

DAY

SUMMERS HERE CAN BE HARD. THERE'S THE WILDLIFE (READ: MOSQUITOES), THE HEAT AND, OHMYGOODNESS, THE HUMIDITY. NO WONDER IT'S SO EASY TO LET THE SEASON SLIP BY POOLSIDE—OR FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR AIR-CONDITIONED LIVING ROOM. BUT FROM THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI TO THE SHADED OZARK HOLLERS, THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD OF ADVENTURE CALLING YOUR NAME THIS SEASON. AND WITH A LITTLE HELP (THAT'S US!), IT'S EASY TO TAKE IT A DAY AT A TIME

TRIPPER

EDITED BY NICHOLAS HUNT

GO THE DISTANCE

along the Razorback Regional Greenway

Gorgeous as the northwestern corner of our state may be, it's awfully hard to stop and smell the roses when you're bogged down in gridlock. Fortunately, it's easy to enjoy the beautiful scenery—which ranges from the rolling vistas of the Boston Mountains to the internationally lauded Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art—along the greenway's 36 miles. Especially when there's a pint waiting for you just off the beaten path—specifically at Core Brewing's taproom in Rogers. (nwatrails.org/trail/razorback-regional-greenway)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Make a stop at the Arkansas Air & Military Museum (see Number 15)—aviation buffs aren't the only ones who'll enjoy it.



PHOTO BY WESLEY HITT

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

at Quigley's Castle

From a distance, the two-story, 28-windowed house appears to have the texture of multi-grain bread. Closer inspection of the mid-1940s dream home built by Elise Quigley (and maintained by her grandchildren), however, reveals a surface barnacled with pebbles, sea-shells and the stray piece of jewelry, all cobbled together over the course of its eponymous owner's lifetime. Taken together—along with the 400-some varieties of perennials blooming on the 80-acre grounds—this unique Arkansas landmark is a picture of passion and eccentricity. And as any visitor to the house outside Eureka Springs can tell you, Quigley's spirit is still growing. (274 Quigley Castle Road, Eureka Springs; quigleycastle.com)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Test your mettle at "America's most haunted hotel" in nearby Eureka Springs (see Number 19).

THEY'LL LEAVE THE LIGHT ON FOR YOU

READY TO MAKE A WEEKEND OUT OF IT BUT NOT REALLY FEELING THE HOT SPRINGS HOLIDAY INN? YEAH, US TOO. BUT THANKS TO THE SHARING ECONOMY—WHICH HAS BESTOWED UPON US SUCH GIFTS AS VACATION RENTAL SITES AIRBNB AND VRBO—WE NO LONGER HAVE TO ENDURE SCRATCHY DUVETS AND SUBPAR BREAKFAST BUFFETS. WE COMBED THROUGH 1,635 LISTINGS TO BRING YOU THESE CHOICE DIGS:



THE CENTRAL LOFT

DOWNTOWN HOT SPRINGS **Sleeps 5**

- Balcony overlooking Central Avenue
- Open-concept layout
- 2 "master" bedrooms

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$299 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

www.vrbo.com/557404



THRIVE SUITE

BENTONVILLE **Sleeps 3**

- Walking distance to Crystal Bridges, 21c Museum Hotel, etc.
- Located in Bentonville's newest high-end apartment complex
- Fully stocked kitchen

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$156 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

www.vrbo.com/746034



KINGS RIVER DECK HOUSE

EUREKA SPRINGS **Sleeps 20**

- High-end interior design
- 2,000-square-foot deck with mountain views
- Located on The Nature Conservancy's 5,200-acre preserve

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$950 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

www.vrbo.com/834014



BEAVER LAKEFRONT HOME

ROGERS **Sleeps up to 18**

- Plenty of windows looking out to a stunning lake view
- 20 yards from the lakeshore; 2 boat slips; secluded cove
- Bunk room for the kiddos

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$675 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

www.vrbo.com/616434



STONEHILL COTTAGES: THE FARMHOUSE

MENA **Sleeps 8**

- Wrap-around porch with panoramic mountain views (and rocking chairs!)
- Parklike setting less than a mile from the Ouachita National Forest
- High-end bed linens and king-size beds

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$216 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

www.vrbo.com/633271



HOT SPRINGS LAKE HOME

LAKE HAMILTON **Sleeps 6**

- Brand new construction on a quiet cove
- Close to downtown
- Easy access to water; deck overlooks the water; private dock

NIGHTLY AVERAGE: \$275 (2-NIGHT MINIMUM)

airbnb.com/rooms/5715212?s=BE_1xHsr



LEARN THE ART OF FLY-FISHING

at Gaston's White River Resort's Fly Fishing School

You don't have to be a young Brad Pitt—who famously starred in “The Movie,” as it's known in the trade—to master the fly rod. All it takes is a trip to the famed Gaston's White River Resort and a spot in Frank Saks's fly-fishing school, where you'll spend two days in the classroom and on the river learning everything from equipment selection to the perfect roll-cast. (1777 River Road, Lakeview; gastons.com)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: Visit the nearby Norfolk National Fish Hatchery to learn more about your prey.

