



*The River, the Ridge & the
Romance of the Delta*



VISITOR'S GUIDE & MAP

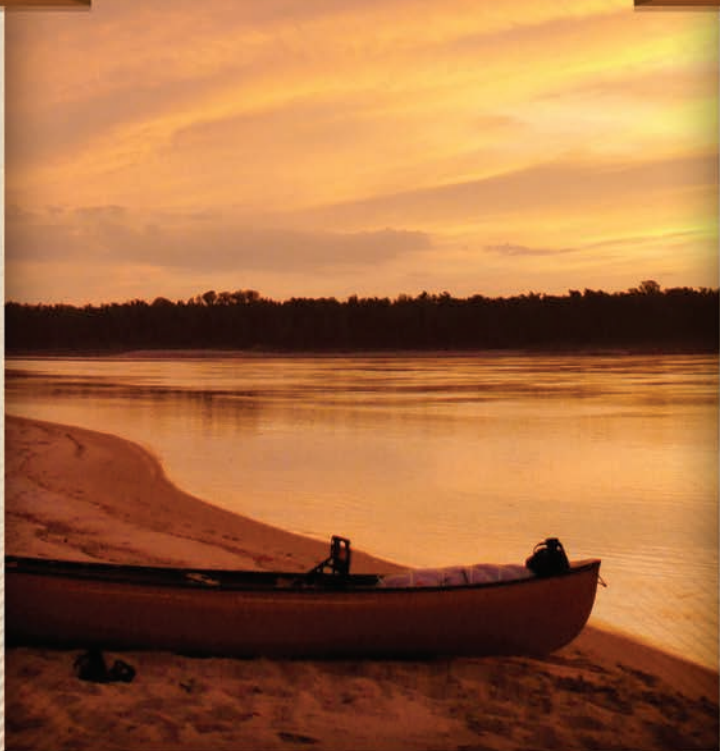


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This guide is produced by the Helena A&P Commission. The commission serves as a resource for our visitors. If you would like more information, please contact us at:

870.714.2844 | julia@visithelenaar.com

WWW.VISITHELENAAR.COM

COVER PHOTO CREDIT - JOHN RUSKEY

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PAGE 7 DANCER PHOTO CREDIT - ALVIN AILEY

PAGE 11 MOORE HONOR HOME PHOTO CREDIT - DELTA CULTURAL CENTER

ABOUT HELENA, ARKANSAS

Lying in a valley of Crowley's Ridge, a geological formation, Helena-West Helena's hilly landscape distinguishes it from the typically flat marshlands of most Mississippi and Arkansas Delta towns. The current city represents a consolidation, effective on January 1, 2006, of the two Arkansas cities of Helena and West Helena.

The city traces its historical roots back to the founding of the port town of Helena in 1833 on the Mississippi River, which began its emergence as a major port shortly after steamboats began traveling the river in 1811. The agricultural wealth of Arkansas's eastern Delta region flowed through Helena, and it was here that the culture of the Deep South made its most enduring penetration into Arkansas.

Pinned between the river on the east and Crowley's Ridge immediately to the west, Helena was unable to accommodate the industrialization that began reaching the area in the early 20th century. Thus, West Helena was founded in 1909 to the west of Crowley's Ridge around the factories and mills for which Helena had lacked the space. After the cities consolidated into one, they collectively became known as Helena-West Helena. Throughout this guide, Helena-West Helena is referred to simply as Helena for ease (Helena-West Helena is a bit of a mouthful).

Today, Helena serves as the county seat for Phillips County, Arkansas and is home to just over 12,000 people. There are a multitude of reasons to explore our city including but not limited to: historic downtown Cherry St., the Mississippi River, and our rich blues heritage. Numerous Civil War Helena sites offer a unique "you were there" perspective, and tell more than just the typical story. Please use this guide to explore what we have to offer and don't hesitate to email or call with any questions. Beyond our attractions, Helena is best known for its people and our small town hospitality. We are genuinely delighted to invite you to visit the place we call home, so come on!

