

News Release



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National Trust for Historic Preservation Selects Dandridge, Tennessee, as one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations for 2011

Public Encouraged to Vote for Fan Favorite Destination

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Washington, D.C. (February 15, 2011)—Today, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named **Dandridge, Tennessee**, one of its **2011 Dozen Distinctive Destinations**. Dandridge, nominated by the Dandridge Community Trust, was selected for its idyllic natural setting amid the Great Smoky Mountains, its welcoming small town spirit, and a charming historic downtown that epitomizes the quintessential Southern Appalachian frontier town. From February 15 to March 15, Dandridge will be participating in a public online voting contest to select the 2011 Dozen Distinctive Destinations Fan Favorite.

For 11 years the National Trust for Historic Preservation has annually selected communities across America that offer cultural and recreational experiences different from those found at the typical vacation destination. From dynamic downtowns and stunning architecture to cultural diversity and a commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization, the selected destinations boast a richness of character and exude an authentic sense of place.

"Dandridge offers a comforting escape from the beaten path," said Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "An impressive number of Dandridge's historic commercial buildings have been restored, and comprise the centerpiece of a vibrant downtown where one can relive the town's Revolutionary War-era history, browse antiques, savor hand-dipped ice cream, or view an 1840s-era inn that sheltered four U.S. presidents."

Dandridge was settled in 1783 when settlers crossed the Appalachian Mountains and found fertile lands along the French Broad River. In 1792, it became the county seat for Jefferson County and was named in honor of first lady Martha Dandridge Washington. In 1942, when dam construction threatened Dandridge's downtown, its citizens petitioned in protest, and succeeded in obtaining funding for a stone and earth dike to keep the waters of Douglas Lake from flooding the town. This inclination toward

self-preservation has served Dandridge well, as it enjoys a robust historic downtown defined by four early 19th-century taverns and many early-to-mid 19th century buildings, and a strong sense of identity that is firmly rooted in its Appalachian history. Douglas Lake now is a major recreational draw for the region and serves as a delightful backdrop to the town's outdoor events and festivals, including the annual Scots Irish celebration, and the "Music on the Town" nights that bring families downtown to enjoy food and music. Dandridge's Main Street organization has worked in partnership with other organizations to encourage business owners and tourism officials to make Dandridge a welcoming and interesting place to shop, dine and stay.

Highlights:

- **Jefferson County Courthouse** - built in the Greek Revival style in 1845, it is one of the state's oldest courthouses. It now houses a free historical museum displaying historic artifacts from the region, including the marriage bond for Davy Crockett who started his family in Jefferson County.
- The 1843 **Thomas Tavern**, one of four surviving taverns in Dandridge, is now occupied by a gift and smoke shop that features children's toys and fine cigars.
- The old **Gass General Store**, circa 1823, is home to a restaurant and a second-floor gallery specializing in handmade fine crafts made in the U.S., foods typical of the area's heritage, and antiques and collectibles.
- The **Tinsley-Bible Drug Company** has been serving Dandridge at its downtown location since 1911, and is complete with a soda fountain, a large assortment of over-the-counter medications, and local memorabilia. Be sure to grab one of their famous milkshakes or a homemade fried apple pie to enjoy under a shade tree in the old **Revolutionary Graveyard**, a lovingly maintained downtown green space.
- The **Dandridge Dike**, a hard-won and much-beloved grassy peninsula, offers the perfect vantage point to enjoy views of the surrounding lake and mountains, or to take in the sounds of a "Music on the Town" event, held weekly in September, and the Scots-Irish Music Festival held the last weekend in September.

The public is invited to vote online to help determine which of the 12 destinations will be the 2011 Fan Favorite. From **February 15 to March 15**, any legal resident of the U.S., 18 years of age or older, can vote once per day for his or her favorite city or town on this year's list. The winner of the popular vote will be announced on March 16, 2011. **Voters are automatically entered to win a complimentary two night stay at any Historic Hotel of America.** No purchase necessary. Offer void where prohibited. Visit www.PreservationNation.org/ddd for official rules,

information about Historic Hotels of America, to learn more about this year's destinations, and to **begin voting!**

To download high resolution images and video of this year's Dozen Distinctive Destinations, visit www.PreservationNation.org/press.