3 BOARD THE EXCURSION TRAIN

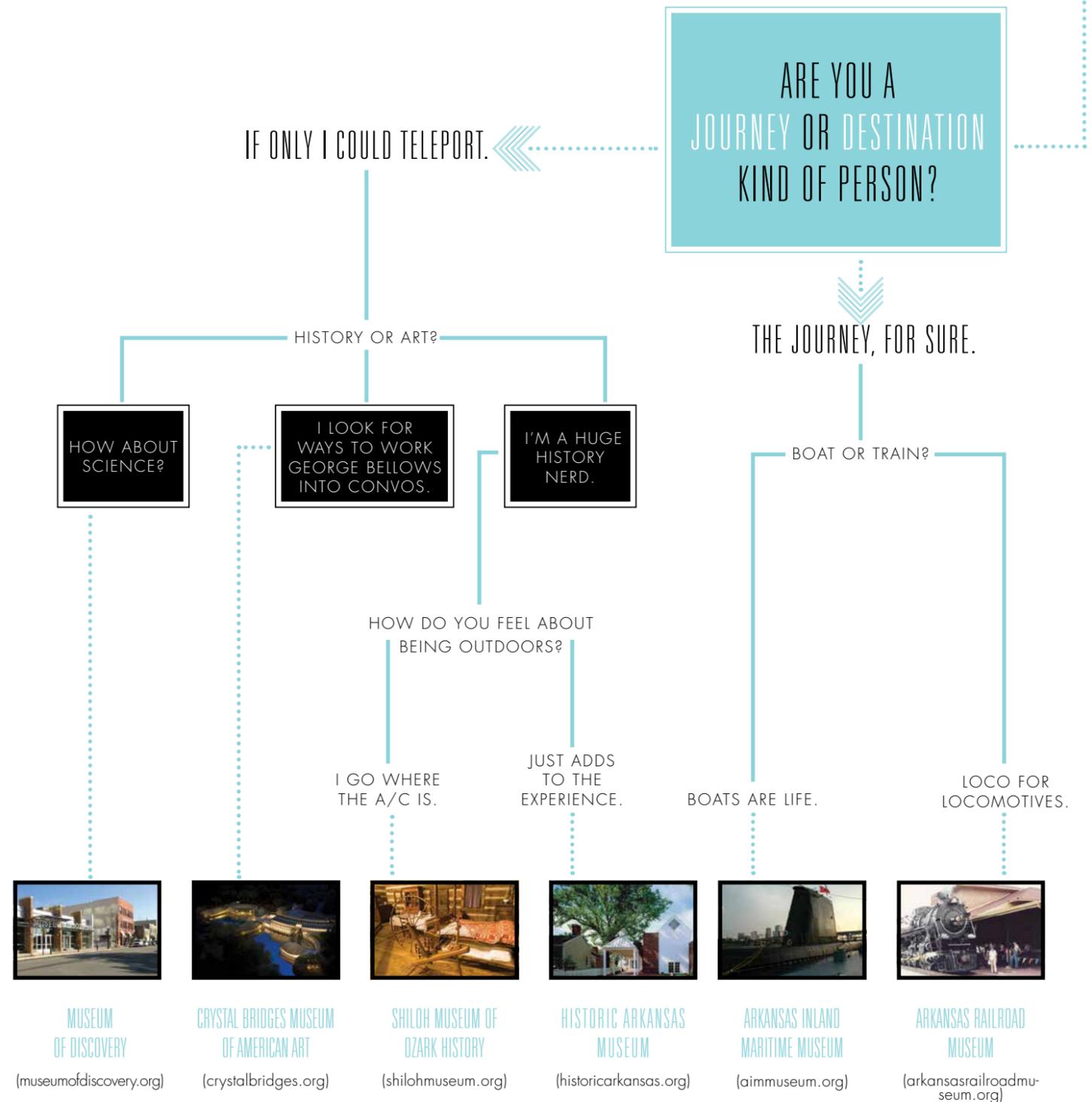
in Van Buren

In Northwest Arkansas' Van Buren, you can hop aboard an early-1900s Pullman passenger train (go ahead and opt for first class and snag the parlor car) and soak up 70 miles' worth of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad. This is no blink-and-you'll-miss-it adventure: Every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday this season, travelers can spend the three-hour round trip viewing the Boston Mountains, passing through a 1,702-foot tunnel and making a stop in small-town Winslow. (813 Main St., Van Buren; amrailroad.com)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: Feel even more refined with a visit to Van Buren's restored King Opera House, which holds shows throughout the year.

WHICH MUSEUM IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

ARKANSAS IS BRIMMING WITH MUSEUMS, SO IF YOU'RE TRYING TO DECIDE WHERE TO GET YOUR CULTURE ON, A COIN FLIP JUST WON'T CUT IT. THIS MIGHT.