EXPLORE HELENA

BY INTEREST

Delta Blues And Beyond

Helena celebrates American music and culture at it's best. As the home of "King Biscuit Time," the longest running blues radio show, and the world famous King Biscuit Blues Festival, Helena has played a rich role in blues and music heritage over the years.

Civil War Helena

Our unique history as an occupied Confederate city that became a refuge for freedom seekers, invites the exploration of the issues that defined the Civil War. It provides the opportunity for students of all ages to make a meaningful connection to the past and to foster an understanding of the war that changed our nation.

Historic Homes & Churches

Helena has an impressive number of historic homes and churches that have been preserved over the years. Antebellum and Victorian homes can be found throughout the city, particularly in and around the downtown district.

Mississippi River & the Great Outdoors

Geography and wildlife are two of Helena and the greater Phillips County region's greatest features. Located at the southern tip of Crowley's Ridge, home to numerous lakes, bordered by a national forest and three rivers, the area has something to offer every outdoor enthusiast.

 [LEARN MORE » VisitHelenaAR.com/explore-helena](https://www.visithelenaar.com/explore-helena)



DELTA BLUES & BEYOND



CIVIL WAR HELENA



HISTORIC HOMES & CHURCHES



MISSISSIPPI RIVER & THE GREAT OUTDOORS

DELTA BLUES AND BEYOND

King Biscuit Blues Festival

The King Biscuit Blues Festival is one of the nation's foremost showcases of blues music, held every Columbus Day weekend in October. Tens of thousands of blues enthusiasts, as well as historians, from all over the world converge upon Historic Downtown Helena to hear stirring and uplifting performances of this American art form.

King Biscuit Time Radio Show

The longest running blues radio show in the country, King Biscuit Time still broadcasts live from the studio at the Delta Cultural Center's Visitor Center. The show has been running continuously for over 70 years and has been hosted for over 60 of those years by its current host, Blues Hall of Famer "Sunshine" Sonny Payne. Visitors can watch the live broadcasts every weekday at 12:15pm at the Delta Cultural Center and often get to be on the show. Mr. Sonny loves having guests!

Warfield Concerts

Warfield Concerts are outstanding musical events that are free of charge to all through the generosity of a former citizen of Helena. The late Samuel Drake Warfield provided in his will the means for setting up the concerts which have been named for him. Recently the concerts have featured Ailey II, Dance Afrika, and A Tribute to Pavarotti.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

about additional festivals & events in Helena, please see page 16



KING BISCUIT TIME RADIO SHOW



WARFIELD CONCERTS



KING BISCUIT BLUES FESTIVAL



LEARN MORE » VisitHelenaAR.com/delta-blues

CIVIL WAR HELENA

Freedom Park, 750 BISCOE

Freedom Park is the first location in Arkansas designated as a National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site. Once the location of a Contraband camp, this park is dedicated to interpreting the African American experience during the war.

Fort Curtis, 350 COLUMBIA

The original Fort Curtis was built soon after the Union army occupied Helena in 1862. New Fort Curtis allows visitors to experience an earthen fort firsthand, including the huge 24-pounder guns. Exhibits tell the story of the original fort and this unique reconstruction.

Battery C, ENTRANCE AT THE END OF YORKSHIRE

One of four earthen batteries erected by the Union army in 1862, Battery C briefly fell to the Confederates during the Battle of Helena on July 4, 1863. This distinct site also affords a stunning view of the city.

Confederate Cemetery, ENTRANCE ON NORTH HOLLY

This historic cemetery is beautifully positioned on top of Crowley's Ridge. It is the burial place of Gen. Patrick Cleburne, known as "the Stonewall Jackson of the West." Exhibits interpret the cemetery's history.