The 2011 list of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations includes:

Alexandria, Va. - Located across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., Alexandria is one of the most culturally rich destinations in the country - and not just because it was home to the nation's founding father, George Washington. An extraordinary blend of early America and modern chic, the city offers an eclectic mix of neighborhoods, historic sites, dining and shopping.

Chapel Hill, N.C. - From its well-preserved historic districts to its quiet winding streets and its bustling downtown area, Chapel Hill certainly lives up to its nickname as the 'Southern Part of Heaven.'

Colorado Springs, Colo. - Nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains, visitors to Colorado Springs can enjoy commanding views of Pikes Peak from just about any part of this vibrant, historic town.

Dandridge, Tenn. - With its idyllic natural setting in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, a welcoming small town spirit and a charming historic downtown, Dandridge epitomizes the quintessential Southern Appalachian town.

Eureka, Calif. - Located on the Northern California coast, Eureka is a beautifully preserved Victorian seaport that features a lively Old Town, the Carson Mansion - one of the most photographed homes in America - and nearby forests of majestic old growth redwoods.

Muskogee, Okla. - Once the unofficial capital of Indian Territory, Muskogee's storied past and Native American, African American and Euro American influences are well-preserved and the vibrant town has many unique festivals, museums, restaurants and more.

New Bedford, Mass. - Once one of the world's largest whaling ports, New Bedford is awash in maritime history, as well as scenic beaches, abundant architectural and historical riches, diverse neighborhoods and a burgeoning arts community.

Paducah, Ky. - The heart of Kentucky's Four Rivers region, visitors to Paducah will find thriving historic districts filled with turn of the century architecture and one-of-a-kind shops and eateries as well as a community that creatively celebrates its cultural and artistic heritage.

San Angelo, Texas - A frontier city with a rich past, San Angelo offers visitors an authentic Old West experience, a bustling downtown historic district and vibrant cultural offerings.

Saint Paul, Minn. - Known for some of Minnesota's most famous historic buildings—including the Cass Gilbert-designed State Capitol and the home of F. Scott Fitzgerald—visitors to St. Paul can browse the quaint shops of Grand Avenue, dine in the strikingly restored warehouse district, or be awed by the stately mansions along Summit Avenue.

Sheridan, Wyo. - Set in "the shadow of the Big Horns," Sheridan offers a vibrant Main Street commercial district, abundant recreational opportunities, and an authentic Western experience.

Sonoma, Calif. - Dating back to the early 19th and set amidst winding country roads and family-owned vineyards, Sonoma offers all the perks of being in the heart of wine country, with the added benefit of a laid back vibe that complements the award-winning wine and food.

2011 marks the twelfth announcement of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Dozen Distinctive Destinations annual list. To date, there are 144 Distinctive Destinations located in 46 states throughout the country. To see a complete list and to vote for the 2011 Fan Favorite Destination, visit www.PreservationNation.org/ddd. The title of Distinctive Destination is presented to cities and towns that offer an authentic visitor experience by combining dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity, attractive architecture, cultural landscapes and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization. In each community, residents have taken forceful action to protect their town's character and sense of place.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.PreservationNation.org) is a non-profit membership organization bringing people together to protect, enhance and enjoy the places that matter to them. By saving the places where great moments from history - and the important moments of everyday life - took place, the National Trust for Historic Preservation helps revitalize neighborhoods and communities, spark economic development and promote environmental sustainability. With headquarters in Washington, DC, eight regional and field offices, 29 historic sites, and partner organizations in 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia, the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education, advocacy and resources to a national network of people, organizations and local communities committed to saving places, connecting us to our history and collectively shaping the future of America's stories.

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