

# Things to Do in Montgomery: Top Attractions and Activities



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Montgomery is one of the most historically important [\*cities in the United States\*](#) and a cornerstone destination for travelers interested in civil rights history, American heritage, and Southern culture.

As the birthplace of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and home to numerous nationally significant landmarks, the city offers powerful educational experiences alongside museums, riverfront recreation, arts venues, and family-friendly attractions. Visitors can explore moving memorials, walk in the footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., tour historic homes, and enjoy modern entertainment districts along the Alabama River.

Montgomery blends deep historical significance with a growing cultural and culinary scene, making it a rewarding destination for travelers who want

meaningful experiences as well as leisure. Whether you are visiting for history, culture, or a weekend getaway, Montgomery offers a wide range of attractions worth exploring.

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## Top Things to Do in Montgomery, Alabama

Montgomery offers a mix of historic landmarks, cultural attractions, riverfront experiences, museums, and many other [\*Alabama's top attractions\*](#) and activities. These top things to do in Montgomery highlight the city's history, creativity, and Southern charm.



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### Visit National Memorial for Peace and Justice

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is one of Montgomery's most powerful and important attractions. Dedicated to the victims of racial terror lynching in the United States, the memorial presents more than 800 hanging steel monuments, each representing a county where documented lynchings occurred. As

visitors walk through the open-air memorial, the design gradually shifts from ground level to suspended monuments, creating an emotional and reflective journey. The memorial encourages visitors to confront difficult chapters of American history while honoring the lives lost. Interpretive signage provides historical context, and quiet reflection spaces invite contemplation. Many travelers describe the experience as moving, educational, and deeply impactful. The memorial is an essential stop for anyone seeking to understand America's civil rights history.

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### **Visit Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration**

Located near the memorial, the Legacy Museum traces the history of racial injustice in America from slavery through segregation and into the modern era of mass incarceration. The museum uses immersive exhibits, interactive displays, films, and historical documents to tell a comprehensive story. Visitors encounter life-sized figures, audio narratives, and visual installations that make history personal and accessible. The museum connects past injustices to present-day systems, helping visitors understand how historical patterns continue to shape society. Many people visit both the museum and the memorial on the same day, as they complement each other. The Legacy Museum offers an in-depth educational experience that leaves a lasting impression.

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### **Visit Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church**

Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church is one of Montgomery's most iconic civil rights landmarks. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. served as pastor here from 1954 to 1960, during the years of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Visitors can view exhibits inside the church that highlight King's ministry, sermons, and leadership in the movement. The church remains an active place of worship, and its location near the Alabama State Capitol adds to its historical significance. Guided tours provide deeper insight into how the church functioned as a center for organizing and community action. For many travelers, visiting this site is a meaningful way to connect with the origins of the Civil Rights Movement.

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## **Visit Rosa Parks Museum**

The Rosa Parks Museum is dedicated to the life and legacy of the woman whose refusal to give up her bus seat sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Located near the site of Parks' historic arrest, the museum features interactive exhibits, multimedia presentations, and artifacts that tell her story and place her actions within the broader civil rights struggle. Visitors learn about Parks' early life, her activism, and the impact of the boycott on Montgomery and the nation. The museum is designed to be engaging for visitors of all ages, making it a strong educational stop for families. It provides valuable context to the city's civil rights landmarks.

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## **Explore Alabama State Capitol**

The Alabama State Capitol is both an architectural landmark and a symbol of major moments in American history. Built in the 19th century, the building served as the first Capitol of the Confederate States of America and later became a focal point of civil rights demonstrations. Visitors can tour the historic chambers, see the governor's office, and learn about the building's role in state and national history. The Capitol's location at the top of Dexter Avenue offers views toward downtown Montgomery. Interpretive exhibits explain how the building has been tied to political power, protest, and progress over time.

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## **Visit Civil Rights Memorial Center**

Operated by the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Civil Rights Memorial Center honors individuals who lost their lives during the Civil Rights Movement. The centerpiece is a circular black granite memorial engraved with the names of martyrs. Inside the center, interactive exhibits explore key events, organizations, and figures from the movement. Visitors can watch short films, browse timelines, and reflect on the ongoing struggle for equality. The memorial's design encourages

quiet reflection and learning. It is often visited alongside nearby landmarks such as Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and the Rosa Parks Museum.

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### **Visit Riverfront Park**

Riverfront Park is a scenic green space along the Alabama River that offers a relaxing break from sightseeing. The park features walking paths, shaded seating areas, an amphitheater, and boat docks. Visitors can enjoy riverboat cruises, attend outdoor concerts, or simply relax with river views. The park is especially popular in the evening when the setting sun reflects on the water. Families appreciate the open space for children to run and play, while couples enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. Riverfront Park adds a recreational element to Montgomery's primarily historical attractions.

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### **Visit Montgomery Zoo**

The Montgomery Zoo is home to hundreds of animals representing species from Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. Exhibits are organized by geographic region, allowing visitors to explore different habitats. The zoo also offers animal encounters, a train ride, and educational programs. Walking paths make it easy to navigate, and shaded areas provide comfort during warmer months. The zoo is a popular family attraction and offers a fun, relaxed experience compared to the city's museums and memorials. It works well as a half-day outing.