Magnolia Cemetery, ENTRANCE ON WIRE ROAD

This African American Cemetery was established before the Civil War. One of the first black Legislators of Arkansas, W. H. Grey, successful businessman Abraham Miller and his wife, well-known philanthropist, Eliza A. Miller, members of pioneering black families, and Civil War veterans are all buried here.

 **LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CIVIL WAR SITES AND STORY »**
VisitHelenaAR.com/civilwarhelena



FORT CURTIS



BATTERY C



CONFEDERATE CEMETERY



FREEDOM PARK

EXPLORE MUSEUMS IN HELENA

Please see page 19 for more information about Helena's museums, both of which have Civil War exhibits.

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE HISTORIC HOMES AND CHURCHES

Pillow Thompson House, 718 PERRY ST

The Pillow-Thompson House is arguably Helena's most impressive historic home. The home, built in 1896 by Jerome B. Pillow, is one of the finest examples of Queen Anne architecture in the South.

Edwardian Inn, 317 SOUTH BISCOE

Built in 1904 by the Clem brothers, who built several other homes in Helena. The inn is one of the better examples in Arkansas of the Colonial Revival style.

St. Mary's Catholic Church, 123 COLUMBIA STREET

Built in 1934 by architect and industrial designer Charles Eames. This church was his first large commission, and one that he always spoke of as being one of his finest works. Eames is considered to modern furniture design what Frank Lloyd Wright's name is to architecture.

Estevan Hall, 653 SOUTH BISCOE

Built in the 1820's, this home is probably the oldest home in Phillips County. Estevan Hall is currently being restored in preparation for its new life as the Civil War Helena Visitor Center.

Moore-Hornor Home, 323 BEECH

The Moore-Hornor Home, built in 1859, served as a hospital following the Battle of Helena. Bullet holes in the parlor doors are a vivid reminder of the Battle of Helena. A wayside interpreting civilian life under martial law is located opposite the house, on the northwest corner of the New Fort Curtis lot.

 **LEARN MORE »** VisitHelenaAR.com/historic-homes-and-churches



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



ESTEVAN HALL



PILLOW-THOMPSON HOUSE



MOORE-HORNOR HOME

MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND THE GREAT OUTDOORS

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE SITES

Mississippi River and the Helena River Park

The only downtown on the Mississippi River for the 300 miles between Memphis and Vicksburg, Helena is the perfect launching point for a river adventure, whether its fishing for monster catfish or canoeing to Buck Island.

Delta Heritage Trail

This rails-to-trails conversion is being developed in phases along the former Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way that stretches from one mile south of Lexa (six miles west of Helena) to Rohwer, and extending via the Mississippi River levee to Arkansas City. The trail is currently 21 miles long.

Old Town Lake

Located in Lake View off Highway 44, this beautiful oxbow lake has a boardwalk that extends right into the middle of the lake. The lake is a serene place to fish or simply enjoy the beauty of the Cypress trees rising from the water.

St. Francis National Forest and the Mississippi River State Park

At 22,600 acres, the St. Francis is one of the smallest and most diverse national forests in the country. The Mississippi River State Park, located within the forest, is currently centered on Bear Creek Lake Recreation Area, which includes a visitor center and two campgrounds.

 [LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR NATURE TOURISM SITES »](https://www.visithelenaar.com/ms-river-great-outdoors)
[VisitHelenaAR.com/ms-river-great-outdoors](https://www.visithelenaar.com/ms-river-great-outdoors)



HELENA RIVER PARK



DELTA HERITAGE TRAIL



OLD TOWN LAKE



THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER



ST. FRANCIS NAT'L FOREST & THE MS RIVER STATE PARK

EXPLORE HELENA

BY ACTIVITY

Festivals & Events

Helena is home to some of the most-loved music festivals in a locale unlike any other. From the grassy slopes of our Mississippi River levee amphitheatre, you can see the mighty Mississippi River to one side and Helena's historic downtown storefronts on the other. This backdrop is host to two major annual festivals and a number of smaller festivals and events—so pack your lawn chair!