5

ROCK IT

at Blanchard Springs Cavern

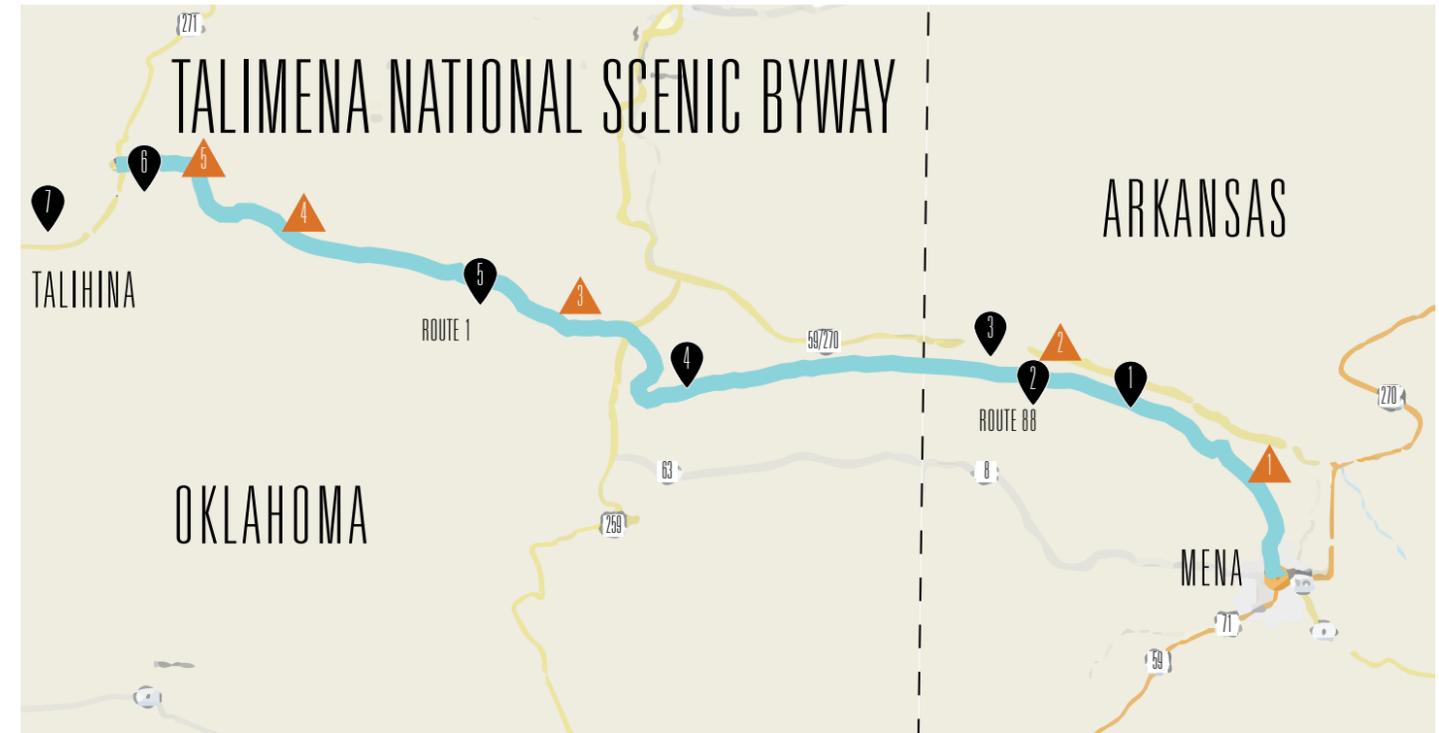
Even though the cave's constant 58 degrees is probably enough of a selling point this summer, it's not what you'll remember. You'll remember what it's like to place a hand on the Earth's innards, hollowed out 50 million to 70 million years ago. You'll remember the cathedral ceilings that took no construction crews, the stalagmites—or maybe stalactites?—reaching from floor to ceiling. And if you opt for the four- to five-hour wild caving tour, you'll remember the darkest dark, a passage dubbed "the corkscrew." And it's for all of those reasons that you'll go back. (blanchardsprings.org)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Leave the depths of the earth behind for the open skies at Loco Ropes (see Number 10), or enjoy the music on Mountain View's Court-house Square (Number 17).



TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

FORGET WORRYING ABOUT YOUR PHONE'S GPS, BECAUSE THE TALIMENA NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY IS ROAD-TRIPPING MADE EASY. BUT DON'T DITCH THAT PHONE COMPLETELY—THERE ARE PLENTY OF PICTURE-WORTHY SIGHTS ALONG THIS 54-MILE STRETCH, WHICH WINDS THROUGH THE SOUTHERN OUACHITAS FROM MENA TO TALIHINA, OKLAHOMA. (talimenascenicdrive.com)



1 RICH MOUNTAIN: About 10 miles from Mena, the observation tower atop Rich Mountain gives you a 58-foot-high view from the highest point in the Ouachita National Forest.

2 QUEEN WILHELMINA STATE PARK: Stretch your legs on the park's day-trip-friendly trails, or enjoy a slice of home away from home at the lodge's comfortable restaurant.

3 BLACK FORK MOUNTAIN TRAIL: The Black Fork Wilderness harkens back to a life best lived by pioneers, and this 6-mile trail lets you in on the fun, too.

4 KERR ARBORETUM & NATURE CENTER: Located just about halfway along the byway, this outdoor laboratory is the perfect place to do a little learning, thanks to the site's three self-guided interpretive trails.

VISTAS

- 1 ACORN VISTA
- 2 MOUNTAIN FORK VISTA
- 3 EMERALD VISTA
- 4 SUGARLOAF VISTA
- 5 HOLSON VALLEY VISTA

5 HORSE THIEF SPRING HISTORIC SITE: You don't have to load up your saddlebags to enjoy this mountain spring—supposedly used by outlaws in the Wild West days—thanks to the interpretive trails and 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps stonework that surrounds the spring.

6 TALIMENA STATE PARK: Skipped the trails of Arkansas' Queen Wilhelmina? Continue on Oklahoma 1, where you'll find plenty of hiking opportunities in Oklahoma's entrance to the byway.

7 THE ROCK HOUSE: Stop by this family-owned ranch-restaurant any evening, Thursday through Sunday, for an eyeful of the Kiamichi Mountains and a stomachful of 18-ounce rib-eye.

6

TEST THE WATERS

at the Spring River

Few things are as relaxing as gliding down the Spring River through the breathtaking Ozark foothills in a canoe. And thanks to the 58-degree water that flows from Mammoth Spring at its head, few places are more refreshing during the summer months. Don't have your own rig? Any of the nine outfitters stationed along the 17-mile stretch from the spring to Hardy will not only have everything you need, but will help you craft your perfect trip—for example, those looking for a challenge could tackle the ominously named Dead Man's Curve, a 9-mile float from Dam 3 downriver to Hardy. (*Hardy*; arkansas.com/outdoors/water-activities/lakes-rivers)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Stretch your legs after the float with some antiques around Hardy's historic Main Street.

