

KENTUCKY TOURISM COUNCIL
SPRING TOP 10 FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The Kentucky Tourism Council announces the following winners from across the state as its Top 10 Festivals and Events for Spring 2009. In order to qualify for this season, the festival or event must be held during the months of March, April or May.

Abbey Road on the River, Downtown Louisville, May 21-25. As the largest Beatles tribute festival in America, this five-day art, music and food festival honors and celebrates The Fab Four by attracting more than 70 bands from 12 countries and over 25,000 attendees. Held Memorial Day Weekend at the Belvedere Festival Plaza overlooking the Ohio River, concerts take place on seven stages both inside The Galt House and Suites and riverside. In 2008, Abbey Road reached out to a new generation of Beatles fans by offering absolutely free admission to everyone 21 and under when accompanied by a ticket purchaser over 21. More information: www.abbeyroadontheriver.com or 216.378.1980.

Actors Theatre of Louisville Humana Festival of New American Plays, Louisville, March 1-April 11. Celebrates the genius and diversity of contemporary playwrights by presenting a rotating repertory of up to seven new works that incorporate a wide spectrum of themes, theatrical forms and styles of dramatic literature. Theatre lovers flock to the Festival in hopes of discovering the next Pulitzer Prize winner, blockbuster film or Broadway hit. More information: www.actorstheatre.org or 502.584.1205.

American Quilter's Society 25th Anniversary of Annual Quilt Show & Contest, Paducah, April 22-25. Showcases more than 500 quilts and wall hangings, with more than \$2.5 million cash prizes to be awarded in various categories. Since 2009 marks the event's silver anniversary, Best of Show winners from the past 25 years will be honored. The festival includes a merchant mall, hands-on workshops & lectures by world-renowned teachers, and a fashion show. More information: www.americanquilter.com or 270.898.7903.

Chamber Music Festival of the Bluegrass, Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, May 30-31. Produced by Danville's Centre College, members of the Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center perform in an open-air, restored tobacco barn overlooking the rolling countryside of Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. More information: www.shakervillageky.org or 877.448.7469.

Hillbilly Days, Pikeville, April 16-18. Held annually to raise funds for Shriners' Children's Hospitals and Burn Centers, artisans, crafters and food vendors line the streets displaying handmade products and tempting foods. Bluegrass and country music performers fill the air with music encouraging clogging, flat footing and square dancing to take place in City Park and Courthouse Square. More information: www.hillbillydays.com or 606.432.5063.

International Bar-B-Q Festival, Owensboro, May 8-9. Best described as “two days of barbeque heaven”, this festival fills the downtown riverfront with the aroma of hickory-smoked chicken, pork, beef and mutton while live bands perform on three stages. Also, enjoy carnival rides, numerous vendor booths, pageants, a car show, back-yard barbeque competitions and so much more. More information: www.bbqfest.com or 270.687.7707.

Keeneland Spring Meet, Lexington, April 3-24. Held at Keeneland Race Course, a nationally historic landmark, this three and a half week, festival-like race meet draws the best jockeys and thoroughbreds each Spring while attracting visitors from around the world. More information: www.keeneland.com or 859.254.3412.

Kentucky Derby Festival, Louisville, April 10-May 2. One of the premiere events of its kind in the world, this 54 year-old festival generates fun, excitement, and international recognition by attracting 1.5 million people to celebrate spring and the unique vitality of the Louisville community. More information: www.kdf.org or 502.584.6383.

MainStrasse Village Maifest, Covington, May 15-17. Located in an historic German neighborhood of shops, restaurants and homes, this festival fills six block with arts and crafts, food vendors and fun-filled activities for both the young and the “young at heart”. More information: www.mainstrasse.org or 859.491.0458.

Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event, Kentucky Horse Park, April 23-26. Since this premier event is the only four-star, three-day event in the Americas, it brings international attention to Lexington and the Bluegrass each spring, while attracting crowds in excess of 100,000. This event features an “International Trade Fair” with more than 125 booths and various exciting demonstrations. More information: www.rk3de.org or 859.233.2362.

Additionally, Honorable Mention recognition is given to two spring festivals or events that the judges felt deserved some recognition. Those are: **Dinner with the Dearly Departed**-Elizabethtown, May 16, ehchheritagecouncil.org, 270.234.8258 and **Heart of Kentucky Farm, Home & Garden Show**, Lebanon, April 4-5, www.visitlebanonky.com, 270.692.9594

The Kentucky Tourism Council names its Top 10” Festivals & Events four times a year. To be eligible festivals or events must be recommended or produced by a Kentucky Tourism Council member. A panel of impartial judges selects the winners for each season. Criteria for selection include popularity of the event, its impact on the local tourism economy, as well as cultural and historical significance.

The Kentucky Tourism Council is a 600 member statewide association representing all sectors of the state’s travel and tourism industry. The Council’s mission is to unite Kentucky’s third largest industry through governmental interaction, communication and education.