Museums

The Delta region is rich in culture and history which can be explored in both of Helena's museums: the Delta Cultural Center and the Helena Museum.

Shopping

Helena is home to some of the best boutiques and gift shops in the Mississippi and Arkansas Delta. Most of our shopping is concentrated on Cherry St. in downtown Helena and in the Midland Heights district. Whether you're looking for King Biscuit Blues Festival souvenirs, antique collectibles, or handmade jewelry, there is something for everyone.

Dining

From BBQ and burgers to soul food, Helena's food scene is rooted in American culinary staples. After touring our historic sites, our visitors are always happy to learn that Helena is blessed with down-home cooking galore. Pair that with a front porch conversation with our friendly locals, and you have a recipe that can't be beat!

Lodging

Our friends who have the opportunity to spend more than a day in Helena will find our local accommodations are the perfect way to rise and shine. After touring the sights and sounds of Helena, kick back and relax in your choice of settings. Whether you desire a traditional hotel, or want to try out a historic bed and breakfast, Helena accommodates in true Southern style.



FESTIVALS & EVENTS



MUSEUMS



SHOPPING



DINING

FESTIVALS

King Biscuit Blues Festival

Held annually over Columbus Day weekend, this festival regularly attracts tens of thousands of visitors to one of the largest celebrations of blues music in the country.

Wild Hog Music and Motorcycle Rally

This three-day celebration of classic rock and motorcycles has routinely attracted thousands of visitors to downtown Helena. Whether you love the music of the 1960's and 1970's, motorcycles, or fair food, this laidback festival had something for you. Delbert McClinton recently headlined. Come see Cherry St. lined with "hogs"!

Arkansas Delta Family Gospel Festival

Sponsored by the Delta Cultural Center, this free festival features local and regional talent performing traditional and contemporary gospel music. It's a great family event.

Legendary Blues Festival

Annual festival held in downtown Helena featuring traditional blues artists. Recent headliners include the Grammy Award winning group, Harold Melvin's Blue Notes.

 [LEARN MORE » VisitHelenaAR.com/festivals-events](https://www.visithelenaar.com/festivals-events)



WILD HOG MUSIC AND MOTORCYCLE RALLY



ARKANSAS DELTA FAMILY GOSPEL FESTIVAL



KING BISCUIT BLUES FESTIVAL

EVENTS



Helena Farmers Market

Every Saturday morning from June until September, enjoy the best of locally grown produce, home-baked goods, and the work of artisans and craftspeople. The downtown market is also a great place to meet the locals.



Helena Holiday Festival

Every year Helena rings in the December holiday season with a series of events including the lighting of the historic downtown district and Christmas tree, choir performances, a Christmas carol sing-along, and a synthetic ice skating rink.



Second Saturdays

Helena Second Saturdays is a free downtown street fair held on Cherry Street every second Saturday of the month from 5-8pm, April-September. Many of the downtown boutiques stay open late for shoppers. Highlights include an arts and crafts market, food court, live blues and gospel music, a kid zone, and beer garden.

King Biscuit Blues Festival 5K & 10K Run

The Kenneth Freemyer Memorial 5K, 10K and 1 Mile Fun Run takes you down the beautiful Mississippi River and through historic downtown Helena.

Tour da' Delta

The Tour da' Delta is an annual bike ride that takes cyclists across the Mississippi River, around a beautiful cypress filled lake, and through the rolling hills that wind through the St. Francis National Forest.

Warfield Concerts

Warfield Concerts are outstanding musical events that are free of charge to all through the generosity of the late Samuel Drake Warfield who provided in his will the means for setting up the concerts.

