



## **Kingsport, Bristol and Greeneville, TN**

The name "Tri-Cities" refers to the region comprised of the cities of Kingsport, Johnson City and Bristol, and the surrounding smaller towns and communities, such as Greeneville, in Northeast Tennessee. All three of the principal cities are located in the extreme northeastern corner of the state; Bristol is on the Tennessee state line, and has a twin city of the same name on the Virginia side.

### **Bristol:**

Bristol has a distinguished history, all beginning with the construction of a railroad. When Joseph Anderson learned of the railroad system, he bought 100 acres of land from his father and then sold it to create a railway system. In 1852, the original town of Bristol was formed with the county lines crossing Tennessee and Virginia. By the 1900s, development in Bristol was booming, which set the groundwork for the city's musical heritage and pride in community and tradition.

- **Roots of Country Music and Fine Arts:** In 1927, music producer Ralph Peer traveled to Bristol and began recording music. During his twelve-day stay, he recorded 76 performances from some of the best names in country music, including The Carter Family, known as the "First Family of Country Music," and Jimmie Rogers, known as "The Father of Country Music." After advertising these recordings, Congress declared Bristol as "the Birthplace of Country Music." While visiting Bristol, visitors can enjoy many of the country music festivals held there throughout the year.

With a rich background in country music, Bristol has been involved in performing arts for many years. Built in 1941, The Paramount Center of the Arts has a tradition of making history come alive through the presentation of music and fine arts. Renovated in 1991, the auditorium now holds 756 patrons. Throughout the year, the audience will experience Broadway productions, children's plays and all types of musical concerts from symphonies, to country music and the blues. Each program at the theatre allows visitors to experience the roots of country music and fine arts.

- **Bristol Motor Speedway:** Located just outside of Johnson City, in the heart of the mountains, is Bristol Motor Speedway. Twice a year, the biggest names in NASCAR come to Bristol to compete on the high banks of the "World's Fastest Half Mile." Renovations have consistently continued on this half-mile concrete oval since the

development of the stadium in 1960. Today, the Speedway attracts more than 160,000 fans per NASCAR event. The 40 foot wide track, with 36 degrees of banking around the corners, has created some of the most exciting racing in the country. When attending a race, fans can enjoy the large private campgrounds surrounding the Speedway, as well as the free parking nearby.

- **Bristol Caverns:** These historical caverns show visitors paths that were created more than 200 to 400 million years ago by an underground river. The vast rooms and arches display columns and natural stone formations of all colors, shapes and sizes. When traveling to the core of the earth, the paved, well-lit walkways wind through the same warrior paths that were used hundreds of years ago.

### **Kingsport:**

Situated in the Northeast corner of Tennessee, just a few miles from the Virginia border and only 45 minutes from North Carolina, Kingsport was discovered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by civilians looking to move west. Kingsport became the center of activity when frontiersman Daniel Boone traveled through, and created trails for settlers, including, the Boatyard District and Long Island, both located on the Holston River. Settlers began their adventures and used the Holston River as an important shipping point. Today, tourists visit Kingsport because of its legendary hospitality and first-rate amenities, popular attractions and visitor accommodations.

- **Bay Mountain Parks:** Nestled in the mountains near Kingsport, the Bay Mountain Park and Planetarium is a 3,000-acre outdoor classroom, 44-acre lake and nature museum offering visitors the opportunity to experience an array of activities. Inside the planetarium, visitors of all ages can enjoy the 40-foot diameter dome, educating viewers through various film productions, mainly produced in-house. The educational films highlight evolution and the planets through humorous, lighthearted films, using a variety of methods, including animation and still photographs. The nature trail, two miles of easy hiking trails, and several miles of ridge trails, ranging from easy to moderate, will let visitors experience the natural side of Bay Mountain Park.

Open year around, Bay Mountain Park can be enjoyed by the entire family with nature activities available for all seasons. Spring brings the beauty of the flowers and animals all throughout the park. Autumn should not be missed, as the leaves are changing into some of the most spectacular colors of the Appalachian Mountains. The snows of winter invite cross-country skiers to test their skills around the 25 miles of trails.

- **Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail:** Long before Columbus discovered the Americas, the Indians used this trail as a major link to the main trail system. Years later, in 1775, the Wilderness Trail was used by Daniel Boone. Today, it is one of the nations most historical routes, used as a route for hundreds of thousands of settlers, the trail begins at

Long Island, located near the Holston River in Kingsport, TN. It now passes through Southern Virginia and the Cumberland Gap, ending in Kentucky.

**Greeneville:**

Named in honor of Nathanael Greene, General of Washington's Army of the Republic, Greeneville was settled in 1783. After a battle by headstrong pioneers, Greeneville became a part of Tennessee in 1796. As pioneers from Greeneville helped win American's Independence, the state of Tennessee was named the "Volunteer State" by the national government. Today, the National Trust for Historic Preservation program in the state of Tennessee uses the historic downtown of Greeneville to encourage economic improvement and physical renovations within a twelve-block radius.

- **Andrew Johnson National Historic Site:** In Greeneville, spectators are able to visit the home of the 17<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, Andrew Johnson. While touring, houseguests will have the opportunity to learn about Johnson's life through an in-depth 14-minute film about the museum, as well as touring the home, along with a trip to the President's tailor shop. After touring the house, guests may visit the National Cemetery where the President and his family have been buried.
  
- **Dickson-William Mansion:** Filled with the history of exquisite antique furnishing and immortal American heroes, the Dickson-William Mansion was built in 1821, and was used as an officers' quarters during the Civil War for both the Confederate and the Union Troops.
  
- **President Andrew Johnson Museum and Library at Tusculum College:** Founded in 1974, Tusculum College is the oldest Presbyterian college in the United States. Here, visitors will find the personal library of Andrew Johnson, along with personal papers of the President and his family. The library is open to the public for self-guided tours.

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