



New Orleans Celebrates: Bicentennial of the War of 1812

200 Years of Naval History Comes To Life in New Orleans

New Orleans will serve as the inaugural city in a three-year national celebration commemorating the War of 1812 and the Star-Spangled Banner. The 2012 celebration will take place April 17 – 23, 2012, featuring a colorful spectacle of ships spreading on the East Bank of the Mississippi River from Erato Street to Upper Poland Avenue. Additionally, the Navy's



River from Erato Street to Upper Poland Avenue. Additionally, the Navy's famed Blue Angels will perform a memorable air show as part of the week's festivities.

The U.S. Navy's amphibious warship USS Wasp, along with other large navy vessels, will welcome Class A tall ships from countries around the world to New Orleans, joining the U.S. Navy and OpSail 2012 for the celebration. The theme, "Our Flag Was Still There," will mark the festivities in seven ports and across the country.

In each of the port cities, beginning with New Orleans, ships will be open for public visiting, and citizens will have the opportunity to interact with sailors from around the world. In addition to the Navy fleet and tall ships lining the Port, and the Blue Angels air show, activities will include official visits among regional dignitaries and Navy leadership, visiting sailors engaged in friendly sporting competitions, a seafood cook-off, and regional outreach and community service projects by visiting sailors.

"From 2012 to 2015, the United States Navy and its partners, including Operation Sail, Inc., will commemorate the War of 1812 and the writing of our national anthem, the Star-Spangled banner," U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said. "It is remarkable that 200 years ago, one of the first wars in our country's history was fought against nations who have become our closest allies."

"Bringing the tall ships of the world back to U.S. waters for the commemoration of this glorious American milestone excites the imagination," said chairman of Operation Sail, Inc., Jose Fuentes. "Throughout 2012-2015, millions of people will witness these graceful and majestic sailing ships as they parade in together, and celebrate brotherhood of the sea, and of our freedom."





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Early in the morning on February 29th some tornadoes hit Branson, MO. There was significant damage done and Branson, According to the National Weather Service, the tornado that affected our town was rated an EF-2. The resilience of the Ozark people, their faith and steadfast nature will shine through this unfortunate situation, and Branson will rebuild and recover quickly. That is why the Centennial celebrations are

still on track. It is going to be one exciting year for Branson.

A Century to Celebrate - Branson is a unique place with a uniquely

American story.

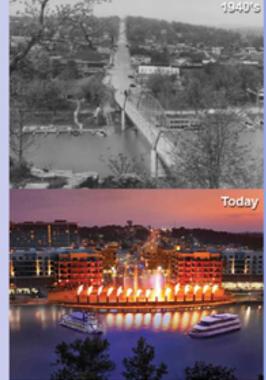
Nestled deep in the Ozark Mountains in southern Missouri, this small community has always had a welcoming spirit, a tenacity to make it through tough times, and a deep foundation of faith. These ideals — coupled with a love of craftsmanship and music — shaped the culture of the Ozarks and the Branson area.

It was this culture, set against the natural beauty of the Ozarks, that drew the first "tourists" to the Branson region in the late 1800's, including an author named Harold Bell Wright. And it was this culture that so many people around the world became fascinated with after reading Wright's landmark 1907 novel "The Shepherd of the Hills."

Word spread quickly about Branson and the Ozarks. By 1912, the settlement was bustling with residents and visitors, and was officially incorporated as a city.

In the past 100 years, Branson has evolved and grown in many ways. Today, Branson is home to more than 10,000 residents and has become Missouri's top vacation destination, welcoming about 8 million

visitors a year. Branson is now surrounded by three lakes and countless attractions and entertainment options.



But in other ways, Branson has remained unchanged since those early days. The unspoiled Ozark Mountain vistas, wilderness and waterways are as breathtaking as ever. The folks who live here still have a rugged and independent spirit, as well as a deep dedication to God, country and family. And visitors still come from great distances to forget their cares for a while.

In 2012, Branson turns 100

Branson invites you to come visit during this once-in-a-lifetime celebration. You are sure to have a good time!

Branson, Missouri, is visited by 8 million people a year and has been a favorite destination for families for decades. The travelers who use TripAdvisor, the Internet's leading travel review site, have voted the Branson/Lakes Area one of the Ten Great Places for Families to Discover in the United States.













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Cabarete, DR	Coconut Palms Resort	Apr 14-21	I BR/sleeps 4	\$299.00
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Ft. Myers, FL	Sanibel Harbour Towers	Apr 28- May 05	2 BR/sleeps 6	\$569.00
Wisconsin Dells, WI	Christmas Mountain Village	May 5-12	2 BR/sleeps 6	\$779.00
Madeira Beach, FL	Sea Breeze Gulf Front Unit!!	May 12-19	2 BR/sleeps 6	\$839.00

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