MUSEUMS



DELTA CULTURAL CENTER

The Delta Cultural Center

a museum of the Department of Arkansas Heritage, is dedicated to interpreting the history of the Arkansas Delta. The center is comprised of two museum locations - the Depot and the Visitors Center, with exhibits on the Civil War, the settlement of the Delta region, and a live radio studio where King Biscuit Time is broadcast every weekday at 12:15pm.



THE HELENA MUSEUM

The Helena Museum

has an impressive collection that includes a diorama of the Battle of Helena, Thomas Hindman's desk, Patrick Cleburne's prayer book and one of the largest collections of Edison artifacts. Like "Grandma's attic", this museum's unique artifacts are not to be missed. Free admission.

SHOPPING

Helena is home to some of the best boutiques and gift shops in the Delta.



SOMETHING SPECIAL

BOUTIQUES - GIFTS & COLLECTIBLES

The Blossom Shop & Bookstore

306 Cherry St
Phone: 870-753-9004

Brian's Framing

605 Oakland Ave
Phone: 870-338-3700

Cotton and Kudzu

413 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-8339

Delta Gypsy Caravan

509 Cherry St
Phone: 870-816-6466

Handworks

227 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-4340

The Mud Puddle

661-A Oakland Ave
Phone: 870-572-1160

Something Special

610 Oakland Ave
Phone: 870-338-7277

Watson's Flowers & Gifts

107 S 5th St
Phone: 870-572-3755

West Helena Flowers & Gifts

513 Plaza
Phone: 870-572-3446

BOUTIQUES - CLOTHING

Bella

227 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-4340

Harts Shoes

401 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-6682

SOUVENIRS

Cotton & Kudzu Mall

413 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-8339

Helena Museum Gift Shop

623 Pecan
Phone: 870-338-7790

Delta Cultural Center Gift Shop

141 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-4350

THRIFT STORES & ANTIQUES

Gracious Living

306 Cherry St
Phone: 870-753-9004

Teapots & Turtles

347 S. Sebastian
Phone: 870-338-0259

Myrna's

315 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-8228

MUSIC

Bubba's Blues Corner

105 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-3501

Gist Music

307 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-8441



GIST MUSIC

LODGING

At any price point, Helena accommodates in true Southern style.



EDWARDIAN INN

From the first step you take into the Edwardian Inn, you cannot help but be swept back in time. You can feel the enchantment of a bygone era. The Edwardian Inn is an outstanding example of the fine homes built in Helena around the turn of the century. A night's stay includes a gourmet breakfast the following morning, cooked by proprietor Dana Chadwick.

For booking information, visit www.edwardianinn.com

Edwardian Inn
317 South Biscoe
Phone: 870-753-9004

ADDITIONAL LODGING IN HELENA

Crown Inn & Suites

412 Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-2597

Sands Motel

1086 Hwy. 49 W
Phone: 870-572-6774



BEST WESTERN INN

The Best Western Inn blends southern hospitality with great value. Amenities include a seasonal pool, on-site business center, and a full complimentary breakfast. Exterior room entrances make the Best Western a popular choice among boaters and motorcyclists.

For booking information:

Best Western Inn • 1053 Hwy 49 West
Phone: 870-572-2592



DELTA INN

The Delta Inn is a clean and affordable motel

located conveniently on Highway 49, offering a seasonal pool and complimentary breakfast. Guest rooms have a modern look with exterior entrances.

For booking information:

Delta Inn • 1207 West Highway 49
Phone: 870-572-7915

DINING

From BBQ and burgers to soul food, Helena's food scene is rooted in American culinary staples.



