

KANSAS CITY



Traditions & Trivia • Story Ideas • What's Trending
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KANSAS CITY TRADITIONS

Authentic, All-American and Uniquely KC

SWINGING JAZZ

From the Roaring '20s to the early '40s, jazz reigned in Kansas City. The city's 12th Street became world-renowned for its jazz clubs, gambling parlors and brothels—earning Kansas City the moniker the "Paris of the Plains."

Today, live jazz can still be heard regularly at 40 clubs throughout the city.

WORLD-FAMOUS BARBECUE

When most people think of Kansas City, barbecue comes to mind. And there's good reason: the city's signature food is served up at more than 100 barbecue establishments, each boasting a house specialty.

Every fall, Kansas City hosts 600 teams at the world's largest barbecue competition, *The American Royal World Series of Barbecue*.

CITY OF FOUNTAINS

Kansas City is home to more than 200 fountains—more than any other city in the world except Rome. From large and majestic to small and whimsical, discover waterworks dedicated to fallen firefighters, the city's children, women's leadership and more.

KC's most photographed fountain is the ornate Mill Creek Fountain, located near the Spanish-inspired Country Club Plaza.



FAMOUS KC

Actors

Don Cheadle
◀ Paul Rudd
Jason Sudeikis
Heidi Gardner
Ellie Kemper
Eric Stonestreet
Ginger Rogers
Ed Asner
Dianne Wiest
Rob Riggle
Chris Cooper



Icons

◀ Amelia Earhart
Walt Disney
Walter Cronkite



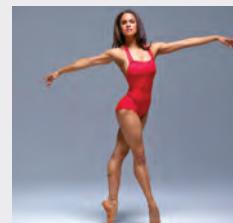
Historical Figures

Harry S. Truman
Tom Pendergast
◀ Jesse James



Athletes

◀ Buck O'Neil
Tom Watson
Maurice Greene
Satchel Paige
George Brett



Artists

Thomas Hart Benton
◀ Misty Copeland
George Caleb Bingham



Musicians

Charlie Parker
Count Basie
David Cook
Melissa Etheridge
◀ Janelle Monáe

DID YOU KNOW?

29.3 million visitors traveled to the Kansas City region in 2024, generating \$4 billion in visitor spending and supporting an industry that employs more than 120,000 people.

WHAT'S TRENDING IN KC



1

WELCOMING THE WORLD ①

Kansas City's love for the beautiful game runs deep, and that's evident when you join the crowd at a Sporting KC or KC Current match. But Kansas City's soccer fandom is going to a whole new level in 2026 when it's an official host city for the FIFA World Cup 26™. With six matches played in KC, the region is ready to welcome approximately 650,000 visitors during the world's largest sports tournament.



2

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION ②

As the U.S. celebrates its 250th anniversary, Kansas City's National WWI Museum and Memorial is celebrating its centennial in 2026. The museum holds the most comprehensive collection of WWI objects in the world. Over the past 3 years, the museum has completely renovated all of its galleries and exhibits, making them more interactive for future generations.



3

ROLLING THROUGH KC ③

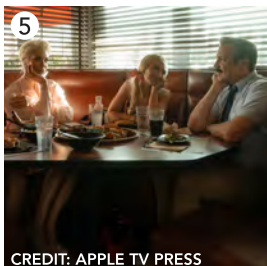
Since its launch in 2016, more than 17 million riders have traveled on the KC Streetcar, a free mode of public transit connecting Downtown KC with other popular neighborhoods. In 2025, the KC Streetcar unveiled a 3.5-mile extension to the Country Club Plaza, and in 2026, another 0.7-mile extension to Berkley Riverfront will welcome riders. In all, the KC Streetcar route will be over 6 miles long and always free to ride.



4

HOTEL RENAISSANCE ④

New hotels continue to dot the landscape in Kansas City. Since 2023, nine hotels have opened in the area, with 10 more set to open throughout 2026. That includes a new-to-the-market Aiden by Best Western in Downtown Kansas City, a Hilton Garden Inn near the KC Current's training facility in Riverside, and boutique property River Market Hotel, the neighborhood's first hotel, among others.



5

SEE KC ON THE BIG SCREEN ⑤

In the Emmy Award-winning series, Ted Lasso leaves his family in Kansas City behind for a coaching gig on the outskirts of London. The backstory is directly inspired by star Jason Sudeikis's real roots as a Kansas City-area native. But now Ted Lasso is returning home, with parts of Season 4 filmed in KC. The cast and crew shot scenes at famous spots like the Country Club Plaza, CPKC Stadium and Gates Bar-B-Q.



