Tupelo (601) 842-7669	•	•	•	•	•
Central Mississippi					
Lake Lowndes Columbus (601) 382-2110	•	•	•	•	•
Holmes County Durant (601) 653-3351	•	•	•	•	•
Winterville Mounds Greenville (601) 334-4684	•	•	•	•	•
Leroy Percy Holladay (601) 827-5436	•	•	•	•	•
LeFleur's Bluff Jackson (601) 987-3923	•	•	•	•	•
Sam Dale Jackson (601) 961-5300	•	•	•	•	•
Legion Louisville (601) 773-8323	•	•	•	•	•
Nanib Waiya Louisville (601) 773-7988	•	•	•	•	•
Roosevelt Mottos (601) 732-6313	•	•	•	•	•
Clarkco Quitman (601) 776-6651	•	•	•	•	•
Golden Memorial Walnut Grove (601) 253-2237	•	•	•	•	•
Casey Jones Vicksburg (601) 673-9864	•	•	•	•	•
South Mississippi					
Shepard Gautier (601) 497-2244	•	•	•	•	•
Paul B. Johnson Hattiesburg (601) 582-7721	•	•	•	•	•
Percy Quin McComb (601) 684-3938	•	•	•	•	•
Natchez Natchez (601) 442-2658	•	•	•	•	•
Buccaneer Waveland (601) 467-3822	•	•	•	•	•
NATIONAL FORESTS					
North Mississippi					
Holly Springs National Forest Grenada, Holly Springs (601) 226-2935	•	•	•	•	•
Tombigbee National Forest Houston (601) 285-3264	•	•	•	•	•
Central Mississippi					
Tombigbee National Forest Akerson (601) 285-3264	•	•	•	•	•
Bienville National Forest Forest (601) 469-3811	•	•	•	•	•
Delta National Forest Rolling Fork (601) 873-6256	•	•	•	•	•
South Mississippi					
DeSoto National Forest Lumb (601) 428-0594	•	•	•	•	•
Homochitto National Forest Meadville (601) 384-5876	•	•	•	•	•
DeSoto National Forest Wiggins (601) 928-5291	•	•	•	•	•
Gulf Islands National Seashore Ocean Springs (601) 875-9057	•	•	•	•	•
Davis Bayou	•	•	•	•	•
Horn Island	•	•	•	•	•
Patt Bos Island	•	•	•	•	•
Ship Island East	•	•	•	•	•
Ship Island West	•	•	•	•	•
RESERVOIRS					
North Mississippi					
Enid Lake Interstate 55, Batesville (601) 563-4571	•	•	•	•	•
Arkabutla Lake Interstate 55, Grakwater (601) 562-6261	•	•	•	•	•
Grenada Lake Highway 7 or 8, Grenada (601) 226-5911	•	•	•	•	•
Sardis Lake Interstate 55, Sardis (601) 563-4571	•	•	•	•	•
Central Mississippi					
Ross Barnett Interstate 55, Jackson (601) 754-3448	•	•	•	•	•
Oshtemo Lake Highway 19 North, Meridian (601) 626-8431	•	•	•	•	•

Call the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol
1-800-843-5352
For emergency assistance only
Toll-free in Mississippi
P.O. Box 22825
Jackson, MS 39205

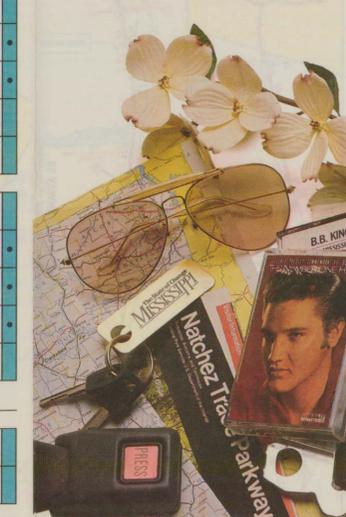
MISSISSIPPI DIVISION
OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
or write
1-800-647-2290
For travel and tourist information, call toll-free

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1991 OFFICIAL HIGHWAY MAP MISSISSIPPI

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A Message From The Governor



On behalf of the people of Mississippi, I extend a warm welcome to the Hospitality State. From the rolling northern hills to the white sand beaches of the Gulf Coast, Mississippi offers a diversity of attractions and activities, each sprinkled with its own local flavor. We invite you to explore our scenic highways—the Natchez Trace Parkway, a well-worn path that leads to new adventures; the Great River Road, a route affording breathtaking views of the majestic Mississippi River; and the Hospitality Highway, a picturesque path paralleling the white sands and crashing waves of the Gulf of Mexico. Wherever your Mississippi journeys take you, you'll discover a wealth of activities to suit your every mood.

Ray Mabus
RAY MABUS
Governor