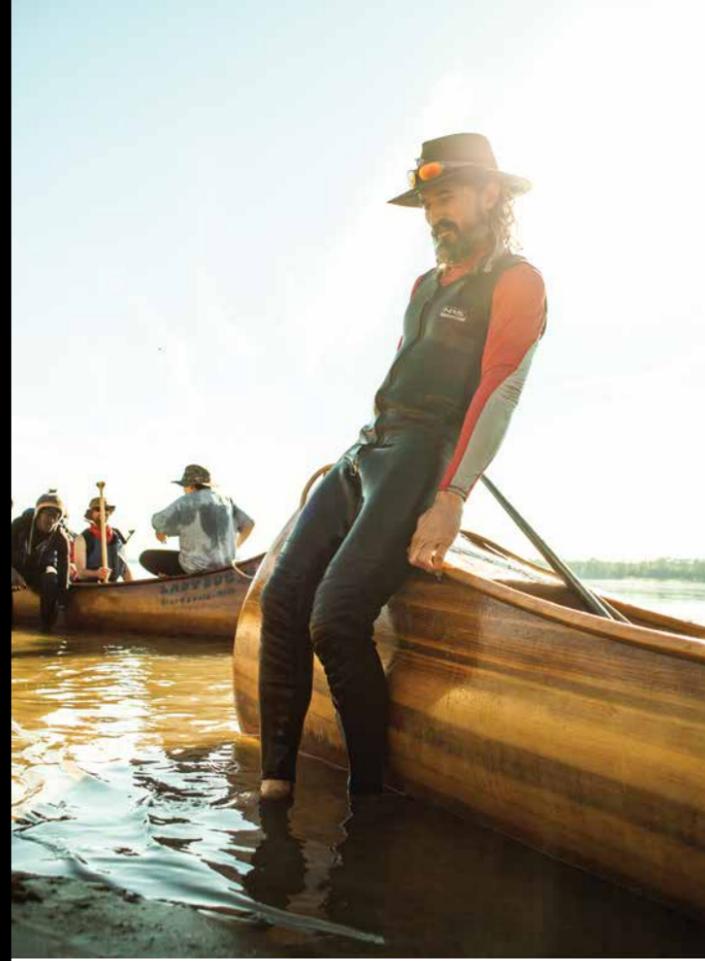
7

LET THE MUSIC TAKE YOU BACK

at the Mountain View Courthouse Square

From kids barely bigger than the fiddles they play to bearded, banjo-pickin' great-grandpas, musicians from all over the region (and some from farther afield) gather in Mountain View's Courthouse Square just about every summer evening to share their music with anyone and everyone looking to listen. And *sharing* is the key word here—these impromptu jam sessions are free. All you need is a camp chair and your toe-tapping boots. (And if you like your music with a little more structure and a firm date, check out *your-placeinthemountains.com*.)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Tour Blanchard Spring Caverns (see Number 5), or go airborne at Loco Ropes (Number 10).



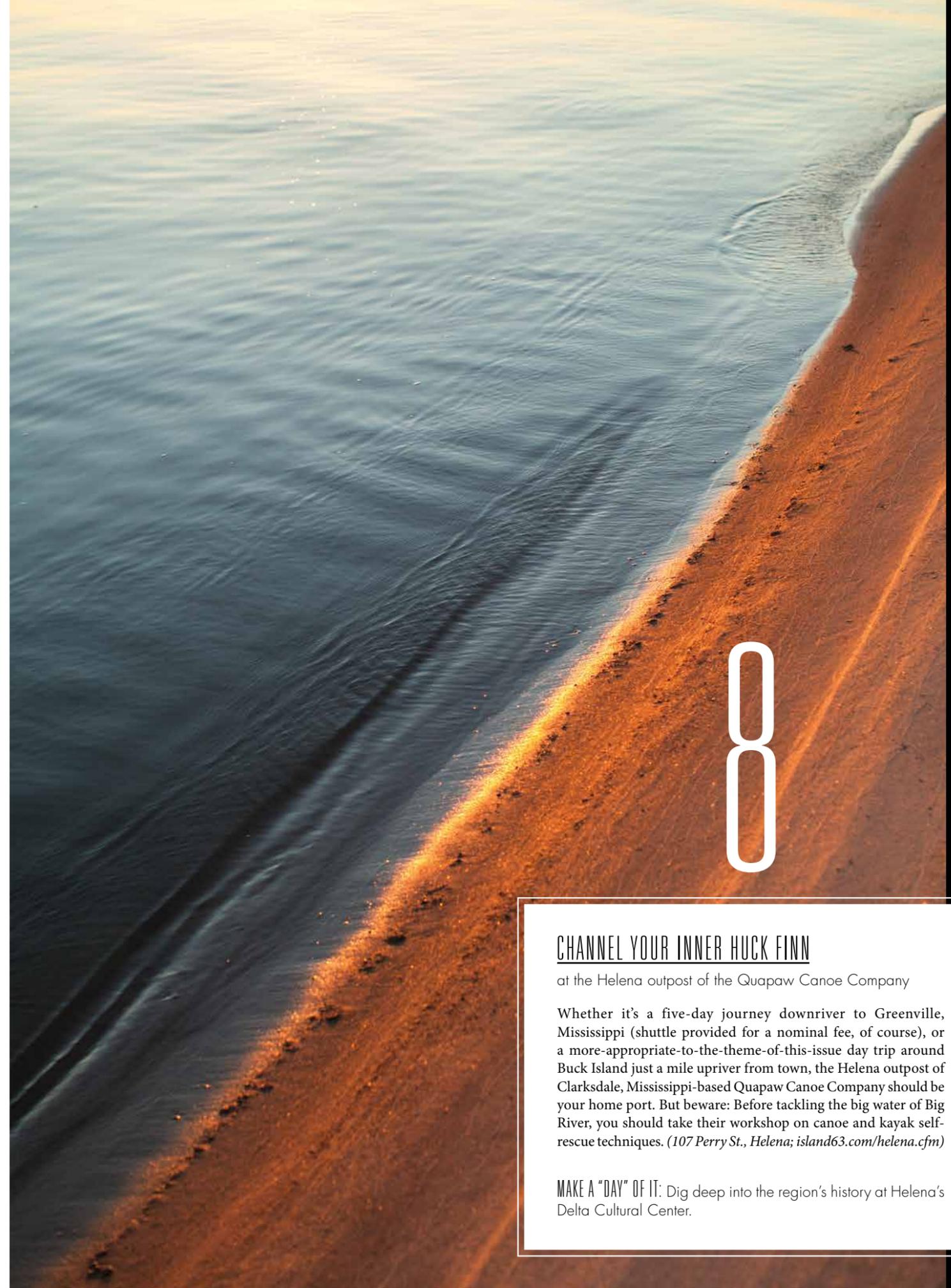
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WARE YOURSELF OUT

at Antique Warehouse of Arkansas in Botkinburg

There are certain superlatives that seem a bit sensational—and that's exactly what we were thinking the first time we drove by what claims to be "the U.S.A.'s largest inventory of direct-imported fine European antiques" on U.S. 65 just north of Clinton. *Annnd* then we went inside. Turns out this place is the real deal, folks—just imagine a yard sale at Versailles. Case in point: We found a 1,000-year-old Chinese statue, a Louis XIV dining set that costs more than most luxury sedans, 18th-century German clocks, even the fully restored innards of an English pub—all neatly arranged in 10 barnlike warehouses filled to the rafters. (9256 U.S. 65 N.; www.antiquewarehouse.com)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Snake your way 11 miles north to the sweet-as-sugar Skylark Cafe in Leslie, home of The Best Strawberry Pie You'll Ever Have, Ever.