BISTRO BAR & GRILL

AMERICAN

August Moon

108 Garland Ave.
Phone: 870-572-5523

Bistro Bar & Grill

213 Plaza
Phone: 870-572-9707

Burger Shack

372 N. Sebastian St.
Phone: 870-572-2271

Corner Market

345 S 7th St
Phone: 870-572-4355

Cypress Corner Barbeque

8298 Highway 1 S
Lexa, AR 72355
Phone: 870-295-6546

Downtown Bar & Grill

520 B Walnut
Phone: 870-714-2940

Granny Dee's

426 Cherry St
Phone: 870-338-8862

Kelly's

297 Richmond Hill Dr
Phone: 870-572-5500

Pasquale's Tamales

1005 Hwy. 49
Phone: 870-338-1109
or 870-338-1632

Ray's Dairy Maid

5322 Hwy 49
Barton, AR 72312
Phone: 870-572-3060

T-Mac's

3136 Hwy 49
Phone: 870-572-0125

West Helena Fish Market

101 E Plaza
Phone: 870-572-3060

CHINESE

#1 Chinese Buffet

838 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-6868

August Moon

108 Garland Ave
Phone: 870-572-5523

MEXICAN

El Canaveral

849 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-5444

Tea Den

569 Oakland Ave
Phone: 870-338-8949

El Rio Lindo

101 Missouri St
Phone: 870-753-9466

FAST FOOD

Baskin Robbins

213 Plaza Street
Phone: 870-338-3200

Daylight Donuts

664 N Sebastian
Phone: 870-572-5552

Hunts Brothers' Pizza

626 N Sebastian
Phone: 870-572-9899

Kentucky Fried Chicken

789 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-9334

McDonald's

843 N Sebastian
Phone: 870-572-1199

Pizza Hut

704 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-2579

Sonic

798 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-3488

Subway

770 N Sebastian St
Phone: 870-572-7700

Wendy's

278 Richmond Hill Dr
Phone: 870-572-1332



GRANNY DEE'S



Downtown Museums & Attractions

1. Freedom Park
2. Estevan Hall, 1826
3. Edwardian Inn, 1904
4. St. Mary's Catholic Church
5. Centennial Church (National Historic Landmark)
6. Fort Curtis (Replica of Union Fort)
7. Moore-Hornor Home, 1859
8. Phillips County Library
9. Pillow Thompson House, 1896
10. Helena Museum, 1891
11. Phillips County Courthouse
12. Court Square Park
13. Doughboy Monument
14. River Park-Boardwalk and River Outlook
15. Delta Cultural Center (2 sites)
16. Cherry Street Pavilion
17. Levee Walk
18. Magnolia Cemetery
19. Confederate Cemetery / Maple Hill Cemetery
20. Battery C (Civil War Earthwork)
21. American Legion Hut & Merci Car
22. Arkansas Welcome Center

Visit us online to explore Helena further:

WWW.VISITHELENAAR.COM





Points of Interest

PUBLIC SERVICES

1. Arkansas Welcome Center
2. City Hall
3. Court House
4. Federal Building and Post Office
5. Helena Library
6. Phillips Community College
Lily Peter Auditorium
7. UAMS East
8. Airport
9. Helena Slackwater Harbor & Industrial Park

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

10. Public Golf Course
11. North Helena Park
Public Pool, Baseball, Basketball and Tennis Courts
12. St. Francis National Forest, Strom Creek Lake, MS River State Park
Public Swimming and Camping
13. Helena River Park
Boardwalk, Boat Ramp and Nature Reserve
14. Hornor Neck Lake & St. Francis River
15. Delta Heritage Trail
Camping
16. Old Town Lake
Boardwalk

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Hospital  Police  Fire 



NEAREST AIRPORTS

Memphis International Airport (1 hour away)
Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport (2 hours away)

APPROXIMATE MILEAGES & TRAVEL TIMES TO HELENA

Memphis, TN	70 miles	(1 hour away)
Little Rock, AR	120 miles	(2 hours away)
Jackson, MS	180 miles	(3 hours away)
Nashville, TN	280 miles	(4 hours away)
St. Louis, MO	350 miles	(5 hours away)
New Orleans, LA	364 miles	(5.5 hours away)
Dallas, TX	437 miles	(6.5 hours away)

Please visit our website for sample itineraries, travel tools, and resources for travel professionals

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