

National Trust Honor cont...

The 2009 list of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations includes:

Athens, Ga. - Athens, called the "classic city" because of its name and neo-classical architecture, is known for its distinct blend of traditional heritage and trend-setting southern culture, a mix of historic attractions, a dynamic downtown and a lively music scene. It is also home to the University of Georgia and a growing artistic community.

Bristol, R.I. - A quintessential New England waterfront town steeped in a rich history that spans three centuries. This coastal community, conveniently located only one hour south of Boston, seamlessly blends outdoor beauty with cultural pleasures. Bristol is studded with parks featuring recreational opportunities and stunning vistas, along with a treasure trove of stately historic homes, museums, one-of-a-kind boutiques and seafood eateries. Together, they create a story-book experience that serves as an ideal retreat.

Buffalo, N.Y. - Buffalo is a gold mine of late 19th/early 20th century urban design. This lakeside city harbors an unexpected discovery around every corner - and 500 walking tours -

offering a staggering range of cultural resources as well as some of the country's most captivating architecture. Nestled between the pristine network of city parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted are National Historic Landmarks by Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan and H.H. Richardson.

Fort Worth, Tex. - The "City of Cowboys and Culture," once a frontier town home to the brave and the brawling now features a world-renowned cultural arts district and well-preserved Western heritage. One focal point, the Fort Worth Stockyards is home to the Fort Worth Herd, the world's only daily cattle drive - Texas Longhorns are paraded daily right in the heart of the Stockyards. This unmistakable mix of historic resources and 21st-century city living appeals to both young and old, distinguishing it as one of the great southwestern urban centers.

Franklin, Tenn. - Surrounded by rolling green hills and scenic landscapes, Franklin offers a rare blend of small-town southern hospitality and big-city amenities - a vibrant community and ideal destination for the whole family. The town, often described as "100 years" and a few miles south of Nashville, is packed with history including Civil War bat-

tlefields, historic house museums and a host of antebellum mansions.

Hot Springs, S.D. - Hot Springs, less than an hour from Mt. Rushmore, is famous for its healing waters, impressive collection of pink sandstone buildings, scenic beauty and excess of natural and cultural resources. It is the perfect gateway to the magnificent beauty of the southern Black Hills which includes the Wild Horse Sanctuary, Native American ceremonial sites, petroglyphs and spectacular scenery. Hot Springs is also home to the world-famous Mammoth Site with the remains of 58 Ice Age mammoths and 27 other prehistoric species, most an estimated 26,000 years old.

Lake Geneva, Wis. - Easily accessible from Milwaukee and Chicago, Lake Geneva is commonly referred to as the "Newport of the West" for its pristine natural beauty and beautiful lakefront estates. Highlighting the historic atmosphere is the well-preserved mix of homes that display a historical spectrum of American residential architecture including Gothic Revival cottages, large picturesque Queen Ann style mansions, formal colonial Revival style houses and progressive Craftsman style homes. One favorite pastime for visitors is meandering along the perimeter of the 21-

mile Geneva Lake Shore Path, offering pedestrians intimate views of the area's most famous mansions and restored estates.

Lititz, Pa. - Only 60 miles west of Philadelphia, this antidote to high-powered city living possesses a picturesque charm rooted in its Moravian heritage that dates to the mid-18th century. Against a backdrop dotted with old stone mills, log homes and wooden covered bridges, and echoing with the clip clop of horses' hooves, Lititz offers a variety of attractions within easy walking distance of its appealing downtown district.

Santa Barbara, Calif. - Called "the American Riviera," this premier resort destination's idyllic, year-round climate and breadth of attractions delivers on its reputation. The sun-drenched, coastal paradise features white-washed buildings with red tile roofs, acres of lush landscaping and laid-back beaches, plus iconic historic landmarks, cultural venues, culinary delights and world-class accommodations of the caliber usually reserved for a major metropolis.

Santa Fe, N.M. - One of the best-preserved cities in the United States, Santa Fe is an ancient city with a distinctive architecture borne out of its

remote location and use of local materials. Perched high in the foothills of the southern Rocky Mountains, it is unparalleled in its richness of history, arts and culture. Signature adobe architecture and old world charm combine with culinary sophistication and a creative flair to make the city one of the country's most fascinating destinations.

Saugatuck-Douglas, Mich. - These neighboring harbor towns, nestled near the shore of Lake Michigan, are defined by steep, rolling dunes to the west and lush orchard country to the east. Today, 19th century architecture forms the basis for the area's old world charm, but the lakeshore community's scenic beauty and singular collection of art galleries, shops and restaurants make it a perfect getaway for a day, a weekend or even a season.

Virginia City, Nev. - The historic mining boomtown of Virginia City provides unique insights into the spirit of the Old West. The town—steeped in silver and gold rush lore - is packed with the history of pioneers turned into millionaires. Mansions, saloons, museums and old mines provide a glimpse into the storied past of American frontier life, capturing the allure that once fueled western expansion.