CHANNEL YOUR INNER HUCK FINN

at the Helena outpost of the Quapaw Canoe Company

Whether it's a five-day journey downriver to Greenville, Mississippi (shuttle provided for a nominal fee, of course), or a more-appropriate-to-the-theme-of-this-issue day trip around Buck Island just a mile upriver from town, the Helena outpost of Clarksdale, Mississippi-based Quapaw Canoe Company should be your home port. But beware: Before tackling the big water of Big River, you should take their workshop on canoe and kayak self-rescue techniques. (107 Perry St., Helena; island63.com/helena.cfm)

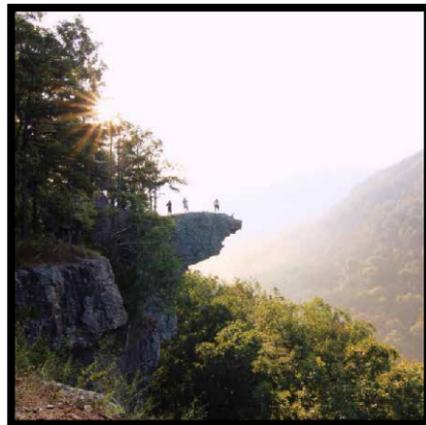
MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Dig deep into the region's history at Helena's Delta Cultural Center.

SELFIE ROAD TRIP

STOP FIGHTING IT. WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, SELFIES ARE HERE TO STAY, AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO EMBRACE YOUR INNER SOCIAL MEDIA STAR THAN A ROAD TRIP TO SOME OF THE STATE'S MOST SELFIE-WORTHY SPOTS:



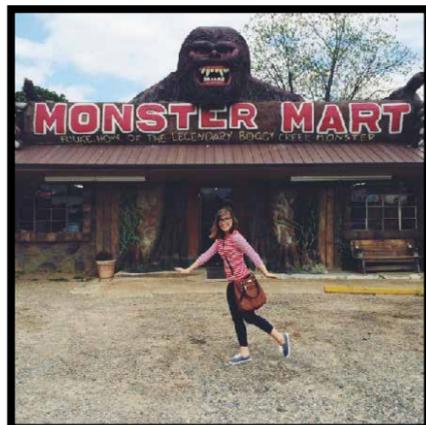
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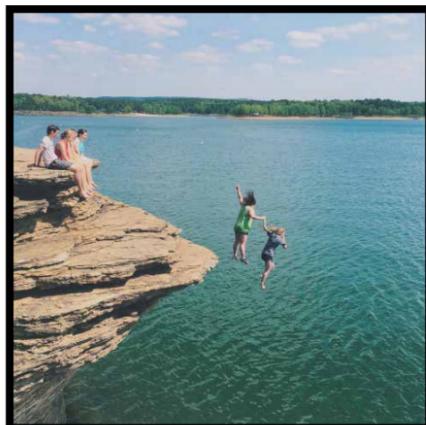


@AXEICMDO



@ERINBURAZIN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
MOUNT MAGAZINE, PARIS;
HAWKSBILL CRAG, PONCA;
THORNCROWN CHAPEL,
EUREKA SPRINGS; GREERS
FERRY LAKE; LITTLE ROCK
CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL;
HEMMED-IN-HOLLOW FALLS,
PONCA WILDERNESS AREA;
GARVAN WOODLAND
GARDENS, HOT SPRINGS;
MONSTER MART, FOUKE.



