



The City That Has It All!

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**Once upon a time in a city with great stories
and all the best properties of culture.**

How is culture defined? Many think of it as both the shared story of a people and a story shared through unique properties such as the dramatic arts, music, literature and architecture. And when it comes to American culture, in all its stories and all its glory, Columbus, known as “The City that Has it All,” has all the right properties, starting with 676 beautifully historic properties spread across three National Historic Register Districts and including a National Literary Landmark—the Tennessee Williams Home and Welcome Center.

Explore. Experience. Enjoy.

Originally the rectory for St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, the Welcome Center, an elegant Victorian structure, was the first home of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tennessee Williams, the prolific genius known as the “Orpheus of the American Stage” for classic plays such as *Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Glass Menagerie*. Meticulously and authentically restored, the home offers an intimate experience of the playwright’s life and work through period furnishings, some of Williams’ cherished personal belongings, and even his mother’s parlor furniture.

The Welcome Center sets the stage for more genius to come in a city that boasts one of the Southeast’s premiere collections of historic homes. Stop to smell the magnolias and see just a few of its famous “roses”: Rosewood, the Italianate masterpiece boasting the state’s finest assemblage of American-made antiques; and Rosedale, the Greek Revival grand residence featured in *Marvelous Old Mansions*, *Historic Homes* and *Colonial Homes*.

Just a few blocks from the heart of downtown Main Street, on the historic wooded campus of Mississippi University for Women, it’s easy to imagine how the Pulitzer-Prize winning writer Eudora Welty would have been drawn here to begin her college career in 1925. Founded in 1884 as the nation’s first publicly-supported university for women, MUW has both made history and preserved it: Today, nearly two dozen buildings have earned designations on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Innovation in celebrations.

With its grand and glorious properties Columbus does more than preserve, it celebrates history and culture in an ongoing calendar of uniquely inviting and exciting events. The Columbus Spring Pilgrimage has grown from a small homes tour beginning in the 1920s to today's ten-day event drawing thousands from all over the globe for a delightfully diverse schedule of activities, so that while the homes tours continue to wow crowds, visitors also come running for the Pilgrimage Half Marathon and 5K, or they can sit back and relax in horse-drawn carriage rides, or see the sights from atop the cheery red British double decker tour bus. They also enjoy chilling at the welcoming crayfish and shrimp boil, and feeling the chills and thrills at "Tales from Crypt," dramatic recreations of the lives of those interred at the historic Friendship Cemetery, the resting place of four generals, two thousand Civil War soldiers and the only Confederate nurse recognized by the U.S. Government.

Like MUW, Friendship Cemetery made history when the members of the Ladies Memorial Association laid flowers on graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers just after the war ended, an act of generosity that eventually inspired the nation's Memorial Day. Stories like these and more have made "Tales from the Crypt" not only a great crowd-pleaser, but also a cultural event earning a finalist position in the History Channel's *Save our Classroom* Award, and well as recognition by national and regional news media including National Public Radio and *The New York Times*.

Another of Pilgrimage's signature events, Catfish in the Alley, celebrates the city's rich musical and African American heritage. A hub of cultural and economic activity for the city's African American community during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Catfish Alley was an exuberant meeting place. Caught from the Tombigbee River below, heaps of catfish were hauled up on horse-drawn wagons, and cooked and sold on street corners where blues musicians plied their trade, busking on sidewalks or performing in clubs. Blues great Bukka White celebrated that special place in time in his 1969 recording "Columbus Mississippi Blues." Featured on the Mississippi Blues Trail for its significant musical contributions, Catfish Alley is only one of the dozen landmark sites in the city's popular African American heritage driving tour.

"Southerners love great stories," Eudora Welty once said, and the stories in Columbus are told with a flair and friendliness.

Rich history, extraordinary people, fascinating drama—once upon a time, once upon a city. In the place known as "The City that Has It All," all the best properties of culture and story are here. Shouldn't Columbus be *your* next story?

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