### **Visit Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts**

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts is widely recognized as one of the premier art museums in the Southeast and serves as a cultural anchor for the city. Its permanent collection includes American paintings, sculptures, decorative arts, Southern regional art, and rotating national exhibitions. Visitors can explore galleries featuring landscapes, portraits, modern works, and contemporary pieces, allowing for a well-rounded art experience. Beyond indoor exhibits, the museum is known for its outdoor sculpture garden, which blends art with natural scenery. The

museum sits within Blount Cultural Park, giving visitors access to walking paths, shaded lawns, and picnic areas. Free general admission makes the museum accessible to all travelers. Whether you are an art enthusiast or casual visitor, the museum offers a calm, inspiring space to spend a few hours.

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### **Go to the Old Alabama Town**

Old Alabama Town is an immersive outdoor history museum that recreates life in central [Alabama](#) during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The site features dozens of restored and relocated buildings, including homes, churches, schools, barns, and small businesses, all arranged to resemble a historic village. Visitors can walk through furnished interiors, view period household items, and learn how families lived, worked, and worshiped generations ago. Interpretive signage and occasional costumed guides provide historical context and stories about former residents. Seasonal events, craft demonstrations, and heritage festivals bring the town to life throughout the year. Old Alabama Town is ideal for travelers who enjoy hands-on history and want a deeper understanding of everyday life beyond major political events.

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### **Never Skip Hank Williams Museum**

The Hank Williams Museum celebrates the life and legacy of one of the most influential figures in country music history. Located in downtown Montgomery, the museum houses an extensive collection of memorabilia, including guitars, stage costumes, handwritten lyrics, photographs, and personal belongings. Exhibits trace Williams' journey from small radio performances to national stardom and highlight his impact on future generations of musicians. Visitors can learn about his connection to Montgomery, his musical style, and the personal struggles that shaped his songwriting. Audio recordings and video footage add depth to the experience. The museum is compact but thoughtfully curated, making it an easy stop for music lovers and anyone interested in Southern musical heritage.

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## **Go to the Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum**

The Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum is dedicated to the famous literary couple who spent their final years living in Montgomery. Housed in the only remaining home where the couple lived together, the museum offers insight into their creative lives, marriage, and cultural influence. Visitors can explore rooms featuring manuscripts, letters, photographs, and personal items. Exhibits highlight Zelda Fitzgerald's artistic pursuits alongside F. Scott Fitzgerald's literary achievements. The museum also hosts rotating art exhibits, author talks, and literary events. For fans of classic literature and American cultural history, this museum provides an intimate look at the human stories behind two iconic figures.

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## **Visit Freedom Rides Museum**

The Freedom Rides Museum occupies the former Greyhound bus station where Freedom Riders were attacked in 1961 for challenging segregated interstate travel. Inside, exhibits document the bravery of activists who risked their lives to confront unjust laws. Visitors can view photographs, personal stories, and multimedia presentations that explain how the Freedom Rides were organized and why they mattered. The museum places Montgomery within the broader national movement for civil rights while emphasizing the local consequences of these actions. Though small in size, the museum delivers a powerful and emotionally resonant experience. It is an essential stop for understanding the sacrifices made to advance equality.

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## **Explore the Alabama Department of Archives and History**

Founded in 1901, the Alabama Department of Archives and History is the nation's oldest state-operated history museum. Its exhibits cover thousands of years of Alabama's past, from Native American cultures and early European settlement to industrial development and modern civil rights history. Visitors can see artifacts such as weapons, documents, clothing, photographs, and political memorabilia. Interactive exhibits and timelines help place events into context. The museum

provides an excellent overview for travelers who want to understand Alabama's story beyond Montgomery alone. It is especially useful as an introductory stop before visiting more specialized historic sites.

### **Visit Blount Cultural Park**

Blount Cultural Park is a beautifully maintained green space that functions as one of Montgomery's main cultural gathering areas. The park surrounds both the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, making it an easy place to spend several hours exploring art, theater, and nature in one setting. Visitors will find paved walking paths, shaded benches, landscaped gardens, and open lawns ideal for picnics or relaxing breaks. The peaceful atmosphere provides a welcome contrast to Montgomery's more emotionally intense historical attractions. Many travelers enjoy strolling the park before or after museum visits or using it as a quiet place to unwind. Photography opportunities are abundant, especially around the gardens and sculptures. Blount Cultural Park is ideal for travelers who enjoy combining cultural sightseeing with outdoor relaxation.