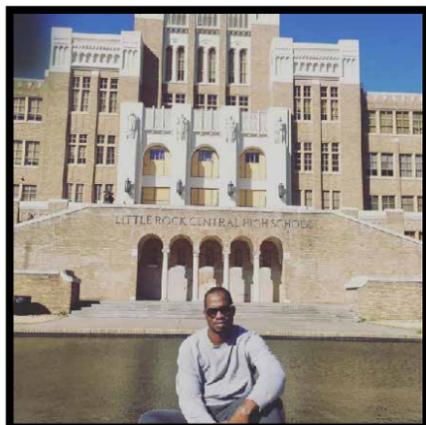
@PEYTONBOIZ



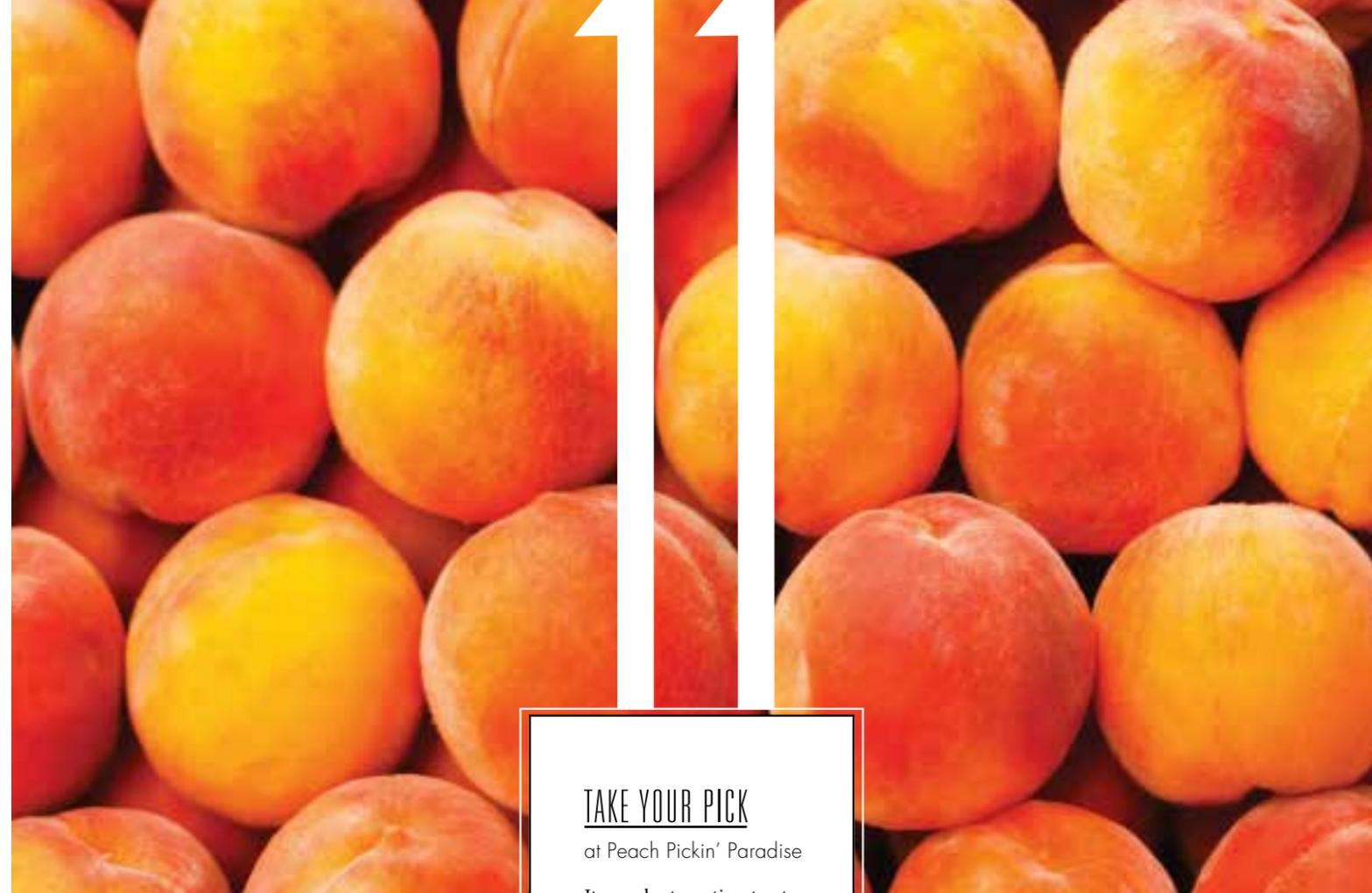
@SPANIN77



@COLBYSHOOTPEOPLE



@JHARPSW



TAKE YOUR PICK

at Peach Pickin' Paradise

It may be tempting to stay inside during the sweltering summertime heat, but there's something about wandering through rows of picturesque trees, bucket in hand, plucking the reddest peaches you can find, that just screams, *Worth it!* And at Peach Pickin' Paradise—a River Valley orchard owned by the same family since the '20s—you can throw down a blanket and take in the view as you gorge on the fruit. (Just make sure to save some for cobbler.) Whatever you do, it'll be a bushel of fun. (1901 McGuire Road, Lamar; facebook.com/peachpickinparadise)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Check Arkansas' highest point off your bucket list at Mount Magazine State Park.

10 REACH NEW HEIGHTS

at Loco Ropes

Sure, Mountain View may be best known for those impromptu fiddling sessions on its town square, but if you want a take-the-breath-right-outta-you experience, try seeing the Ozarks from a true bird's-eye view. At zip-lining destination Loco Ropes, daredevils can zoom from one towering oak to another, or opt for the free fall, which drops you from 35 feet to ground level before you have time to second-guess yourself. If an adrenaline rush isn't your thing, stick to a slower but challenging pace on the treetops' obstacle course or climbing wall. (1025A Park Ave., Mountain View; locoropes.com)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: A short walk away is the Ozark Folk Center, where you can find matinee and evening music performances, along with artisan crafts.

12 GO WILD

at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge

When you read about this sprawling 459-acre Eureka Springs refuge, it's darn-near impossible not to start humming "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." Why? Because in addition to offering forever homes and natural habitats for more than TK rescued lions, tigers, cougars, leopards (and a grizzly by the name of Bam Bam), Turpentine offers lodgings for guests interested in sleeping within earshot of the refuge's feline residents. (Those especially interested in a feline-based sleep aid should consider the Tree House, which isn't too far from the habitat of a particularly vocal African lion by the name of Thor.) No wonder Turpentine Creek's guided tours attract more than 30,000 guests each year. (239 Turpentine Creek Lane, Eureka Springs; turpentinecreek.org)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Make the scenic 20-minute drive west to Arkansas' largest state park, Hobbs, and explore the interactive kiosks in its 17,531-square-foot visitor center.

13

FLOAT ON

at the Ouachita River Whitewater Park

Picture this: a water park where the only admission fee is your trusted float-friendly accessory and a need for the exact opposite of anything that screams “lazy river.” Just off Interstate 30 near Malvern, the Ouachita River Whitewater Park brings that image to life, making this kayaker’s playground the perfect spot to be one with the current. And with the help of nearby Orbi Rentals, you’ll find tubes, canoes and even ice chests available for all-day use. (1265 Riverview Drive, Malvern)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT:

Stop by during the 36th annual Brickfest in Malvern on June 24-25, and catch a brick-throwing contest and a performance by Neal McCoy.

