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Book Review: *Southern Journeys - Tourism, History, And Culture In The Modern South*

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Abstract

Book review of *Southern Journeys: Tourism, History, And Culture In The Modern South*, edited by Richard D. Starnes.

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Southern Journeys: Tourism, History, and Culture in the Modern South. Edited by Richard D. Starnes. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003. Acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, contributors, index. Pp. 310. \$26.95, paper; \$55.00, cloth.)

Richard D. Starnes has compiled eleven essays that transform the reader into an armchair tourist, journeying on a historical and analytical tour through the southern United States. The tourist-reader becomes an insider as historians and other writers reveal the backgrounds behind some of the South's most visited vacation destinations. Ranging from New Orleans to the Blue Ridge Parkway, Starnes's *Southern Journeys* brings together recent scholarship in the area of southern tourism history that documents and explores tourism as a force in shaping the modern South and provides a springboard for future research in southern tourism. While other writers in the social sciences have explored and published works about tourism, relatively little has been published about tourism in the South. Starnes's contribution in *Southern Journeys* successfully begins to fill a gap in the literature of southern tourism history and opens a new window through which to see the evolution of the modern South.

The eleven essays that Starnes has chosen to include document a wide range of twentieth-century tourism development in southern cities, beaches and coastal areas, and mountains. These essays explore how and why these destinations became tourist destinations, and in particular, interpret the effect of tourism on their economic, social, and racial structures. Arranged loosely in chronological order, the essays' lack of subject grouping allows readers to make their own comparisons and conclusions about the various arguments.

Of those interpreting tourism in cities, Alecia P. Long's well-researched essay about New Orleans's renowned Storyville district at the turn of the twentieth century is the highlight of these urban discussions. Long provides a thorough analysis of the vice district's growth as a tourist attraction amid the context of complex racial relations and attempts by city boosters to shape New Orleans into a tourist destination. Beaches and coastal areas, often associated with

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southern vacations, are also topics among the essays. Of note is C. Brenden Martin and June Hall McCash's history of tourism at Jekyll Island, Georgia. Tracing the island's history from a Gilded Age resort to a late-twentieth-century state-owned recreation park, Martin and McCash skillfully discuss many of southern tourism's broader issues—economics and politics, race and class, environment and historic preservation. Discussions of the success and failures of bringing tourism to scenic destinations are the topics of essays relating to mountainous regions of the South: the Appalachian and Great Smoky Mountains and the Arkansas Ozarks. Broader overviews include Starnes's essay about tourism development in North Carolina and Ted Ownby's closing discussion about the intersection of southern history and tourism.

Although Starnes and his fellow essayists write with the goal of creating scholarly interpretations of southern history through the medium of tourism and thus targeting an academic audience, the collection is generally so well written and accessible that it would appeal to interested non-scholars as well. Notes for each essay are located at the end of the book and often provide leads for further reading, expanded explanations, and background details for those who want to delve deeper. This collection of essays represents just the beginning of new research in southern tourism history with much more left to discover and interpret. Hopefully, historians and other writers will continue to pursue this intriguing southern journey.

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