

## Louisville, Kentucky: Not Just For Horse Lovers

by Monique Craft, PassPorter Guest Contributor

When most people think of Louisville, I am sure the first thing that comes to mind is the Kentucky Derby. And while that is a big part of the Kentucky culture there is so much more to see and do! When we moved to Louisville from Florida, I was worried that there would not be as much fun things to do as we were used to. Boy was I wrong! Here are just a few of the things that we have enjoyed as a family.

The [Louisville Zoo](#) is the state zoo of Kentucky. The zoo is home to over 1,300 animals and home to a rare white alligator named "King Louie." There have been many additions to the zoo in the past couple of years. One of them is a 4 acre gorilla habitat that includes gorillas and pygmy hippos. Another is the addition of the Calistoga Splash Park, which is a big hit with the kids. It is a nautical themed splash park with water slides, and many, many chances to get soaked! The zoo also has a new tiger exhibit with training sessions where you get to see the tigers up close and personal. One of the newest additions is a baby elephant named Scotty. Make sure to check out the elephant exercise show to see him in action. In the month of October the Boo at the Zoo where the kids get to dress up and trick or treat. The Louisville Zoo is certainly a great stop and not to be missed!

Now let's not forget about you sports fans out there! Louisville is home to the famous [Louisville Slugger Museum](#) and Factory. Here you can see the world's largest baseball bat and learn the history of the baseball bat. There is a factory tour where you can see where and how these bats are made. The tour is very interesting and great for those baseball lovers in the family. At the end of the tour everyone is presented with a miniature souvenir bat to remember your time here. One thing that is good to know is that the factory does not make bats on Sundays or holidays, so if you want to see them actually making the bats, be sure to come on a different day. The museum also holds some bats that were used by famous baseball players like Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Ted Williams and many more. Plan to spend about two hours here.

Now for those children that love hands on science there is the [Louisville Science Center](#). Located downtown, this museum is a big hit with not only kids but adults as well. There are four separate exhibits: The World We Create, The World within Us, The World Around Us, and for the little ones a special area just for them called Kidszone. There is also a

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temporary exhibit area that changes every couple of months. You also have the option of purchasing a ticket to the IMAX theatre, which is a wonderful experience. The Science center happens to be about a half a block from the Slugger Museum which allows you to go to one right after the other.

Now all this isn't to say that the [Kentucky Derby](#) can't be fun for the family too. The Derby is always held the first Saturday of the month of May, and the two weeks before the Derby are filled with all kinds of fun activities. To kick off the Derby there is [Thunder Over Louisville](#), which is an all day event on the Ohio River. They have an air show which includes all kinds of military and even some rescue planes. The day ends with an amazing fireworks display that is a huge hit. Another event held the Thursday before the Derby is the Pegasus parade which showcases many businesses, floats, and bands. Mickey Mouse was once the Grand Marshal of the parade. One other event that is a great hit with the kids is the Great Balloon Race! The best part is that the night before the race they have what is called a balloon glow. All the participants place their balloons in their respective spots and inflate their balloons. This is an amazing sight with the dark sky and the glow of the many balloons. Entrance to the glow is free with a Pegasus pin (which can be purchased at any local Kroger's grocery store) and \$6 for parking. I hope that you will take a chance to check out Louisville for yourself, you won't be disappointed!

*About The Author: Monique Craft is a stay-at-home mom and recent transplant to the Louisville area from Clearwater, Florida. She is always looking for fun things for her and her family to do.*

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