Restaurants, Attractions Opening in 2026

BARNEY ALLIS PLAZA

Visitors will also soon be able to enjoy a new outdoor space in downtown KC, offering multiple opportunities for events. Just steps from the Kansas City Convention Center, the reimaged Barney Allis Plaza is set to open in the fall. It will feature a pavilion, event plaza and green spaces, ready to host large groups, festivals and pop-up events.

MORTON AMPHITHEATER

Just north of KC in the suburb of Riverside, the new Morton Amphitheater will soon host some of the top artists from across the U.S. like Chris Stapleton, Pitbull, Guns N' Roses and Meghan Trainor. The outdoor music venue from Live Nation plans to open in the summer and welcome over 500,000 fans in 2026.

THE RIFF HOTEL

Music will be at the heart of this new boutique hotel coming to Downtown Kansas City in 2026. Along with 12 music-themed rooms, the property will also boast a basement speakeasy, an exclusive event space and a listening lounge. The lobby library will also feature an extensive record collection where guests can broaden their musical horizons or put their favorites on repeat.

CURRENT LANDING

The KC Current are transforming land around CPKC Stadium, bringing residential, retail and more to the riverfront. The first phase of Current Landing, which includes two new apartment buildings, multiple local and national restaurants, and a 2-acre town square for events, is expected to open by summer.

DEAR DONNA

Two James Beard-nominated chefs are starting their own restaurant in KC's cozy Columbus Park neighborhood. Husband-and-wife duo Helen Jo and Johnny Leach, who also operate The Town Company inside Hotel Kansas City, plan to open Dear Donna in early 2026. The casual corner cafe will feature an elevated lunch menu, plus pastries and eventually grab-and-go service.

KANSAS CITY TRIVIA

ALL THE BASICS

Population:
2.2 million (MSA)

Time Zone:
Central



36,000 hotel rooms
citywide

More than **150** free
events annually



Airport: Kansas City
International Airport (**MCI**)

Nicknames:
PARIS OF THE PLAINS
HEART OF AMERICA
CITY OF FOUNTAINS



"It will win you
over – with warmth,
with soul, with just
the right amount
of charm."

-Lonely Planet

NECESSARY NUMBERS

2 states: the KC MSA includes both Missouri and Kansas

Kansas City saw record-breaking business travel in 2024 after welcoming **523 events**, leading to **\$370 million** in estimated economic impact.



Arthur Bryant's

The Kansas City area boasts more than **100** barbecue restaurants.

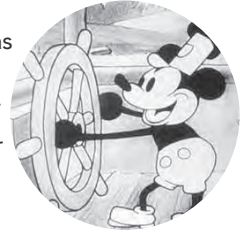
Located in the heart of the country, Kansas City is only a **3-hour** flight from either coast.

The City of Kansas City, Missouri, touts **222** parks, **158** miles of trails and bikeways, **29** lakes, **115** playgrounds and **119** monuments.

142.2 decibels at Arrowhead Stadium set the Guinness World Record for the loudest stadium on the planet.

HOMETOWN HISTORY

Walt Disney opened his first animation company, Laugh-O-Gram Studio, in Kansas City, where he fed a small rodent that became the inspiration for Mickey Mouse.



Hallmark, the largest greeting card maker in the world, began in KC in 1910 when Joyce C. Hall started selling postcards out of two shoeboxes at the local YMCA.

At 1,805 acres, **Swope Park** is one of the nation's largest city parks—over twice the size of NYC's Central Park. It features the Kansas City Zoo and Starlight Theatre.

Publisher Andrews McMeel Universal, known for **popular comics** such as "The Far Side" and "Calvin and Hobbes," has been headquartered in KC since its founding in 1975.

OFFBEAT TRIVIA

Each March, KC hosts more **college basketball** games than anywhere in the country.

Modeled after Seville, Spain, the **Country Club Plaza** opened in 1922 as the nation's first outdoor shopping district.

Local advertising agency Bernstein-Rein conceived the McDonald's **Happy Meal** after the owner noticed his son staring at the cereal box during breakfast.



M&M's candy coating was invented at KC's Stowers Institute. Other KC **inventions** include the fire pole, the Bomb Pop, the bumper sticker, Rival crockpot and Wishbone salad dressing.

The Kansas City Royals are named after another area institution: **The American Royal**, a weeks-long horse and livestock show dating back to 1899 and featuring barbecue contests, rodeos and a full-fledged festival.

At least four different **U.S. presidents** have dined at the original Arthur Bryant's Barbeque. Harry S. Truman was considered a regular because he frequented so often.



In the late 1940s, 86 factories were producing **garments** in KC. It was said that one in seven American women wore clothing made here.

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**FROM
THE
HEART**