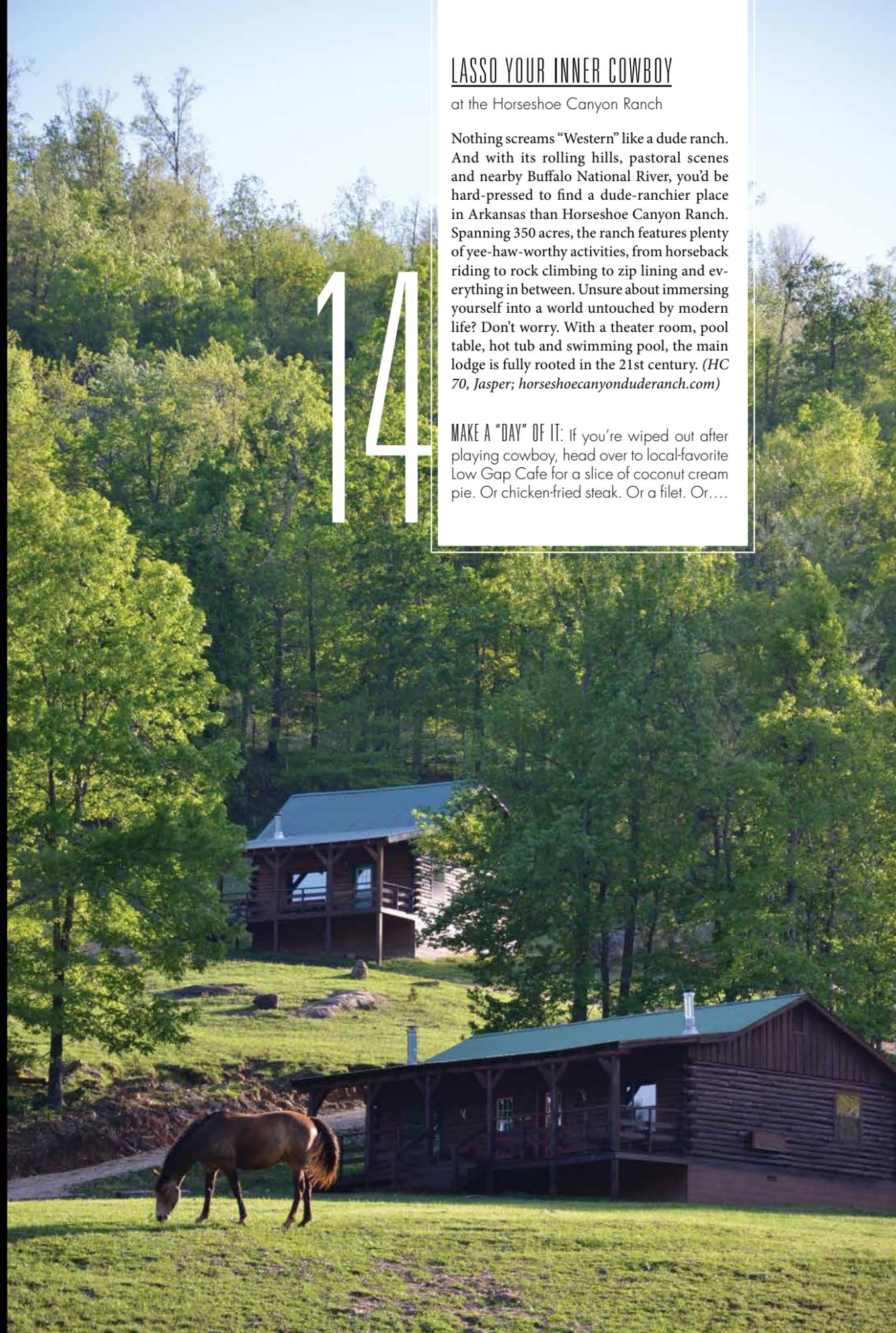
14

LASSO YOUR INNER COWBOY

at the Horseshoe Canyon Ranch

Nothing screams “Western” like a dude ranch. And with its rolling hills, pastoral scenes and nearby Buffalo National River, you’d be hard-pressed to find a dude-ranchier place in Arkansas than Horseshoe Canyon Ranch. Spanning 350 acres, the ranch features plenty of yee-haw-worthy activities, from horseback riding to rock climbing to zip lining and everything in between. Unsure about immersing yourself into a world untouched by modern life? Don’t worry. With a theater room, pool table, hot tub and swimming pool, the main lodge is fully rooted in the 21st century. (HC 70, Jasper; horseshoecanyonduderranch.com)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: If you’re wiped out after playing cowboy, head over to local-favorite Low Gap Cafe for a slice of coconut cream pie. Or chicken-fried steak. Or a filet. Or....



16

15 UNCORK ARKANSAS’ FINEST WINE

along the Arkansas Wine Trail

Napa Valley, it ain’t, but there’s still an impressive roster of wineries and vineyards clustered around the hamlet of Altus (the heart of Arkansas’ Wine Trail). Chateau Aux Arc Vineyards & Winery, for example, is the only female-owned vineyard in Arkansas. For only \$5, customers can sample any or all of the bottles (many sporting medals around their necks) and stroll around the winery—or even bring a packed lunch for a picnic among the vines. For a more serious lunch or dinner (and more glorious wine-drinking, of course), head out to Wiederkehr’s Weinkeller Restaurant at the Wiederkehr Wine Cellars only five minutes away. (8045 Arkansas 186, Altus; chateauxaux-arc.com)