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### **Attend Alabama Shakespeare Festival**

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival is one of the largest and most respected Shakespeare theaters in the world and a cornerstone of Montgomery's performing arts scene. The complex features multiple theaters and presents a year-round schedule of productions that include Shakespeare classics, modern dramas, comedies, and family-friendly performances. Shows are professionally produced with high-quality sets, costumes, and acting. Visitors can attend evening performances, matinees, or special seasonal productions depending on the schedule. Even travelers who are not frequent theatergoers often find the experience enjoyable because of the accessible programming and welcoming atmosphere. The festival is located within Blount Cultural Park, allowing visitors to easily combine a show with museum visits or a park walk. Attending a performance adds depth and variety to any Montgomery itinerary.

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## **Play Montgomery Biscuits Baseball Game**

Catching a Montgomery Biscuits baseball game at Riverwalk Stadium is a fun and relaxed way to experience local sports culture. The stadium sits along the Alabama River and offers scenic views alongside comfortable seating and modern amenities. Games feature affordable tickets, family-friendly promotions, and a lively crowd atmosphere. Visitors can enjoy classic ballpark food such as hot dogs, nachos, and popcorn while watching minor league baseball. Between innings, entertainment such as mascot appearances and contests keeps energy high. Even visitors who are not serious baseball fans often appreciate the social atmosphere and easygoing pace. Spring and summer games are especially popular, making this an excellent evening activity for travelers looking to unwind.

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## **Go for the EastChase Shopping and Dining District**

EastChase is Montgomery's premier shopping, dining, and entertainment district, offering a modern experience away from the historic downtown area. The open-air complex features national retail brands, local boutiques, specialty stores, restaurants, and a movie theater. Visitors can browse for clothing, souvenirs, beauty products, and gifts, then choose from a wide range of dining options, including fast-casual spots, cafes, and full-service restaurants. EastChase is also a popular evening destination, with dessert shops, bars, and entertainment venues. Clean walkways, landscaped areas, and convenient parking make the district easy to explore. EastChase is ideal for travelers who want shopping and dining in one convenient location.

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## **Join Montgomery Riverboat Cruises**

Montgomery Riverboat Cruises offer a relaxing way to experience the Alabama River and learn about its role in the city's development. Cruises range from sightseeing and narrated history tours to dinner cruises and themed entertainment events. Visitors can enjoy river views, gentle breezes, and photo opportunities while cruising past the waterfront. Some tours include live music or storytelling

about Montgomery's river commerce and steamboat era. Sunset cruises are especially popular for couples and photographers. Riverboat cruises provide a slower-paced experience that balances well with museum-heavy days. It is a memorable way to see Montgomery from a different perspective.

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### **Go to the Goat Hill Museum and Store**

The Goat Hill Museum and Store offers a unique and often humorous look at Alabama's political history. Exhibits feature campaign memorabilia, historic photographs, political cartoons, and unusual gifts presented to state governors. Rotating displays highlight notable elections, famous politicians, and quirky moments from Alabama's past. The museum blends education with entertainment, making political history more approachable and engaging. Visitors often enjoy browsing the gift shop, which sells books, souvenirs, and Alabama-themed items. The museum's small size makes it an easy stop near the Capitol complex. Goat Hill adds a lighter, unexpected dimension to Montgomery's historical attractions.

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### **Conclusion**

Montgomery is more than a stop on a map. It is a city where American history, culture, art, and everyday life intersect in meaningful ways. From powerful civil rights landmarks and world-class museums to riverfront experiences, parks, performing arts, and local sports, Montgomery offers travelers a wide range of things to see and do. Whether you are visiting for education, inspiration, relaxation, or entertainment, the city delivers experiences that feel both important and memorable.

To make planning easier, download our free Montgomery Things to Do Guide (PDF) and keep all top attractions, activity ideas, and travel planning tips in one place. It is perfect for saving, sharing, and using offline during your trip.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Montgomery Alabama best known for?**

Montgomery is best known for its central role in the Civil Rights Movement, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, as well as landmarks like the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum.

### **How many days do you need in Montgomery?**

Most travelers spend two to three days in Montgomery to comfortably explore major museums, historic sites, and cultural attractions.

### **Is Montgomery worth visiting for tourists?**

Yes. Montgomery offers powerful historical experiences, quality museums, performing arts, riverfront activities, and family-friendly attractions.

### **What are the top historical sites in Montgomery?**

Popular sites include the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Legacy Museum, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, Rosa Parks Museum, and Freedom Rides Museum.

### **Are there family-friendly things to do in Montgomery?**

Yes. Families enjoy the Montgomery Zoo, Riverwalk Stadium baseball games, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, riverboat cruises, and interactive museums.

### **What is the best time of year to visit Montgomery?**

Spring and fall are ideal due to mild temperatures and comfortable sightseeing conditions.

### **Are there free attractions in Montgomery?**

Yes. Several museums, including the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts and some memorial sites, offer free admission.

**What outdoor activities are available in Montgomery?**

Visitors can enjoy parks, walking trails, riverfront strolls, picnicking, and scenic river cruises.

**Is Montgomery good for a weekend trip?**

Yes. Montgomery is well-suited for a weekend getaway focused on history, culture, and local experiences.

**Can you explore Montgomery without a car?**

Some downtown attractions are walkable, but a car makes it easier to reach parks, museums, and outlying sites.