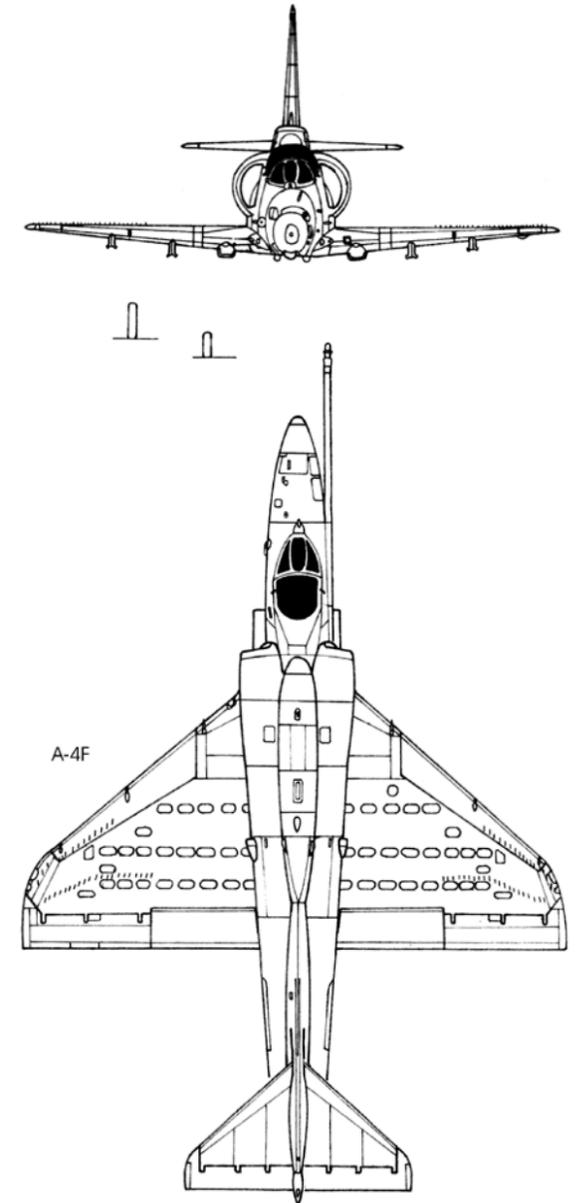
MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: Continue your horticulture explorations at Peach Pickin’ Paradise just a half-hour away in Lamar

SPREAD YOUR WINGS

at the Arkansas Air & Military Museum

Yes, it’d be easy to just gawk at the retro-sleek 1920s air racer, the iconic “Huey” helicopter, the deadly A-4 jet fighter or any of the other aircraft, military vehicles and exhibits at this venerable Fayetteville museum, housed inside a historic hangar at Drake Field. But if you really want a jaw-dropping experience, inquire about a flight in the museum’s restored Stinson Junior, a 1931 four-seater straight out of the Golden Age of Aviation. (4290 S. School Ave., Fayetteville; arkansasairmuseum.com)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: Bike the Razorback Regional Greenway, which winds its way 36 miles from Fayetteville to Bentonville (see Number 1). Talk about a leg day.



DOUGLAS A-4 SKYHAWK

17 TIME TRAVEL

at Historic Washington State Park

Fear not, history buffs: You don’t need a temporal wormhole to step back in time. With immaculately dressed living-history interpreters and 30-plus historic buildings—including the grand Hempstead Country Courthouse, the homey Williams Tavern and the Gothic Washington Presbyterian Church—a visit to Historic Washington State Park

is all you need to feel like you’ve ditched the 2010s for the 1800s. Be sure to check the park’s website for events like this month’s Bread and Butter Workshop, which will see you sampling bread made from historic recipes and churning your own butter, of course. (103 Franklin St., Washington; historicwashingtonstatepark.com)

MAKE A “DAY” OF IT: Pay a visit to Bill Clinton’s boyhood home in nearby Hope. (Especially if it’s the weekend of August 12, and you really like watermelon.)

18 BE "SUP" FOR SOMETHING NEW

at Beaver Lake with SUP Outfitters

Have boards, will travel. That's the business plan behind Eureka Springs-based SUP Outfitters, which buzzes around Beaver Lake intent on bringing stand-up paddleboarding to the Northwest Arkansas masses. Have a lake house? Melody Elliott will come to you, boards and paddles (and life jackets!) in tow. Camping at Hobbs? Let her know when and where, and she's there. Never paddled before? Not to worry—each session begins with a primer on the do's and don'ts. And be sure to follow SUP Outfitters on Facebook for details on special events, like full-moon paddles and—if you're feeling particularly bendy—SUP yoga. (*mobile; www.sup-outfitters.com*)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Grab a post-paddle bite (and a brew) at Sparky's Roadhouse Cafe in Eureka Springs, where no one cares if you come, um, "lake-y."



19

GET GHOULED

on the Crescent Hotel Ghost Tour

Eureka Springs is just what your summer-vacation camera roll begs for: majestic architecture, quirky city life and, of course, glowing, floating paranormal orbs. Because at the Crescent Hotel, visitors may mingle with some guests who haven't quite checked out. You could very well run into "Michael," the late-1880s stonemason who's said to have died while working on the roof, or hear the phantom sounds of a wheeling gurney—you know, from back when the property, which opened in 1886, functioned as a cancer hospital. (75 Prospect Ave., Eureka Springs; *crescent-hotel.com*)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT:

The spook continues with a ghost tour and underground cave visit at the Basin Park Hotel.

DINNER AND A SHOW

WHEN IT COMES TO SUMMERTIME DINNERS AND SHOWS, OUR TASTES TEND TO BE FAIRLY SIMPLE—A BOTTLE OF WINE, A HUNK OF BRIE AND A LONG DELTA SUNSET. HOWEVER, AS MOST ANYONE WHO'S BRAVED OUR SUMMERS CAN SURELY ATTEST: SOMETIMES THOSE PLANS NEED A CHANGE OF SETTING. HERE'S WHERE WE TURN MOST OFTEN:



20

WALK THE LINE

at the Johnny Cash Boyhood Home in Historic Dyess Colony

It might not look like much—just a five-room, green-shuttered clapboard house rising out of a soybean field smack-dab in the middle of the lonesome Delta bottoms. But after a painstaking restoration, the house that made Johnny Cash *Johnny Cash* has become a shrine to the Man in Black. "I wrote a lot of songs about life as I knew it back when I was a little bitty boy," Johnny Cash once said at a 1969 concert. A visit to his boyhood home gets you a little closer to understanding why. (110 Center Drive, Dyess; *dyesscash.astate.edu*)

MAKE A "DAY" OF IT: Order the blue-plate special at Tyboogie's Cafe, which is just a 20-minute Delta drive away. And trust us: It's worth it. **AL**